

NFPA[®]

1000

**Standard for Fire
Service Professional
Qualifications Accreditation
and Certification Systems**

2017



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NFPA® 1000

Standard for

Fire Service Professional Qualifications Accreditation and Certification Systems

2017 Edition

This edition of NFPA 1000, *Standard for Fire Service Professional Qualifications Accreditation and Certification Systems*, was prepared by the Technical Committee on Accreditation and Certification for Fire Service, Public Safety, and Related Personnel to Professional Qualifications Standards and released by the Correlating Committee on Professional Qualifications. It was issued by the Standards Council on July 19, 2016, with an effective date of August 8, 2016, and supersedes all previous editions.

This edition of NFPA was approved as an American National Standard on August 8, 2016.

Origin and Development of NFPA 1000

In 1990, the Professional Qualifications Correlating Committee recommended that the Association establish a project related to fire service certification and accreditation programs. The project was approved at the July 1990 meeting of the NFPA Standards Council. As a result of that action, a technical committee was named to develop procedures for the accreditation of agencies involved in certification, based on the NFPA Professional Qualifications Standards, and procedures for the certification of individuals to those standards.

The Technical Committee on Accreditation and Certification to Fire Service Professional Qualifications met for the first time in October 1991 and regularly during 1992 and 1993 to develop this document. The committee reviewed materials related to accreditation and certification programs of non-fire service organizations and, where possible, used nationally accepted requirements from those programs as the basis for this document. The committee's objective was to develop requirements that could be used to evaluate accreditation and certification systems that use NFPA Professional Qualifications Standards, and the first edition of NFPA 1000 was published in 1994.

For the 2000 edition, the committee added provisions for the accrediting of nonengineering, fire-related, academic, degree-granting programs offered by institutions of higher education.

For the 2006 edition, the committee added provisions to recognize changing methodologies used for evaluations for both accreditation and certification agencies. Changes were made to bring the document into conformance with the *Manual of Style for NFPA Technical Committee Documents*.

For the 2011 edition, the committee made changes that clarified the distinction between "training" and "certification" by adding a definition for the word *training*. Also added was language designed to strengthen the ethical expectations of accrediting bodies. The committee also chose to use the word *candidates* instead of *students* to ensure delineation between training, education, and certification.

The committee has made several changes for the 2017 edition. The term "fire and related emergency response personnel" has been replaced with "fire service, public safety, and related personnel" throughout the document. Language has been added to require a certifying entity to ensure the safety and health of individuals participating in the evaluation process. Certifying agencies are required to comply with applicable NFPA or equivalent standards adopted by the authority having jurisdiction and with the principles and concepts identified in the National Fallen Firefighters Foundation's "16 Firefighter Life Safety Initiatives." The committee also added language directing certifying entities to develop a policy that addresses current knowledge and skills as well as recertification and renewal requirements.

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Committee Scope: This Committee shall have primary responsibility for the management of the NFPA Professional Qualifications Project and documents related to professional qualifications for fire service, public safety, and related personnel.

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Committee Scope: This Committee shall have primary responsibility for documents on (1) procedures for fire service, public safety and related personnel certification to NFPA Professional Fire Service Qualifications Standards or other standards adopted by the authority having jurisdiction, and (2) procedures for accrediting national, state, provincial, and local jurisdictions as certifying entities for NFPA Professional Fire Service Qualifications Standards or other standards adopted by the authority having jurisdiction.

The Committee shall also have primary responsibility for documents on procedures for accrediting non-engineering, fire-related, academic, degree-granting, programs offered by institutions of post-secondary education.

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2017 Edition

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NOTICE: An asterisk (*) following the number or letter designating a paragraph indicates that explanatory material on the paragraph can be found in Annex A.

A reference in brackets [] following a section or paragraph indicates material that has been extracted from another NFPA document. As an aid to the user, the complete title and edition of the source documents for extracts in mandatory sections of the document are given in Chapter 2 and those for extracts in informational sections are given in Annex E. Extracted text may be edited for consistency and style and may include the revision of internal paragraph references and other references as appropriate. Requests for interpretations or revisions of extracted text shall be sent to the technical committee responsible for the source document.

Information on referenced publications can be found in Chapter 2 and Annex E.

Chapter 1 Administration

1.1 Scope. This standard establishes the minimum criteria for the following:

- (1) Accrediting bodies
- (2) Assessment and validation of the process used to certify fire service, public safety, and related personnel to professional qualifications standards
- (3) Nonengineering, fire-related, academic, degree-granting programs offered by institutions of higher education

1.2 Purpose.

1.2.1 The purpose of this standard is to establish criteria and requirements applicable to the following:

- (1) Organizations providing accreditation to entities certifying fire service, public safety, and related personnel and

institutions of higher education granting degrees for nonengineering, fire-related, academic programs

- (2) Entities certifying fire service, public safety, and related personnel as having met or complied with a recognized national standard
- (3) Nonengineering, fire-related, academic, degree-granting programs offered by institutions of higher education

1.2.2 It is not the intent of this standard to conflict with the statutory requirements of any jurisdiction.

1.3 Application.

1.3.1* Organizations that accredit certifying entities or that certify individuals to fire service professional qualifications standards or that accredit nonengineering, fire-related, academic, degree-granting programs offered by institutions of higher education shall meet the requirements of this standard.

1.3.2 Accrediting bodies shall meet the requirements of Chapter 4.

1.3.3 Certifying entities shall meet the requirements of Chapter 5.

1.3.4 Fire-related, academic, degree-granting programs offered by institutions of higher education shall meet the requirements of Chapter 6.

1.3.5 Accreditation of a certifying entity shall be, at a minimum, based on the process described in Section 4.2 and Chapter 5.

1.3.6 Accreditation of a degree-granting entity shall be, at a minimum, based on the process described in Section 4.3 and Chapter 6.

Chapter 2 Referenced Publications

2.1 General. The documents or portions thereof listed in this chapter are referenced within this standard and shall be considered part of the requirements of this document.

2.2 NFPA Publications. National Fire Protection Association, 1 Batterymarch Park, Quincy, MA 02169-7471.

NFPA 1500, *Standard on Fire Department Occupational Safety and Health Program*, 2013 edition.

2.3 Other Publications.

Merriam-Webster's *Collegiate Dictionary*, 11th edition, Merriam-Webster, Inc., Springfield, MA, 2003.

“16 Firefighter Life Safety Initiatives,” National Fallen Firefighters Foundation, P.O. Drawer 498, Emmitsburg, MD, 2004, reaffirmed 2014.

2.4 References for Extracts in Mandatory Sections.

NFPA 600, *Standard on Facility Fire Brigades*, 2015 edition.

Chapter 3 Definitions

3.1 General. The definitions contained in this chapter shall apply to the terms used in this standard. Where terms are not defined in this chapter or within another chapter, they shall be defined using their ordinarily accepted meanings within the context in which they are used. *Merriam-Webster's Collegiate*

Dictionary, 11th edition, shall be the source for the ordinarily accepted meaning.

3.2 NFPA Official Definitions.

3.2.1* Approved. Acceptable to the authority having jurisdiction.

3.2.2* Authority Having Jurisdiction (AHJ). An organization, office, or individual responsible for enforcing the requirements of a code or standard, or for approving equipment, materials, an installation, or a procedure.

3.2.3 Shall. Indicates a mandatory requirement.

3.2.4 Should. Indicates a recommendation or that which is advised but not required.

3.2.5 Standard. An NFPA Standard, the main text of which contains only mandatory provisions using the word “shall” to indicate requirements and that is in a form generally suitable for mandatory reference by another standard or code or for adoption into law. Nonmandatory provisions are not to be considered a part of the requirements of a standard and shall be located in an appendix, annex, footnote, informational note, or other means as permitted in the NFPA Manuals of Style. When used in a generic sense, such as in the phrase “standards development process” or “standards development activities,” the term “standards” includes all NFPA Standards, including Codes, Standards, Recommended Practices, and Guides.

3.3 General Definitions.

3.3.1 Accredited. To give official authorization to or to approve a process or procedure to recognize as conforming to specific criteria, and to recognize an entity as maintaining standards appropriate to the provision of its services.

3.3.2 Accrediting Body. A voluntary, nongovernmental association that administers accrediting procedures for entities that certify individuals to fire service professional qualifications standards, or programs granting degrees in nonengineering fire/emergency services-related fields.

3.3.3 Certification. An authoritative attestation; the issuance of a document that states that an individual has demonstrated the knowledge and skills necessary to function in a particular fire service professional field.

3.3.4 Certifying Entity. An organization that is accredited to award certification to individuals.

3.3.5 Degree. A formal recognition of completion of a prescribed program of study at the postsecondary level.

3.3.6 Degree-Granting Entity. An accredited institution of postsecondary education that is authorized to award degrees.

3.3.7 Job Performance Requirement (JPR). A written statement that describes a specific job task, lists the items necessary to complete the task, and defines measurable or observable outcomes and evaluation areas for the specific task.

3.3.8* Simulation. The repeatable act of carrying out a job performance requirement in a safe environment that reproduces actual job performance conditions to the fullest possible extent.

3.3.9 Training. The process of achieving proficiency through instruction and hands-on practice in the operation of equipment and systems that are expected to be used in the performance of assigned response duties. [600, 2015]

Chapter 4 Accrediting Body Requirements

4.1 General.

4.1.1* The accrediting body shall be independent of direct governmental control and shall have sole responsibility for the final decision on the accreditation of a certifying entity or degree-granting entity.

4.1.2 The accrediting body shall not be a certifying entity or the standards-making body for the standard(s) for which accreditation or certification is being offered and shall document policies and procedures to achieve compliance with this requirement.

(A) Accreditation shall be conducted in an objective and independent manner.

(B) Accrediting bodies shall avoid conflicts of interest or the appearance of conflicts of interest.

(C) Accrediting bodies shall establish policies and procedures to ensure that no individual, entity, or interest group exercises inappropriate influence over the accreditation process.

4.1.3 The accrediting body shall conduct accreditation on a multiple state/provincial/territorial, national, or international basis.

4.1.4* The accrediting body shall evaluate for accreditation the certification processes for fire service, public safety, and related personnel as requested by the certifying entity and as defined by the following:

- (1) NFPA professional qualifications standards or other NFPA standards related to the competence of emergency responders
- (2) Other standards adopted by the authority having jurisdiction for non-U.S. certifying entities

4.1.5* The accrediting body shall evaluate for accreditation the nonengineering, fire-related, academic, degree-granting programs offered by institutions of higher education.

4.1.6* The accrediting body shall evaluate for accreditation entities that are empowered to operate and that confer certification to fire service, public safety, and related personnel or that award degrees.

4.1.7 The accrediting body shall develop and maintain public documents that describe the accreditation process.

(A) Documents describing the accreditation process shall include, at a minimum, the scope, evaluative criteria, and procedures, including the following:

- (1) Applications
- (2) Self-study
- (3) Granting
- (4) Withdrawing
- (5) Revoking or suspending
- (6) Appealing decisions
- (7) Responding to public inquiries
- (8) Term of accreditation