

**PENNSYLVANIA FIRE SERVICE**  
**VOLUNTARY CERTIFICATION PROGRAM**



**CANDIDATE HANDBOOK**

**FIRE FIGHTER I**

OFFICE OF THE STATE FIRE COMMISSIONER  
PENNSYLVANIA STATE FIRE ACADEMY

Dear Certification Candidate,

Welcome to the Pennsylvania Voluntary Fire Service Certification Program. The purpose of this manual is to provide you with information to successfully participate in certification testing. This manual outlines the pre-requisites, testing and application process, and provides you with a study guide reference list. Tests are conducted under the sanction and approval of the Pennsylvania Office of the State Fire Commissioner with accreditation granted by the National Board on Fire Service Professional Qualifications (National Pro-Board) and the International Fire Service Accreditation Congress (IFSAC)

In accordance with Act 61 of 1995, The State Fire Commissioner Act, the Office of the State Fire Commissioner is the certifying agency within the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, and the Pennsylvania State Fire Academy is the administering agency. Any United States Citizen eighteen (18) years of age or older who resides in Pennsylvania may apply for consideration as a test candidate.

Good luck and thank you for participating in the Pennsylvania Voluntary Fire Service Certification Program.

## **Application Process**

Upon obtaining an application from either the Office of the State Fire Commissioner (OSFC) website or an approved test site, the candidate must fill out the form, in full, and provide all required supporting documentation. The completed application and accompanying documents are to be submitted to an approved test site or PA State Fire Academy (PSFA). The test sites or PSFA will review and either accept or reject the application, based on deficiencies (i.e., lacks pre-requisites, no signatures, etc.).

The general testing process is as follows:

1. A candidate must submit a completed application including all supporting documents;
2. Upon approval of the application, a candidate takes the written and subsequently the skills tests (NOTE: the skills test cannot be taken before the written test);
3. Upon successfully completing the written and skills test and a review of the application for completeness by the test site and PSFA or Delegated Authority, the candidate can be certified for the level tested. If a candidate should not pass any part of the testing process, a retest can be administered and must be completed within one (1) year of the original test date

## **Application Pointers**

1. Make sure application is legible and check for completeness
2. Social Security Number: you have the option to provide the full nine (9) digits or just the last four (4) digits.
3. Complete Name is listed including suffix (Jr, Sr, III, etc) **NO** nicknames please
4. Address includes street, apartment number, city, state and zip
5. All appropriate signatures are obtained and are in blue or black **ink**. Please note that Chief Officers may NOT sign for themselves where a Chief Officer signature is required, another Chief Officer must sign.
6. Copies of required certificates and/or certifications are attached and current copy of both front and back of medical training and CPR cards with signature
7. Make sure your Pre-Requisite Verification Form is appropriately marked off and signed in blue or black **ink**.

## **Pre-requisites**

**1. Structural Burn:** In order to be certified as a Fire Fighter I, a candidate **must** have demonstrated his/her ability to attack and extinguish an interior structural fire operating as a member of a team. The following courses of instruction have been determined to meet this requirement

- a. PA State Fire Academy Local Level *Structural Burn Session (SBS)*;
- b. PA State Fire Academy Resident Course *Engine Company Operations at Residential Fires (ZSFB)* or its predecessor *Structural Fire Fighting I*;
- c. *ELIF Interior* Firefighting certificate from the Entry Level curriculum. Interior Firefighting with NO Live Fire is NOT acceptable;
- d. City of Pittsburgh Bureau of Fire Recruit Training;

- e. City of Philadelphia Fire Department Recruit Training;
- f. Harrisburg Area Community College (HACC) “*Fire Academy*” curriculum;
- g. Pennsylvania Department of Corrections *Fire Emergency Response Team Training*;
- h. City of Allentown/Bethlehem/Easton Fire Department *Career Recruit Training Program*
- i. Buck County Community College – “Bucks Basic Fire Academy”

**2. Hazardous Materials Training and/or Certification:** Candidates must be currently trained or certified at the First Responder Operations Level or higher in accordance with NFPA 472 "Standard for Professional Competence of Responders to Hazardous Materials Incidents". The following courses of instruction have been determined to meet this requirement. ***Training or Certification must be within one(1) year of the date of application If certification is greater than one (1) year you must show proof of completion of a current refresher training course.***

- a. Hazardous Materials Operations Level 472 Training or Certification  
OR
- b. Hazardous Materials Operations Level 472 Annual Refresher  
OR
- c. Hazardous Materials Technician Level 472 Training or Certification

**3. Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR) and Emergency Medical Care Training:** Candidate shall provide evidence, at a minimum of capabilities that include emergency medical care, infection control, and CPR (*adult/child/infant*). The following is a listing of Fire Service Certification Advisory Committee (FSCAC) approved training courses that meet the requirements of this section. Each candidate must show at a minimum an approved CPR card/certificate and an approved First Aid Course card/certificate or EMS certification. ***Copies of both sides of the cards and cards MUST be signed by the candidate to be valid.***

**PA DOH EMS Certification**

- 1. PA DOH – First Responder
- 2. PA DOH – EMT
- 3. PA DOH – Paramedic
- 4. PA DOH – Health Professional

**American Heart Association (AHA)**

- 1. AHA – Heartsaver First Aid
- 2. AHA – Heartsaver CPR (Adult/Child/Infant)
- 3. AHA – Healthcare Professional (Preferred)

**ASHI**

- 1. ASHI – First Aid

**AAOS**

- 1. AAOS - Standard First Aid
- 2. AAOS – Emergency Care & Safety Institute HealthCare Provider CPR

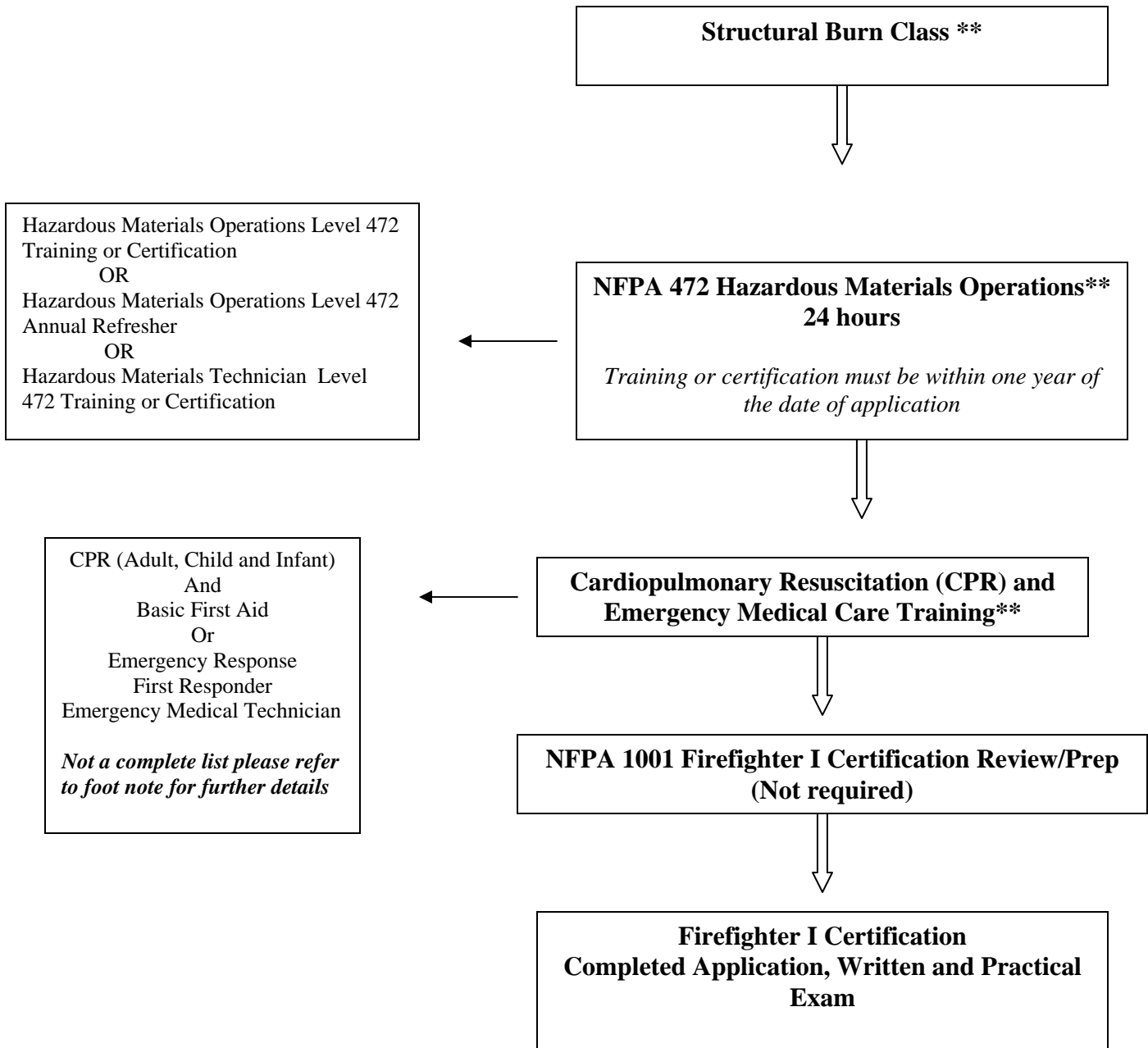
**National Safety Council (NSC)**

- 1. NSC - First Aid
- 2. NSC – Basic Life Support Healthcare & Professional Rescuer

**American Red Cross (ARC)**

- 1. ARC - Emergency Responder
- 2. ARC – *First Aid Responding to Emergencies*
- 3. ARC – Adult CPR & Infant/Child CPR
- 4. ARC – CPR Professional Rescuer (Preferred)
- 5. ARC – CPR for the Professional Rescuer & Healthcare Provider
- 6. ARC – CPR/AED for the Healthcare Provider

# Firefighter I Certification Pathway



\*\* Please refer to the Fire Fighter I application OR the previous section of this document titled “Pre-requisites” for a complete listing of approved courses that will be accepted to meet the pre-requisites.

## **Testing Policy**

### **Written Test**

Passing scores for any written test is seventy percent (70%).

### **Skills Test**

Must pass 100% of the twelve (12) skill stations offered

## **Re-test Policy**

### **Written Test**

1. If you are unsuccessful you may retest a total of two (2) times and have one (1) year to complete the retest. You will need to contact the fire academy or a test site of your choice to schedule retest.

### **Skills Test**

1. Must pass 100% of the twelve (12) skill stations offered.
  - If you are unsuccessful on three (3) or less skill stations, you may retest the same day. (only one retest per skill station);
  - If you are unsuccessful on four (4) or more skill stations, you may NOT retest the same day. Skill retests must be scheduled at a later time.
  - A total of eight (8) retest attempts are permitted and must complete in one (1) year to successfully complete the testing process.

## **Appeals**

Within thirty (30) days of receipt of a failure notice, a candidate may request a review of his/her performance records by the State Fire Academy. Appeals must be in writing and in accordance with the policies and procedures of the Certification Program

## **Accommodations**

The Pennsylvania Fire Service Voluntary Certification Program offers reasonable accommodations for the written certification exams for individuals with documented disabilities. Only written requests for accommodations for certification examinations are reviewed and each request is reviewed on a case-by-case basis. Requests must be submitted on the "Accommodation Request" form. The Pennsylvania Fire Service Voluntary Certification Program provides written notification of its decision to the candidate upon completion of its review and the review by legal counsel of the request for accommodation.

The "Accommodation Request" form is located on page 8 of this manual or is available from the Pennsylvania State Fire Academy and test site coordinators. Please contact the Certification Program Manager for further information. The candidate who is requesting an accommodation must complete the request form at the time of application submission or as soon as the need for an accommodation is recognized. All requests must be made prior to the scheduled date of the

examination. Any request for accommodation not submitted at least twenty (20) working days prior to the scheduled examination will result in a delay in the candidate's date of examination.

Documentation of a specific disability which would impact a candidate's performance on the written examination must be current (within five (5) years of the date of application). Such documentation should include a signed explanation on letterhead stationary from a professional who is familiar with the applicant's disability or a copy of an Individual Education Plan (IEP) from an educational institution. See below comment.

The statement must confirm and describe the disability for which the accommodation is requested. The professional must have expertise in the specific disability for which the accommodation is being requested.



### **Safety Policy**

For the safety and protection of all participants all equipment and Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) being used for testing must meet the NFPA standard at the time of manufacturing. PPE will be inspected prior to being used for testing.

The facial hair policy directs that a candidate with facial hair that interferes with the operation or use of a Self Contained Breathing Apparatus (SCBA) will not be permitted to participate in a testing process that requires the use of a SCBA.

### **Test Results/Release of Results**

The Office of the State Fire Commissioner/PA State Fire Academy notifies candidates of their results in writing via US Mail. Only pass/fail grades are given.

In accordance with the Federal Education Records and Privacy Act (FERPA) of 1974 which is a federal law that established a minimum standard for the protection of records requires prior consent of a person before any records or other personally identifiable information can be released. In the event a third party request test results of a candidate a Consent to Release Information form will need to be completed and signed by the candidate that the third party is requesting results for.

### **No show policy**

If a candidate is accepted for testing and fails to show up for testing without an acceptable reason the candidate will be suspended from further certification activities for a period of one (1) year from the date of the original test.

### **Study Reference List**

Reference list 0608

The following is a list of text that may be reference in preparation for testing.

1. National Fire Protection Association, NFPA 1001, Standard for Fire Fighter Professional Qualifications, 2008 Edition
2. Delmar, Firefighter's Handbook, Essentials of Firefighting and Emergency Response 2nd Edition, 1st Printing
3. IFSTA, Essentials of Fire Fighting, 4th Edition, 1st Printing
4. Jones and Bartlett, Fundamentals of Fire Fighter Skills, 1st Edition, 1st Printing
5. Jones and Bartlett, Exam Prep Book Fire Fighter I & II  
<http://www.jbpub.com/fire/ExamPrep/>
6. Delmar, Exam Preparation Fire Fighter I & II Western PA Fireman's Association 724-339-1017
7. Skill Sheets are available on the OSFC website [www.osfc.state.pa.us](http://www.osfc.state.pa.us)

**Additional Information:**

1. Application should be to the test site at least 2 weeks prior to the test date
2. Please contact the test site of your choice to receive information about fees for testing
3. Photo ID is required at the time of the written and skills testing
4. Bring all appropriate PPE and SCBA for completion of all possible skill stations
5. Dress appropriately, bring extra dry clothes
6. Bring food and beverage with you, stay hydrated.

Certification applications and skill sheets as well as a testing schedule and test sites contact information can be found at [www.osfc.state.pa.us](http://www.osfc.state.pa.us) . Click on the Certification link on the left hand side of the screen. A page will open with information about the certification program and process. At the end of that page you will find several other links for the certification applications, skill sheets, test schedules and test site contact information.

If you have any additional questions or concerns about the testing process please contact the test site coordinator at the site in which you applied to be tested at or the PA State Fire Academy Certification Program Staff.