



# **FIRE SERVICE INSTRUCTOR**

## **CERTIFICATION DIRECTIVE**

*(NFPA 1041 2012 Edition)*

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# AFSC FIRE SERVICE INSTRUCTOR CERTIFICATION DIRECTIVE

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## INSTRUCTOR DIRECTIVE OVERVIEW

The basis for the Fire Service Instructor (FSI) certification directive is industry standards and was developed by the AFSC to provide Alaska fire service agencies with a method to obtain the knowledge and skills necessary to provide high quality training to emergency responders within their organizations. The reference for the directive is the [NFPA 1041 Standard](#), *Fire Service Instructor Professional Qualifications*. The intent of this material is to improve the quality of established training programs and ensure delivery is proficient, professional, and uniform throughout the State of Alaska.

The International Fire Service Accreditation Congress ([IFSAAC](#)) accredits the Alaska Fire Standards Council ([AFSC](#)) to provide certification for Fire Service Instructor I, II and III. Training for each level is typically available through the [Bureau of Fire Accreditation, Standards and Training](#) (BFAST) accredited programs. AFSC certifications acquired for level IV were from a previous program, and only individuals currently certified at level IV are eligible for renewal at this level.

Certification for Fire Service Instructor levels require that individuals meet AFSC application requirements and complete the following elements:

- 1) A Fire Service Instructor (FSI) course specific to the level of certification; *and*
- 2) Successful evaluation of practical job performance requirements (JPR's) specific to the level of certification; *and*
- 3) Successful completion of the AFSC Fire Service Instructor written examination (70% minimum score) specific to the level of certification.

The AFSC uses the administration of a final examination to evaluate that applicants have met the requisite knowledge and skill requirements within the NFPA standard. Applicants that successfully complete the AFSC Fire Service Instructor examination process are eligible for certification. Certification for levels of Fire Service Instructor may available through a reciprocity process.

## LEVELS OF CERTIFICATION

The basis for the original Alaska Fire Service Instructor program was the 1992 edition of NFPA 1041 Fire Service Instructor Professional Qualifications. In the 1996 edition, the NFPA removed Level IV and reorganized the other instructor qualification levels. Currently the AFSC instructor certification directive follows the 2012 edition of NFPA 1041. The current edition of NFPA 1041 does not list Level IV, but renewal at this level is still available through the AFSC for individuals previously certified at Level IV that have maintained certification at that level.

### **AFSC Fire Service Instructor Certification Levels:**

**Instructor I:** (*NFPA 1041 2012 ed., 3.3.2.1*): An individual who has demonstrated the knowledge and ability to deliver instruction effectively from a prepared lesson plan, including instructional aids and evaluation instruments; adapt lesson plans to the unique requirements of the students and authority having jurisdiction; organize the learning environment so that learning is maximized; and meet the record-keeping requirements of authority having jurisdiction.

**Instructor II:** (*NFPA 1041 2012 ed., 3.3.2.2*): An individual who has met the requirements for FSI Level I qualifications, and has demonstrated the knowledge and ability to develop individual lesson plans for a specific topic including learning objectives, instructional aids, and evaluation instruments; schedule training sessions based on overall training plan of authority having jurisdiction; and supervise and coordinate the activities of other instructors.

**Instructor III:** (*NFPA 1041 2012 ed., 3.3.2.3*): An individual who has met the requirements for FSI Level II qualifications, and has demonstrated the knowledge and ability to develop comprehensive training curricula and

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programs for use by single or multiple organizations; conduct organization needs analysis; and develop training goals and implementation strategies.

## FIRE SERVICE INSTRUCTOR CERTIFICATION REQUIREMENTS

### Instructor I

To qualify for this level of certification, applicants must:

- a. be at least 18 years of age, and;
- b. applicant must be an Alaska resident or member of an organized fire department/emergency response organization registered with the Division of Fire and Life Safety, and;  
\*successfully complete a BFAST approved Level I Fire Service Instructor course, and;
- c. \*successfully complete the AFSC written FSI I exam with a minimum score of 70% and pass the required practical skills.  
*\*Note: The course requirement and the written test requirement must be completed within **three years** of application date and must meet NFPA 1041 core requirements.*

### Instructor II

To qualify for this level of certification, applicants must:

- a. be an AFSC certified Level I, and;
- b. \*successfully complete a BFAST approved Level II FSI course, and;
- c. \*successfully complete the AFSC written exam with a score of 70% or higher and pass the required practical skills.  
*\*Note: The course requirement and the written test requirement must be completed within **three years** of application date and must meet NFPA 1041 core requirements.*

### Instructor III

To qualify for this level of certification, applicants must:

- a. be an AFSC certified Level II instructor, and;
- b. \*successfully complete a BFAST approved Level III FSI course, and;
- c. \*successfully complete the AFSC written exam with a score of 70% or higher and pass the required practical skills.  
*\*Note: The course requirement and the written test requirement must be completed within **three years** of application date and must meet NFPA 1041 core requirements.*

## FIRE SERVICE INSTRUCTOR COURSES

For eligibility to complete Fire Service Instructor certification examinations applicants must have completed a AFSC approved training course. Training courses are offered through BFAST, or, through fire department training programs that have been accredited by BFAST before the course start date. The National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) 1041, *Standard for Fire Service Instructor Professional Qualifications*, is the basis for certification examinations. A level I course must meet the knowledge and skill requirements for chapter 4, a Level II course must meet the knowledge and skill requirements for chapter 5, and a Level III course must meet the knowledge and skill requirements for chapter 6. Fire departments or organizations conducting a BFAST approved course must follow the requirements of the Training Program Accreditation Manual.

### Alternative to FSI Courses

In addition to courses accredited under the BFAST, the AFSC recognizes a number of other courses and/or certifications. For eligibility to test for FSI, completion of an approved course must be within the last 3 years, and/or the corresponding certificate must be valid at the time of AFSC [Application for Certification](#). Applicants requesting recognition of FSI training for any other course must provide the AFSC with course documentation and curriculum when submitting an [Application for Certification](#). AFSC approved courses and certifications are:

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- Alaska Police Standards Council MOI course/certification recognition
- Alaska Emergency Medical Services Section MOI course/certification recognition
- National Fire Academy course – Fire Service Course Design (R129)– Level II only (must have AFSC FSI I to challenge level II written examination)
- Current Alaska EMT or Paramedic Instructor Certification

*The above courses/certifications meet the requirements for eligibility to test for the Fire Service Instructor under the Equivalency Challenge section of this document.*

### FIRE SERVICE INSTRUCTOR EXAMINATIONS

The Fire Standards Council has a validated written examination test bank for each level of certification. Each FSI examination contains 100 questions. Test bank questions reference NFPA 1041 *Standard for Fire Service Instructor Professional Qualifications*, 2012 edition. Fire Service Instructor certification examinations are typically administered immediately following an AFSC approved course. For certificate issuance, written examinations must be completed with a score of 70% or higher. There is a two-hour time limit for the final written examination.

The AFSC office will grade all certification examinations and notify the applicant of final scores.

#### **Fire Service Instructor I, II & III Written Examination References**

- a. NFPA 1041, *Standard for Fire Service Instructor Professional Qualifications*, 2012 Edition
- b. Text/Curriculum (either of the following)
  - IFSTA, *Fire and Emergency Services Instructor*, 8th Edition; **OR**,
  - Jones & Bartlett, *Fire Service Instructor: Principles and Practice*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition

#### **Fire Service Instructor Practical Skills Evaluation References**

- a. NFPA 1041, *Standard for Fire Service Instructor Professional Qualifications*, 2012 Edition

See each level of [Fire Service Instructor Practical Skills Evaluation Sheets](#)

### RECIPROCITY/EQUIVALENCY CHALLENGE

Refer to the AFSC [Certification Policy Manual](#) for the requirements under each of these processes.

### FIRE SERVICE INSTRUCTOR CERTIFICATION TIME LINES

In recognition of NFPA 1041, section 1.3.7, the AFSC supports maintaining professional competency through continuing education, instructional development, and delivery associated with fire instruction skills. The AFSC renewal guidelines ensure that individuals retain core knowledge and skills related to instruction.

All AFSC Fire Service Instructor certifications are valid for up to 5 calendar years. The certified individual is ultimately responsible for monitoring his or her certification expiration date. For FSI renewal, an individual must submit an [Application for Certification](#) and renewal documents prior to the expiration date listed his or her certificate. Renewal must be complete within one year of expiration or renewal requirements are applied.

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## INSTRUCTOR RENEWAL REQUIREMENTS

### Fire Service Instructor Certificate Renewal- All levels

A Fire Service Instructor can renew instructor certification by providing documentation under item 1 *and* 2 as follows:

1. Documentation of instructional learning or delivery
  - a. Documentation that an individual instructed, or performed as a certifying officer, at least 8 classroom/field hours each year of the \*5-year certification period (40 hours).
  - b. Documentation of attendance at 1 or more courses annually totaling 8 classroom/field hours each year of the \*5-year certification (40 hours) with primary objectives that meet the following criteria:
    - i. address instructional techniques;
    - ii. are train-the-trainer for learning instruction of new courses
    - iii. apply specifically to advanced fire service instructor
  - c. Any combination of **a** and **b** above equivalent to 8 hours in each year over the \*5-year certification period (total of 40 hours). Beginning in January of 2015 the total hourly renewal requirement will start at 8 hours (as required in previous directive) and will increase by 8 hours every year until 2019. The full 40 hours of instruction or delivery time will apply beginning January 1, 2019.

*\*The AFSC will allow a carryover of up to 16 hours from one year to the next.*

2. Submit an Instructor Evaluation packet completed by a current AFSC Fire Service Instructor. An individual must complete the evaluation within one-year of the application submittal date.

*\*Note: For item "2", the AFSC has an [Instructor Renewal Packet](#) available online. The evaluation portion must be filled out by an instructor with current AFSC FSI certification, and the complete packet must be returned to the AFSC to comply with the renewal requirements.*

The AFSC FSI certificate expiration date is 5-years from the date of an applicant's initial examination for certification. For renewal applications, the expiration date will be 5-years from the date of the renewal application approval.

### Instructor Certification Expired More Than 12 Months

The individual must complete a written exam for each level up to highest level of previous AFSC certification with a minimum score of 70%, **AND** documentation under item 1 *and* 2 as follows:

1. Documentation of instructional learning or delivery
  - a. Documentation that an individual instructed, or performed as a certifying officer, at least 8 classroom/field hours each year of the \*5-year certification period (40 hours).
  - b. Documentation of attendance at 1 or more courses annually totaling 8 classroom/field hours each year of the \*5-year certification (40 hours) with primary objectives that meet the following criteria:
    - i. address instructional techniques;
    - ii. are train-the-trainer for learning instruction of new courses
    - iii. apply specifically to advanced fire service instructor
  - c. Any combination of **a** and **b** above equivalent to 8 hours in each year over the \*5-year certification period (total of 40 hours). Beginning in January of 2015 the total hourly renewal requirement will start at 8 hours (as required in previous directive) and will increase by 8 hours every year until 2019. The full 40 hours of instruction or delivery time will apply beginning January 1, 2019.

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## BACKGROUND CHECKS

A background check is not required for certification as a Fire Service Instructor.

## INSTRUCTOR RELATED COURSES

Periodically, the AFSC conducts Certifying Officer Workshops to assist Training Program Managers, Training Officers, and Fire Service Instructors with the management of courses that result in certification testing. These workshops are generally 4– 8 hours in length and attendance is applicable towards renewal requirements.

Other applicable courses can include attendance at Fire Department Instructor Conference (FDIC) and training classes with objectives that:

- a. address instructional techniques; or,
- b. are train-the-trainer for learning instruction of new courses; or,
- c. apply specifically to advanced fire service instructor techniques or education

The AFSC will utilize designated committee members and/or the Executive Board to determine acceptance of attendance certificates that do not explicitly state that it meets the above requirements.

## PREVIOUS ALASKA FIRE SERVICE INSTRUCTOR CERTIFICATION/GRANDFATHER CERTIFICATION

The Alaska Fire Standards Council recognizes State of Alaska fire service instructor certifications that have not expired. Due to ongoing changes with NFPA fire service instructor certification standards the grandfather request for IFSAC seals are not available. This clause does not prohibit an individual that was certified in Alaska prior to 2001 from receiving an IFSAC seal. Individual IFSAC seal requests for a certificate issued before 2012 will be required to successfully complete a current written and practical examination before he/she is issued a certificate with an IFSAC seal.

## Frequently Asked Questions

The following information is provided to explain the details of AFSC certification process for all Fire Service Instructor levels.

### **How do I begin the Fire Service Instructor Certification process?**

Contact your local fire department training officer and/or contact the Bureau of Fire Accreditation, Standards and Training. For eligibility to take the written examination an individual must complete the Fire Service Instructor requirements, as defined by NFPA 1041: *Fire Service Instructor Professional Qualifications*.

### **Does a person have to be a certified Firefighter before they can qualify for instructor certification?**

There is no requirement that an applicant be certified as an AFSC firefighter before beginning instructor training, but the AFSC expects that an individual will have basic experience in the field they are instructing. That is the reason this requirement includes 3-years of experience with a recognized/organized fire department or an emergency response organization.

### **I am a certified Fire Service Instructor from another state. Can I get certified in Alaska?**

Yes, as long as you meet the AFSC reciprocity requirements. Under the AFSC reciprocity process the expiration is based on the initial IFSAC/ProBoard date of issuance. When original issuance was greater than 5-years prior to the AFSC application date the reciprocity request may be approved, but the AFSC certificate will expire on December 31 of the year reciprocity was granted. An application for reciprocity can include the completed

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Sheet B and C from instructor renewal packet to ensure the expiration period is the full 5-years. See the [Instructor Evaluation Packet](#) for details.

### **I am a Police or EMS instructor. Do I automatically qualify for Fire Service Instructor?**

No. An individual must meet the AFSC Fire Service Instructor requirements for eligibility to complete a certification examination.

### **Can an individual complete a Fire Service Instructor as a home study course and then take the AFSC examination for certification?**

No. An individual is required to complete a BFAST approved course. Certification as a Fire Service Instructor includes practical job performance requirements that the individual must successfully complete under an approved course prior to eligibility to test for an AFSC examination.

### **Can a person begin at Level II or are they required be a Level I instructor first?**

An individual must be certified at Fire Service Instructor I for eligibility to test for Level II.

### **Does the AFSC recognize specialty instructor recognition for levels not otherwise listed in NFPA 1041?**

Yes. The AFSC may establish criterion for levels of certification that are not identified in the NFPA 1041 standard. Currently the AFSC has additional instructor criteria within the [Rapid Intervention Crew Directive](#) and Live Fire Training Instructor Directive.

## **Frequently Asked Questions on the Instructor Renewal Process**

### **My IFSAC certification does not expire, why does it expire under the Alaska Fire Standards Council certification process?**

NFPA 1041: Fire Service Instructor Professional Qualifications (2012) section 1.3.7 states that “*fire service instructor shall maintain professional competency through professional development*”. The Alaska Fire Standards Council renewal process provides a methodology to ensure that AFSC certified fire service instructors have an established directive to ensure minimum job performance requirements are maintained in accordance with current industry standards.

### **How long is my Fire Service Instructor certification valid?**

For initial AFSC certification issuance and AFSC renewals, the individual expiration date is 5-years from the date of issuance.

### **How do I know when my certificate expires?**

Expiration dates are listed on all FSI certificates and are the official renewal date. You can also log into your account on [IMPACT](#) to view your certification transcript page.

### **How many hours do I have to actively instruct within my 5-year AFSC certification period?**

The AFSC revised the hourly renewal requirement in January of 2015 from 8 to 40 hours over a 5-year period. The AFSC also expanded recognition for continuing education credit for classes attended to include time for courses/classes that a certified instructor has taught. The AFSC requires that individuals complete a minimum of 8-hours annually (for FSI attendance or delivery) during a 5-year certification period. In 2015 there was an 8-hour minimum requirement, and this increases by 8-hours every year until 2019. The minimum FSI annual hourly renewals are as follows:

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- January 1, 2017- 24 total hours
- January 1, 2018- 32 total hours
- After January 1, 2019- 40 total hours

### **Do I have to attend a fire service instructor class or workshop each year to qualify for renewal?**

An instructor can accrue hours through attendance of a fire service instructor class or workshop or by delivery of training as an instructor.

### **Does that mean I have to have a combination of 80 hours of continuing education every time I renew?**

No, you may have any combination of instructional delivery hours and attendance of a fire service instructor class or workshops to meet the total 40 hour requirement.

### **Can I do all 40 hours in one class or in one year?**

No. The intent is that you are keeping up and staying relevant with your learning/instruction each year. Teaching one 40 hour class in 5 years will not meet the requirement. See the instructor renewal requirements for details.

### **Can I count any of my hours from one year to the next?**

Yes, you can roll up to 16 hours over from one year to the next.

### **Does teaching many short classes up to 8 hours a year count?**

Yes.

### **I am a Certifying Officer for the AFSC, do my CO hours count toward my renewal?**

Yes.

### **Who is considered a *qualified evaluator* for the [Instructor Evaluation Packet](#)?**

A qualified evaluator is defined as a current Fire Service Instructor AFSC certified at any level.

### **Does the person that does my evaluation have to have the same level of instructor certification as I do?**

No, but they must have a current AFSC FSI certification.

### **What if I am retired from the fire service, how can I still renew my certification if I am not in a fire department?**

Yes, as long as you are an Alaska resident.