

National Fire Academy Criteria for Contract Instructor Selection

Course: Certificate of Occupancy Compliance (F/W0268)

Curriculum: Fire Prevention: Technical

This 2-day course will enable the student to develop strategic approaches to solve the management challenges of successfully commissioning a building or occupancy so that the code official is confident all the life safety and fire protection systems and features are working together properly and the structure is ready for human use.

Course content will include the code official's and owner's legal obligations and liabilities during commissioning, the challenge of commissioning buildings of different sizes and complexity with limited staff, an overview of what systems/features constitute "fire and life safety features," commissioning and testing alternatives, and documentation and record-keeping.

Criteria for Contract Instructor Selection

Only current instructors on the "Fire Inspection Principles" course list are eligible to teach this course.

All new contract instructors or those wishing to expand their teaching portfolio must be instructionally dedicated to the Fire Prevention: Technical curriculum and cannot cross boundaries teaching National Fire Academy (NFA) curricula. Interest with other curricula will signal a voluntary withdrawal of teaching privileges from the Fire Prevention: Technical courses.

This curriculum teaches finely detailed and meticulously specific content concerning construction and maintenance codes, standards, guides, recommended practices, testing criteria and manufacturers' specifications for the built environment. Instructors must be national subject matter experts, as compared to a local, fundamentally strong code enforcer, since the country has a geographically diverse array of students and code requirements.

A major characteristic necessary to serve in this instructional capacity is the willingness of coaching the student cadre to success. The philosophy of the instructor is to mentor less knowledgeable individuals by transferring highly detailed information, using verbal skills coupled with visual graphics, to propel them to excellence. This curriculum does not support self-absorbed instructors appeasing their own interests but is squarely focused on the student-centered learning outcome.

New instructors shall be evaluated in 3 consecutive course deliveries in accordance with the NFA's Contract Instructor Evaluation program. Existing contract instructors are subject to evaluation in accordance with this program.

1. Academic Requirement

- a. Bachelor's degree from an institution that is accredited in fire protection technology, fire administration, fire science or similar program. Candidates are encouraged to successfully complete this course in the last 3 years and/or serve as an adjunct instructor (in training) in the course.
- b. Candidates with an associate degree from an institution that is accredited in fire protection technology, fire administration, fire science or similar program will be entertained on a case-by-case basis. Additional formal education consisting of 1 semester each of college-level algebra, fire protection hydraulics and physics must have been successfully completed. Candidates are encouraged to successfully complete this course in the last 3 years and/or serve as an adjunct instructor (in training) in the course.

2. Documented Technical Knowledge and Relevant Experience

- a. The candidate must have extensive experience as a fire inspector for a local, state or national entity that is legally responsible for the enforcement of building and/or fire codes. Provide specific, quantifiable and qualifiable (simplistic to complex) examples of work performed.
- b. The candidate should be experienced, proficient and knowledgeable of current issues in the field of expertise for the content of this course. Active participation with relevant national code and/or standard committees, such as National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) and International Code Council (ICC) committees or state committees for adoption of building and fire codes, is highly recommended.
- c. The candidate should have the necessary education and experience to be capable of presenting all units of the course. It is recognized that exceptions may occur where courses are of such a technical nature that no one person may be technically competent to instruct all units. Verifiable examples of professional licensure such as Professional Engineer, Registered Architect and Certified Safety Professional can be provided. Professional certificates such as Certified Fire Protection Specialist, Certified Building Official, Certified Fire Marshal, ICC Fire Inspector or NFPA Fire Inspector can be submitted. State fire inspector certificates have differing requirements which may or may not be recognized nationally. Only national certificates will be recognized.
- d. Current knowledge of inspection and acceptance testing of passive and active fire protection systems, exiting components, and mechanical/electrical systems.
- e. Extreme familiarity with the certificate of occupancy inspection process, the administrative steps in the construction permit process and experience with partial temporary occupancies.

- f. Experience with the use of NFPA 3, *Standard for Commissioning of Fire Protection and Life Safety Systems*, and NFPA 4, *Standard for Integrated Fire Protection and Life Safety System Testing*, to commission building, life safety and fire protection components.

3. Documented Educational Instruction and Experience

Accepted formal instructional training, such as:

- a. State fire training certificate and courses taught with frequency/history.
- b. College instructor's/professor's credential with courses designed/instructed.
- c. College education instruction courses with a transcript supplied.
- d. A minimum of 48 hours of detailed, documented and successful fire/emergency services instruction listing each course and dates of delivery.
- e. Speaking engagements and/or presentations at national/state conferences for the fire service or other relevant professional organizations with a listing of topics and dates.

4. Continuing Practice or Education

Ability to maintain currency in the field and the specific course by:

- a. Teaching a similar course at a training academy, college or university.
- b. Taking a similar course within the last 5 years.
- c. Developing a similar course within the last 5 years.
- d. Teaching the course at the NFA or in the field within the last 2 years.
- e. Writing and researching a paper or article related to the course topic for at least 1 of the fire service or related disciplines' trade journals within the last 2 years.
- f. Attending and/or speaking at a conference related to the field at the local, state, tribal or national level within the last 3 years.
- g. Or, active participation with local/state/national building/fire code(s) or standard(s) committee(s).

Failure to provide approved documentation of ongoing training or instruction may result in revocation of the contract instructor status.

5. How To Submit an Application Package

Follow the instructions located on the website:

https://www.usfa.fema.gov/training/nfa/instructors_officials/criteria.html.

Application package(s) must be submitted to: fema-nfainstructorapp@fema.dhs.gov.