

## **DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SAFETY**

### **Division of Fire Safety**

## **FIREFIGHTER VOLUNTARY CERTIFICATION PROGRAM**

### **8 CCR 1507-3**

*[Editor's Notes follow the text of the rules at the end of this CCR Document.]*

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## **SECTION 1 INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

The "Voluntary Certification Program for Fire Fighters" began on June 21, 1979, when House Bill 1243 was signed into law. The general purpose of the certification program is to measure the level of knowledge, skills and abilities possessed by firefighters and first responders and to attest that these individuals meet nationally recognized standards. These competency-based standards permit evaluation of training programs and promotes uniformity in firefighter and first responder training.

The Colorado Firefighter Certification Program is a voluntary program, meaning that there is no statutory requirement that firefighters become certified. The certification program establishes a means to judge the proficiency of firefighters and first responders, irrespective of their department affiliation and regardless of whether they are paid or volunteer.

### **Colorado Fire Service Training and Certification Advisory Board**

CRS 24-33.5, Part 12 creates the Colorado Fire Service Training and Certification Advisory Board, the general purpose of which is to:

- Advise the director on establishing a fire service education and training program;
- Advise the director on setting minimum standards for training and certification;
- Advise the director on establishing procedures for determining if firefighters meet these minimum standards; and
- Advise the director on certifying applicants who meet the established minimum standards.

The Colorado Fire Service Training and Certification Advisory Board is comprised of nine members appointed by the Governor, and representing the major fire service organizations in the state, municipalities, fire protection districts and the property and casualty insurance industry.

### **Fire Service Training Program**

The State of Colorado Fire Service Training Program, previously under the supervision of the State Board of Community Colleges, and Occupational Education, was transferred to the Division of Fire Safety on July 1, 1986. In 1970, the International Fire Service Training Association (IFSTA) manuals published by Fire Protection Publications, Oklahoma State University, were adopted as the standards for the fire service training program.

The Advisory Board has established the IFSTA training manuals, IFSTA Instructor lesson plans, and curriculum packages as the minimum curriculum leading to state certification. IFSTA training manuals are

available for purchase from the Division of Fire Safety, 9195 East Mineral Avenue, Suite 234, Centennial, Colorado 80112, telephone number (720) 852-6735.

## **SECTION 2 PURPOSE AND AUTHORITY FOR ESTABLISHING RULES**

- 2.1 The purpose of the Firefighter Certification Program is to measure the level of knowledge, skills and abilities possessed by firefighters and to attest that these individuals meet nationally recognized standards. These competency based standards permit evaluation of training programs and promotes uniformity in firefighter training.
- 2.2 The purpose of these rules is to achieve the following goals and objectives:
  - 2.2.1 Address current firefighting principles and practices.
  - 2.2.2 Establish and promote the fire service in the State of Colorado as a professional service.
  - 2.2.3 Improve the performance and coordination of fire suppression and fire prevention activities through the development of minimum performance standards for all applicants.
  - 2.2.4 Develop more competent and reliable fire service personnel through the adoption of national professional qualifications standards.
  - 2.2.5 Establish and maintain valid procedures that measure specific levels of skills, abilities and knowledge consistent with standards approved and adopted by the Colorado Fire Service Training and Certification Advisory Board.
  - 2.2.6 Establish a statewide uniform testing procedure that will ensure all practical skills evaluated and all practical examinations conducted are performed and evaluated in a consistent manner for all fire fighters throughout the State of Colorado.
  - 2.2.7 Establish a fire service education and training program setting forth minimum standards for training and instructors.
  - 2.2.8 Establish and implement a certification program that will ensure complete impartiality and confidentiality and is designed in such a manner to safeguard against misuse and abuse.
  - 2.2.9 Ensure that all internationally accredited levels of certification are administered with strict adherence to the requirements and recommendations of the International Fire Service Accreditation Congress.
  - 2.2.10 Establish disciplinary procedures for denial, revocation, limitation, or suspension of an individual's firefighter certificate and/or an accredited academy's recognition; and
  - 2.2.11 Ensure compliance with C.R.S. 24-4-103 (12.5), concerning incorporation by reference requirements, and to reinstate certain rules that were not extended by Senate Bill 96-236 for noncompliance with these requirements.
- 2.3 Authority for the promulgation of these rules is set forth in C.R.S. 24-33.5-1202 through 24-33.5-1209.
- 2.4 All publications, standards or rules adopted and incorporated by reference in these rules are on file and available for public inspection during normal business hours by contacting the certification program administrator for the Colorado Division of Fire Safety, 9195 East Mineral Avenue, Suite 234, Centennial, Colorado 80112. All publications, standards or rules adopted and incorporated by reference in these rules may also be examined at any state publications depository library.

This rule does not include later amendments to or editions of any materials incorporated by reference.

2.4.1 Questions, clarification, or interpretation of these rules should be addressed in writing to:  
Colorado Fire Service Training and Certification Advisory Board, c/o Colorado Division of Fire Safety.

2.5 The Advisory Board, in its discretion, may adopt policies concerning the implementation or interpretation of these rules at any regular or special meeting.

2.6 The Division, in its discretion, may adopt policies or guidelines concerning the methods, procedures and processes for administering the certification program.

### **SECTION 3 DEFINITIONS**

3.1 The following definitions apply only to these rules and DO NOT in any way apply to the rules, regulations, practices, or procedures of a local fire service unit or organization.

3.2 All definitions which appear in C.R.S. 24-33.5-1202 shall apply to these rules.

3.3 ADVISORY BOARD (BOARD) - The Colorado Fire Service Training and Certification Advisory Board created pursuant to 24-33.5-1204. Also refers to the members appointed by the Governor to serve on the Advisory Board for prescribed terms.

3.4 AERIAL LADDER APPARATUS – A piece of fire apparatus with a permanently mounted, power operated elevating device, including aerial ladders aerial ladder platforms, telescoping aerial platforms, articulation aerial platforms, and elevating water delivery systems.

3.5 APPLICANT - A person who has satisfied the requirements to be examined for certification or an entity that applies for recognition as an accredited academy.

3.6 CERTIFIED - Applicants who have successfully met or exceeded cognitive and psychomotor behavioral objectives of the Voluntary Fire Fighter Certification Program.

3.7 CERTIFIED PROCTOR - An individual who meets or exceeds the requirements to be certified as a written and/or practical examination proctor.

3.8 CERTIFYING AGENCY - The Colorado Division of Fire Safety, Colorado Department of Public Safety.

3.9 CHIEF LEVEL OFFICER RANK - Chief or chief executive officer of the department; or Chief officer or equivalent who heads a major bureau or division within a fire department or organization; or Chief officer or equivalent who commands multi-company or multi-station operations on the emergency incident scene or who may command a greater alarm incident.

3.10 CLASS - A single meeting or session devoted to a specific fire service or non-fire service training objective.

3.11 COGNITIVE OBJECTIVE - Pertinent written questions, lists, or problems relative to the level at which a person is being tested.

3.12 CONTINUING EDUCATION - A course of instruction or a self directed program, extended over a period of three years, which meets the educational requirements for renewal of certification.

- 3.13 COURSE - Any grouping of classes, or series of lessons or lectures combined to attain a particular education level or training objective.
- 3.14 DEMONSTRATE - To show by actual use. This may be supplemented by or, when actual use is not feasible, replaced by simulation, explanation, illustration, or a combination of these methods.
- 3.15 DEPARTMENT - A fire service unit defined in this section.
- 3.16 DEPARTMENT HEAD - The chief executive officer of an organization.
- 3.17 DIRECTOR - The Director of the Division of Fire Safety, Department of Public Safety, State of Colorado.
- 3.18 DIVISION - The Division of Fire Safety, Department of Public Safety, State of Colorado.
- 3.19 FIREFIGHTER - A member of a fire department unit.
- 3.20 FIRE DEPARTMENT UNIT - An organization providing rescue, fire suppression, and related activities. The term "Fire Department" shall include any public, governmental, private, industrial, or military organization engaging in this type of activity.
- 3.21 NATIONAL ACCREDITATION - Issued to a candidate who has met all of the requirements of the NFPA Standards, and has taken and passed both the written and practical examinations, when required, for an accredited level of certification that meets the requirements of the International Fire Service Accreditation Congress.
- 3.22 NFPA - The National Fire Protection Association.
- 3.23 NON-CERTIFIED - Any applicant who does not possess a valid certification recognized by the Board.
- 3.24 POLICIES - Formal guidelines promulgated by the Division and/or the Advisory Board concerning the methods, procedures and processes for implementing these rules and administering the certification program.
- 3.25 PSYCHOMOTOR OBJECTIVE - Actual use or performance, safely and efficiently accomplished within a specified time limit and in accordance with procedures and standards established for National Accreditation of Firefighters and meets the requirements of the National Fire Protection Association Standards as its basis.
- 3.26 REFRESHER TRAINING - A course of instruction, condensed over a short period of time, designed to provide training to persons for the purpose of preparing them for renewal of certification.
- 3.27 SAFELY - Means to perform the objective without endangering or injuring oneself or others.
- 3.28 WITH COMPETENCE - Possessing knowledge, training, skills and judgment needed to satisfactorily and safely perform indicated objectives, as determined by the examining authority.

#### **SECTION 4 REQUIRED TRAINING/TRAINING CURRICULUM**

- 4.1 The department head of each organization shall designate the type and kind of training required. However, all training must meet the National Fire Protection Association professional qualifications standards.

**Explanatory Information:** *The department head has the ultimate responsibility to ensure to the citizens of their jurisdiction that the individual is properly trained. The department head also has the responsibility for certifying to the Division that the individual applying for certification at any level, or renewal of certification, is adequately trained and qualified for the requested level of certification. The department head of each organization is responsible for the credibility of the certification program as it relates to the organization. Emergency responses are considered experience – not training.*

4.2 Training subjects for the various levels of certification are those listed in the National Fire Protection Association Standards for Professional Qualifications.

4.3 The NFPA Standards adopted and incorporated herein by this reference, are as follows:

4.3.1 NFPA 1000 - *Fire Service Professional Qualifications Accreditation and Certification Systems, 2000 edition*

4.3.2 NFPA 1001 - *Fire Fighter Professional Qualifications, 2002 edition*

4.3.4 NFPA 1002 - *Fire Department Vehicle Driver/Operator Professional Qualifications, 2003 edition*

4.3.5 NFPA 1003 - *Airport Firefighter Professional Qualifications, 2005 edition*

4.3.6 NFPA 1021 - *Fire Officer Professional Qualifications, 2003 edition*

4.3.7 NFPA 1031 - *Professional Qualifications for Fire Inspector, 2003 edition*

4.3.8 NFPA 1033 - *Professional Qualifications for Fire Investigator, 2003 edition*

4.3.9 NFPA 1035 - *Professional Qualifications for Public Fire and Life Safety Educator, 2005 edition*

4.3.10 NFPA 1041 - *Fire Service Instructor Professional Qualifications, 2002 edition*

4.3.11 NFPA 472 - *Standard for Professional Competence of Responders to Hazardous Materials Incidents, 2002 edition*

4.3.12 NFPA publications can be ordered from the National Fire Protection Association, Batterymarch Park, Quincy, MA 02269.

## **SECTION 5 GENERAL REQUIREMENTS FOR CERTIFICATION**

5.1 Anyone choosing to participate in the Colorado Firefighter Voluntary Certification Program will adhere to all rules, policies and procedures set forth and adopted by the Advisory Board and the Colorado Division of Fire Safety.

5.2 By signing the *Application and Request for Examination* the department head or designee is certifying that the requirements have been met for that level of certification and that department records will exist to support the training.

5.3 The organization requesting certification must submit applications and fees a minimum of thirty (30) days prior to the scheduled examination date. *Exception: Application for Fire Investigator certification must be submitted sixty (60) days prior to written examination.*

5.4 Certification will be awarded for a three (3) year period.

5.5 Certificates will be issued with the expiration dates of January 1 or July 1, depending on when the applicant is certified.

5.6 Certifications Levels available through the Colorado Division of Fire Safety:

- (a) Fire Fighter I
- (b) Fire Fighter II
- (c) Fire Officer I
- (d) Fire Officer II
- (e) Fire Officer III
- (f) Fire Instructor I
- (g) Driver Operator
- (h) Driver Operator Pumper
- (i) Driver Operator Aerial
- (j) Emergency Medical First Responder
- (k) Fire Inspector I
- (l) Fire Investigator
- (m) Juvenile Fire Setter Prevention Specialist I
- (n) Airport Firefighter
- (o) Public Life Safety Educator I, II, III

## **SECTION 6 SPECIAL CERTIFICATES AND AWARDS**

6.1 Certificates and awards, including “**Honorary Certification**” , may be presented by the Board for the purpose of raising the level of awareness of the voluntary certification program and to recognize and otherwise foster cooperation among other agencies, groups, organizations, jurisdictions, and individuals.

## **SECTION 7 PROCEEDINGS PURSUANT TO DENIAL, REVOCATION, SUSPENSION, ANNULMENT, LIMITATION OR MODIFICATION OF CERTIFICATION**

7.1 Denial of Certification. The Division, in accordance with the Administrative Procedures Act, C.R.S. 24-4-101, et seq., as amended, may deny any certificate or refuse to renew a certificate to any applicant for, but not limited to, the following reasons:

7.1.1 Failure to meet requirements specified in these rules pertaining to the Issuance of Certificates and the renewal of certification.

7.1.2 Any conduct as described in Section 7.2.2 pertaining to good cause for disciplinary action.

- 7.1.3 Fraud, misrepresentation, or deception in applying for or securing certification, or in taking any written or practical certification examination.
- 7.1.4 Aiding and abetting another person in procuring certification for any person who is not eligible for certification.
- 7.1.5 Creating a disturbance during a state practical skills evaluation or a state written examination, or conducting themselves in a manner that disrupts other persons taking the examination or prevents the examination proctor from conducting the examination.

## 7.2 Revocation, Suspension, or Limitation of Certification

- 7.2.1 Any certification issued by the Division may be suspended, summarily suspended, revoked, or limited for good cause in accordance with the Administrative Procedures Act, C.R.S. 24-4-101 et seq., as amended.
- 7.2.2 Good cause for disciplinary sanctions listed in this section (denial, revocation, suspension, annulment, limitation, or modification of certification) shall include, but not be limited to:
  - (a) Evidence that the minimum standards for certification set forth in these rules have not been met.
  - (b) Material misstatement or misrepresentation on the application for certification.
  - (c) Proof of unfitness.
  - (d) Proof of individual's failure to meet, and continue to meet, performance standards at the level certified.
  - (e) Unlawful use, possessing, dispensing, administering, or distributing controlled substances.
  - (f) Conviction of, or a plea of no contest to, unlawful conduct that relates to certification status.
  - (g) Driving an emergency vehicle in a reckless manner, or while under the influence of alcohol or other performance altering drugs.
  - (h) Demonstrating a pattern of alcohol or other substance abuse.
  - (i) Obtaining certification or recertification by fraud, misrepresentation, deception, or subterfuge.
  - (j) Materially altering any Division certificate, or using and/or possessing any such altered certificate.
  - (k) Unlawfully discriminating in the provisions of services based upon national origin, race, color, creed, religion, sex, age, physical or mental disability, sexual preference, infectious disease, or economic status.
  - (l) Representing qualifications at any level other than the person's current certification level.

7.3 If the Board finds that grounds exist for the denial, revocation, suspension, annulment, limitation, or modification of certification of any fire service personnel or applicant, action will be taken

according to the provisions of the Colorado Administrative Procedure Act, Section 24-4-101, et. sec., of the Colorado Revised Statutes, as amended.

7.4 Upon the denial, revocation, suspension, annulment, limitation, or modification of any member of a fire service unit or applicant, the person shall return to the Board all certificates, cards, patches or other identification issued by the Board for said certification and accreditation levels.

## **SECTION 8 FEES**

8.1 The following fees shall apply for products and services provided by, or on behalf of the Division:

8.1.1	Application for initial written examination	\$30.00
8.1.2	Application for retake written examination	\$30.00
8.1.3	Application for Fire Officer III certification	\$30.00
8.1.4	Application for proctor certification	\$30.00
8.1.5	Application fee for Fire Investigator	\$40.00
8.1.6	Application for renewal of certification	\$20.00
8.1.7	Reinstatement fee for expired certification	\$40.00
8.1.8	Application for reciprocity	\$40.00
8.1.9	Replacement of lost or damaged certificates	\$5.00
8.1.10	Additional triangle patches	\$3.00
8.1.11	Additional certification bars	\$1.50
8.1.12	Certification pins	\$5.00

8.2 All application fees payable to the Division must be made at the time of application and are not refundable.

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### **Editor's Notes**

### **History**

Sections 1 through 8 eff. 06/30/05.

Entire rule eff. 12/30/2007.