

OHIO DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SAFETY
DIVISION OF EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES



FIRE CHARTER PROGRAM DIRECTOR GUIDEBOOK

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Regardless of geographic location or organizational structure, fire personnel must be prepared to meet the needs of their community. To accomplish this, fire education and training is dependent on the planning, preparation, and successful implementation of chartered training programs throughout the state.

The decision to become an educational institution is a major commitment, which should be given careful consideration. Specific requirements of the conduct of approved programs are outlined in the Ohio Revised Code (R.C.) and the Ohio Administrative Code (O.A.C.). You may download these documents through a link on our web site at www.ems.ohio.gov.

This guide is designed to assist program directors in planning and administering fire education programs and assuring compliance with the laws and rules governing Ohio education programs. It is only a guide and does not cover every aspect of the program director's duties, but rather focuses on program directors' most frequently asked questions. It is hoped that the information presented here will answer most of the questions and prove to be a valuable resource to the fire education program. If answers to your questions are not found in this guide or if further clarification is needed, the Division of Emergency Medical Services (EMS) is ready to assist you.

Contact Information

Ohio Department of Public Safety - Division of EMS
1970 W. Broad Street, P.O. Box 182073
Columbus, Ohio 43218-2073
(800) 233-0785
(614) 466-9447

HAVE A QUESTION?
Fire Education
emsfireeducation@dps.ohio.gov

Ohio Emergency Medical Services Legislation

Legislative Authority

The Ohio Revised Code and the Ohio Administrative Code establish the Division of Emergency Medical Services as the approving authority for all **Chartered Fire Training Programs**. Fire education training programs are approved under the R.C. 4765 (laws) and the O.A.C. chapters 4765-20 through 4765-24 (rules). It is important for program directors to understand the applicable laws governing Ohio Emergency Medical Services to successfully coordinate a fire education training site. **You will especially want to refer to Chapter 4765-24 of the O.A.C.**, which lists the requirements for a fire education certificate of chartering. You should also review O.A.C. Chapter 4765-21 regarding instructor training programs and instructor qualifications.

To access the Ohio Revised Code and Ohio Administrative Code please visit LAWriter Ohio Laws and Rules at: <http://codes.ohio.gov/>

Ohio Revised Code (R.C.)

- 4765.04 Firefighter and fire safety inspector training committee - trauma committee - other committees and subcommittees.
- 4765.55 Fire service training programs.

Ohio Administrative Code (O.A.C.)

- Chapter 4765-20 Fire Service Training Programs
- Chapter 4765-21 Fire Instructor Training Programs
- Chapter 4765-22 Professional Standards
- Chapter 4765-23 Disciplinary Actions
- Chapter 4765-24 Chartering of Firefighter, Fire Safety Inspector and Instructor Training Programs

Applying for a Fire Chartered Program

Each institution applying for a fire charter to provide firefighter, fire safety inspector, and instructor training is required to complete this application. The criteria used in the evaluation are based upon R.C. Section 4765.55 and rules promulgated by the Executive Director of the Division of Emergency Medical Services, with the advice and counsel of the Firefighter and Fire Safety Inspector Training Committee, in O.A.C. Chapter 4765. Additionally, each institution will have to specify which classification levels--volunteer firefighter, firefighter I, firefighter II, fire safety inspector, hazardous recognition officer, fire instructor, and/or fire safety inspector instructor--that the institution wishes to teach.

The ultimate goal of the fire charter application process is to help a training program attain its own goal — providing a quality educational experience for students to become competent fire service providers. The effectiveness of the fire charter application process depends upon the fire training program's honest, self-reflective analysis of its strengths and challenges based upon the approved standards. The answers should be prepared in clear and concise language and respond to each of the questions asked. Programs that intend to offer fire service education at the high school level must include relevant documentation as part of their application.

Definitions of a Fire Charter

“Chartered program” means any organization or institution that has been issued a charter by the Executive Director to offer firefighter, fire safety inspector, or instructor courses.

“Charter” or **“fire charter”** means a certificate issued to a training institution to offer firefighter, fire safety inspector, or instructor courses, issued by the Executive Director.

Classification of Firefighter, Fire Safety Inspector, and Instructor Training Courses

The Executive Director, with advice and counsel of the committee, shall issue a charter to a training institution that meets the requirements of rule 4765-24-02 of the O.A.C. The Executive Director may authorize chartered programs to teach training courses at one or more of the following classifications:

- | | |
|---------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| (1) Volunteer firefighter | (5) Hazard Recognition Officer |
| (2) Firefighter I | (6) Fire instructor |
| (3) Firefighter II | (7) Live Fire Instructor |
| (4) Fire Safety Inspector | (8) Fire safety inspector instructor |

In order to apply for a new or additional classification, a chartered program shall submit a completed **“Fire Charter Application”** to the division. Additional classifications issued by the Executive Director shall expire on the chartered program's current expiration date.

Chartering of Firefighter, Fire Safety Inspector, and Instructor Training Programs

In order to be issued a charter by the Executive Director, a training program shall satisfy all of the following requirements:

Have an authorizing official with a good reputation who assumes ultimate responsibility for the following:

- Serves as program director or designates another person with a good reputation to serve as program director;
- Administers the firefighter, fire safety inspector, and instructor courses;
- Complies with all rules and laws applicable to firefighter, fire safety inspector, and instructor courses;
- Performs ongoing review and maintains written evaluations of the courses including content of each course;
- Performs ongoing review and maintains written evaluations of the instructors' and students' performance for each course;
- Assigns faculty responsibilities and schedules program courses;
- Prepares or approves all documents required to be submitted for chartering;
- Assures the adequacy of the curriculum and all program training materials; and
- Assures the integrity and security of testing materials, procedures, and requirements to be a charter are met as required in Chapter 4765-24 of the O.A.C.

Authorizing Official

“**Authorizing official**” means any person who owns or maintains responsibility on behalf of an individual, corporation, trust, partnership, or an association for the facilities, equipment, instructors, managers, and other employees of the chartered program.

The authorizing official assumes ultimate responsibility. The authorizing official shall serve as the program director or designate another person to serve as program director.

Program Director

The O.A.C. requires a fire charter applicant to have a program director who assumes general responsibility for administering and operating the program in order to offer a fire training education program (O.A.C. 4765-24-03). The choice of the program director with knowledge, organizational skill, and dedication is critical and often defines the success of a fire chartered program. The program director operates at the nucleus of the program, facilitating quality training opportunities, based on local needs, often in areas where it would otherwise be unavailable. It is important that the program director has a commitment to fire training and education, is a good leader, and has good organizational skills. The program director should also have a thorough knowledge of state code and rules regarding fire education, as well as a broad perspective on national fire-related issues.

As the program director for the fire training program, the program director should review and approve all instructor-created lesson plans. When any inconsistency or controversy occurs, the program director, along with the instructors, should review the evaluation and make recommendations as to how the fire training program can improve.

The program director can also serve an important function as the liaison with the local fire departments and fire organizations. Through this affiliation, the program director can work with the fire departments and fire organizations to discuss local issues and assure that fire views are presented.

The “Charter” or “fire charter” application (http://www.ems.ohio.gov/ems_fire_services.stm) requires that the fire education authorizing official and program director sign the submitted application. The completed application should be submitted to the Ohio Division of Emergency Medical Services. There is no application fee for a fire charter.

Upon receipt of your completed application, you will be contacted to schedule an on-site review.

No advertising may be conducted nor classes held until a Certificate of Fire Charter has been granted and the program has been assigned a fire charter number.

The on-site review will include a meeting with the program director and a review of the program facilities, its resources, and equipment. During the site visit a Fire Education Coordinator will also discuss the requirements and documentation that will be necessary to renew the certificate. Following the on-site review, a recommendation will be presented to the Executive Director. A Certificate of Fire Charter is valid for three years.

The O.A.C rules require that the applicant notify the Ohio Division of EMS when there are any changes made in the status of program currently on file with the Ohio Division of EMS. Examples of those changes include a change in the authorizing official, program director, change or addition to facilities, or additional off-site locations.

Organization Prior to Preparation of the Application

The development of an application can take from three to six months; therefore, a realistic and detailed timetable should be created. Although the exact organizational plan will vary from institution to institution, the following suggestions may be helpful:

- (1) Select an appropriate member of the staff to direct the preparation of the application.
- (2) Involve members of the faculty, administration, and advisory committee in application discussions.
- (3) Adopt a reasonable time schedule and adhere to the schedule.

Completing the Fire Charter Application

The application is divided into six sections. Each section requires the applicant to determine if the program is in compliance with the specific requirements found in the R.C. and O.A.C. It is the responsibility of the applicant to submit a complete and true application consistent with R.C. and O.A.C. requirements.

A review of the R.C. section and O.A.C. chapters will provide assistance in completing the application. It is the responsibility of the applicant to submit a complete and accurate application. Complete all sections of the application. An incomplete application will not be processed or considered. An incomplete application will be returned to the applicant.

Upon receipt and review of the application, a representative of the Division of EMS will contact the applicant to schedule an on-site review of the facilities, equipment, and required documentation. Once a complete review of the application and an on-site review are conducted, the Executive Director shall grant or deny the Fire Charter Application.

Advisory Committee

The advisory committee can serve an important function with your chartered program and shall be a minimum of five members consisting of the program director, fire chiefs of local fire departments, instructors, and others from the fire community. Through this affiliation, the program director should discuss local issues and assure that fire views are presented. Minutes of the advisory committee including the agenda, discussion, and attendance record for each meeting must be available during your site review.

Renewal of a Fire Charter

A Certificate of Fire Charter must be renewed every three years. The EMS office will mail the renewal packets to you about 90 days prior to the expiration date of your certificate of fire charter. The completed application must be **returned to the EMS office 30 days before your current “certificate of fire charter” expiration date.**

Careful record management throughout the three-year cycle will enable you to fill out the renewal application <https://www.ems.ohio.gov/charter.aspx> completely and accurately. The Fire Charter Application requires that the current authorizing official and program director sign the submitted application. Be truthful in filling out the application. Your chartered program will be audited by a Division of EMS Education Coordinator.

On-Site Review

There should be no surprises, a list of all required files can be found at <https://www.ems.ohio.gov/charter-resources.aspx>. If you have maintained the files as required, it will be a friendly visit to verify and document compliance and to see if the Education Coordinator can help you with anything or answer questions for you. The on-site review will include a meeting with the program director and, if possible, the authorizing official. During the site visit the Education Coordinator will tour the program's facilities to ensure the premises and equipment are safe and sanitary and that there is sufficient classroom and laboratory space. The Education Coordinator will also ask to see the required records for the courses taught over the previous three-year cycle. Following the on-site review, a recommendation will be presented to the Executive Director.

If your program has not followed the applicable laws and rules, the Executive Director may deny or revoke the Certificate of Fire Charter.

Course and Charter Records Management

The program director must ensure that the chartered training program is compliant with the Ohio Revised Code and the Ohio Administrative Code 4765-24-03. More importantly, each and every student who has attended a course through the program depends on accurate records for certification. Therefore, completing, organizing, and maintaining the necessary course documentation is a must.

The easiest way to manage course records is to either have an electronic copy, or to dedicate a file drawer or cabinet specifically to the chartered program. Many program directors make a new file folder each time a course is offered and keep them filed in chronological order. Others develop a check sheet for each course with all the required documentation listed.

It is important to photocopy credentials for each instructor participating in the course. Credentials you will want to have for the on-site review include each instructor's valid certificate to practice and valid certificate to teach. The Division of EMS recommends that you keep records for nine years, the current cycle, and two previous cycles.

FIRE CHARTER COURSE REQUIREMENTS OAC 4765-24-03 / 4765-24-05 / 4765-24-11/ 4765/24/09		C	V	N/A
COURSE FILE				
1. Course roster with contact information including all instructors				
2. DEMS approved syllabus and course schedule - 4765-24-03(B)(21)(a)				
3. Complete attendance records - 4765-24-03 (B)(5)(a)				
4. Cadet make-up documentation if applicable - 4765-24-03(B)(5)(a,b)(6)				
5. Accident and injury reports, if applicable - 4765-24-03(B)(7)				
6. Evaluations of each instructor by the students - 4765-24-03 (B)(13)				
7. Evaluations of the course by the students - 4765-24-03 (B)(15)				
8. NFPA 1403 compliant burn plan 4765-24-03(B)(21)(j) – (B)(21)(i-x)				
STUDENT FILE				
1. NFPA 1582 compliant medical exam - 4765-24-11 (E)(2) NFPA 1001 1.3.11.1				
2. Met educational requirements - 4765-24-11(E)(2) NFPA 1001 1.3.11.1				
3. Met age requirements - 4765-24-11(E)(2) NFPA 1001 1.3.11.1				
4. Met job-related physical requirements of - 4765-24-11(E)(2) NFPA 1001 1.3.8				
5. Background check - 4765-24-11(E)(2) NFPA-1001 1.3.8, 3.2.2				
6. Copy of required student and instructor certification for transition/inspector/instructor 4765-24-03 (B)(21)(f)				
7. Documentation cadet met all required prerequisites for the course 4765-24-11 (B)(21)(h)				
8. Verification cadet received handbook - 4765-24-03 (A)(15)				
9. Completed objective check-off packets - 4765-24-03(B)(9)				
10. NIMS ICS/IS 100, 700 for Firefighter, including ICS/IS 200 for Live Fire Instructor 4765-24-03(B)(21)(k) 4765-24-15 (C)(4)				
11. Completion of JPR's / Student Teaching / Required Modules if applicable				
12. Course completion certificate for each cadet who passes all exams 4765-24-03(B)(11)				
<p>For each classification held, shall meet one of the following: 4765-24-03 (C)(1,2) 4765-24-05 (D)(3)(a,b)</p> <p>During the charter cycle, for each classification held, the training program met one of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not less than 65% of the training program's students who take the written portion of the initial certification examination shall receive a passing score on their first attempt to pass the examination, or • Not less than 80% of the training program's students who take the written portion of the initial certification examination shall receive a passing score. 				
C = Compliant		V = Violation		N/A = Not Applicable

FIRE CHARTER REQUIREMENTS OAC 4765-24-03 / 4765-24-05	C	V	N/A
CHARTER RECORDS			
1. Current and valid agreements for use of all equipment, apparatus and facilities.			
2. Current, valid and approved offsite agreements.			
3. NFPA 1403 Compliant Burn Plan			
4. Student Handbooks			
5. Advisory Committee Roster and Meeting Minutes			
6. Current and valid Instructor Certifications			
7. Fire Instructor Evaluations for each instructor completed by the Program Director or Designee			
8. Documentation Instructor Trainers meet all OAC requirements			
9. Maintain copies of inspection and maintenance records for all equipment.			
10. Maintain copies of inspection and maintenance records for all apparatus.			
11. Maintain copies of inspection and maintenance records for all burn facilities.			
12. Has conducted at least one course at each authorized classification in the most recent charter cycle.			
FACILITIES			
1. Classroom meets requirements			
2. Testing lab meets requirements			
3. Burn facilities shall be constructed, inspected & maintained in accordance with NFPA 1403			
4. Demonstrate Burn Facilities are able to meet practical skill station requirements			
EQUIPMENT			
1. PPC shall be inspected, maintained, and tested in accordance with NFPA 1851			
2. SCBA shall be inspected, maintained, and tested in accordance with NFPA 1852			
3. Fire apparatus shall be inspected, maintained, and tested in accordance with NFPA 1911			
4. Fire pumps shall be inspected, maintained, and tested in accordance with NFPA 1911			
5. Aerial devices shall be inspected, maintained, and tested in accordance with NFPA 1911			
6. Fire hose shall be inspected and tested in accordance with NFPA 1962			
7. Fire extinguishers shall be inspected and tested in accordance with NFPA 10			
8. Ground ladders shall be inspected and service tested in accordance with NFPA 1932			
C = Compliant	V = Violation		N/A = Not Applicable

Coordinating a Fire Training Course Planning and Preparation

The most successful chartered training programs provide courses that began with thoughtful planning. Since program topics are often decided for the entire year, a time line should be developed working backwards from the presentation date, to establish target dates to address the following steps:



- Identify Needs of Target Audience
- Set Date, Location, and Physical Environment
- Select Instructional Staff
- Select Skills Coordinator
- Develop or Secure Lesson Plan
- Determine the Logistics for Practical Skills Testing
- Lesson Plans Approved by Program Director
- Schedule Equipment or Audiovisual Aids
- Estimate Financial Requirements
- Determine Assessment Method
- Develop Evaluation Form
- Summarize Evaluations
- Determine Written Examination Date and Test Administration
- Distribute Certificates of Completion

Set Date, Location, and Physical Environment

The physical facility for the fire training course should be in a setting that supports learning and is physically comfortable. The facility should accommodate the teaching strategies to be used and be accessible to the target audience. Also under this rule, you must have sufficient classroom and laboratory facilities to accommodate the number of participants in each program.

Select Instructional Staff

Among the most important jobs of a program director is the selection of instructors for fire training courses. Courses may be taught by fire service instructors or guest lecturers. All presenters should be selected on the basis of demonstrated knowledge and expertise in the subject matter. The program director may want to ask the authorizing official to review the list of certified instructors and lecturers and provide input.

The program director must ensure that all courses are taught by instructors who hold a valid Ohio certificate to teach and adhere to their specialty area(s). Credentials you may want to verify and photocopy include: 1) each instructor's valid certificate to practice; 2) instructor's valid certificate to teach, and; 3) guest instructor's credentials.

An instructor must hold both a valid certificate to teach and certificate to practice. The instructor may only teach a course to the level of his/her certificate to practice. (If the instructor holds a Firefighter I certificate to practice, he/she may only teach Firefighter I and Volunteer Firefighter courses.) A person who serves as a guest lecturer must have an instructor present for the lecture.



- Instructors must hold both a valid certificate to teach and certificate to practice as a Firefighter.
- The instructor may only teach a fire training course to the level of his/her certificate to practice.
- A person who serves as a guest lecturer must have an instructor present for the lecture.

It is the responsibility of the program director to ensure that courses are developed and meet the “NFPA 1001” *Qualification for Professional Fire Fighter Standard*. The fire curriculum is available at <https://www.ems.ohio.gov/charter-materials.aspx>

Usually, the instructor will develop the objectives and the content outline with the assistance of the program director. Together they will determine the needs for each content area and determine the teaching methods, instructional aids, and equipment most appropriate for the course. The program director should work with instructors to ensure that the principles of adult learning are incorporated into the teaching strategies.

Teaching strategies should be carefully selected to be consistent with the content. Often, the expected outcome determines the strategy to be used. Examples of various teaching strategies include demonstrations, lectures, equipment demonstration, small group discussion, and simulations. For example, an objective that requires a practical skill would use demonstration as a teaching strategy. An objective that required the instructor to describe a concept might use lecture or discussion as teaching strategies.

The use of instructional aids and materials (audiovisual aids, handouts, etc.) is encouraged. Advance planning will assist the program director in scheduling locations, time, equipment, supplies, audiovisual needs, and, if necessary, additional instructors. The determination of expenditures, instructor or speaker expenses, or material used must be included in the course planning.

Determine Assessment Method and Develop Evaluation Forms

The O.A.C. requires that a summary of the assessment and evaluation forms be maintained for each program (O.A.C. 4765-24-03). The program director has the specific responsibility to compile and summarize the assessment and evaluations.

Assessment is conducted to determine changes in participants’ knowledge, skills, and attitudes immediately following the learning experience. The instructor and program director must work together to determine the assessment and evaluation methods of the presentation. The assessment methods must be based upon the course objectives and should at least address the participant’s level of achievement at the end of the course.

Additional methods assess the overall effectiveness of the course and generally focus on the impact of the new knowledge or may refer to improvements or changes in firefighting itself. Demonstration of successful completion includes practical skill tests or written post-tests. The program director should be involved in the overall course evaluation process and is also a valuable resource when determining student outcomes and assessment methods.

The course evaluation is conducted to identify positive aspects of the course, to determine needed revisions or improvements, and to guide development of future education courses. Typically, participants rate the relevance and accuracy of the content, the appropriateness of the facilities and equipment, and the instructor’s expertise and effectiveness of teaching strategies. In order to provide useful feedback to instructors, it is important that the evaluation questions focus on knowledge and instructional skills.

Verifying Attendance and Successful Completion

Attendance in fire training courses can be verified by attendance sheets. In fact, much of the required documentation can be included on the sign-in sheet. In addition to the list of participants, it is suggested that you require the participant's signature--not just initials or check marks. The attendance sheet can also include the topic, date, time, and location of the course as well as the name of each instructor and the hours taught.

Following the successful completion of the course each participant must be issued a certificate of completion. A certificate of completion must contain the program director's signature. In addition, the certificate should include the title/topic of the course, date of course completion, name of the participant, hours completed, chartered program name, and the fire charter number issued by the Division of EMS. The instructor's signature is optional.

Offsite Locations

Your chartered training program may offer courses at different locations from the location listed in the application for approval provided that: 1) your charter continues to operate at the location identified in the application for a Certificate of Fire Charter; 2) each offsite location meets the minimum standards for a Certificate of Fire Charter; and 3) the approved site is not under disciplinary action by the Executive Director. Files and records may be maintained in a secure area at the offsite location until the course has been completed. The records must be transferred to the chartered institution no later than 90 days following the last day of class. The required Certificate of Completion, issued to those who successfully complete the training, must be issued with your Certificate of Fire Charter number.

Failure to receive the Executive Director approval of an offsite location prior to the start of the course will be cause for denial of a course request.

Requesting a Course

To request a course, choose the "Request Course" option and complete the request by following these instructions.

- Select "Fire Charter" (or "EMS Accreditation" for an EMS Instructor course).
- Select the name of your "School" from the drop down list.
- Choose the Course / Certification Type. Types are Initial, Reinstatement, Reciprocity, or Pro Board.
- Click the dropdown arrow to display course levels and choose the desired course.
- Enter the "Start Date" of the training course (MM/DD/YYYY). Course requests must be submitted seven days prior to the start date of the course. If there is a problem, please contact the Division.
- Enter the "Course Hours" of the training course.
- Check the "Course and Examination location" box and complete the required fields. If the course is being held at an offsite location, select "Offsite" and complete the required fields.
- Click the "Add" button and enter the Lead Instructor's Certification Number in the "Add Instructor" window.
- Click "Search" to display the name of the Instructor, then click "Add" to add the Instructor to the Course. For courses that require skills testing, use this function to enter the Skills Coordinator as well.
- Enter "Guest Lecturers" if applicable.
- Click "Submit" to submit the course request or "Clear" to start over or not submit the request.

Course Attachments

As of July 30, 2015, the Course and Examination Administration System allows course documents to be uploaded with all Initial courses. This documentation must show course hours and student contact time. Previously, the documentation was submitted to the Division of EMS for review by being sent in with the Opening Report (which the online Course Request replaced).

Documentation may be attached as a Word, Excel, or PDF document. Although more than one document may be attached and there is no limit on the total size of all attachments, individual attachments must be no more than 8 MBs.

Adding or Removing Students from the Course Dashboard

A student cannot be added or removed from the course dashboard after 14 days from the start date of the course. If a student is removed or dropped from a course past the 14 days, the student shall remain on the course dashboard. Documentation must be maintained in the course file for any student that is added or removed from the course.

16 Firefighter Life Safety Initiatives (FLSI)

The 16 Firefighter Life Safety Initiatives (FLSI) were jointly developed by representatives of the major fire service constituencies in 2004 at a Firefighter Safety Summit in Tampa, Florida. At that time, the National Fallen Firefighters Foundation was tasked with promulgating the Initiatives throughout the fire service and developing material to support their implementation.

Since then, the Initiatives have deeply informed the emerging safety culture in the U.S. fire service and become the bedrock foundation for thousands of fire departments and EMS organizations that have a desire to ensure that their firefighters and medics return home safely after every shift.

Culture is generally defined as the behaviors, attitudes, values, and beliefs that are shared within a group or organization. It reflects the collective perception of right and wrong, good and bad, or desirable and undesirable actions and characteristics.

The safety culture within Ohio's fire departments is reflected through its members' behaviors, attitudes, and actions in and out of the station as well as on the fire ground. The first of the Firefighter Life Safety Initiatives asks us to explore the characteristics of our departments to bring about a higher commitment to safety.

In 2014 the Division of EMS incorporated these initiatives into the Ohio fire curriculum to bring about a higher commitment to safety.

Emergency Vehicle Operation Course (EVOC)

In today's emergency service organizations, there is a need for the development and use of specific training. One of the areas that requires a great deal of attention is the operation of emergency vehicles. Emergency vehicle operators need to recognize the fact that the emergency vehicle response is the basis for the success or failure of all other emergency functions. These expensive vehicles carry all of the portable emergency equipment in addition to all of the personnel of the organization. Without the safe conveyance of these vehicles to the emergency scene, the emergency service organization cannot achieve its mission of saving lives and protecting property.

In 2014 the Division of EMS added a 16-hour Emergency Vehicle Operation Course to the Ohio fire curriculum.

Hazardous Material Awareness and Operation Level

A hazardous material is defined as any substance or material that could adversely affect the safety of the public, handlers, or carriers during transportation. The 2019 "NFPA 1001" *Standard for Qualification of Professional Fire Fighters* requires this training in the Firefighter I curriculum. Ohio has included sixteen hours of Hazardous Material Awareness and Operation Level training in Ohio's fire training curriculum.

Eligibility to Administer Examinations

Examinations shall be delivered at one of two facilities:

- An approved chartered fire training program; or
- An accredited EMS training program.

A chartered fire training program shall be permitted to administer state fire service and instructor certification examinations if the program holds a current and valid charter, has a signed Division of EMS “Written Testing Agreement,” and meets the requirements outlined in 4765-24-20 of the O.A.C..

The chartered training program shall only be permitted to administer state certification examinations for certifications in which they hold a classification.

An accredited EMS training program shall be permitted to administer the state EMS instructor instructional methods examination, required for certification, if the program holds a current and valid accreditation and has signed the Division of EMS “Written Testing Agreement.”

Course and Examination Offsite Location

Chartered programs and accredited institutions shall be permitted to offer courses, including the administration of examinations, at different locations from the location listed in the application for chartering/ accreditation provided that all of the following apply:

- The program continues to operate at the location identified in the application for a charter/accreditation;
- Each offsite location where the program is offered meets the minimum standards for chartering as set forth in rule O.A.C 4765-24-06 and 4765-24-18 and/or the standards outlined in the “Written Testing Agreement;”
- A written request has been submitted to the Division of EMS Executive Director;
- A program utilizing a location outside of the state of Ohio shall comply with O.A.C. Chapter 4765-24-06, the requirements outlined in the “Written Testing Agreement,” and any applicable laws, rules, or regulations in that state.

Failure to receive the Executive Director approval of an offsite location prior to the start of the course will be cause for denial of an examination request.

Initial Certification

In order to be eligible to test for state certification applicants shall:

- (1) Have successfully completed all course requirements through a chartered fire training program or accredited EMS training program and shall have received a document of course completion.
- (2) Have successfully passed a practical skills examination, if applicable.

All requirements for certification (course completion, application, practical skills, and written examinations) shall commence and end within a consecutive twelve-month period (with the exception of Instructor certification, where applicants have 24 months). Applicants are not eligible to sit for an examination if the twelve-month period has been exceeded.

A student who is at least seventeen-years-old and has graduated or who is enrolled in the twelfth or final grade in a secondary school program may be admitted into a chartered or accredited program. The student will be permitted to sit for the examination; however, the student will not be awarded a certificate to practice until reaching the age of eighteen. Underage applicants successfully meeting all requirements for certification will remain in “pending” status until they have achieved eighteen years of age.

- Firefighter initial certification is pursuant to O.A.C. 4765-20-02.
- Fire safety inspector initial certification is pursuant to O.A.C. 4765-20-03.
- Fire instructor initial certification is pursuant to O.A.C. 4765-21-03.
- EMS instructor initial certification is pursuant to O.A.C. 4765-18-12.

Reciprocity

For purposes of reciprocity the Division of EMS Executive Director may review firefighter and fire instructor licensing or certification requirements and firefighter and fire instructor training standards from another state, the District of Columbia, a United States Territory, or any branch of the United States military to identify those requirements and standards that are substantially similar to the curriculum and certification standards in Ohio.

Once an applicant submits the completed packet and required documentation for reciprocity, the applicant will be issued a letter of authorization to test by the Division of EMS. Firefighter testing includes both a practical skills examination and written examination. Fire instructor testing includes knowledge and instructional methods written examinations. Testing shall be completed within twelve months of approval to test. **The program director is responsible for verifying eligibility of the student prior to testing. The program director shall not test any students without the letter of authorization prior to testing.**

- Firefighter reciprocity certification is pursuant to O.A.C. 4765-20-10.
- Fire instructor reciprocity certification is pursuant to O.A.C. 4765-21-09.
- EMS instructor reciprocity certification is pursuant to O.A.C. 4765-18-11.

Reinstatement

The reinstatement process permits restoration of a lapsed certificate to practice. O.A.C. 4765-20-08 and 4765-21-07 establish the requirements for reinstatement for firefighter, fire safety inspector, and fire instructor. **The program director is responsible for verifying eligibility of the applicant prior to testing.**

- Firefighter and fire safety inspector reinstatement certification is pursuant to O.A.C. 4765-20-08.
- Instructor reinstatement certification is pursuant to O.A.C. 4765-21-07.
- EMS instructor reinstatement certification is pursuant to O.A.C. 4765-18-08.

Minimum Passing Scores

Firefighter Knowledge Examination	70%
Fire Safety Inspector Examination	70%
Instructor Knowledge Examination	80%
Instructional Methods Examination	70%

Examinations shall be passed within three attempts. Failure to pass an examination within three attempts will require the applicant to complete a new course of instruction.

ProBoard Fire Service Professional Qualifications

Candidates that successfully pass the state certification examinations for Firefighter I and/or Firefighter II will be offered the opportunity to be accredited by ProBoard. Once their Ohio certifications become “active” an e-mail will be sent to them explaining how to apply.

Examination for ProBoard Certificate for Ohio Certified Firefighters

Individuals currently holding a Firefighter I, Firefighter II, or Firefighter I and II certification in the State of Ohio who are not ProBoard certified will have the opportunity to obtain a ProBoard certificate by taking an examination. Based on when their firefighter certification was obtained, candidates shall be required to take a written examination or complete practical skills testing, or both. To begin the process, candidates shall **submit a written request to the Division of EMS, P.O. Box 182073, Columbus, Ohio 43218-2073** requesting to challenge the examination for the ProBoard Certificate. Division staff will research the candidate’s certification status and eligibility for the ProBoard Certificate. A notification to the candidate outlining the requirement and time limits permitted for obtaining the ProBoard Certificate will be issued.

Authorizing Official

The authorizing official is any person who owns or maintains responsibility on behalf of an individual, corporation, trust, partnership, or an association for the facilities, equipment, instructors, managers, and other employees of the chartered fire training program or EMS accredited training program. The authorizing official assumes responsibility for the following:

- Serves as program director or designates another person with a good reputation to serve as the system administrator;
- Administers the firefighter, fire safety inspector, and instructor courses;
- Complies with all rules and laws applicable to firefighter, fire safety inspector, and instructor courses;
- Performs ongoing review and maintains written evaluations of the courses including content of each course;
- Performs ongoing review and maintains written evaluations of the instructors' and students' performance for each course;
- Assigns faculty responsibilities and schedules program courses;
- Prepares or approves all documents required to be submitted for chartering; and
- Assures the adequacy of the curriculum and all program training materials.

The authorizing official shall ensure the integrity and security of all written examinations including, but not limited to:

- Examination Administrator Login;
- Proctor Login and the proctor's personal confidential information;
- Student Login and the student's personal confidential information;
- Student Rosters;
- Examination Passwords;
- Examination Items;
- Computerized Examination;
- Paper and Pencil Examinations;
- Examination Room and Testing Facility;
- Access to the examination room.

Program Director

The program director is the authorizing official or that person designated by the authorizing official of a chartered program to oversee the administration and operation of a chartered fire training program or accredited EMS training program. This person assumes responsibilities as designated by the authorizing official (see Authorizing Official).

The Executive Director shall issue or renew a fire training certificate for a firefighter, a fire safety inspector, instructor, or another position of any fire training certification level, to any applicant who meets the qualifications established in rules adopted in accordance with this section. Additionally, the Executive Director may issue disciplinary actions against a certificate holder or applicant in accordance with the rules adopted in accordance with the R.C. Certificates issued under this section shall be on a form prescribed by the Executive Director.

Qualifications for a Firefighter Certificate

An applicant for a firefighter certificate shall satisfy the following requirements in order to function as a firefighter in Ohio:

- Submit a completed “Firefighter or Fire Safety Inspector Initial Application;”
- Successfully complete a firefighter training course through a chartered program and receive a document of course completion at the level for which the certificate of firefighter training is sought;
- Pass the knowledge and practical examinations as set forth in the O.A.C.;
- Be at least eighteen years of age;
- Has not been convicted of any of the following:
 - Any felony;
 - A misdemeanor committed in the course of practice;
 - A misdemeanor involving moral turpitude.
- Has not committed fraud, misrepresentation, or material deception in applying for or obtaining a certificate issued under section 4765.55 of the R.C. and O.A.C. Chapter 4765-20.

No person shall hold a firefighter certificate at more than one level.

An applicant for a firefighter certificate shall successfully complete the following “Federal Emergency Management Agency” (FEMA) training courses:

- (1) “National Incident Management System Course IS-700;”
- (2) “National Incident Management System Course ICS-100” or the online equivalent.

In addition, an applicant for a firefighter I or firefighter II certificate shall have successfully completed training on “NFPA Standard 472” *Professional Core Competencies for Hazardous Materials Awareness and Operations*.

The requirements shall commence and end within a consecutive twelve-month period to be eligible for certificate to practice. A firefighter certificate issued pursuant to this rule shall be issued in accordance with the certification cycles and pro-rated renewal requirements as set forth in the O.A.C.

Qualifications for a Fire Safety Inspector Certificate

An applicant for a fire safety inspector certificate shall satisfy the following requirements in order to function as a fire safety inspector in Ohio:

- Submit a completed “Firefighter or Fire Safety Inspector Initial Application:”
- Successfully complete a fire safety inspector training course through a chartered program, and receive a document of course completion for a certificate of fire safety inspector training;
- Pass the knowledge and practical examinations as set forth in the O.A.C.;
- Be at least eighteen years of age;
- Has not been convicted of any of the following:
 - Any felony;
 - A misdemeanor committed in the course of practice;
 - A misdemeanor involving moral turpitude.
- Has not committed fraud, misrepresentation, or material deception in applying for, or obtaining a certificate issued under section [4765.55](#) of the R.C. and O.A.C. Chapter 4765-20.

In addition, an applicant for a fire safety inspector certificate shall successfully complete the following “Federal Emergency Management Agency” training courses:

“National Incident Management System Course IS-700;”

“National Incident Management System Course ICS-100” or online equivalent.

The requirements shall commence and end within a consecutive twelve-month period. A fire safety inspector certificate issued shall be in accordance with the certification cycles and pro-rated renewal requirements set forth in rule [4765-20-22](#) of the O.A.C.

Application for Firefighter, Fire Safety Inspector, or Instructor Certificate

An applicant for a firefighter, fire safety inspector, or instructor certificate shall submit a completed initial application. An application that is not filled out in the manner as specified may be deemed incomplete.

An applicant who has been convicted of any offense listed in rules 4765-20-02, 4765-20-03 and 4765-21-03 of the O.A.C. shall, at the applicant’s expense, submit with the application a certified copy of the judgment entry from the court in which the conviction occurred, a civilian background check from the bureau of criminal identification and investigation (BCI&I), and a certified copy of the police report or law enforcement agency report, if applicable. Subject to the discretion of the Executive Director, failure to submit this documentation may render the application incomplete.

Applications deemed incomplete shall not be considered. The division shall provide written notification to the applicant indicating the reason the application is incomplete.

Firefighter, Fire Safety Inspector, or Instructor Continuing Education Requirements

The most common way for firefighters to complete their continuing education (CE) hours is through departmental in-service training. Non-affiliated firefighters, or those choosing to obtain CE outside of their departments, can complete CE through one of Ohio's approved fire charters. Firefighters are required to have 54 hours of CE per three-year certification cycle; this CE must be approved by an Ohio fire chief or program director of a chartered fire training program.

For Fire Safety Inspector certification, you must complete 24 hours of CE per three-year certification cycle. These hours must cover nine topics established in O.A.C. 4765-20-16: If a new fire code is adopted by the state of Ohio, a fire safety inspector and/or hazard recognition officer shall attain continuing education of not less than four hours related to the new fire code.

<http://codes.ohio.gov/oac/4765-20-16>.

For Fire Service Instructor certification, you must complete 6 hours of instructional methodology CE and 24 hours of instruction time per three-year cycle.

For Assistant Fire Instructor certification, you must complete 6 hours of instructional methodology CE and 8 hours of instruction time per three-year cycle.

For Fire Safety Inspector Instructor certification, you must complete 6 hours of instructional CE and 24 hours of instruction time per three-year cycle.

Firefighter Course Objectives

Volunteer Firefighter Course

A training course for a volunteer firefighter certification shall consist of 36 hours of training and shall meet the "Volunteer Firefighter Course Objectives. "The volunteer firefighter training course must commence and end within a consecutive twelve-month period from the start date of the course.

A chartered program shall not allow students enrolled in a volunteer firefighter training course to participate in live burn evolutions prior to issuance of a volunteer firefighter certification.

Firefighter I Transition Course

A training course to transition a certified volunteer firefighter to the firefighter I certification level must consist of a minimum of 124 hours which meets the Firefighter I Course Objectives and includes the following training requirements:

- A minimum of 96 hours that meets the general knowledge requirements, general skill requirements, and the Job Performance Requirements (JPR) as set forth in NFPA 1001 and in the "Firefighter I course Objectives.
- A minimum of 24 hours of hazardous materials awareness and operations level training that meets the mission-specific competencies specified in "NFPA 1072" as required by "NFPA 1001."
- An emergency vehicle operator course consisting of a minimum of 16 hours that is approved by the chartered program and is consistent with the requirements of "NFPA 1451" and "NFPA 1002;"
- A minimum of 4 hours on the "Courage to be Safe: Sixteen Life Safety Initiatives Course."

The chartered program shall require a current and valid volunteer firefighter certificate for admission to a Firefighter I transition course. The Firefighter I Transition training course must commence and end within a consecutive twelve-month period from the start date of the course.

Firefighter I Course

A training course for a Firefighter I certificate shall consist of a minimum of 160 hours, which meet the "Firefighter I Course Objectives," and includes the following training requirements:

- A minimum of 132 hours that meets the general knowledge requirements, general skill requirements, and the Job Performance Requirements (JPR) as set forth in NFPA 1001 and in the "Firefighter I course Objectives.
- A minimum of 24 hours of hazardous materials awareness and operations level training that meets the mission-specific competencies specified in "NFPA 1072" as required by "NFPA 1001."
- A minimum of 4 hours on the "Courage to be Safe: Sixteen Life Safety Initiatives Course."

The Firefighter I training must commence and end within a consecutive twelve-month period from the start date of the course.

Firefighter II Transition Course

A training course to transition a certified firefighter I to the firefighter II certification level must consist of minimum of 84 hours, which meet the "Firefighter II Course Objectives," to include the following training requirements:

- A minimum of 84 hours that meets the general knowledge requirements, general skill requirements, and the Job Performance Requirements (JPR) as set forth in NFPA 1001 and in the "Firefighter I course Objectives.
- Successful completion of an emergency vehicle operator course not more than twelve months prior to firefighter II transition course start date. The course shall consist of a minimum of sixteen (16) hours, shall be consistent with the intent of "NFPA 1002" and "NFPA 1451"

Previous training credit may be given for the emergency vehicle operator course and the sixteen life safety initiatives course, if the training is recognized by the program director and has been completed within twenty-four months of the course start date.

The chartered program shall require certification as a Firefighter I for admission to a Firefighter II Transition course. The training requirements must commence and end within a consecutive twelve-month period from the start date of the course.

Firefighter I and II Course

A training course for a Firefighter I and II certificate shall consist of a minimum of 244 hours that meet the "Firefighter I Course Objectives" and the "Firefighter II Course Objectives," which includes the following training requirements:

- A minimum of 216 hours that meets the general knowledge requirements, general skill requirements, and the Job Performance Requirements (JPR) as set forth in NFPA 1001 and in the "Firefighter I course Objectives.
- A minimum of 24 hours of hazardous materials awareness and operations level training that meets the mission-specific competencies specified in "NFPA 1072" as required by "NFPA 1001."
- A minimum of 4 hours on the "Courage to be Safe: Sixteen Life Safety Initiatives Course."

Previous training credit may be given for the emergency vehicle operator course and the sixteen life safety initiatives course, if the training is recognized by the program director and has been completed within twenty-four months of the course start date. The Firefighter I and II training course must commence and end within a consecutive twelve-month period from the start date of the course.

Fire Safety Inspector Course Objectives

A training course for fire safety inspector certification must consist of a minimum of 80 hours and meet the following training requirements:

- Meet the "Fire Safety Inspector Course Objectives;"
- Shall meet the performance objectives set forth in "NFPA 1031" for Fire Inspector I;
- Require a current and valid firefighter certificate for admission into a fire safety inspector course;
- Require each student to be employed by one of the following in order to be eligible for admission to a fire safety inspector course:
 - The office of the state fire marshal;
 - A firefighting agency;
 - A private fire company that is providing fire protection.

The training requirements must commence and end within a consecutive twelve-month period from the start date of the course.

Hazard Recognition Officer Course Objectives

A training course for fire safety inspector certification must consist of a minimum of 40 hours and meet the following training requirements:

- Meet the "Hazard Recognition Officer Course Objectives;"
- Shall meet the performance objectives set forth in "NFPA 1031" for Fire Inspector I;

The training requirements must commence and end within a consecutive twelve-month period from the start date of the course.

Fire Instructor and the Assistant Fire Instructor Curriculum

A fire instructor course must consist of a minimum of 60 hours and include all of the following training requirements:

- Forty hours instruction of adult students and basic teaching techniques as set forth in the "Ohio Fire and EMS Instructor Curriculum;"
- The final two hours shall be credited toward successful completion of the instructional methods examination.
- Completion of the 4-hour "Fire Service Training Module;"
- Completion of the 4-hour "Live Fire Training Awareness Course;"
- Ten hours of supervised teaching in the presence of a fire instructor and under the auspices of a chartered program;

A fire instructor course must be taught by a fire instructor trainer under the auspices of a chartered program. The supervised teaching required shall not occur until the student has received the forty hours of instruction.

A person seeking certification as a fire instructor who holds at least a baccalaureate degree in education may be granted credit by the program director for the forty hours of instruction. The program director shall maintain a copy of his or her degree in the course file. An assistant fire instructor training course shall consist of a completion of the 4-hour "Fire Service Training Module" and the completion of the 4-hour "Live Fire Training Awareness Course;"

Fire Safety Inspector Instructor Curriculum

A fire safety inspector instructor training course shall consist of a minimum of 60 hours and include all of the following:

- Forty hours in instruction of adult students and basic teaching techniques as set forth in "Ohio Fire and EMS Instructor Curriculum;"
- The final two hours are credited toward successful completion of the instructional methods examination approved by the executive director.
- Completion of the 8-hour "Fire Safety Inspector Training Module;"
- Ten hours of supervised teaching in the presence of a fire safety inspector instructor and under the auspices of a chartered program;

A fire safety inspector instructor training course must be taught by a fire safety inspector instructor trainer under the auspices of a chartered program. The supervised teaching shall not occur until the student has received the forty hours of instruction.

A person seeking certification as a fire instructor who holds at least a baccalaureate degree in education may be granted credit by the program director for the forty hours of instruction. The program director shall maintain a copy of his or her degree in the course file.

Online Education and Distance Learning

The executive director, with the advice and counsel of the committee, will approve a chartered program to provide fire safety inspector and fire instructor training courses online or through distance learning if the chartered program meets the following requirements:

- Submits a written request to the division to offer online education or distance learning. Such request shall indicate the level or levels of fire safety inspector or instructor training proposed to be offered and must include documentation of how the chartered program meets the requirements;
- Continues to meet all requirements for a fire charter and currently possesses a charter at the classification level of fire safety inspector, fire instructor, or fire safety inspector instructor, for which the chartered program seeks to provide the online education or distance learning;
- Has maintained a charter at the classification level for which the chartered program seeks to provide online education or distance learning for at least the preceding three full years from the date of application;
- Has completed at least one fire safety inspector or instructor training course in the traditional classroom setting at the classification level for which the chartered program seeks to provide the online education or distance learning;
- The chartered program is in good standing;
- Has written policies that will be made available to each student, regarding all of the following:
 - Admission requirements;
 - Minimum requirements for technological needs for students enrolling in fire safety inspector and instructor training courses utilizing online education or distance learning including, but not limited to, hardware, software, and internet connection speed;
 - Technological support to be provided by the chartered program to include at a minimum the hours of support and the method(s) in which the support will be provided;
 - A schedule identifying weekly access to the instructors while the fire safety inspector or instructor training course is in session to allow for direct communication between instructor and students. This should include, but is not limited to, telephone numbers, e-mail addresses, and office hours;
 - Security parameters protecting students' financial and personal information in accordance with state and federal laws;
 - Online procedures for course administration and completion;

- Method to transition from online education and distance learning to the classroom version of the same course in order to complete the required training. This policy shall include a reasonable time frame in which the transition process must be completed.
- Develops and maintains the following for all fire safety inspector and instructor training courses utilizing online education and distance learning:
 - A technology infrastructure that facilitates secure access, including user authentication and authorization procedures and technologies;
 - Access control procedures and technology that supports the courses utilizing online education systems;
 - Technological support to meet student needs;
 - An appropriate security solution to ensure course and systems integrity, especially financial and personal information;
 - A risk management plan to include identification of foreseen risks, continuity, disaster recovery, and incidence response;
 - Assurance that course data is readily, securely, and reliably available by electronic or printed means to the division and the division's authorized recipients;
 - A means to access student and program information to facilitate state audits to verify compliance with rules. If the technical support, application server host, or data storage facilities are located outside of the state of Ohio, the chartered program shall submit, upon request of the division, a report encompassing the rules to meet the audit requirements. The chartered program shall provide the division with an audit amendment describing any significant system changes within thirty days of enabling those changes. An enterprise shall make student records available to the division online, in a password protected environment, upon request.
- Creates and maintains a complete student course data file to demonstrate student activity and ensure that the following information, at a minimum, is collected and retained:
 - Student's name;
 - Dates and times of student activity in the training course and verification of the amount of total time spent utilizing the online education portion of the course;
 - The reason a student was suspended or failed to complete the online education portion of the fire safety inspector or instructor training course;
 - Name or identity number of a chartered program staff member accessing or entering student records.
- Ensures that the fire safety inspector and instructor training course final examinations are administered and scored in a traditional classroom setting;
- Ensures that each initial fire safety inspector and instructor training course utilizing online education or distance learning meets all of the following:
 - Obtains prior written approval of the fire safety inspector and instructor training course content from the program director;
 - Possesses written documentation of clear objectives, course content, and method of delivery that meets all curricula requirements as set for in Chapter 4765-24 of the O.A.C.;
 - Obtains prior approval from the program director in order to utilize online education or distance learning for instruction;
 - Is developed or approved by an instructor under the auspices of a chartered program;
 - Ensures that the lecture portions of each fire safety inspector and instructor training course shall be taught utilizing online education, distance learning, or in the traditional classroom setting;
 - Ensures that instruction, practice, and testing in the practical skills portion of each fire safety inspector and instructor training course shall not be provided through online education or distance learning.

- Requires written evaluations, completed by each student, of each fire safety inspector and instructor training course offered through online education or distance learning. The evaluation shall include, but is not limited to, the following:
 - Clarity of written policies associated with the chartered program;
 - Course content;
 - Means of delivery and systems availability;
 - Availability of certified instructors.

A chartered program approved to utilize online education or distance learning may do so in conjunction with traditional classroom-based instruction.

A chartered program approved to utilize online education or distance learning shall annually provide the division with information, statistics, and data specific to the fire safety inspector and instructor training courses offered through online education or distance learning.

Approval by the executive director to conduct fire safety inspector and instructor training courses utilizing online education or distance learning shall be specific to the level of training and type of delivery system requested.

A chartered program approved to utilize online education or distance learning shall maintain documentation that demonstrates compliance with the hours and curricula requirements set forth in Chapter 4765-24 of the O.A.C.

A chartered program approved to utilize online education or distance learning shall ensure contact hours in the fire safety inspector and instructor training courses are equal to or exceed the hours in the same courses conducted in a traditional classroom environment.

