

# **FIRE INVESTIGATOR CERTIFICATION MANUAL**

In a continued effort to reduce the fire loss in the State of North Carolina, the State Legislature established GS 58-78.5.14b, which required the State Fire and Rescue Commission to establish voluntary minimum professional qualifications for all levels of fire and rescue service personnel. It is the intent of this manual to set forth requirements pertaining to Fire Investigator Certification. The following guide was established to assist personnel in making application to the Fire Investigator Review Board for approval to take the State examination.

- Tim Bradley, Executive Director  
North Carolina Fire and Rescue Commission

**NORTH CAROLINA STATE FIRE AND RESCUE COMMISSION**  
**FIRE INVESTIGATOR CERTIFICATION STANDARD**

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## **SECTION .0100 FIRE INVESTIGATOR CERTIFICATION PROGRAM**

### **.0101 Purpose**

The purpose of the Fire Investigator Certification Program shall be to acknowledge demonstrated competence in all phases of fire investigation, to recognize professional standards of achievement in fire investigation theory and practice by government and private fire investigators, to encourage the continuing education and training in the field of fire investigation, to increase professional standing in the fire investigative field, and to identify the sources of professional knowledge for the theory and practice of fire investigation.

### **.0102 Fire Investigator Certification Review Board**

There shall be a nine-member Fire Investigator Certification Review Board having the powers and responsibilities set out in this section. The Chairman of the Fire and Rescue Commission shall appoint the members of the Board, at least three of whom, and their successors shall be from nominations submitted by the North Carolina Chapter of the International Association of Arson Investigators, and of whom, and their successors, shall be from nominations submitted by the Training and Standards Commission of the Department of Justice, the North Carolina Justice Academy, the North Carolina Department of Community Colleges, the North Carolina State Bureau of Investigation, and the North Carolina Department of Insurance. The Executive Director of the North Carolina Fire and Rescue Commission shall serve as the ninth member. The Executive Director is a permanent member and each new member shall be appointed for a term of three years. Any vacancy shall be filled for the remainder of the unexpired term only. Each member shall continue in office until his/her successor is appointed and qualified.

The Fire and Rescue Commission may, upon the recommendation of two-thirds of the Review Board membership, remove any member of the Board when it finds that such member: (1) has knowingly made a material misrepresentation of any information supplied to them for review; (2) has knowingly and designedly by any means of false pretense, deception, fraud, misrepresentation or misinformation made any unfair or untrue statements against any applicant, other Board member, or Commission member; (3) provided any candidate for Certification any information not available to all candidates regarding the test, or misrepresented Board discussions to any candidate when refused or accepted by the Board.

### **.0103 Minimum Standards for Certification as a Fire Investigator**

Every applicant for certification as a Fire Investigator may only obtain certification by examination. Every applicant for certification, as a prerequisite to taking the examination, shall have achieved a minimum of 100 points based upon prior education, training and experience. The awarding of points shall be by the Review Board and shall be based upon the following:

1. Education. The highest level of education must be noted on the application. Points for education vary from 10 points for a high school graduate, GED or certificate equivalency to 50 points for a doctoral degree in a field related to fire investigation. Other levels of education shall be listed on the application for examination. A minimum of 10 points is required and a maximum of 50 points is allowed.
2. Training. Points earned for specialized training the applicant has received in accordance with the current standards as published by the National Fire protection Association for Fire Investigator or other levels of experience

established and published by the Review Board. A minimum of 20 points in the training category are required for certification by examination eligibility. Tested training submitted for points in the application process must have been achieved within 5 years prior to the date of the application.

3. Experience. Points earned for experience will vary from one-half (.5) point per year up to 10 points per year. A minimum of 20 points from the experience category is required for certification eligibility. No one year of experience can be carried in more than one category.

### **.0104 Testing**

The Fire and Rescue Commission shall offer the written examination covering various phases of fire investigation techniques and theory that have been developed, as covered in the National Fire Protection Association Manual, Section 1033, in each of the 3 regions of the state (Western, Central and Eastern) a minimum of two (2) times each quarter. The minimum passing grade is 70. Candidates who fail the written examination may take one additional test without Board Review and approval. Candidates failing the exam for the 2<sup>nd</sup> time must wait one (1) year from the date of the 2<sup>nd</sup> exam to reapply to the Board and successfully complete an additional 30 hours of tested fire investigator-related training.

### **.0105 Applications**

The Review Board shall prepare applications which shall be available, in printable format on the North Carolina Department of Insurance website at:

<http://www.ncdoi.com/OSFM/FireAndRescueCommission/Documents/Certification/FireAndArsonInvestigatorApplication.pdf>

upon request to individuals seeking certification as a fire investigator. A completed hard copy of the application must be submitted to the Review Board along with copies of supporting documentation and a copy of the applicant's job description, resume and a letter from the applicant's supervisor outlining his/her current duties at least one (1) week prior to the scheduled quarterly meeting. The meetings are conducted in January-April-July-October. The Review Board may verify information set forth in the application and may interview the applicant. Supporting documentation must be attached to the appropriate section in sequential order. Applications submitted without complete documentation shall be returned to the applicant without action.

### **.0106 Certification**

The Commission shall issue certificates to applicants approved by the Review Board and who pass the examination. These certificates shall be valid for a five-year period from the date of issue.

### **.0107 Recertification**

Recertification will be awarded upon receipt of the applicant's documentation of a minimum of 30 points earned during the previous five-year period and as determined by the Review Board. Ten (10) of the thirty (30) points must be from training completed by the applicant. This offer of proof must be submitted to the Review Board during the last six months of certification. Points claimed for the applicant's original certification or prior recertifications will not be allowed. If no documentation has been submitted at the end of six months, the certification will expire, at which time the individual will be required to re-apply and document 130 points to take the test and receive a passing grade.

### **.0108 Suspension, Revocation or Denial**

The Fire and Rescue Commission may, upon recommendation of the Review Board, suspend revoke or deny the certification of a fire investigator when it finds that such individual: (1) has knowingly made a material misrepresentation of any information required for certification; (2) has knowingly and designedly, by any means of false pretense, deception, fraud, misrepresentation or cheating whatsoever, obtained or attempted to obtain credit, training or certification from the Board; (3) fails to achieve a score of 70 or above on the examination.

### **.0109 Appeal Process**

- (1) Any applicant or certified investigator aggrieved by an adverse decision may appeal to the Commission.
- (2) Request for hearing must be made, in writing, to the Executive Director, who shall inform the applicant or certified investigator of the time, date and location of the hearing.
- (3) The hearing shall be held before the full Commission.
- (4) The Commission shall conduct a hearing and allow all parties an opportunity to be heard. The hearing may be recorded and witnesses may be heard.
- (5) The Commission shall have complete control of the proceedings including, but not limited to setting time allotments for presentation, methods of presenting information, prevention of repetitious presentation and management of the proceedings.
- (6) The Commission shall make and issue its final decision, in writing, within 60 days after the appeal is heard.

## APPENDIX "A"

### FIRE INVESTIGATOR CERTIFICATION PROGRAM

Candidates for certification should complete the attached application form and include with it a copy (no originals) of all awards, certificates, diplomas, and transcripts for documentation of credits claimed. Additional certification may be required by the Review Board. The copies will not be returned to the applicant.

Applicants will be notified of examination dates and locations. A Regional Testing schedule can be accessed by visiting the North Carolina Department of Insurance website at:

<http://www.ncdoi.com/OSFM/FireAndRescueCommission/Documents/RegionalTesting/RegionalTestingSchedule.pdf>

Submission of an application, but subsequent failure to take the examination within one year of approval, will result in forfeiture of the application.

Recertification will be provided for by the applicants' demonstration of continuing education, training, and experience in the field of fire investigation.

Mailing address:

North Carolina Fire and Rescue Commission  
Fire Investigator Review Board  
1202 Mail Service Center  
Raleigh, NC 27699-1202

**FIRE INVESTIGATOR CERTIFICATION PROGRAM**

**Application**  
**(Type or print clearly in black or blue ink)**

Last Name \_\_\_\_\_ First Name \_\_\_\_\_ MI \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Birth \_\_\_\_\_ Social Security # (Last 4 digits only) \_\_\_\_\_

Current Mailing Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: (h) \_\_\_\_\_ (w) \_\_\_\_\_ (other) \_\_\_\_\_ DL# \_\_\_\_\_

Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Previous Address \_\_\_\_\_

Current Employer \_\_\_\_\_

Job Title \_\_\_\_\_ Years in position \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Prior Employer \_\_\_\_\_ Years in position \_\_\_\_\_

Have you ever been treated for substance abuse? If yes, explain.

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Have you ever been convicted of a criminal misdemeanor, or felony? If yes, explain. \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**REFERENCES:**

Name	Address	Phone
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1.

\_\_\_\_\_

2.

\_\_\_\_\_

3.

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4.

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***(Attach a copy of your resume, job description and a letter from your supervisor indicating your employment dates and outlining your job duties)***

**I. LEVEL OF EDUCATION COMPLETED**

Check only (1) of the following ten (10) levels of education. Fields considered to be related to Fire Investigation are: Engineering, Physical Sciences, and Police Science / Criminal Justice. Fields not considered to be related are Education, Liberal Arts, etc.

- \_\_\_ HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATE, GED CERTIFICATE OR EQUIVALENT . . . . . 10 PTS.
- \_\_\_ ASSOCIATE’S DEGREE: FIELD UNRELATED TO FIRE INVESTIGATION. . . 12 PTS.
- \_\_\_ ASSOCIATE’S DEGREE: FIELD RELATED TO FIRE INVESTIGATION . . . . . 20 PTS.
- \_\_\_ BACHELOR’S DEGREE: FIELD UNRELATED TO FIRE INVESTIGATION . . . . 20 PTS.
- \_\_\_ BACHELOR’S DEGREE: FIELD RELATED TO FIRE INVESTIGATION. . . . . 30 PTS.
- \_\_\_ MASTER’S DEGREE: FIELD UNRELATED TO FIRE INVESTIGATION . . . . . 25 PTS.
- \_\_\_ MASTER’S DEGREE: FIELD RELATED TO FIRE INVESTIGATION. . . . . 40 PTS.
- \_\_\_ DOCTORAL DEGREE: FIELD UNRELATED TO FIRE INVESTIGATION . . . . 30 PTS.
- \_\_\_ DOCTORAL DEGREE: FIELD RELATED TO FIRE INVESTIGATION . . . . .50 PTS.

**Total Education Points Claimed . . . . \_\_\_\_\_**

**II. PROFESSIONAL CERTIFICATION(S)**

Check one (1) category below for which you have completed the requirements for certification. The Review Board reserves the right to disallow any prior certification if it does not meet the accepted standards in that field. (Firefighter Certification must be with the NC Fire and Rescue Commission or equivalent)

\_\_\_\_ FIREFIGHTER I CERTIFICATION FROM AN ACCREDITED PROGRAM . . . . . 10 PTS.

Certifying Agency and Date of Certification:

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_ FIREFIGHTER II CERTIFICATION FROM AN ACCREDITED PROGRAM. . . . . 20 PTS.

Certifying Agency and Date of Certification:

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_ BASIC LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICER TRAINING . . . . . 10 PTS.

Certifying Agency and Date of Certification:

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_ INTERMEDIATE LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICER CERTIFICATION . . . . . 15 PTS.

Certifying Agency and Date of Certification:

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_ ADVANCED LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICER CERTIFICATION . . . . . 20 PTS.

Certifying Agency and Date of Certification:

\_\_\_\_\_

**Total Certification Points Claimed** \_\_\_\_\_

**III. TRAINING RECORD**

Training credits are broken down into a tested category and an untested category. The Review Board reserves the right to disallow any submitted training if it does not meet accepted guidelines for training. No credit can be taken in this section for courses taken during a degree program in which you received a degree.

**TESTED INSTRUCTION RELATED TO FIRE INVESTIGATION (passing grade is required)**

**TESTED TRAINING MUST HAVE BEEN COMPLETED WITHIN 5 YEARS PRIOR TO THE DATE OF YOUR APPLICATION.**

TITLE	SPONSOR	DATES	HOURS

*(attach additional pages, if necessary)*

**TOTAL HOURS OF TESTED INSTRUCTION: \_\_\_\_\_ x .50 POINTS = \_\_\_\_\_**



#### IV. PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

List the total number of years of experience for each category—

**NO ONE YEAR OF EXPERIENCE CAN BE CLAIMED IN MORE THAN ONE CATEGORY.**

Complete the shown multiplication process to determine points for each category and show total in the space provided. Credit for full-time Fire Investigation experience requires that Fire Investigation be the primary function in your job description and be part of your daily routine. Investigations performed as a line officer, patrolman, and adjuster cannot be claimed. Credit for supervision experience requires that you must have directly supervised the activities of the Fire Investigators assigned to your department. A departmental head cannot claim the supervision experience unless the Fire Investigators directly report to the departmental head. A complete job description and a letter of certification from a supervisor must be submitted with the application, or equivalent documentation.

- A. \_\_\_\_ Years of full-time Fire Investigation x 10 pts. per year = \_\_\_\_\_
- B. \_\_\_\_ Years of part-time Fire Investigation x 5 pts. per year = \_\_\_\_\_
- C. \_\_\_\_ Years of non-fire Criminal Investigation experience x 4 pts. per year = \_\_\_\_\_
- D. \_\_\_\_ Years of supervision of Fire Investigation (requires supervision of 2 or more full-time Fire Investigators) x 5 pts. per year = \_\_\_\_\_
- E. \_\_\_\_ Years of supervision of part-time Fire Investigator x 2 pts. per year = \_\_\_\_\_
- F. \_\_\_\_ Years as Firefighter/Patrolman x .50 pts. per year = \_\_\_\_\_
- G. \_\_\_\_ Years as Fire Lt./Police Sgt. or above x 1 pt. per year = \_\_\_\_\_
- H. \_\_\_\_ Years as Evidence/Crime Scene Tech. x 2 pts. per year = \_\_\_\_\_
- I. \_\_\_\_ Years as non-fire Private Investigator x 2 pts. per year = \_\_\_\_\_
- J. \_\_\_\_ Years as Fire Insurance Adjustor x 1 pt. per year = \_\_\_\_\_

**TOTAL EXPERIENCE POINTS CLAIMED** \_\_\_\_\_

[Documentation Applicable to this section must be attached to this page](#)













**INDIVIDUAL SECTION TOTALS**

**I. EDUCATION**

Level of Education \_\_\_\_\_ (10 pt. minimum/50 pt. maximum)

Professional Certifications \_\_\_\_\_ (20 pt. maximum)

**TOTAL EDUCATION POINTS \_\_\_\_\_**

**II. TRAINING**

Tested Instruction \_\_\_\_\_ (25 pt. maximum)

Untested Instruction \_\_\_\_\_ (15 pt. maximum)

**TOTAL TRAINING POINTS \_\_\_\_\_ (20 pt. minimum)**

**III. EXPERIENCE**

Professional Experience \_\_\_\_\_ (20 pt. minimum required from  
Section A and/or B)

Items Published \_\_\_\_\_ (20 pt. maximum)

Instruction Experience \_\_\_\_\_ ( 60 pt. maximum)

Professional Memberships \_\_\_\_\_ (10 pt. maximum)

Expert Testimony \_\_\_\_\_ (20 pt. maximum)

**TOTAL EXPERIENCE POINTS \_\_\_\_\_**

**TOTAL POINTS ACCUMULATED IN THE APPLICATION PROCESS \_\_\_\_\_**

I certify that all information contained in this application, including attachments, is accurate and truthful to the best of my knowledge, and I am aware that any false entry and/or statement(s) will be considered sufficient cause for revocation of my certification at any time. I acknowledge that my certification can be revoked at any time by the Certification Board upon establishment of just cause. I agree to accept the decision of the Certification Board as to my eligibility for certification. I authorize any member of the Certification Board to certify information provided on this application. I also release all parties from any liability arising from this application and the subsequent certification process.

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Signature

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Printed Name

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Date