

FIRE INVESTIGATOR CERTIFICATION MANUAL

In a continued effort to reduce the fire loss in the State of North Carolina, the State Legislature established General Statute GS 58-278.31.14b, which required the State Fire and Rescue Commission to establish voluntary minimum professional qualifications for all levels of fire and rescue service personnel. It is the intent of this manual to set forth requirements pertaining to Fire Investigator Certification. The following guide was established to assist personnel in making application to the Investigator Review Board for approval to take the State examination.

-Timothy L. Bradley, Executive Director
North Carolina Fire and Rescue Commission

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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NORTH CAROLINA STATE FIRE AND RESCUE COMMISSION

FIRE INVESTIGATOR CERTIFICATION STANDARD

- I. Commission Members
- II. Board Members
- III. Standard
 - .0101 Purpose
 - .0102 Fire Investigator Certification by Review Board
 - .0103 Minimum Standards
 - Certification by Examination
 - 1. Education
 - 2. Training
 - 3. Experience
 - .0104 Testing
 - .0105 Applications
 - .0106 Certification
 - .0107 Recertification
 - .0108 Suspension, Revocation or Denial
 - .0109 Appeal Process

APPENDIX A Application Procedure and Point Sheets

SECTION .0100 - FIRE INVESTIGATOR CERTIFICATION PROGRAM

.0101 Purpose

The purpose of the Fire Investigator Certification Program shall be to acknowledge demonstrated competence in all phases of fire investigation, to recognize professional standards of achievement in fire investigation theory and practice by government and private fire investigators, to encourage the continuing education and training in the field of fire investigation, to increase professional standing in the fire investigative field, and to identify the sources of professional knowledge for the theory and practice of fire investigation.

.0102 Fire Investigator Certification Review Board

There shall be a nine-member Fire Investigator Certification Review Board having the powers and responsibilities set out in this section. The Chairman of the Fire and Rescue Commission shall appoint the members of the Board, at least three of whom, and their successors, shall be from nominations submitted by the North Carolina Chapter of the International Association of Arson Investigators, and one of whom, and their successors, shall be from nominations submitted by the Training and Standards Commission of the Department of Justice, the North Carolina Justice Academy, the North Carolina Department of Community Colleges, the North Carolina State Bureau of Investigation, and the North Carolina Department of Insurance. The Executive Director of the North Carolina Fire and Rescue Commission shall serve as the ninth member. The Executive Director is a permanent member and each new member shall be appointed for a term of three years. Any vacancy shall be filled for the remainder of the unexpired term only. Each member shall continue in office until his successor is appointed and qualified.

The Fire and Rescue Commission may, upon the recommendation of two-thirds of the

Review Board, remove any member of the Board when it finds that such member: (1) has knowingly made a material misrepresentation of any information supplied to them for review; (2) has knowingly and designedly by any means of false pretense, deception, fraud, misrepresentation or misinformation made any unfair or untrue statements against any applicant, other Board member, or Commission member; (3) provided any candidate for Certification any information not available to all candidates regarding the test, or misrepresented Board discussions to any candidate when refused or accepted by the Board.

.0103 Minimum Standards for Certification as Fire Investigator

Every applicant for certification as a Fire Investigator may only obtain certification by examination. Every applicant for certification shall, as a prerequisite to sitting for the examination, have achieved a minimum of 100 points based upon prior education training and experience. The awarding of points shall be by the Review Board and shall be based upon the following:

1. **Education.** The highest level of education must be noted on the application. Points for education vary from 10 points for a high school graduate, GED or certificate equivalency to 50 points for a doctoral degree in a field related to fire investigation. Other levels of education shall be listed on the application for examination. A minimum of 10 points is required and a maximum of 50 points is allowed.

2. **Training.** Points are earned for specialized training the applicant has received in accordance with the current standards as published by the National Fire

Protection Association for Fire Investigator or other levels of experience established and published by the Review Board. A minimum of twenty 20 points from the training category are required for certification by examination eligibility.

3. Experience. Points earned for experience will vary from one-half (.5) point per year up to ten points per year. A minimum of twenty points from the experience category is required for certification eligibility. No one year of experience can be carried in more than one category.

.0104 Testing

The Investigator Certification Review Board shall establish and administer, at least two times per year, a written test covering various phases of fire investigation techniques and theory that have been developed, as covered in the National Fire Protection Association Manual, Section 1033. The minimum passing grade is 70. Candidates who fail the test may take one additional test without Board Review approval.

.0105 Applications

The Review Board shall prepare and print applications which shall be available upon request to individuals seeking certification as a fire investigator. The application must be submitted to the Review Board and approved prior to the next scheduled examination. The Review Board may verify information set forth in the application and may interview the applicant. Supporting documentation of information listed in the application must be submitted with the application for Board review. Supporting documentation must be attached to the appropriate section in sequential order. Applications submitted without complete documentation

shall be returned to the applicant without action.

.0106 Certification

The Commission shall issue certificates to applicants approved by the Review Board and who pass the examination. These certificates shall be valid for a five-year period from the date of issue.

.0107 Recertification

Recertification will be awarded upon receipt of the applicant's documentation of a minimum of 30 points from any category or combination of categories earned during the previous 5-year period and as determined by the Review Board. This offer of proof must be submitted to the Review Board during the last six months of certification. Points claimed for the applicant's original certification, or prior re-certifications, will not be allowed. If no documentation has been submitted at the end of six months, the certification will expire, at which time the individual will be required to re-apply and document 130 points to take the test and receive a passing grade.

.0108 Suspension, Revocation or Denial

The Fire and Rescue Commission may, upon the recommendation of the Review Board, suspend, revoke or deny the certification of a fire investigator when it finds that such individual:

(1) has knowingly made a material misrepresentation of any information required for certification; (2) has knowingly and designedly by any means of false pretense, deception, fraud, misrepresentation or cheating whatsoever, obtained or attempted to obtain credit, training or certification from the Board; or (3) fails to achieve a score of 70 on the examination.

.0109 Appeal Process

(1) Any applicant or certified investigator aggrieved by an adverse decision may appeal to the Commission. (2) Request for hearing must be made, in writing, to the Executive Director who shall inform the applicant or certified investigator of the time, date and location of the hearing. (3) The hearing shall be held before the full Commission. (4) The Commission shall conduct a hearing and give all parties an opportunity to be heard. The hearing may be recorded and witnesses may be heard. (5) The Commission shall have complete control of the proceedings including, but not limited to setting time allotments for presentation, method of presenting information, prevention of repetitious presentation and management of the proceedings. (6) The Commission shall make and issue its final decision in writing with 60 days after the appeal is heard.

APPENDIX “A”

FIRE INVESTIGATOR CERTIFICATION PROGRAM

Candidates for certification should complete the attached application form and include with it a copy (no originals) of all awards, certificates, diplomas, and transcripts for documentation of

credits claimed. Additional certification may be required by the Review Board. The copies will not be returned to you.

Applicants will be notified of examination dates and locations. Submission of an application, but subsequent failure to take the examination within one year will result in forfeiture of the application.

Recertification will be provided for by the applicant's demonstration of continuing education, training, and experience in the field of Fire Investigation.

Mail application to:

***North Carolina Fire and Rescue Commission
Fire Investigator Review Board
Post Office Box 26387
Raleigh, NC 27611***

**FIRE INVESTIGATOR CERTIFICATION PROGRAM
APPLICATION
(Type or print in black ink)**

FULL NAME _____ DOB _____

CURRENT HOME ADDRESS _____

CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP _____

PHONE NUMBER(S) (h) _____ (w) _____ DL# _____ SS# _____

PRIOR ADDRESS _____

CURRENT EMPLOYER _____ JOB TITLE _____ YRS. _____

ADDRESS _____ PHONE: _____

PRIOR EMPLOYMENT _____ JOB TITLE _____ YRS. _____

HAVE YOU EVER BEEN TREATED FOR SUBSTANCE ABUSE (DRUG, ALCOHOL, ETC.)? IF SO, EXPLAIN THE CIRCUMSTANCES.

HAVE YOU EVER BEEN CONVICTED OF A CRIMINAL MISDEMEANOR, OR FELONY? IF SO, EXPLAIN THE CIRCUMSTANCES.

REFERENCES (4)

Name

Address

Phone

(Attach a copy of your resume and job description)

I. LEVEL OF EDUCATION ACHIEVED

Check only one (1) of the following ten (10) levels of education. Fields considered to be related to Fire Investigation are Engineering, Physical Sciences, and Police Science/Criminal Justice. Fields not considered to be related are Education, Liberal Arts, etc.

___ HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATE, GED CERTIFICATE, OR EQUIVALENT 10 PTS.

- ___ ASSOCIATE DEGREE IN FIELD UNRELATED TO FIRE INVESTIGATION. 12 PTS.
- ___ ASSOCIATE DEGREE IN FIELD RELATED TO FIRE INVESTIGATION . . . 20 PTS.
- ___ BACHELOR'S DEGREE IN FIELD UNRELATED TO FIRE INVESTIGATION. 20 PTS.
- ___ BACHELOR'S DEGREE IN FIELD RELATED TO FIRE INVESTIGATION . . . 30 PTS.
- ___ MASTERS DEGREE IN FIELD UNRELATED TO FIRE INVESTIGATION . . . 25 PTS.
- ___ MASTERS DEGREE IN FIELD RELATED TO FIRE INVESTIGATION 40 PTS.
- ___ DOCTORAL DEGREE IN FIELD UNRELATED TO FIRE INVESTIGATION . . 30 PTS.
- ___ DOCTORAL DEGREE IN FIELD RELATED TO FIRE INVESTIGATION 50 PTS.

Total Education Points Claimed _____

II. PROFESSIONAL CERTIFICATION(S)

Check one category below for which you have completed the requirements for certification. The Review Board reserves the right to disallow any prior certification if it does not meet the accepted standards in that field. (Firefighter Certification must be with the NC Fire and Rescue Commission or equivalent)

- ___ FIREFIGHTER I CERTIFICATION FROM ACCREDITED PROGRAM . 10 PTS.

Certifying agency and date _____

_____ FIREFIGHTER II CERTIFICATION FROM ACCREDITED PROGRAM. 20 PTS.

Certifying agency and date _____

_____ BASIC LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICER TRAINING 10 PTS.

Certifying agency and date _____

_____ INTERMEDIATE LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICER CERTIFICATION . 15 PTS.

Certifying agency and date _____

_____ ADVANCED LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICER CERTIFICATION 20 PTS.

Certifying agency and date _____

Total Certification Points Claimed _____

III. TRAINING RECORD

Training credits are broken down into a tested category and an untested category. The Review Board reserves the right to disallow any submitted training if it does not meet accepted guidelines for training. No credit can be taken in this section for courses taken during a degree program in which you received the degree.

TESTED INSTRUCTION RELATED TO FIRE INVESTIGATION (passing grade is required)

TITLE	SPONSOR	DATES	HOURS
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- A. _____ years of full-time Fire Investigation x 10 pts. per yr. = _____
- B. _____ years of part-time Fire Investigation x 5 pts. per yr. = _____
- C. _____ years of non-fire Criminal Investigator x 4 pts. per yr. = _____
- D. _____ years of supervision of Fire Investigation (requires 2 or more full-time Fire Investigators) x 5 pts. per yr. = _____
- E. _____ years of supervision of part-time Fire Investigator x 2 pts. per yr. = _____
- F. _____ years as Firefighter/Patrolman x .50 pts. per yr. = _____
- G. _____ years as Fire Lt./Police Sgt. or above x 1 pt. per yr. = _____
- H. _____ years as Evidence/Crime Seen Tech. x 2 pts. per yr. = _____
- I. _____ years as non-fire Private Investigator x 2 pts. per yr. = _____
- J. _____ years as Fire Insurance Adjustor x 1 pt. per yr. = _____

Total Experience Points Claimed _____

DOCUMENTATION APPLICABLE TO THIS SECTION MUST BE ATTACHED TO THIS PAGE.

V. ARTICLES/PAPER/BOOKS RELATED TO FIRE/BOMB INVESTIGATION PUBLISHED

TITLE	PUBLISHER	DATE

(Attach additional pages, if necessary)

_____ **ARTICLES/BOOKS/PAPERS PUBLISHED X 5 PTS. PER ITEM = _____ PTS.**

(Attach additional pages, if necessary)

COLLEGE LEVEL COURSE INSTRUCTION

TOPIC	LOCATION	DATE(S)	HOURS

(Attach additional pages, if necessary)

UNTESTED LECTURES X 1 PT. = _____
TESTED LECTURES X 1.5 PTS. = _____
COLLEGE-LEVEL COURSES X 3 PTS. PER 8 HRS. = _____
TOTAL TEACHING/INSTRUCTION POINTS CLAIMED = _____

VII. PROFESSIONAL ORGANIZATION MEMBERSHIPS

ORGANIZATION	DATES OF MEMBERSHIPS

_____ **TOTAL YEARS OF PROFESSIONAL ORGANIZATION MEMBERSHIPS X .50 PTS.** = _____

EXPERT WITNESS TESTIMONY (FIRE ONLY)

DEFENDANT	LOCATION	CHARGE	DOCKET #	DATE
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____

_____ **TOTAL APPEARANCES FOR EXPERT TESTIMONY X 4 PTS.** = _____

POINT TOTAL FROM INDIVIDUAL SECTIONS

I. EDUCATION

Level of Education _____ (10 pt. minimum/50 pt. maximum)

Professional Certifications _____ (20 pt. maximum)

TOTAL EDUCATION POINTS _____

II. TRAINING

Tested Instruction _____ (25 pt. maximum)

Untested Instruction _____ (15 pt. maximum)

TOTAL TRAINING POINTS _____ (20 pt. minimum)

III. EXPERIENCE

Professional Experience _____ (20 pt. minimum required from Section A and/or B)

Items Published _____ (20 pt. maximum)

Instruction Experience _____ (60 pt. maximum)

Professional Memberships _____ (10 pt. maximum)

Expert Testimony _____ (20 pt. maximum)

TOTAL EXPERIENCE POINTS _____

TOTAL NUMBER OF POINTS ACCUMULATED IN APPLICATION PROCESS _____

I CERTIFY THAT ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED IN THIS APPLICATION, INCLUDING ATTACHMENTS, IS ACCURATE AND TRUTHFUL TO THE BEST OF MY KNOWLEDGE AND I AM AWARE THAT ANY FALSE ENTRY AND/OR STATEMENT WILL BE CONSIDERED SUFFICIENT CAUSE FOR REVOCATION OF MY CERTIFICATION AT ANY TIME. I ACKNOWLEDGE THAT MY CERTIFICATION CAN BE REVOKED AT ANY TIME BY THE CERTIFICATION BOARD UPON ESTABLISHMENT OF JUST CAUSE. I AGREE TO ACCEPT THE DECISION OF THE CERTIFICATION BOARD AS TO MY ELIGIBILITY FOR CERTIFICATION. I AUTHORIZE ANY MEMBER OF THE CERTIFICATION BOARD TO CERTIFY THE INFORMATION PROVIDED ON THIS APPLICATIONS. I ALSO RELEASE ALL PARTIES FROM ANY LIABILITY ARISING FROM THIS APPLICATION AND THE SUBSEQUENT CERTIFICATION PROCESS.

Signature

Date

