



Certification Renewal

Firefighters are responsible to maintain their certification and initiate renewal. The procedures for certification renewal are being developed, utilizing the following guiding principles:

- Continuous employment as a firefighter in Ontario
- Documented ongoing training
- Proof of demonstrated competence to the current standard
- For those who certify through the 'Window of Opportunity', proof of successful completion of one mandatory (Pumper Operations) and one optional Endorsed Certification Specialty Module



Simulations Guide

The purpose of this document, which was released in November 1999, is to provide Ontario Fire Service personnel who are responsible for the training and/or evaluation of firefighters, with guidelines for the creation of safe, effective, standardized, simulated exercises.

This document complements and relates specifically to:

- The practical skills tests of the Ontario Firefighter Curriculum
- The Ontario Firefighter Certification Program Job Performance Checklist; completion of this document is necessary to meet the employment experience requirement that consists of demonstrating on-the-job skills
- Office of the Fire Marshal/Ontario Fire College courses with a practical component, for example, Fire Cause Determination, Company Officer Diploma Program, Ontario Fire College Volunteer Firefighting Modules and Pumper Operations

The Guide is posted on and available for downloading from our web site:

<http://www.gov.on.ca/OFM/>

For further information or if you are unable to access our web site, please contact the OFM Certification Office at **416-325-3142**.



Fee for Certification

A nominal fee has not been determined. The fee has been waived for those certifying through the 'Window of Opportunity.'



Certification Council Members

Members are representative of the Ontario Fire Service. For a list of current members, consult the OFM or OAFC web sites.



For Further Information

Note: There are three brochures on The Professionalization Process for the Ontario Fire Service – Ontario Professional Standards Setting Body, Endorsement, Firefighter Certification Program.

Regarding firefighter certification, please contact the OFM Certification Office at **(416) 325-3142**

Regarding PSSB, please contact the PSSB Secretary at the Office of the Fire Marshal, 2284 Nursery Road, Midhurst ON LOL 1X0 **1-800-565-0613 ext. 9693**

Regarding endorsement, please contact the Endorsement Review Board Office at **1-800-744-6651**

For current information regarding the PSSB, Firefighter Certification Program and Endorsement visit the following web sites:

OFM <http://www.gov.on.ca/OFM/>

OAFC <http://www.OAFC.on.ca>

MFSIA <http://www.mfsia.org>

Ministry of the Solicitor General
Certification Council
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Ontario Firefighter Certification Program

- The Professionalization Process for the Ontario Fire Service
- Purpose of Certification
- Benefits of Certification
- Certification Requirements
- Certification Routes
- Certification Renewal
- Simulations Guide





Authority

The Office of the Fire Marshal certifies Ontario firefighters to the Ontario Firefighter Standards. [The Fire Protection and Prevention Act, 1997 \(FPPA\)](#), clauses 9 (2) (d) and 9 (2) (e), provides authority to the Office of the Fire Marshal for training and evaluation of firefighters.



History

In 1988, 'Paradigm for Progress', a Task Force Report to the Ontario Association of Fire Chiefs recommended that the Professional Standards Setting Body (PSSB) be created with the mandate to develop a training, educational and certification system for the Ontario Fire Service.

The PSSB, under the auspices of the Ontario Association of Fire Chiefs (OAFC) and the Office of the Fire Marshal (OFM) has developed and published nine Ontario Fire Services Standards.



The Professionalization Process

- Job Performance Standards
- Certification
- Endorsement Review Board
- Educational/Training Career Plan



Professional Standards Setting Body

The PSSB is a partnership between the OAFC and OFM, and includes membership from all major fire service stakeholders.

The mandate of the Professional Standards Setting Body is to:

- Set performance standards for all levels within the Ontario Fire Service
- Meet on a regular basis to deliberate issues and take appropriate actions to develop, maintain, implement and promote fire service performance standards
- Operationalize the standards process model contained in the OAFC Task Force Report 'Paradigm for Progress'



Standardized Curricula

Standardized Pre-entry Firefighter Curricula has been developed by the OAFC and endorsed Pre-entry programs are currently being offered in several community colleges.

The endorsed Standardized Firefighter Curriculum has been developed by the OFM and the Ontario Fire College. The Certificate of Achievement is the academic requirement for the Ontario Firefighter Certification Program.



Certification Council

In 1996, the Certification Council held its first meeting. The Council includes membership from fire service stakeholders, OFM personnel and independent persons appointed by the Fire Marshal.

The mandate of the Certification Council is to develop and recommend policies and procedures required for an ongoing, voluntary certification program.



Purpose of Certification

Certification formally acknowledges that an experienced firefighter in Ontario meets the recognized performance standards and educational/training requirements as approved by the Office of the Fire Marshal and accepted by the Ontario Association of Fire Chiefs.

Certification is not a means of determining who shall participate in the practice or profession of firefighting and its related activities. A lack of certification is only an indication that the individual has not applied for or fulfilled the requirements of certification.



Certification Routes

Candidates may seek certification as a firefighter or career firefighter.



Career Firefighters

The firefighter must complete all of the existing requirements for certification. In addition, all of the requirements listed below must be met in order to achieve a career firefighter certificate.

- The firefighter must be a full-time firefighter in a municipal fire department.
- The firefighter must have served at least 5,000 hours on duty as an emergency responder.
- The firefighter must have completed a minimum of 400 hours of on-the-job training. Approximately 50% of this training must be in addition to the Ontario Firefighter Curriculum. All training in excess of the core firefighter curriculum can be included in the extra 50%. For example, some or all of the Endorsed Certification Specialty Modules could be included.



Volunteer Firefighters

Following completion of the Ontario Firefighter Curriculum, volunteer firefighters may choose to continue the certification process or stop after meeting the academic requirement.



Window of Opportunity

All firefighters, employed as of April 30, 1998 are being given an opportunity to be certified. A three-year 'Window of Opportunity' exists from May 1, 1998 to May 1, 2001. Fire departments have identified from a prescribed list, an option to complete the academic requirement. Existing firefighters are not required to complete Endorsed Certification Specialty Modules for initial certification. When the academic and job experience requirements have been met, a Job Performance Checklist is completed for each firefighter. The application and accompanying documentation are submitted to the OFM Certification Office for review and assessment. The successful candidate is granted certification and receives an OFM certificate.

November 26, 1999 was the deadline for fire chiefs to state their commitment to participate through the 'window'.



Benefits of Certification

There are a number of benefits to firefighter certification:

- Certification recognizes firefighters as professionals with specialized skills and a reputation for providing quality service
- Certification provides firefighters with opportunities to evaluate and document their performance, and compare their skills to each competency and the overall standard
- Certification acknowledges a firefighter's commitment to ongoing training and life-long learning
- Certification provides a concrete training path to follow
- Should firefighters ever be involved in litigation, certification will support their credibility
- Highly motivated people will continue to be attracted to the fire service because of the certification program



Certification Requirements

Certification is a voluntary process and is based on a candidate's ability to:

- Meet established educational/training qualifications
- Provide proof of current employment as a firefighter in Ontario
- Meet job experience requirements
- Demonstrate competencies to standards

The candidate is required to submit his/her educational/training and job experience portfolio with required documentation to the OFM Certification Office at the time of application for certification.



Term of Certification

The initial firefighter certificate is valid for five (5) years from the date of issuance.