

Office of the State Fire Commissioner



Pennsylvania State Fire Academy Instructor Policy

Policy No. 2001 – 01

Issued July 1, 2001

Revised 3/13/2013

Revised 8/7/2015

Revised 7/1/2017

Revised 1/27/2020

I. Purpose

To establish an Instructor Policy for individuals instructing courses (“Instructors”) related to, in support of, and at the direction of the Pennsylvania State Fire Academy (“PSFA”). This Instructor Policy includes, but is not limited to, Instructors accredited by PSFA for the Educational Training Agencies' (the community colleges, technical institutes and training academies involved in the Local Level Training Program) (“ETAs”) delivery programs, PSFA-approved curriculum for numerous hazard specialty courses, National Fire Academy (“NFA”), Federal Emergency Management Agency (“FEMA”) and other federal agency courses, including those co-sponsored with other State agencies.

II. Instructor Classifications

Agency Instructor

Non-Suppression Instructor

Suppression Instructor

Instructor Emeritus

Instructor Emeritus - Retired

III. Instructor General Requirements

To be considered as an instructor under this Instructor Policy, instructor candidates shall:

1. Be a minimum of twenty-six (26) years of age.
 - a. Where required, seven (7) years of experience shall accumulate after the age of eighteen (18).
 - b. Possess a high school diploma or G.E.D.
2. Be physically capable of performing the minimum duties related to the presentation of courses.
3. Be of such moral character as to exemplify professional decorum, which facilitates the transfer of knowledge and fosters a positive learning environment for students.
4. Have no pending charges or convictions of any crime at the Misdemeanor 2 level or greater.
5. Have successfully completed a thirty-five (35) hour (minimum) adult education methodology course recognized by PSFA or possess a valid Teacher's Certificate.
6. Submit a current Clearance from Child Abuse report.
7. Submit a current Criminal Record Check report.

8. Possess applicable valid federal, state, county or local licenses, permits and/or certificates where required, e.g. commercial driver's license or approved written waiver, etc.
9. Participate in an interview with Fire Services Education Specialist/Field Supervisor.
10. Receive final approval from the Instructor Review Committee.

IV. Specific Requirements

A. Agency Instructor

An individual accredited to instruct within their State agency only, specific courses designated in the PSFA Local Level Curriculum as Non-Suppression courses.

To qualify as an Agency Instructor, the candidate shall meet all general instructor requirements as listed in Section III of this Instructor Policy and the following additional criteria:

1. Provide a letter of request from the senior State agency official or designee that they be accredited as an Agency Instructor. The letter shall include a listing of the specific course(s) being requested to be accredited to instruct.
2. Attend a specific instructor development course (Train-the-Trainer) prior to instructing the specific course(s).

B. Non-Suppression Instructor

An individual qualified to instruct various Local Level Training curricula designated in the PSFA Local Level Curriculum and catalogue as Non-Suppression courses for any ETAs.

To qualify as a Non-Suppression Instructor, the candidate shall meet all general instructor requirements as listed in Section III of this Instructor Policy and the following additional criteria:

1. Have verifiable hands-on experience in appropriate emergency service work after their 18th birthday at the time of application.
 - a. A minimum of eight (8) years of experience is required.
2. Submit a detailed resume listing their experience, education and training, and other information they believe qualifies them to instruct each of the specific course/specialties they wish to teach.
3. Have a minimum of one-hundred (100) hours of emergency services training, of which a

minimum of fifty (50) hours shall be in the specialty track(s) (rescue, hazmat, command, etc.) they wish to be accredited to instruct.

4. Possess a Fire Service Instructor I certification with either the National Board on Fire Service Professional Qualifications (NBFSPQ) or the International Fire Service Accreditation Congress (IFSAC).
5. Submit three (3) letters of professional reference, one of which must be from an accredited PSFA Local Level Non-Suppression or Suppression instructor.
6. Successfully completed the NFA course, "Incident Safety Officer."
7. Possess the minimum NBFSPQ or IFSAC professional certification in the specialty track(s) and/or course(s) they wish to be accredited to instruct; if the certification level exists in Pennsylvania.
8. Attend a specific instructor development course (Train-the-Trainer) prior to instructing specific courses. Should no specific Train-the-Trainer be available, applicants will need to satisfy any or all the following as determined necessary by PSFA:
 - a. Submit a detailed resume for evaluation listing the applicant's experience and qualifications to instruct specific courses.
 - b. Attend approved course of the same or similar topic. In many cases such course must be taken at a specific location; State/National Fire Academy, Emergency Management Institute, etc.
 - c. As an instructor candidate, teach initial classes under the direction of a qualified instructor appointed by the Field Supervisor and receive a favorable evaluation from the designated instructor.
9. Meet all federal, state and educational training agency requirements appropriate for the position and the course of instruction to be presented.
10. Receive approval from the PSFA Instructor Review Committee and the PSFA Administrator.

C. Suppression Instructor

An individual qualified to instruct fire suppression courses as listed in the PSFA Local Level Curriculum and catalogue.

To qualify as a Suppression Instructor, the candidate shall meet all general instructor requirements as listed in Section III of this Instructor Policy, all requirements for a Non-

Suppression Instructor listed above, and the following additional criteria:

1. Have verifiable hands-on experience in appropriate emergency service work after their 18th birthday at the time of application.
 - a. A minimum of eight (8) years of experience is required.
2. Have a minimum of one-hundred and fifty (150) hours of documented structural fire suppression training of which one-hundred (100) hours shall be PSFA programs.
3. Have successfully completed ***one*** of the following ***selection*** of courses:
 - a. Engine Company Operations at Residential Structures and Fire Operations At large Structures which must be completed at PSFA ***or***,
 - b. An equivalent municipal or military program as approved by the PSFA Assistant Administrator.
4. Be certified as a Fire Fighter II and Fire Service Instructor II with either NBFSPQ or IFSAC.
5. ***After completing*** requirements C.1 through C.4, attend and successfully complete the “Suppression Instructor Development” (ZFID) course conducted by PSFA.
6. Receive approval from the PSFA Instructor Review Committee and the PSFA Administrator.

D. Instructor Emeritus

An instructor of the Non-Suppression and/or Suppression classification with twenty-five (25) or more years of continuous service as a PSFA instructor in the state emergency services training system. This title is honorary and would be conferred by PSFA. Emeritus instructors are active instructors and are not exempt from Section VI Classification Maintenance. However, Emeritus Instructors shall complete four (4) hours of CPE and eight (8) hours of instruction annually.

E. Instructor Emeritus-Retired

An instructor of the Non-Suppression and/or Suppression classification with twenty-five (25) or more years of continuous service as a PSFA instructor in the state emergency services training system that has "retired on his/her merits." This title is honorary and would be conferred by the Pennsylvania State Fire Academy. Instructor Emeritus-Retired instructors no longer instruct and will be removed from the active instructors list.

V. Instructor Review Committee

A. Composition

The PSFA Instructor Review Committee is an advisory body of members appointed by the PSFA Administrator. The Committee shall be composed of the following members, at a minimum for quorum purposes; however, the PSFA Administrator may establish other members of the Committee when and if needed.

1. PSFA Assistant Administrator – Committee Chair
2. Western Region Fire Education Specialist – Field Supervisor
3. Eastern Region Fire Education Specialist – Field Supervisor

B. Duties

The duties of the PSFA Instructor Review Committee:

1. To review and make recommendations to the PSFA Administrator upon all instructor applications submitted.
2. To consider and make recommendations upon any application request for consideration of alternative credentials (equivalencies).
3. To perform such other duties as may be assigned by the PSFA Administrator.
4. To serve as the Disciplinary Review Committee (See the Pennsylvania State Fire Academy Instructor Code of Professionalism).

C. Authority

The Instructor Review Committee has authority to review equivalent or alternative training credentials and may make discretionary recommendations to the PSFA Administrator, whose decision will be final.

D. Meeting

The Instructor Review Committee shall meet at the PSFA Administrator's call or when there is business to discuss.

VI. Classification Maintenance

To maintain classification, an instructor shall meet all requirements established by PSFA, including yearly acknowledgement of the Pennsylvania State Fire Academy Instructor Code of

Professionalism. Further, an instructor shall instruct, or be involved in instructing, a **minimum of thirty-two (32)** hours of PSFA-accredited courses annually.

A. Continuing Professional Education – All instructors must complete **eight (8)** hours of Continuing Professional Education (“CPE”) each year. Such CPE shall meet the following criteria.

1. CPE must be relevant to the maintenance of instructor skills and Adult Education Methodology.

– **OR** –

2. CPE must be relevant to technical changes and improvements in the instructor’s specialties. This education must:

a. Be accredited by a county, state, national organization or authority.

– **OR** –

b. Result in a certification issued by an entity accredited by the NBFSPQ or IFSAC.

– **OR** –

c. Be granted a Continuing Education Unit (CEU) value by a state or national CEU accredited entity.

Examples of acceptable CPE includes: training completed, certification, seminars, workshops, and conferences attended, publication of papers, and documented research work.

B. Alternative CPEs – The PSFA Instructor Review Committee shall have the power to review and make recommendations to the PSFA Administrator in cases where there is question regarding whether submitted CPE meets the requirements for this section. The burden of proof that an alternative credential is fully equivalent to the requirements of this directive shall fall upon the applicant.

C. Inactive Status – Any instructor who fails to meet the minimum annual teaching and/or CPE requirements for a given year shall be placed on **Inactive Status** for one calendar year.

1. During this year, the instructor may regain his/her active status by completing both of the following:

a. The minimum continuing professional education requirements for the current year.

b. Eight (8) additional hours of CPE.

2. Upon receipt of evidence of such completion, the instructor shall be reinstated.
3. If at the end of the calendar year, the instructor has not fulfilled this requirement or, if in any subsequent year the instructor fails a second time to meet the minimum annual teaching and continuing education requirements, the instructor shall be permanently dropped from the roster.
4. An instructor may, at his/her own written request to his/her Field Supervisor, can be moved to inactive status for a period of ***no more than two (2) years***; and may request one (1) extension for a period of no more than two (2) years, for a maximum total of four (4) years. The request(s) shall state the reason for requesting inactive status and the anticipated date of return to active status. Such an instructor shall be reinstated upon his/her request and the furnishing of evidence of eight (8) hours of CPE for each year of inactive status served. If no such evidence is received at the end of five (5) years, the instructor shall be permanently dropped from the roster.
5. Instructors on inactive status may not teach in the Local Level program. An instructor dropped from the roster as stated in this section, once dropped, must reapply as a new applicant if he/she wishes to be reinstated.

VII. Application Process

Refer to the Local Level Instructor Application and Instructions.

VIII. Delegation of Program Management

The State Fire Commissioner delegates ongoing management and implementation of this directive to authorized PSFA staff of the program involved unless or until withdrawn. Specific responsibilities are placed upon the PSFA Administrator, PSFA Assistant Administrator, PSFA Fire Education Specialists – Field Supervisors, and PSFA staff.

IX. Authority

Title 35 Health and Safety as amended and Act 61 of 1995, the State Fire Commissioner Act.

X. Supersedes

This Pennsylvania State Fire Academy Instructor Policy, revised January 1, 2020, supersedes and rescinds the Office of the State Fire Commissioner Instructor Policy titled “Instructor Classification System and Code of Professionalism, No. 2001-01” last revised July 1, 2017.

XI. Duration of Instructor Policy

This Instructor Policy shall remain in effect until superseded or suspended.

XII. Effective Date

July 1, 2001
Date Approved:

July 1, 2010
Date Revised

March 13, 2013
Date Revised

August 7, 2015
Date Revised

July 1, 2017
Date Revised

January 27, 2020
Date Revised



State Fire Commissioner



State Fire Academy Administrator