

Washington State Patrol, Fire Protection Bureau (Office of the State Fire Marshal) adopts nationally recognized standards to promote professionalism and competency in the fire service. The National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) standards will be used; standard development shall occur when no nationally recognized professional qualification standard exists.

The Office of the State Fire Marshal (OSFM) is currently accredited by the International Fire Service Accreditation Congress (IFSAC) on the following levels of certification:

<u>Certification Level</u>	<u>Standard</u>
Hazardous Materials Awareness	NFPA 472
Hazardous Materials Operations	NFPA 472
Firefighter I	NFPA 1001
Firefighter II	NFPA 1001
Fire Officer I	NFPA 1021
Fire Officer II	NFPA 1021
Fire Service Instructor I	NFPA 1041
Fire Service Instructor II	NFPA 1041
Driver Operator	NFPA 1002
Driver Operator Pumper	NFPA 1002
Fire Inspector I	NFPA 1031
Public Fire & Life Safety Educator I	NFPA 1035
Airport Firefighter	NFPA 1003
Fire Investigator	NFPA 1033
Hazardous Materials Technician	NFPA 472

Mission statement:

The mission of the Accreditation and Certification Program is to administer a quality certification program through competency testing in accordance with nationally recognized standards.

Goals:

- Implement testing processes that certify candidates to nationally recognized standards
- Seek third party approval (International Accreditation) of the state of Washington's certification program to ensure that it is fair and equitable to fire service personnel and meets the standard it is designed to meet
- Work collaboratively with the fire service, colleges, consortiums and professional organizations
- Continually strive for improvements in the delivery of the program to ensure the efficient and effective use of resources devoted to carrying out the mission

1.0 ACCREDITATION CRITERIA

1.1 Washington State Accreditation & Certification

All levels of accredited certification in Washington State shall be conducted in accordance with accrediting body guidelines. Utilizing the same criteria will ensure consistency throughout all levels of accreditation relating to written and practical examinations.

1.2 Delegated Authority

Entities with delegated authority shall maintain compliance with Washington State accreditation criteria, and are subject to site visits and audits to verify compliance.

1.3 Two Year Update Requirement

The competencies for certification testing in Washington State are based on either NFPA or Washington State Performance Qualification Standards. The OSFM will update its testing materials within two years of edition changes of applicable standards. The state will notify the accrediting body if unable to meet the two year requirement.

1.4 Notice of Standard Edition Changes

Notice of changes shall be provided from the OSFM through multiple communication methods.

1.5 Testing During Standard Edition Changes

In instances where the standard is changed while a candidate is involved in the testing process, the candidate will be allowed to complete testing or retesting on the standard edition they were trained on, provided it is done within a specified timeframe.

2.0 TESTING PROCESS

2.1 Certification Testing

Written competency exams and practical evaluation sheets are developed and disseminated by the OSFM. Certification exams are administered by individuals approved by the OSFM.

Written and practical exams shall have the capability of testing all components of the job performance requirements (JPR). There are no separate pretests for the requisite knowledge or skills.

2.1.1 Test Security

Individuals approved by the OSFM shall comply with test security protocol to ensure integrity of the testing process.

2.1.2 Practical Skills Test

The practical skills portion of the test shall be conducted in accordance to the Test Construction Guide.

2.1.3 Host Entity Responsibilities

The host entity is responsible for appointing a test site manager to ensure required equipment, a safety officer, and necessary support personnel are provided. The host entity will ensure the test site complies with all state and federal safety regulations.

2.1.4 Fees

The OSFM does not charge a fee for providing written exams or practical skill sheets to the host. Host entities, including the Fire Training Academy, may charge fees to candidates to recoup expenses for conducting testing.

2.2 Test Registration

All written and practical certification tests shall be registered with the OSFM. The OSFM shall publish a current test schedule of registered exams on a regular basis.

2.3 Candidate Eligibility

The OSFM shall publish candidate eligibility requirements to ensure individuals in the testing process meet the minimum age requirement and have adequate knowledge and skills. The OSFM will maintain a matrix identifying pre- and co-requisites for each accredited level.

2.3.1 Minimum Age Requirement

Candidates must be 18 years or older to enter the testing process, regardless if they are affiliated with a department through a Cadet or Explorer program.

2.3.2 Education

Candidates must have a high school diploma or a General Education Diploma (GED).

2.3.3 Training

Candidates will be trained to the standard for which they are testing.

2.3.4 Test Progression

Candidates shall test in progression as prescribed by the nationally recognized standard.

2.3.5 Prerequisites

Candidates must meet all prerequisites prior to competency testing. Retroactively seeking to meet the prerequisites after entering the testing process will result in invalidation of test scores. Candidates must meet the prerequisites through testing in progression unless they meet one of the below exceptions:

2.3.5.1 Equivalency

Candidates may qualify for equivalency if they entered the fire service and completed training to NFPA 1001 prior to April 1995 when Washington State became accredited. Successful candidates will receive an OSFM certificate of equivalency-

2.3.5.2 Historical Recognition

Candidates seeking historical recognition must provide documented evidence of education, training and/or experience that validates performance to the adopted standard. Successful candidates will receive a certificate of competency with appropriate recognition from the accrediting bodies.

2.3.5.2.1 Five-year Limit

Candidates will have a five year window to apply for historical recognition for new any level accredited after June 1, 2013.

2.3.5.2.2 Two-year Limit

Candidates will have a two year window to apply for historical recognition for any level accredited prior to June 1, 2013.

2.3.5.3 Recognition of Certifications Issued by Other Accredited Entities

2.3.5.3.1 Recognition of IFSAC Certifications

Recognition of IFSAC certifications issued by other accredited entities will only be granted on levels of certification for which the OSFM holds IFSAC accreditation. Candidates must be affiliated with a Washington State fire agency. Candidates must also have been tested by an entity with the ability to test all of the same NFPA Job Performance Requirements as the OSFM IFSAC accredited level. Certifications must be verifiable. Candidates will receive an OSFM certificate of reciprocity.

On levels where currency is required in Washington State, candidates will be expected to comply. If the out of state certification is expired reciprocity will not be given.

2.3.5.3.2 Recognition of National Board on Fire Service Professional Qualifications Certificates (Pro Board)

Recognition of Pro Board certifications issued by other accredited entities will only be granted on those levels of certification for which the OSFM holds IFSAC accreditation. Candidates must be affiliated with a Washington State fire agency. Candidates must also have been tested by an entity with the ability to test all of the same NFPA Job Performance Requirements as the OSFM IFSAC accredited level. Certifications must be verifiable. Candidates will receive an OSFM certificate of recognition.

2.3.6 Co-requisites

Candidates must meet all co-requisites within one-year of beginning the testing process.

2.3.7 Candidate Application

Candidates will complete and sign the Candidate Application prior to entering any aspect of the testing process.

2.4 Retest

2.4.1 Written Exam

There is no limit to the number of retest attempts a candidate may take. Candidates must retest on a different day. Candidates shall be administered a different test version for each retest attempt.

2.4.2 Practical Test

Candidates who fail up to three tasks (evaluation sheets) are entitled to retest on the same day. Candidates who fail a fourth task (evaluation sheet) or who fail the same task twice must retest on a different day.

2.5 Appeals

Candidates may make a written appeal to the OSFM regarding certification testing scores or questions.

2.5.1 Written Exam

2.5.1.1 Written Score

Candidates must submit an appeal in writing within 30 days of score notification. The appeal must address the specific issue with the exam.

2.5.1.2 Test Questions

Candidates must complete the Certification Test Critique and Inquiry form provided with the Candidate Application. The inquiry must contain the question number and the specific issue associated with the question. The form must be submitted at the time of the exam.

2.5.2 Practical Exam Score

2.5.2.1 On-Site Arbitration

The TCO on-site shall arbitrate any disputes candidates may have with an evaluator's grading decision. The TCO shall document all appeals and maintain for 90 days.

2.5.2.2 Unresolved Disputes

If unable to resolve the dispute on-site, candidates may further appeal to the OSFM. Appeals must be submitted in writing within 30 days of score notification.

2.6 Complaints

The OSFM considers all complaints regarding the testing process or against individuals involved with the testing process and fully investigates all such complaints as appropriate.

2.7 Audit

2.7.1 Audits by Accrediting Body

Upon request, the OSFM shall provide the accrediting body a current test schedule. A representative designated by the accrediting body shall be permitted to observe any testing process so long as the OSFM receives notice of intent to observe the test at least forty-eight (48) hours prior to the test.

2.7.2 Audits of Delegated Authorities & Open Tests

All delegated authorities and open tests are required to permit a representative designated by the accrediting body or the OSFM to observe any testing process upon receiving notice of intent to observe the test at least forty-eight (48) hours prior to the test.

2.8 Testing Outside of Washington State

The OSFM shall test only within its jurisdictional boundaries unless one of the below conditions are met.

2.8.1 Department of Defense (DOD) Facilities

The OSFM may not go onto DOD sites without specific permission.

2.8.2 Live Fire Facility

If access to an out of state live fire training facility is necessary to conduct a certification exam, the host entity must request approval from the OSFM prior to conducting the exam. The OSFM shall then request permission from the accrediting bodies and all related parties.

The Marine and Environmental Research and Training Station (MERTS) Fire Response & Research Center facility in Astoria, Oregon is currently the only approved out of state live fire facility for testing Washington State firefighters.

3.0 REASONABLE ACCOMMODATION

The OSFM will provide reasonable accommodation to the known physical, mental, or sensory limitations of an otherwise qualified candidate with a disability in all aspects of the testing process, unless doing so would cause undue hardship to the OSFM.

Reasonable accommodation may include, but is not limited to, providing readers, qualified sign language interpreters, adaptive equipment, and other aids, as well as making documents and publications available in an alternate format when reasonably required to accommodate persons with disabilities.

It is the obligation of a candidate with a disability to request a reasonable accommodation. The OSFM may request verification from a health care professional.

Candidates shall be able to perform the essential functions of the certification for which they seek. A qualified candidate with a disability has the right to refuse accommodations.

4.0 TEST SITE REQUIREMENTS

4.1 Safety Requirements

Individuals approved by the OSFM to administer tests are responsible to provide a safety briefing to all participants in the testing process, ensuring they are aware of and comply with WISHA, NFPA and WAC 296-305 safety requirements.

4.1.1 Test Site Requirements

Test sites must provide adequate space for written and manipulative skills testing.

Test sites must meet or exceed the NFPA safety and health standards or their equivalents, WISHA requirements, WAC 296-305 standards, and EPA requirements for live fire testing.

Personal protective equipment, apparatus and equipment meet or exceed applicable NFPA standards or their equivalents.

4.1.2 Safety Officer

Safety Officers are to be designated at all certification exams involving firefighting skills. They are responsible for monitoring site safety and shall have the authority to stop and/or prevent unsafe acts at any time during the testing process.

4.1.3 Test Control Officer

The Test Control Officer has the utmost responsibility of safety at the testing site and is required to terminate any unsafe activity.

4.1.4 Reporting

All participants in the testing process are responsible for identifying and reporting safety issues.

4.1.5 Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) & Self-Contained Breathing Apparatus (SCBA)

Candidates are required to sign the application verifying their PPE is in good condition and SCBA has been fit tested. All SCBA cylinders must have visible hydrostatic testing/inspection dates. Candidates with non-compliant PPE, SCBA, or SCBA cylinders are to be dismissed from the testing process.

4.2 Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Requirements

Host entities and individuals administering exams shall be aware of and comply with all requirements of the federal EPA and the Air Pollution Authority as they pertain to live fire testing/training. All required permits are the responsibility of and shall be maintained on file by the host entity.

4.3 Non-compliance

The OSFM or host entity will provide documentation when non-compliance with statute and/or other state, federal, local regulations has occurred.

4.4 Violations

Violations of any of the above policies may result in disciplinary action.

5.0 CODE OF CONDUCT

5.1 Non-Discrimination

The OSFM prohibits all types of harassment including sexual harassment and discrimination of any person because of ethnic origin, gender, sexual orientation, religion, age, or the presence of any sensory, mental, or physical disability.

5.2 Cheating on Examinations

Candidates and all test personnel with access to exam materials shall not cheat or tamper in any manner with an official examination by obtaining, furnishing, accepting or attempting to obtain, furnish, or accept answers or questions to such examinations. Furthermore, individuals shall not copy, photograph, or otherwise remove examination contents; nor shall they use any misrepresentation or dishonest method while preparing, administering, or participating in such examinations.

5.3 Test Administration Personnel Discipline

Alleged violations of policy will be investigated by the OSFM as appropriate. Individuals found to be in violation of the policies outlined in this document may be subject to discipline, which will be progressive in nature and may include permanent removal from participation in the state certification program. Though discipline is progressive in nature, the OSFM may initiate discipline at any level, based on the nature of the policy violation.

5.3.1 Disciplinary Actions

1. Verbal warning with follow-up documentation.
2. Written warning letter with corrective action plan implemented within 60 days.
3. Removal from test administration personnel program until retraining is completed.
4. Permanent removal from test administration personnel program.

Written notification of removal from the certification program (step 3 or 4) will be made to the chief(s) or administrator(s) of agencies/entities sponsoring exams to be conducted by that individual.

5.3.2 Investigation

The OSFM will make every effort to protect confidentiality during investigations, though this may not be entirely possible in all situations.

During investigation, OSFM staff may contact any test personnel associated with that exam, test candidates, helpers, and personnel employed by or associated with the agency/entity hosting the exam.

5.3.3 Findings & Recommended Actions

Discipline steps 1 through 3 will be enacted by the section Chief Deputy State Fire Marshal. Any discipline recommendation of permanent removal (step 4) will be approved by the Assistant State Fire Marshal.

5.3.4 Appeal of Disciplinary Action

Appeals must be made in writing and submitted within 30 calendar days of notification of the discipline determination. It is the responsibility of the appellant to ensure delivery of the request.

Appeal of steps 1 through 3 shall first be made to the Assistant State Fire Marshal; further appeals shall be made to the State Fire Marshal. Appeal of step 4 shall be made directly to the State Fire Marshal.

The decision of the State Fire Marshal is final.

5.4 Candidate Discipline

Alleged violations of policy will be investigated by the OSFM as appropriate. Individuals found to be in violation of the policies outlined in this document may be subject to discipline, which will be progressive in nature and may include permanent removal from participation in the state certification program. Though discipline is progressive in nature, the OSFM may initiate discipline at any level, based on the nature of the policy violation.

5.4.1 Disciplinary Steps

1. Verbal warning with follow-up documentation.
2. Written warning letter.
3. Suspension from the certification program for a period of one year.
4. Permanent removal from certification program.

5.4.2 Investigation

The OSFM will make every effort to protect confidentiality during investigations, though this may not be entirely possible in all situations.

During investigation, OSFM staff may contact any test personnel associated with that exam, test candidates, helpers, and personnel employed by or associated with the agency/entity hosting the exam.

5.4.3 Findings & Recommended Actions

The section supervisor will determine appropriate disciplinary action. Discipline steps 1 through 3 will be enacted by the section supervisor. Any discipline recommendation of permanent removal (step 4) will be approved by the Assistant State Fire Marshal.

5.4.4 Appeal of Disciplinary Action

Appeals must be made in writing and submitted within 30 calendar days of notification of the discipline determination. It is the responsibility of the appellant to ensure delivery of the request.

Appeal of steps 1 through 3 shall first be made to the Assistant State Fire Marshal. Appeal of step 4 shall be made to the State Fire Marshal.

The decision of the State Fire Marshal is final.

5.4.5 On-Site Discipline

The TCO or Proctor has the authority to remove candidates from the test site if they determine the candidate has committed an egregious offense or policy violation (i.e., cheating) during the testing process. The offense or violation shall be documented and immediately reported to the OSFM and the above candidate disciplinary policy shall be instituted.

6.0 INVALIDATION OF EXAM RESULTS

6.1 Prerequisites Not Met

Candidates will have their scores void if prerequisite certification levels are not accomplished simultaneously in the same test administration sequence or prior to testing for the next highest level.

6.2 Cheating

Certification or test results will be void if cheating has been determined. See Code of Conduct Policy 5.2 Cheating on Examinations.

6.3 Test Version Duplication

If candidates retest on the same test version, results shall be void.

6.4 Test Security Compromise

If test security is compromised, appropriate steps will be taken by the OSFM to determine scope of compromise and candidate scores may be void.

6.5 Under Minimum Age Requirement

Candidates found to be under the age of 18 at the time of testing will have test results void.

7.0 ISSUING CERTIFICATIONS

7.1 Notification of Test Scores

7.1.1 Written Exam

Candidates receive a Score Notice letter with the results of their written exam within 30 days of receipt of all test documents by the OSFM.

7.1.2 Practical Exam

Candidates receive notification of their practical score on the day of the practical from the Test Control Officer. Practical results are also included in the Score Notice letter.

7.1.3 Score Expiration

Scores expire one year from the date of notice.

7.2 Passing Score

7.2.1 Written Exam

Candidates must have a raw score of 80 percent or higher to receive a passing score.

7.2.2 Practical Exam

Practical exams are scored on a pass/fail basis. Candidates are allowed two attempts on a specific task, but no more than four failed attempts during the testing process. When the maximum attempts are reached, the candidate is required to retest on a different calendar day.

7.3 Extensions

Candidates may apply for an extension to complete their testing requirements. The OSFM will determine the length of the extension as appropriate.

7.4 Issuing Seals

Certificates of Competency with seals from the accredited bodies will be issued to candidates that have successfully passed the written and practical exams as well as met the prerequisites for the level.

7.4.1 Replacement Seals

Candidates may request a replacement certificate with new seals if the original is lost, stolen or destroyed.

7.4.2 Seal Report

The OSFM shall submit a report of all seals issued during the calendar year to the accrediting bodies by February 28th of the following year. The report will include any seals voided during the reporting period.

7.5 Currency

The following levels have a currency requirement to remain active in the state database:

Fire Investigator – 5 year

Fire Inspector – 3 year

Candidates wishing to maintain currency in these levels must submit a currency application to the OSFM prior to the certification expiration date.

7.6 Invalidating Certifications

The OSFM may invalidate certification of any candidate when it is found that:

- The candidate has knowingly made a material misrepresentation of any information required for certification.
- The candidate has knowingly by any means of false pretense, deception, fraud, misrepresentation or cheating, obtained training or certification.
- The certification was issued in error.

8.0 TEST BANK MANAGEMENT

Tests Banks may be purchased from a test bank company or developed by the OSFM. There are no parts of an exam that are weighted.

8.1 Test Question Analysis

8.1.1 Correlations

All test banks and practical skills must be correlated to the NFPA or Washington State standards utilizing approved correlation sheets if available for the level of certification being validated. Questions shall be reviewed and analyzed by the OSFM and a committee of subject matter experts. Each question shall include a reference to the standard being measured and to the reference source.

8.1.2 Test Version

Questions shall be reviewed when there is a high failure rate on a test version.

8.1.3 Written Exam Consistency

Test questions are picked at random from the test bank whenever a new test is generated. Test banks are large enough to generate several different versions of the same test instrument.

8.2 Access

8.2.1 Access to Test Banks

Access to test banks shall be limited to the following:

- Authorized OSFM personnel
- Accrediting bodies for the purpose of a site visit or administrative review
- Subject-matter experts for the purpose of test bank validation

8.3 Security

8.3.1 Test Bank Protection

Test banks are maintained on a secure drive with access limited to authorized OSFM personnel only.

8.3.2 Test Bank Compromise

Any suspected compromise of a test bank shall be documented and reported to the OSFM who shall investigate and take appropriate action. If it is determined a test bank has been compromised, the OSFM shall report it to the accrediting bodies.

8.3.3 Test Materials

All test materials are kept in a secure location at the OSFM. Test questions shall not be duplicated or provided to unauthorized individuals.

8.3.1.1 Exam Booklets

Exam booklets shall be considered a controlled item with use and distribution documented. Periodic inventories will be conducted.

8.3.1.2 Proctors and Test Control Officers (TCO)

Proctors and TCOs are responsible for the security of written exam materials while in their possession until properly submitted in a secure manner to the OSFM. Materials are not to be retained for any reason after the exam has been administered.

8.3.1.3 Master Copies of Exams

One master copy of each test version with associated answer key shall be kept on file at the OSFM.

8.3.1.4 Destruction

Destruction of test materials shall be documented.

9.0 RECORDS MANAGEMENT

9.1 Confidentiality of Candidate Information

Candidates entering the testing process shall be informed of the guidelines pertaining to confidentiality of candidate information.

9.1.1 Candidate Personal Information

Candidate date of birth and last four of social security number are required for identification and tracking purposes within the OSFM.

9.1.2 Test Scores

By signing the Candidate Application, the candidate authorizes release of test scores to the home unit, instructor and Test Control Officer.

9.1.3 Public Disclosure

Personal information attached to test records will be maintained in accordance with the Public Records Act, chapter 42.56 RCW and other applicable law.

- Administrative or instructional staff may access student/candidate records when the information is required for advisement, record keeping, reporting, or other legitimate interest consistent with their specific duties and responsibilities.
- Officials of local jurisdictions may request the records of their own assigned personnel pursuant to the authorization on the Candidate Application. Records released to the candidate's home unit will reflect the person's name, type and date of training, and the person's pass or fail status (including written score).
- Authorized federal, state or local officials may request as authorized by law.
- Records may be release to comply with a judicial order or a lawfully issued subpoena.

9.2 Test Records

The OSFM shall maintain records of all certification exams to include location, date and level of exam, candidate names, scores and certifications issued. The records shall be maintained in accordance with Washington State retention and/or accrediting body guidelines.

10.0 TEST ADMINISTRATION PERSONNEL PROGRAM

The OSFM shall establish and maintain a program for the selection and training of test proctors and evaluators. A list of current test administration personnel shall be maintained and published by the OSFM.

10.1 Agreement with the OSFM

Test administration personnel must sign an agreement to abide by all OSFM policies and procedures pertaining to the testing process.

10.2 Test Administration Personnel Classifications

Instructor I certification is a prerequisite for all test administration personnel.

10.2.1 Proctor

This is a stand-alone designation for the administration of written exams only.

10.2.1.1 Initial Certification

OSFM approved classroom training
Pass proctor certification exam

10.2.1.2 Recertification

Certification shall expire three years from date of issue. Individuals are responsible to complete the following prior to the expiration date:

OSFM approved refresher training
Pass recertification exam

10.2.2 Evaluator

An impartial professional knowledgeable about and experienced with the components of an evaluation. Evaluators shall be certified at the level(s) which they are evaluating.

10.2.2.1 Initial Certification

OSFM approved classroom training
Pass evaluator certification exam
Task book completed and approved by OSFM

10.2.2.2 Recertification

Certification shall expire three years from date of issue. Individuals are responsible to complete the following prior to the expiration date:

A minimum of six evaluations

10.2.2.3 Adding Levels

Requests to evaluate at additional levels may only be submitted at the time of recertification.

10.2.3 Senior Evaluator (SE)

A qualified evaluator with supervisory and site management responsibilities. Senior evaluators shall be certified at the level(s) which they are acting as senior evaluator.

10.2.3.1 Initial Certification

OSFM approved classroom training

Pass senior evaluator certification exam
Serve 3 years as an Evaluator
Task book completed and approved by OSFM at recommendation of Technical Advisory Group (TAG)

10.2.3.2 Recertification

Certification shall expire three years from date of issue. Individuals are responsible to complete the following prior to the expiration date:

OSFM approved refresher training
Pass recertification exam
A minimum of three evaluations

10.2.3.3 Adding Levels

Requests to evaluate at additional levels may only be submitted at the time of recertification.

10.2.4 Test Control Officer (TCO)

A qualified senior evaluator with overall responsibility for test and site management. Test control officers shall be certified at the level(s) which they are acting as TCO.

10.2.4.1 Initial Certification

OSFM approved classroom training
Pass TCO certification exam
Serve 3 years as a Senior Evaluator
Task book completed and approved by OSFM at recommendation of TAG

10.2.4.2 Recertification

Certification shall expire three years from date of issue. Individuals are responsible to complete the following prior to the expiration date:

OSFM approved refresher training
Pass recertification exam
A minimum of two performance evaluations by another TCO
A minimum of two performance evaluations of another TCO

10.2.4.3 Adding Levels

Requests to evaluate at additional levels may only be submitted at the time of recertification.

10.2.5 Temporary Appointments

The OSFM reserves the right to appoint test administration personnel at any level on a temporary basis as needed.

10.3 Previously Approved Test Administration Personnel

The following policies shall apply to current test administration personnel with a signed agreement on file with the OSFM prior to June 1, 2013.

10.3.1 Instructor I Prerequisite

Individuals that do not have Instructor I certification will have until January 1, 2014 to obtain the certification. If certification is not obtained by this date, the individual will be removed from the Test Administration Personnel Program until they do so.

10.3.2 Certification Requirement

Individuals must comply with the requirement to be certified at the level(s) in which they are acting as test administration personnel.

10.3.3 Initial Certification

As of June 1, 2012, individuals desiring to change classifications will be required to follow the initial certification process for the desired classification as outlined above.

10.3.4 Recertification

As of June 1, 2014, all individuals will be required to follow the 3-year recertification cycle as outlined above.

10.4 Ongoing Evaluation

Test administration personnel are subject to ongoing evaluation. A rating sheet shall be completed on each evaluator and senior evaluator for every practical skills test.

10.5 Ethics in Testing

Test administration personnel shall not serve as evaluators for the skill they have taught to the candidate(s) without prior approval of the OSFM. Written certification exams shall not be proctored by the instructor(s) involved in training the candidate.

10.6 Discipline

Test administration personnel are subject to the disciplinary policy as outlined in 5.3 Test Personnel Discipline.

11.0 DELEGATION OF AUTHORITY

As the accredited entity in Washington State, the OSFM has the authority to delegate any and all certification testing responsibilities to other entities within its jurisdictional boundaries.

11.1 Sub-Accreditation Criteria

All sub-accredited entities with delegated authority shall maintain compliance with Washington State accreditation criteria.

11.2 Authority

Sub-accredited entities may be granted authority, all or in part, as described below for the purposes of certification testing.

11.2.1 Levels

Entities may only apply for sub-accreditation for levels which the OSFM is accredited.

11.2.2 Jurisdiction

Entities shall operate only within their jurisdictional boundaries or where they have both mutual aid agreements and contiguous boundaries.

11.2.3 Test Bank Management

Test banks purchased or created by a sub-accredited entity shall be correlated to the NFPA or Washington State standards utilizing approved correlation sheets, if available, for the level of certification being validated. Questions shall be reviewed and analyzed by the entity and a committee of subject matter experts. Each question shall include a reference to the standard being measured and to the reference source.

11.2.4 Test Administration

There are no parts of an exam that are weighted.

11.2.5 Issuance of Certification

The OSFM retains the responsibility for issuing certification and appropriate recognition from the accrediting bodies.

11.3 Requirements

11.3.1 Policies

The sub-accredited entity shall sign an agreement with the OSFM to comply with the policies as set forth in this manual.

11.3.2 Audit

A representative designated by the OSFM shall be permitted to observe any testing process so long as the sub-accredited entity receives notice of intent to observe the test at least forty-eight (48) hours prior to the test.

11.3.3 Site Visit

Entities are subject to a site visit by the OSFM on a 5-year cycle.

11.3.4 Reporting

Entities shall provide reports as required or requested by the accredited bodies or OSFM.

11.3.5 Test Administration Personnel

Entities shall utilize test personnel approved by the OSFM.