

Kansas National Certification Program

November 2009



National Certification Criteria and Procedures



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1.0 Kansas Fire & Rescue Training Institute University of Kansas Certification System Overview

1.1 Forward

In January of 1980, the Kansas Fire & Rescue Training Institute of the University of Kansas was accredited as one of the nation's first certifying agencies, by the National Professional Qualifications Board (NPQB), for the fire service. This accreditation verified that the Kansas Fire & Rescue Training Institute met the standards of the NPQB and allowed individuals who were trained in Kansas to apply for national certification.

In October of 1991, the Kansas Fire & Rescue Training Institute applied for (and received) accreditation from the International Fire Service Accreditation Congress (IFSAC). Through these accreditation entities, Kansas fire fighters and allied professionals may receive both NPQB and IFSAC national certification upon passing one certification examination. Accreditation by both entities extends the benefit of true national certification to every fire fighter in the state of Kansas. National certification in Kansas is not intended to supersede any federal, state or local laws, ordinances or department policies.

Certification in Kansas is voluntary. Candidates seeking certification must meet the criteria established within the accreditation system including meeting the appropriate National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) standards as well as being tested for competency.

Certification is not necessarily a means of determining who shall participate in the practice or profession of fire fighting and its related activities. A lack of certification does not necessarily mean that the individual is unqualified to participate in fire fighting and related activities. It is only an indication that the individual has not applied for, or fulfilled the requirements of certification.

Certification does provide a demonstration of dedication and effort to the public, as well as the fire service. Certification also provides individual fire fighters with a reward and acknowledgment for their training efforts. Further, certification provides documentation that an individual fire fighter has demonstrated a level of proficiency established by a national consensus.

The Kansas Fire & Rescue Training Institute stands ready to assist any fire fighter or allied professional in reaching their training and certification goals. Certification criteria and procedure documents are available to explain the certification process for each area in which certification is offered. Certification guides are available to assist fire fighters through the certification process.

1.2 Equal Access

Appointment, promotion, admission, and programs at the University of Kansas are administered equally to all without regard to race, color, creed, sex, national origin, disability, religion, age, or veteran status. In addition, university policies prohibit discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation, marital status, and parental status. The Kansas Fire & Rescue Training Institute is operated in accordance with the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and the Equal Opportunity Act as well as other federal and state laws, regulations and guidelines which prohibit discrimination. If you have questions or comments regarding the certification, training or other services provided by the Kansas Fire & Rescue Training Institute, please call toll free 866-804-8841.

Accreditation by NPQB or IFSAC shall not affect the current certification status of any individual. Persons previously certified by NPQB or IFSAC will be recognized for those certifications held and will be allowed to fully participate in the Kansas Fire & Rescue Training Institute accreditation system.

2.0 Scope of Training

2.1 Mission Statement

The mission of the Kansas Fire & Rescue Training Institute is to train fire fighters for Kansas communities.

2.2 Purpose

The Kansas Fire & Rescue Training Institute as unit of the University of Kansas, Continuing Education, provides technical support and high quality programs that enable the fire fighter and allied professionals of Kansas to achieve certification based on levels of competency as outlined in nationally recognized and adopted standards.

3.0 The Kansas Fire & Rescue Training Institute as the Certification Entity

3.1 Certification Authority

The Kansas Fire & Rescue Training Institute is designated by the Kansas Legislature as the entity in the state of Kansas to manage and deliver training and certification programs for the Kansas fire service. The Kansas Fire & Rescue Training Institute is proud of its service record to the fire fighters and fire departments of Kansas. The Kansas Fire & Rescue Training Institute is committed to continuing this long tradition of delivering high quality training and certification.

3.2 Accreditation by IFSAC and NPQB

The Kansas Fire & Rescue Training Institute is accredited by the International Fire Service Accreditation Congress and the National Professional Qualifications Board to certify fire service personnel to accepted national standards. Through this process, Kansas fire fighters and allied professionals achieve national certification.

This accreditation of the Kansas Fire & Rescue Training Institute certification system assures Kansas fire service personnel and allied professionals that programs and standards used within this system adhere to the most current recognized national standards. The assurances gained through the accreditation process provide credibility and prestige for every fire fighter participating in the certification process. Fire fighters certified through the Kansas system are recognized throughout the United States (and the world) as qualified and meeting the standards set forth by the National Fire Protection Association. Generally speaking, accreditation provides the Kansas Fire & Rescue Training Institute with the necessary credentials to issue National Certification for fire fighters within Kansas.

3.3 National Certification

After participants have successfully completed an objective evaluation process, within the Kansas Fire & Rescue Training Institute certification system, national certification is awarded. The candidate's name is entered in the Kansas Fire & Rescue Training Institute certification system data bank as well as the national certification data banks maintained by the International Fire Service Accreditation Congress at Oklahoma State University. With the payment of the required fee to the National Professional Qualification Board in Quincy, Massachusetts the candidate's name will also be entered in that data bank.

4.0 Certification Study Guides

4.1 Availability of Certification Study Guides

The Kansas Fire & Rescue Training Institute publishes a certification study guide for each level and category of certification offered. Certification study guides contain pertinent information designed to assist candidates in preparing for the certification process. Certification study guides may be downloaded at no cost by accessing the certification page of the website: <http://www.continuinged.ku.edu/fire/certification.php>

They may also be requested in hard copy by contacting the office at toll free 866-804-8841.

4.2 Specific Information

The Kansas Fire & Rescue Training Institute also provides specific information on:

1. Objectives and requirements for certification.
2. Reference lists that will help candidates locate the proper study materials.
3. Certification Application Forms.
4. Project assignments.
5. Other information that will assist in preparing for certification.

5.0 Certification System

5.1 Certification Standards

The International Fire Service Accreditation Congress and the National Professional Qualifications Board adopt standards for certification. Standards contained within the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) are used by the entities accredited by these two organizations. To maintain accreditation, entities must certify fire service personnel to the latest edition of the adopted NFPA Standards.

For specific requirements established by the standards, applicants should reference the appropriate NFPA Standard, or Certification Study Guide published by the Kansas Fire & Rescue Training Institute.

5.2 Certification System Integrity

The requirements, criteria, and processes required to obtain accreditation by IFSAC and NPQB help insure the highest possible credibility and stature for participants in the Kansas Fire & Rescue Training Institute certification system. These processes ensure that fire service personnel trained and certified by the Kansas Fire & Rescue Training Institute are among the most highly qualified fire fighters in the world.

5.3 Entrance Into the Certification System

Qualified personnel within the Kansas fire service may enter the certification system for the purpose of seeking certification by contacting the Kansas Fire & Rescue Training Institute. Upon receipt of a request, the staff will forward appropriate information to members of the fire service about any of the levels or categories of certification available.

6.0 Application for Certification

6.1 Obtaining Applications

Applications for each level and category of certification may be obtained from the Kansas Fire & Rescue Training Institute at no cost by dialing toll free 866-804-8841. Application forms may also be downloaded from the certification page of the web site at <http://www.continuinged.ku.edu/fire/certification.php>

6.2 Submitting Applications

Every individual seeking certification within the Kansas Fire & Rescue Training Institute certification system must submit an application and the appropriate fee to secure entrance into the system. Certification applications must be received by the institute office ten (10) days before the scheduled test date.

6.3 Duplication of Application Forms

An application form is included in this document and may be used and/or duplicated at the local level.

6.4 Application Fees

The Kansas Fire & Rescue Training Institute requires the submission of an application and payment of fees prior to certification testing. A list of current fee amounts may be obtained by calling toll free 866-804-8841 or by downloading the document "*National Certification Program Fee Schedule*" from the website. All checks or money orders should be made out to the Kansas Fire & Rescue Training Institute and reflect the exact amount. Purchase orders from cities/organizations will be accepted in-lieu of prior payment. The Kansas Fire & Rescue Training Institute will not "bill" individuals for the certification fee.

6.5 Approved Methods of Payment

Approved methods of payment are:

- Personal Check
- Money Order
- Credit card
- City/Organization Check
- Purchase Order
- Invoice departments/agencies

6.6 Applications Submitted Without Fees

Applications submitted without the appropriate fee or city/organization purchase order will be returned to the applicant. Results of certification tests for these individuals will be held until such time as payment is made.

6.7 Preregistration for Certification Exams

Applicants wishing to submit their application form and fee at the test site must preregister with the Kansas Fire & Rescue Training Institute via telephone (toll free 866-804-8841) prior to the exam.

Applicants may register for an exam site at the time of application by completing the appropriate block on the application form.

6.8 Confirmation of Registration

Upon receipt of the application and fee, the individual will be notified of exam sites (current schedules) or be scheduled into a specific exam site if requested by the candidate.

Candidates requesting a specific test site should contact the Kansas Fire & Rescue Training Institute to confirm that they have a reserved place at the exam.

6.9 Refunding Application Fees

The Kansas Fire & Rescue Training Institute will refund application fees under the following guidelines:

1. Application fees will be refunded only if the individual has not taken any action toward completing certification after submitting his/her application and fee.
2. Any other exceptional requests must be requested in writing and will be considered based upon their merits.

6.10 Application Time Limits

Candidates are given one year to complete the certification process. This time window expires one year from the date the first part of the certification test (written or skills) is initiated.

6.11 Incomplete Certification Process Status

Candidates not completing the certification process within the one-year time window will be

required to submit a new application and certification exam fee. Candidates will also be required to retake the written and practical exam (regardless of the pass/fail status from previous exams) and resubmit homework projects as well as local documentation as required by the certification level.

7.0 Testing Practices and Policies

7.1 General Testing Practices and Policies

All candidates must show an official picture ID for admittance to a written or practical exam.

Certification candidates are given two (2) attempts at each component, written and skills. If the candidate takes either component of the exam two (2) times without passing, the candidate is required to resubmit a certification application form as well as an additional certification fee before being scheduled to retest a third time. This will entitle the candidate to two (2) more attempts at the exam. If the candidate passes one component of the exam, but fails another component two (2) times, upon submitting a new application and fee, the candidate will be required to retest on all components.

7.2 Minimum Criteria for Evaluators and Test Site Coordinators

1. Must have adequate knowledge and skills in the NFPA standard for which they are acting as evaluators.
2. Must understand and be knowledgeable in the evaluation process of the NFPA skill being tested.
3. Shall be certified as Instructor Level I.
4. Shall maintain a current Associate Instructor Status.
4. Shall be approved by the Certification Program Manager.

7.3 Challenging Test Items

Any candidate challenging a test item must do so in writing to the Certification Program Manager. The Certification Program Manager shall review the test item(s) in question, do the appropriate research, and render a decision. If appropriate, the candidate's test score will be adjusted and the test bank will be corrected.

The same will apply to any other special circumstance that may arise during a test.

8.0 Written Exam Policies

8.1 Written Exams

Written exams will consist of an appropriate number of questions necessary to test the knowledge requirements of the applicable standard. The total number of questions on the written exam will depend on the certification level being tested. Written exam questions may be composed of multiple choice, true/false, labeling diagrams, and matching questions.

8.2 Minimum Passing Score

The minimum passing score on written exams is 70%. Each exam will be based on the NFPA standard and constructed from a bank of test questions maintained by the Kansas Fire & Rescue Training Institute.

Candidates will be allowed a maximum of two (2) attempts on the written exam. The candidate may only sit for one written exam per standard per day. The Kansas Fire & Rescue Training Institute will utilize a variety of exam versions to insure no candidate takes the same version of the written exam more than once, i.e., test and retest .

8.3 Maximum Time Allowance

The maximum time limits are calculated at 30 minutes per 25 questions contained on the exam. The time limits for written exams are:

1. Fifty (50) question exam: One (1) hour
2. One-hundred (100) question exam: Two (2) hours
3. One-hundred fifty (150) question exam: Three (3) hours

8.4 Request for Accommodation

The Kansas Fire & Rescue Training Institute is committed to providing programs and activities to all persons, regardless of race, religion, color, national origin, ancestry, sex, age, disability, or veteran status. In addition, university policies prohibit discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation, marital status, and parental status.

Documentation of the diagnosis, and a request for accommodation, must be submitted in writing to the Kansas Fire & Rescue Training Institute at least two weeks prior to the exam. The submitted diagnosis shall be determined by a physician or qualified professional. Contact the Kansas Fire & Rescue Training Institute for more information.

8.5 Written Exam Retests

Candidates failing the written exam are responsible for notifying the Kansas Fire & Rescue Training Institute of their desire to retest and enroll at the next scheduled exam that has available space. Candidates may not take the written exam more than once per day. With the exception of “same day” retesting prohibition, there are no mandatory waiting periods between attempts.

9.0 Practical Skills Performance Policies

9.1 Practical Skills Performance Exam

Candidates are responsible for **all of the skills** required by the applicable standard during the practical exam. An exact list of specific skills can be found in the appropriate certification study guide published by the Kansas Fire & Rescue Training Institute.

9.2 Variable Number of Skills Tested for Each NFPA Standard

The exact number of skills tested for each NFPA Standard may vary by certification level. The number of skills to be tested is listed in the appropriate certification study guide. Due to the large number of skills required by some NFPA standards, all skills of a large standard may not be tested at each exam site. Candidates should be prepared to test on any skill outlined in the standard for which they seek certification. The intent of this process is to insure that candidates are prepared to test on all skills required by an NFPA standard.

9.3 Prior Knowledge of Practical Skills to be Tested

The practical skills to be tested will not be revealed to candidates or to exam evaluators prior to the exam. This policy is to prevent prior knowledge by the candidates.

9.4 Practical Skills Pass/Fail Criteria

Practical skill exams are graded on a pass/fail basis. Through the design of the evaluation checklists, components of the skills will be strictly evaluated. Candidates must successfully complete all skill stations tested at an exam site to receive a passing grade for the skill exam.

9.5 Attempts Per Practical Skills Station

Each candidate is allowed two (2) attempts at each station. Candidates will be given the opportunity to repeat a skill station that they did not successfully complete. Candidates will not be informed, by the evaluator assigned to the skill station, if they have passed or failed the second attempt at the station.

The following information will be provided confidentially to the each candidate upon completion of the practical skills exam by the Test Site Coordinator:

- (1) That all stations have been passed (**or**)
- (2) Which station(s) the candidate failed.

9.6 Practical Exam Retest

The Kansas Fire & Rescue Training Institute does not automatically schedule retests for candidates who fail the practical exam. Candidates failing the practical exam are responsible for notifying the Kansas Fire & Rescue Training Institute of their desire to retest by preregistering for another regularly scheduled exam. Candidates may not take the practical exam more than once per day. With the exception of “same day” prohibition on retesting, there are no mandatory waiting periods between attempts. Candidates retesting on the practical exam must retake the entire practical exam (as randomly selected for the test site at which they are retesting). No candidate will be allowed to retest only on the skill they failed at the previous exam.

10.0 Policy Concerning Projects

10.1 Evaluation of Requirements Utilizing Standard Projects

Some of the requirements for certain standards cannot be adequately evaluated through traditional methods. Specifically, these objectives relate to local policies, procedures and actions. These requirements may be evaluated by requiring candidates to complete an assigned individual project.

10.2 Assignment of Projects

The need for a project is dictated solely by the requirements of the standard. The assigned project may be submitted for evaluation by the Kansas Fire & Rescue Training Institute staff, any time after the certification process has begun.

10.3 Documentation of Local Procedures and/or Regulations

If the certification test involves local procedures or regulations, a copy of those regulations or procedures must be submitted if requested by the Kansas Fire & Rescue Training Institute.

Documentation of compliance in these cases is executed via the Local Verification Form. This form is attested to and signed by the candidate's first Chief Officer in his or her chain of command. For those candidates tested at community colleges, this form is attested to and signed by the candidate's primary instructor.

If required, the Local Verification Form is included in the appropriate Certification Study Guide. Additionally, the Local Verification Form is available for download from the web site.

Completed Local Verification Forms must be submitted prior to final certification being granted.

10.4 Timely Completion of Assigned Projects

Any assigned project must be completed within the one-year window of certification and prior to final certification being granted.

10.5 Projects Retests

Candidates failing a project will be assigned a retest project. It will be mailed to the candidate along with the notification of failure. The candidate must submit the project retest within the twelve-month certification window.

10.6 Assigned Project Security

The project version assigned to a candidate will be assigned upon receipt of the project at the test site. Candidates will not be allowed to choose the project version they will complete, nor will the assigned version be revealed beforehand.

11.0 Notification of Certification Exam Results

11.1 Processing Exam Results

After candidates have completed the exam process, the Kansas Fire & Rescue Training Institute begins the process of scoring and processing the test results. As soon as grading, processing and documentation are complete, the results are sent to the candidate via U.S. Mail or the candidate may appear in person at the Kansas Fire & Rescue Training Institute, show official picture ID, and receive the results.

11.2 Confidentiality of Exam Results

To insure confidentiality, certification exam results will not be released on the telephone, FAX or other electronic mechanisms. Test results should be received by the candidates within 10 – 20 **working** days of the exam. If candidates do not receive their test results within 20 **working** days, they should call the Kansas Fire & Rescue Training Institute. Exam scores will still not be released on the phone, but a trace of the delay of notification will begin and the test candidate will be contacted in a timely manner to be given an explanation of the delay.

11.3 Completion of the Certification Process

After participants have successfully completed an objective evaluation process, within the Kansas Fire & Rescue Training Institute certification system, national certification is awarded. The candidate's name is entered in the Kansas Fire & Rescue Training Institute certification system data bank as well as the national certification data banks maintained by the International Fire Service Accreditation Congress at Oklahoma State University. With the payment of the required fee to the National Professional Qualification Board in Quincy, Massachusetts, the candidate's name will also be entered in that data bank.

12.0 Certification Policies

12.1 Residency and Membership

Any person seeking certification within the Kansas Fire & Rescue Training Institute certification system must meet the following requirements:

1. Must be at least 18 years of age on the date of the certification test.
2. Be a current member of a Kansas fire, emergency, rescue or allied professional organization.
3. Must be a resident of the state of Kansas or live in a border area and serve on one of the organizations listed in item 2. Residency is not required if the candidate is a member of the armed services of the United States and is on active duty.
4. Students enrolled in fire service college programs who are over 18 years of age may apply for certification in those content areas that are applicable to their course of study.

Special exceptions to the residence and fire department/rescue membership requirements may be granted on an individual basis. Individuals not meeting requirements who desire certification should submit their requests for exceptions to the Kansas Fire & Rescue Training Institute's Certification Program Manager.

12.2 Specific Requirements Criteria and Procedures

Each category and level of certification available through the Kansas Fire & Rescue Training Institute's certification system has specific requirements based on the appropriate NFPA standard. Information on requirements for each level and category of certification is published by the Kansas Fire & Rescue Training Institute in a certification study guide for that level. This document is available at no cost from the institute.

12.3 Denial or Revocation of Certification

The Kansas Fire & Rescue Training Institute may deny or revoke an individual's certification if that individual:

1. Submits false information to the Kansas Fire & Rescue Training Institute.
2. Fails to successfully complete all elements of certification for the indicated standard within a one year time period.
3. Cheats during any part of the evaluation process.

4. Fails to make payment of certification exam fee to KFRTI.

13.0 Conduct

13.1 Cheating and Unethical Conduct

National certification is a major milestone to be achieved by members of the nation's fire service. Once received, national certification provides independent verification of an individual's competence and professional dedication. By awarding certification, the Kansas Fire & Rescue Training Institute validates an individual's efforts and backs that certification with the full weight and prestige of the University of Kansas. For those reasons, the Kansas Fire & Rescue Training Institute takes the issue of cheating and unethical conduct very seriously.

13.2 Cheating During the Exam Process

Any candidate who is caught cheating on any element of the examination process will:

1. Be denied certification.
2. Be immediately expelled from the current certification process and any other certification category or levels in which they have active files.
3. Forfeit all certification fees paid prior to that point.
4. Not be allowed to apply for any certification for a period of one year.

13.3 Additional Considerations on Cheating and Unethical Conduct

It is impossible to list all of the actions that might be considered cheating or unethical conduct without missing some of them. Common actions are talking with other candidates during a written exam for the purpose of soliciting or giving an answer, copying or modifying another person's project/homework and submitting it as your own.

Perhaps the best way to summarize how to avoid being accused of cheating or unethical conduct is to always do your own work, and do what you know to be professional and right.

No exceptions to this rule will be granted.

14.0 Due Process

14.1 Entitlement to Due Process

If certification is denied or revoked, the individual is entitled to due process, including appeal and hearing. Any person believing that they have not received fair treatment within the certification process is entitled to the appeal process.

14.2 Appeal Process

The first step in the appeal process is for the individual to contact the Certification Program Manager at the Kansas Fire & Rescue Training Institute. This step of the appeal process must be in writing and must be received by the Kansas Fire & Rescue Training Institute at Lawrence within 30 days of the action being appealed. The Certification Program Manager must respond in writing within 30 days of reception.

The second step is an appeal in writing by the candidate to the Kansas Fire & Rescue Training Institute's Certification Appeal Review Committee within 30 days of the Certification Manager's decision. The Certification Appeal Review Committee consists of the Kansas Fire & Rescue Training Institute professional staff, a representative of the University of Kansas Continuing Education (chairperson), a representative from the State Fire Marshal's Office, a representative from the Kansas Fire Service Training Commission and an at large Kansas fire service representative. The at large representative would be selected by the chairperson and must be certified at the level being appealed. The Certification Appeal Review Committee will be chaired by the senior member of the Kansas Fire & Rescue Training Institute professional staff. The Certification Program Manager will not participate as a member of the committee.

Within 30 days of receiving the written appeal the Certification Appeal Review Committee will hold a hearing on the appeal. The candidate will be notified of the location, date and time of the hearing and may be present if he or she so desires and may present any testimony that he or she desires. The Certification Appeal Review Committee shall render a recommendation relevant to the candidate's appeal to the Director of the Kansas Fire & Rescue Training Institute.

Upon receipt of the recommendation from the Certification Appeal Review Committee, the Director shall render a decision within 30 days. The candidate will be provided with a copy of the Director's decision.

The third step is a written appeal to the Kansas Fire Service Training Commission. This appeal must be submitted in writing within 30 days of the decision rendered by the Director, Kansas Fire & Rescue Training Institute. The appeal will then be placed on the agenda of the Kansas Fire Service Training Commission's next quarterly meeting. The appellant will be notified in writing of the time, date, and location of that meeting.

14.3 Final Rule on Appeals

The decision of the Kansas Fire Service Training Commission on appeals will be final.

15.0 Skills Exam Special Note

15.1 The Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) Requirements

The Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) has clearly stated that facial hair extending into the area covered by the seal of an SCBA face piece is not permissible. The National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) is the research arm of OSHA. NIOSH conducted research a number of years ago and documented the case against being able to obtain a consistent adequate seal when facial hair was present in the area of the face piece seal.

The 1998 adoption of the respiratory regulation by OSHA requires fit testing prior to using an SCBA in Immediately Dangerous to Life or Health (IDLH) atmospheres. This regulation expressly forbids facial hair in the area covered by the face piece seal. Fire fighters may not participate in any Kansas Fire & Rescue Training Institute fire ground activities that require the use of an SCBA without being fit tested prior to wearing the SCBA. You cannot be fit tested with a beard or facial hair in the area of the seal.

15.2 The Kansas Fire & Rescue Training Institute Policy Regarding Facial Hair

The Kansas Fire & Rescue Training Institute has had a long-standing policy prohibiting facial hair in the area of the face piece seal. Effective immediately, facial hair in the area of the seal will not be allowed. Candidates not in compliance with this policy who wish to participate in Kansas Fire & Rescue Training Institute activities requiring the use of an SCBA in potentially hazardous atmospheres will be given two options:

1. Shave prior to participating in the activity.
2. Do not participate in the activity.

No exceptions to this policy will be granted. It should be noted that a one or two day beard growth (stubble) is considered facial hair. Participants must be visibly clean-shaven in the area of the face piece seal.

Required compliance to this policy is noted in each Certification Study Guide where it is applicable.

16.0 Equivalency and Reciprocity

16.1 Review of Requests for Equivalency or Reciprocity

The Kansas Fire & Rescue Training Institute will review requests for grants of equivalent reciprocal certification to candidates who hold a current certification from another accredited entity on a case by case basis.

16.2 Requests Considered on an Individual Basis

Each candidate requesting equivalency/reciprocity certification in Kansas will be treated on an individual basis.

16.3 Reciprocity Options

If reciprocity is granted, the candidate is issued a new certificate and a new IFSAC number upon payment of a \$30 fee for each level.

16.4 Reciprocity Restricted to the Kansas Fire Service

The Kansas Fire & Rescue Training Institute does not participate in the practice of awarding reciprocal certification to fire fighters from outside of the Kansas fire service. Individuals living outside of Kansas and not serving on a Kansas fire department will not be granted reciprocity. Exceptions to this policy may be granted for persons demonstrating a justifiable need for certification through the Kansas Fire & Rescue Training Institute. In this event, individuals should request reciprocity in writing with an explanation of the need for Kansas certification.

17.0 Certification Test Banks

17.1 Written Exam Test Banks

Written exam questions are maintained in test banks for each level of certification. Test banks will contain questions that are referenced to NFPA objectives as well as to the text book source. Questions are reviewed by the Kansas Fire & Rescue Training Institute personnel for content and construction prior to use. Exam analysis may be conducted with scored answer sheets to verify the validity and reliability of the exams.

17.2 Exam Security

Exam security measures have been created for this program to insure that every candidate is allowed an equal chance for success. These procedures are further intended to prevent any individual or group from gaining an unfair advantage over other candidates. No one will be granted access to written exam materials other than those persons taking an exam. No one will be provided advanced knowledge of the contents of an exam (written or practical) prior to the exam. No one (instructors, chief officers, former candidates, etc.) will be granted access to written or practical exams for the purpose of viewing or reviewing the exam. Any challenges to the validity of the exam or any item on the exam should be directed to the Kansas Fire & Rescue Training Institute Certification Program Manager. These security measures are designed solely to protect the integrity of the national certification process and to safeguard the value of every nationally certified fire fighter's certification.

17.3 Exams Administered On-Shift

If an exam is administered to candidates on shift and candidates are required to respond to an emergency call the following procedures must be observed:

1. Only relevant personnel may leave the exam to respond.
2. The Test Site Coordinator must collect test booklets and answer sheets of candidates responding to the emergency call.
3. The Test Site Coordinator notes the time the candidates leave and return, adjusting the candidates' total exam time to compensate for the candidates' absence.
4. Upon return from the emergency call the candidate must immediately resume the test.
5. If the emergency call is of long duration and/or involves a majority of the class, the Test Site Coordinator shall declare the test invalid and reschedule an appropriate time to retest.

6. If the emergency call is of short duration, the exam coordinator may at his/her discretion, continue the exam adjusting for the elapsed time.

18.0 Policies Regarding Exam Sites

18.1 Responsibilities of Host Departments

Due to the evolving requirements of the NFPA standards, the logistical capabilities required of hosting fire departments has increased. The Kansas Fire & Rescue Training Institute attempts to maintain a supply of specialized equipment that is needed in the testing process. However, the nature of the standards prevent the Kansas Fire & Rescue Training Institute from having all of the equipment necessary to conduct an exam.

18.2 Information Regarding Hosting an Exam Site

A list of the items that the Host Department must provide appears on the certification page of the web site. If the Host Department does not own a particular piece of required equipment, it must purchase or borrow said equipment in order to host the exam. Fire departments wishing to host an exam should contact the Kansas Fire & Rescue Training Institute Certification Program Manager for more detailed information.

18.3 Items Provided by the Host Department

Items/conditions to be provided by the hosting department may include:

1. Meet all NFPA Safety Standards (required - no exceptions).
2. Fire Department Pumpers (equipped as per NFPA 1901) with pumper operators as needed. Water source supplying required GPM for skill stations selected.
3. Equipment and locations needed to conduct any practical station of the standard being tested.
4. Space to conduct live burns via a Burn Trailer or LPG Trailer if part of test.
5. A space, power extrication tools, and the ability to acquire up to four (4) vehicles to be used in an auto extrication exam station. Confirm cost with the Kansas Fire & Rescue Training Institute prior to obligating for the vehicles. Costs will be paid by the Kansas Fire & Rescue Training Institute.
6. Appropriate buildings so that ladder operations can be conducted (to a pitched roof, to an upper floor window, to a flat roof).
7. Classroom with tables and chairs suitable to conduct a written test or be used for classroom presentations

18.4 Availability of Items

All of these items must be available if requested by the Kansas Fire & Rescue Training Institute in order to conduct an exam. Every item may not be needed at every exam site, however, because of the random nature of the practical exam selection and the need to keep the skills to be tested confidential, all items must be available within only a few hours notification.

18.5 Non-disclosure of Test Equipment Prior to Exam

The Kansas Fire & Rescue Training Institute cannot tell local exam hosts exactly what equipment will be needed until only a few hours prior to the exam. Any prior notification beyond this time limit would violate the accreditation requirements that the Kansas Fire & Rescue Training Institute must adhere to in order to issue National Certification.

18.6 Tentative Arrangements for Items Requiring Special Effort

It is suggested that items requiring special effort be tentatively arranged for with the understanding that these items will have to be delivered with a few hours notice. For example, arrangements with a local auto salvage could be made for two autos. The agreement should include that the auto salvage understands that **if** the autos are needed, it would be on the day of the exam and they would get 4 hours notice to deliver the vehicles (or the test station could be conducted at the local salvage yard if it is close by).

18.7 Detailed Information

Detailed questions on requirements and guidelines for hosting an exam should be directed to the Certification Program Manager at the Kansas Fire & Rescue Training Institute.

19.0 Requirements for Each Level of Certification Offered

19.1 Requirements for Each Level of Certification

The requirements for the candidate are listed in each level's Certification Study Guide. It is important that candidate's become familiar with these requirements, particularly as they apply to prerequisite certifications, as these requirements must be met within the one-year certification completion window.

Any questions concerning the requirements for any level should be directed to the Certification Program Manager.

19.2 Prior Certification of Prerequisite and Corequisite Levels

Prerequisite and/or corequisite certification levels are listed in each level's Certification Study Guide. KFRTI highly recommends that candidates complete each prerequisite/corequisite level prior to testing at the next level, but it is not required. However, prior to being certified at a particular level, candidates must certify at all prerequisite/corequisite certification levels.

19.3 Challenging Certification Tests

KFRTI highly recommends that candidates successfully complete the appropriate training courses associated with certification levels. However, those candidates who choose to challenge a level's certification test may do so (with the exceptions listed in sections 19.4 and 19.5 below) without having taken or successfully completing the associated training course.

19.4 Fire Instructor I & II

Prior to attempting the certification test for Fire Instructor I and Fire Instructor II, candidates must successfully complete the associated training courses.

19.5 Rescue Technician – Structural Collapse, Levels I/II

Prior to attempting the certification test for the Rescue Technician – Structural Collapse, Levels I/II, candidates must have successfully completed the associated training course. In lieu of the KFRTI training course, candidates may complete a similar course such as another state's or province's training course or the Rescue Systems I & II courses. Credit for similar courses must be approved by the Certification and Rescue Program Managers before challenging the certification will be approved.

19.6 Certification Expiration and Continuing Education

Certifications issued by KFRTI do not expire. While continued updates and training in all disciplines is always recommended, KFRTI does not impose any continuing education requirements on successful candidates to maintain certifications they have earned.