

NFPA® 1021

Standard for Fire Officer Professional Qualifications

2014 Edition



NFPA, 1 Batterymarch Park, Quincy, MA 02169-7471
An International Codes and Standards Organization

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NFPA® 1021

Standard for

Fire Officer Professional Qualifications

2014 Edition

This edition of NFPA 1021, *Standard for Fire Officer Professional Qualifications*, was prepared by the Technical Committee on Fire Officer Professional Qualifications and released by the Technical Correlating Committee on Professional Qualifications. It was issued by the Standards Council on May 28, 2013, with an effective date of June 17, 2013, and supersedes all previous editions.

This edition of NFPA 1021 was approved as an American National Standard on June 17, 2013.

Origin and Development of NFPA 1021

In 1971, the Joint Council of National Fire Service Organizations (JCNFSO) created the National Professional Qualifications Board (NPQB) for the fire service to facilitate the development of nationally applicable performance standards for uniformed fire service personnel. On December 14, 1972, the Board established four technical committees to develop those standards using the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) standards-making system. The initial committees addressed the following career areas: fire fighter, fire officer, fire service instructors, and fire inspector and investigator. In July 1976, the Association adopted the first edition of NFPA 1021.

The original concept of the professional qualification standards, as directed by the JCNFSO and the NPQB, was to develop an interrelated set of performance standards specifically for the fire service. The various levels of achievement in the standards were to build on each other within a strictly defined career ladder. In the late 1980s, revisions of the standards recognized that the documents should stand on their own merit in terms of job performance requirements for a given field. Accordingly, the strict career ladder concept was abandoned, except for the progression from fire fighter to fire officer. The later revisions, therefore, facilitated the use of the documents by other than the uniformed fire services.

In 1990, responsibility for the appointment of professional qualifications committees and the development of the professional qualifications standards were assumed by the NFPA. The NFPA Standards Council appointed the Correlating Committee on Professional Qualifications, which assumed responsibility for coordinating the requirements of all of the professional qualifications documents.

The 1992 edition of NFPA 1021 reduced the number of levels of progression in the standard to four. In the 1997 edition, NFPA 1021 was converted to the job performance requirement (JPR) format to be consistent with the other standards in the Professional Qualifications Project. Each JPR consists of the task to be performed; the tools, equipment, or materials that must be provided to successfully complete the task; evaluation parameters and/or performance outcomes; and lists of prerequisite knowledge and skills one must have to perform the task.

The intent of the technical committee was to develop clear and concise job performance requirements that can be used to determine that an individual, when measured to the standard, possesses the skills and knowledge to perform as a fire officer. The committee further contends that these job performance requirements can be used in any fire department in any city, town, or private organization throughout North America.

In preparing the 2003 edition of the document, the technical committee did a task analysis to validate the continued need for the use of four levels in the document. It was found that several tasks were actually being performed at a level lower than indicated in the previous edition. Changes were made to reflect that fact, as well as to bring the document into conformance with the new *Manual of Style for NFPA Technical Committee Documents*.

In the 2009 edition of the document, the technical committee revised the Scope statement, added a skill maintenance requirement, and changed the term “certification” to “qualification” as directed by the Technical Correlating Committee to establish conformity across the Professional Qualifications project. The committee revised the duty statements for inspection and investigation in Chapters 4, 5, and 6. They also added new JPRs to clarify the committee intent.

In the 2014 edition, the technical committee has further clarified the scope of the document to comply with professional qualifications project documents. The technical committee has revised the text of the document as it relates to qualifications for Fire Officer III. The committee has removed the requisite for Fire Service Instructor II for Fire Officer III, indicating that it exceeds the scope for that level. Fire Officer III is considered a managerial/administrative level. A Fire Instructor II has to have the knowledge, skills, and ability to develop individual lesson plans.

The technical committee has also made several adjustments to the job performance requirements under Human Resource Management for Fire Officer II and III and Administration and Emergency Services Delivery for Fire Officer IV. The most significant change to this edition has been to acknowledge and encourage prospective fire officers to consider formal higher education as part of their educational and professional growth while maintaining current knowledge.



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NOTE: Membership on a committee shall not in and of itself constitute an endorsement of the Association or any document developed by the committee on which the member serves.

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 professional qualifications required of fire officers.



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NFPA 1021

Standard for

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2014 Edition

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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 D. 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 D.

Chapter 1 Administration

1.1* Scope. This standard identifies the minimum job performance requirements (JPRs) for fire officer.

1.2 Purpose. The purpose of this standard shall be to specify the minimum job performance requirements for serving as a fire officer.

1.2.1 The intent of the standard is to define progressive levels of performance required at the various levels of officer responsibility. The authority having jurisdiction has the option to combine or group the levels to meet its local needs and to use them in the development of job descriptions and specifying promotional standards.

1.2.2 It is not the intent of this standard to restrict any jurisdiction from exceeding these minimum requirements.

1.2.3 This standard shall cover the requirements for the four levels of progression — Fire Officer I, Fire Officer II, Fire Officer III, and Fire Officer IV.

1.3* General.

1.3.1 All of the standards for any level of fire officer shall be performed in accordance with recognized practices and procedures or as defined by an accepted authority.

1.3.2 It is not required for the objectives to be mastered in the order in which they appear. The local or state/provincial training program shall establish both the instructional priority and the program content to prepare individuals to meet the performance objectives of this standard.

1.3.3 The Fire Fighter II shall meet all the objectives for Fire Officer I before being qualified at the Fire Officer I level, and the objectives for each succeeding level in the progression shall be met before being qualified at the next higher level.

1.3.4* The fire officer at all levels of progression shall remain current with the general requirements for fire officers, human resource management, community and government relations, administration, inspections and investigations, emergency service delivery, and health and safety.

1.3.5* The fire officer at all levels of progression shall remain current with the general knowledge and skills and job performance requirements addressed in the level of qualification.

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 1001, *Standard for Fire Fighter Professional Qualifications*, 2013 edition.

NFPA 1041, *Standard for Fire Service Instructor Professional Qualifications*, 2012 edition.

NFPA 1600®, *Standard on Disaster/Emergency Management and Business Continuity Programs*, 2013 edition.

2.3 Other Publications.

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

2.4 References for Extracts in Mandatory Sections.

NFPA 1000, *Standard for Fire Service Professional Qualifications Accreditation and Certification Systems*, 2011 edition.

NFPA 1002, *Standard for Fire Apparatus Driver/Operator Professional Qualifications*, 2014 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.

