



***FIRE SERVICE
TRAINING***

Procedures Manual

For

***IFSAC/Pro-Board
Accredited Certification Levels***

Revised: April 2011

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Section 1: Mission Statement

The mission of the Oklahoma State University Fire Service Training (OSU FST) Professional Qualifications Certification System is to measure the level of knowledge, skills, and abilities possessed by firefighters and to attest that these individuals meet nationally recognized standards. These competency based standards permit evaluation of training programs and promote uniformity in firefighter training.

To ensure consistency throughout all levels of accreditation relating to written and practical examinations, all levels of accreditation shall be conducted within the same criteria in accordance with International Fire Service Accreditation Congress (IFSAC) and National Board on Fire Service Professional Qualifications (Pro-Board).

Section 2: Scope

This document establishes the OSU FST. The contents herein apply to all activities related to certification of candidates based on levels accredited by the International Fire Service Accreditation Congress (IFSAC) and National Board on Fire Service Professional Qualifications (Pro-Board).

Section 3: Purpose

The purpose of the OSU FST Certification System is to measure the level of knowledge, skills, and abilities possessed by the firefighters and to attest that these individuals meet nationally recognized standards. These competency based standards permit evaluation of training programs and promote uniformity in firefighter training.

The purpose of these policies is to:

- Address current firefighting principles and practices.
- Establish and promote the fire service in the State of Oklahoma as a professional service.
- Improve the performance and coordination of emergency response activities through the development of minimum performance standards for all applicants.
- Develop competent and reliable fire service personnel through the adoption of national professional qualification standards.
- Establish and maintain valid procedures that measure specific levels of skills, abilities and knowledge consistent with standards approved and adopted by OSU FST Certification System.
- Establish a statewide uniform testing procedure that will ensure all certification evaluation processes are performed and evaluated in a consistent manner for all firefighters throughout the State of Oklahoma.

- Utilize nationally recognized standards such as the National Fire Protection Association Professional Qualification as minimum standards.
- Obtain accreditation from a recognized accreditation body.
- Enhance the quality of the OSU FST Certification System through the use of quality assurance methods.
- Establish and implement a certification program that will ensure complete impartiality and confidentiality and is designed in such a manner to safeguard against misuse and abuse.
- Ensure that all internationally accredited levels of certification are administered with strict adherence to the requirements and recommendations of the International Fire Service Accreditation Congress (IFSAC) and National Board on Fire Service Professional Qualifications (Pro-Board).

Section 4: Currency

These procedures will be reviewed annually and revisions made when necessary. Major changes that require immediate implementation will be forwarded to all staff, proctors, and evaluators in memo form, and any memos will be incorporated into the next annual revision. Current copies of these procedures are available upon request from OSU FST website or by request.

After every re-accreditation or major revision to the Certification System, OSU FST will notify its constituents of changes to certification procedures, levels of certification, and other important program information. Notice of such changes will be prominently displayed on the OSU FST web page (www.osufst.org).

Section 5: Empowerment/Financial Capability/Staffing

OSU FST is an established component of OSU through State Statute (§70-628.9.). OSU FST operates within the College of Engineering, Architecture, and Technology (CEAT) as an extension mission of OSU. OSU FST is authorized to offer programs that meet the needs of Oklahoma emergency responders. The OSU FST Certification System is an integral part of OSU FST and its mission, and is supported within the OSU FST budget and mission .

The State of Oklahoma does not legislate a requirement for mandatory certification of public emergency responders. The OSU FST Certification System is a voluntary system through OSU FST and is strongly supported by fire service associations within Oklahoma. Letters of support from these organizations are found in *Appendix A*. OSU FST maintains regular liaison with these organizations to ensure their needs are served by the Certification System. Additionally, OSU FST is a non-voting member of the Council on Firefighter Training (Oklahoma House Bill 2372).

Section 6: Delegation of Authority

OSU FST does not delegate its authority to conduct professional qualification examinations or certification to any political subdivision or entity.

Section 7: Definitions

Accreditation: The process of comparing established professional standards defined by the accrediting agency to an organization seeking recognition for quality programs and accountability. The accrediting agency uses documentation such as a self-study and analysis, an assessment of an organization's mission, as well as a site visit to determine the organizations achievement in meeting the standards.

Candidate: The individual who is testing for certification based on an NFPA professional qualification or competency standard.

Certification: Verification that an individual has shown competent performance meeting a defined set of cognitive and/or psychomotor behavioral objectives (requisite knowledge and skills). This verification process is achieved through testing.

Certification Coordinator: Member of the OSU FST staff who oversees and manages the OSU FST Certification System.

Certification Staff: OSU FST staff members who administer the Certification System.

Certification System: Oklahoma State University Fire Service Training Professional Qualifications Certification System.

Certification Team: The group consisting of a proctor and, where applicable, evaluator(s) who have been appointed to administer a specific certification exam on a specific date.

Certified: Candidates who have successfully met the established prerequisites and minimum passing criteria of the certification process, for a given certification level.

Competence/Competently: Performed in a manner which satisfies the criteria set forth on a given skill sheet for a given level of certification.

Evaluator: A certification team member assigned to observe candidates performing skills. Evaluators determine if a candidate's performance meets skill sheet criteria.

Live Fire: An activity/skills exam that consists of tasks exposing candidates to actual fire conditions.

Proctor: The certification team member who administers and coordinates the certification exam at a specific site.

Reciprocity: The acceptance of accredited levels of certification from other entities.

Safely: To perform a task in a manner that would prevent injury to self or others.

Skill Sheet: The document that sets forth the criteria to show competency requirements for a JPR, objective, or portion thereof.

Section 8: General Policies and Procedures

The candidate for certification shall meet/comply with the applicable chapters of the accredited edition of NFPA Professional Qualifications Standard. Copies of these standards are available from the National Fire Protection Association, 1 Battery March Park, Quincy, MA 02269-9101; (800) 344-3555 or through IFSTA @ www.ifsta.org (800) 654-4055.

Complete reading assignments, test descriptions, and skill sheets are maintained for each accredited level. These items are available to candidates during course deliveries, on the OSU FST web page, and upon request. Certification prerequisites and test dates, times, and locations will be provided upon request. Regularly scheduled open-enrollment certification dates, prerequisites, and registration information are available on the OSU FST web page.

8.1 NFPA Standard Revisions

OSU FST will update certification requirements based on changes contained within newly issued editions of NFPA Standards. Once the NFPA issues a revised edition, OSU FST will update the corresponding certification level(s) and begin testing to the new standard edition within two (2) years. All changes relating to curriculum and skills shall be published on the OSU FST website at least six (6) months prior to implementation of testing. When OSU FST receives accreditation to a more recent edition of a standard, candidates will be required to meet all provisions of the revised standard.

8.2 Safety

The safety of all candidates, proctors, evaluators, and support staff is of primary importance. OSU FST staff and representatives shall take all steps necessary to ensure that certification examinations are conducted in a safe manner. Any OSU FST representative shall halt any operation that places personnel in jeopardy.

All personnel, including test candidates, evaluators, and support staff shall wear (NFPA compliant) appropriate PPE when involved in manipulative skill evaluations. It is

expected that all candidates will be fit tested with their SCBA by the organization, which they are representing. The Proctor has the authority to deny testing to individual(s) not complying with these procedures.

8.2.1 Facial Hair in Contact with SCBA Prohibited

Individuals with facial hair that could interfere with the seal of the SCBA face piece will not be allowed to participate in an exam or live fire training for a certification that could require the use of SCBA. This policy is in accordance with United States Department of Labor Occupational Safety & Health Administration (OSHA) regulations 29 CFR 1910.134(1)(i)(A) and 29 CFR 1910.134(1)(i)(B) and NFPA 1500, *Fire Department Occupational Safety and Health Programs*, 2007 Edition Section 7.13:

29 CFR 1910.134(1)(i)

The employer shall not permit respirators with tight-fitting facepieces to be worn by employees who have:

29 CFR 1910.134(1)(i)(A)

Facial hair that comes between the seal surface of the facepiece and the face or that interferes with valve function; or

29 CFR 1910.134(1)(i)(B)

Any condition that interferes with the face-to-facepiece seal or valve function.

7.13

Using Respiratory Protection

7.13.1

Respirators shall not be worn when a member has any conditions that prevent a good face seal.

7.13.2

Nothing shall be allowed to enter or pass through the area where the respiratory protection facepiece is designed to seal with the face, regardless of the specific fitting test measurement that can be obtained.

7.13.3

Members who have a beard or facial hair at any point where the facepiece is designed to seal with the face or whose hair could interfere with the operation of the unit shall not be permitted to use respiratory protection at emergency incidents or in hazardous or potentially hazardous atmospheres.

7.13.3.1

These restrictions shall apply regardless of the specific fitting test measurement that can be obtained under test conditions.

8.2.2 Live Fire Testing

Live fire testing will be conducted in accordance with the current edition of NFPA 1403, *Standard on Live Fire Training Evolutions*. OSU FST has procedures regarding live fire training/testing that include the assignment of a Live Burn Coordinator to oversee live burn activities.

8.3 Facilities and Equipment

Facilities at which testing is to be conducted will be deemed adequate and safe for a specific level. OSU FST maintains a database of sites that have been approved for testing at specific levels.

8.3.1 Host Facility Responsibilities

Host sites are responsible to ensure that the test site, apparatus, and equipment meet or exceed applicable NFPA standards. Due to the logistics required for certain skills, a facility may be deemed appropriate with the condition that an alternate site will have to be used if a certain skill or type of skill will be tested during a specific testing process. Unless other arrangements are agreed upon in advance, a host facility will be responsible for providing all of the necessary materials required for testing any skill contained within a certification level.

8.3.2 Candidate Responsibilities/Equipment to Bring

Certification candidates need to bring a government issued I.D. and any materials required for specific certifications to the exam site (i.e. Emergency Response Guidebooks, Instructor I Lesson Plans, Fire Fighter II Public Education Lesson Plans). Other reference materials, such as NFPA Standards will be provided (for testing purposes only).

Emergency response certification candidates are responsible to bring structural fire fighting PPE, PASS device, and SCBA that are NFPA compliant, in good working condition, and meet testing (hydrostatic) criteria.

8.4 Requirements for Participation

The Certification System is open to emergency responders and members of associated support agencies, 16 years of age or older, within the State of Oklahoma and outside of the state as outlined within these policies and procedures. Candidates below the age of 18 must fill out an Assumption of Risk form. The Certification System is also open to students, regardless of age, who are currently enrolled as an emergency response student in an academic or vocational training program within the State of Oklahoma. Additionally, the Certification System is open to employees of OSU Fire Programs.

All candidates must be representing their employer or academic institution while participating in the examination and certification process. Candidates must participate in the program under full knowledge and approval of their employer/academic institution. Candidates must meet the requirements of the current edition of NFPA 1582, *Standard on Medical Requirements for Fire Fighters*, and be fully covered by the employer's workmen's compensation insurance (health insurance for academic institutions).

Certification candidates must hold (IFSAC/Pro-Board) accredited certification at all prerequisite levels before certification will be granted, the exception to this would be

individuals who obtained certifications through OSU FST before IFSAC/Pro-Board existed. Course completion certificates will not serve or substitute as (IFSAC/Pro-Board) accredited certification. Candidates are eligible to participate in the Certification System through completion of OSU FST course work or by challenging certification examinations.

8.4.1 Completion of OSU FST Course Work

OSU FST certification courses are developed to meet applicable professional qualifications or competency standards. Single courses may not be totally inclusive of the knowledge and skills required within a specific standard. Two or more classes may be required to meet all the requirements of a level. Applicable OSU FST course deliveries are generally concluded with the delivery of the appropriate certification examinations.

8.4.2 Challenging Certification Examinations

The Certification System is an open system, meaning that candidates may obtain training from sources other than OSU FST. Candidates who challenge certification exams based on training that they have received from an outside source will be required to document this training on a *Training Verification Form*. This must be completed by the candidate's fire chief/employer (or designee). Submitting a *Training Verification Form*, verifies that the candidate has completed all training indicated by the applicable NFPA standard.

Candidates desiring to challenge a certification exam must receive prior approval from the Certification Coordinator. The Certification Coordinator may deny any challenge requests that are not requested at least thirty (30) calendar days prior to the exam.

Candidates may only challenge exams during scheduled certification exams. Challenge exams will not be given at the OSU FST office, nor will special challenge exams be administered. The Certification Coordinator will consider exception to this procedure when an organization has a reasonable number of candidates needing to test, or when a candidate will have to wait an inordinate amount of time before a scheduled certification exam will be offered. An inordinate travel distance may also be cause for exception.

8.4.3 Denial

OSU FST reserves the right to disallow any candidate to participate in any certification exam for cause.

8.5 Availability of Certification

OSU FST makes all Certification System services available to its constituents without regard to race, religion, sex, or ethnic origin. OSU FST offers certification

examinations for each level throughout the State of Oklahoma. Exams are also provided at the end of many regularly scheduled courses. Exam scheduling and locations are based on available resources of the Certification System, needs of the local constituency and local resources necessary to support the process. Exam dates/locations are available upon request and on the OSU FST web site.

As part of the OSU and CEAT extension mission, and as allowed by IFSAC/Pro-Board Guidelines, OSU FST may offer certification outside the geographical boundaries of the State of Oklahoma to Department of Defense emergency responders. OSU FST will not allow out-of-state emergency responders (private or public) to challenge certification exams unless they are a member of an Oklahoma emergency response organization, employed by an Oklahoma employer, are currently enrolled as an emergency response student in an academic or vocational training program in Oklahoma, or are an employee of OSU Fire Programs. However, out-of-state emergency responders who come to Oklahoma to attend OSU FST course offerings will be permitted to take the applicable certification exam(s).

8.6 Requesting a Certification Exam

8.6.1 Local Delivery of Exams: Non OSU FST sponsored classes

OSU FST will administer local examinations for a reasonable number of candidates. Requests must be made at least 30 days prior to the anticipated test date. The candidates' employer (s) shall ensure that each candidate has demonstrated proficiency in all applicable JPR's or performance objectives.

OSU FST may conduct a site visit to determine if the site is suitable. Approved sites may not require subsequent review unless, in the opinion of OSU FST, the characteristics and facilities of the site have changed substantially.

If, in the opinion of OSU FST or its designated representative, the examination site is not conducive for conducting the exam on the specified date, and modification cannot be made in a reasonable period of time, the examination will be relocated, canceled, or postponed.

OSU FST reserves the right to allow any outside candidate(s) to attend a locally delivered certification process.

8.6.2 OSU-Sponsored Courses

The appropriate OSU FST Program Coordinator shall request an examination at least 30 days prior to the anticipated exam date. This time may be lessened for unusual circumstances. Request for exams shall be requested on a "Course Authorization Form".

8.7 Accommodation

In accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, appropriate examination accommodations may be made on an as needed basis. Requests must be made in accordance with Oklahoma State University policy and supported by appropriate documentation of disability.

Candidates with reading deficiencies may be provided extended test time limits and/or tested in a private room. These extended time limits must be determined according to Oklahoma State University policies by contacting Student Disability Services, 315 Student Union, Stillwater, OK 74078, and (405) 744-7116. However, Candidates will not be allowed a reader while participating in certification examinations. This decision has been based on the specific requirements of the standards concerning the necessity for individuals to be able to read and understand specific documents. (See *Appendix D* for a legal ruling from the Oklahoma State University Legal Department.)

8.8 Academic Honesty

Dishonesty of any kind, with respect to examinations or alteration of records to obtain certification, will not be tolerated. OSU FST reserves the right, at its sole discretion, to require any candidate to retest any examination. If required, grades will be awarded on the basis of the second examination. Requiring a candidate to retest any examination is not considered an accusation of academic dishonesty.

Examinations must represent the candidate's own work without the assistance of texts, notes, devices, or outside assistance, unless specifically allowed by OSU FST examination policies and procedures. Candidates who give information to a dishonest student will be considered as liable as the candidate being assisted and subject to corrective action. Candidates found in violation of this policy may have certification denied. If certification has been granted prior to discovery of the occurrence, such certification may be withdrawn.

8.9 Certification Status and Equivalency/Reciprocity

The period of time for which a certification is valid is indefinite. There are currently no continuing education requirements. Once candidates are awarded certification at a specific level, they will not lose their certification due to revisions in the professional qualifications or competency standard.

Individuals who obtained certifications through OSU FST before IFSAC/Pro-Board existed may apply these certificates as a prerequisite certification required for subsequent certification levels. However, if revisions in NFPA Standards require additional pre-requisites, the candidate will be responsible for obtaining IFSAC/Pro-Board accredited certification for the new pre-requisites before the higher level of certification will be granted.

For example,

A fire fighter received FFI and FFII certificates from OSU FST in 1988. Now the fire fighter is seeking Fire Officer I Certification. In 1992, the NFPA changed the Fire Fighter Professional Qualification Standard to include Hazardous Materials Awareness as a pre-requisite for FFI and Hazardous Materials Operations as a pre-requisite for FFII. This fire fighter did not have to get the Hazardous Materials Certifications to get FFI and FFII in 1988. In 2002, however, the fire fighter would have to get Hazardous Materials Awareness and Operations to count the 1988 FFI and FFII toward Fire Officer I.

Upon request and documentation, any person who possesses IFSAC or Pro-Board accredited certification from another agency, may receive reciprocity for the specific level and NFPA Standard edition of the certification. OSU FST will not issue a new certificate(s) when granting reciprocity; however, if the candidate's employer requires proof of reciprocity, a Letter of Reciprocity will be issued.

Appropriate documentation may include either of the following:

- An IFSAC # verified by IFSAC administration.
- An original certificate or copy that has been authenticated by the issuing agency and/or IFSAC or Pro-Board Administration. If required to submit a certificate or copy, it must be accompanied by complete contact information for the issuing agency.

8.10 Fees and Cost Recovery

There is no charge for certification testing for candidates who are employed by and represent Title 11, 18, and 19 fire departments and other Oklahoma (state and local) public emergency response agencies. However, budgetary restraints may require a cost recovery fee for ALL candidates. If a cost recovery fee is determined to be necessary by the OSU FST Director, all candidates will be notified of the exact fee before the test date.

Employees of other agencies and organizations within Oklahoma who are emergency responders and participate in an OSU FST open enrollment class shall receive certification testing at no additional charge. A fee will be charged to out-of-state emergency responder and students from Oklahoma who is not considered emergency responders. Those Oklahoma students who are not a member of a fire, police, or EMS department will be considered to be non-emergency responder status until the head of the organization submits documentation proving otherwise.

Upon request, certification testing shall be provided to other public educational institutions within Oklahoma at the conclusion of their course offerings. OSU FST will establish annual fee's for these services based on cost per student. OSU FST will bill the

public educational institution for providing certification testing at the institution's course location.

OSU FST will not provide certification testing for private training organizations. Certification candidates that have obtained training from such organizations may challenge certification testing at scheduled OSU FST testing locations.

OSU FST reserves the right to require a minimum number of candidates to conduct a certification testing process.

8.11 Observation by IFSAC/Pro-Board

Scheduled certification examination dates and locations are available to the IFSAC/Pro-Board Administration upon request. Representatives from these agencies are welcome to observe any testing process with a minimum of 48-hours' notice.

8.12 Certificates

Certificates will be issued following all OSU FST sponsored exams within 30 days of completion of the exam. If a certificate has not arrived after 30 days, candidates should notify OSU FST in writing. There will be no charge for the initial certificate with the gold IFSAC seal with number. If candidates want/need to replace original certificate, he/she will receive a certificate with no seal; however, the new certificate shall have the original IFSAC number printed on it. There will be a charge of \$15 per certificate and the charge will be charged to the candidate.

There will be no certificates issued to those candidates that do not meet all pre-requisite training.

Section 9: Testing

9.1 General

Testing for each professional qualifications level includes a written examination and, if indicated, an evaluation of randomly selected skills. Candidates must successfully complete the written examination and all evaluated skills criteria within specified time limits. The use of any unauthorized outside materials is prohibited.

"Requisite knowledge" and/or cognitive objectives will be examined by written testing. Questions on a written test may be correlated to a skill. Written examinations are graded with 70% as the minimum passing score. The results of written examinations are recorded as "pass" or "fail." Time limits for the exams are determined by allowing 30 minutes for each 25 questions.

Manipulative objectives, JPR's, "requisite skills," or portions thereof will be examined by skills examinations. OSU FST maintains the ability to test all objectives,

JPR's, requisite knowledge, and skills from the applicable standard. However, to ensure brevity, only a random selection of all requirements covered in the standard will be tested. The pass/fail criteria for each skill are outlined on a corresponding skill sheet. Skill examinations may be scored with 80% to 100% successful completion required as the minimum passing score. Critical skill components are identified on appropriate skill sheets and must be successfully completed to obtain a passing score. The results of skill examinations are recorded as "pass" or "fail." Candidates who fail their first attempt on a skill shall be advised of the step or steps missed.

9.2 Testing Procedures

9.2.1 Test Site Conditions

The test site shall comply with Sections *8.2 Safety and 8.3 Facilities and Equipment*. In addition, the site shall be arranged so that it is conducive with a learning/testing environment. It shall be free from outside distractions and give candidates every opportunity for success. Provisions must be made for restroom and break facilities.

Locations used for written examinations must be well lit, temperature controlled, and quiet. In addition, a suitable chair and writing surface with ample separation between candidates must be provided. The proctor must ensure that all candidates have the same opportunity to see any projected audio/visuals.

Locations used for manipulative skills examinations must have ample areas for separation of students to prevent peer assistance and/or studying by observation. Consideration must be given to temperature extremes, and rehab must be provided where necessary.

9.2.2 Test Site Security

Proctors will be identified in different areas within the state that provides the proctor with a test kit assigned to them. It shall be the responsibility of each proctor for keeping their kits stocked with all necessary forms, supplies and providing a lock to keep tests secure. These proctors will have tests and skills sent to them via the US Postal Service or UPS. Upon completion of an exam the proctor will then US Postal Service or UPS the tests and skills back to the Certification office.

Only candidates, proctor/evaluator(s), and necessary staff/host(s) are allowed at the testing site. Instructors and/or representatives from the candidate's organization may not attend or view testing. This policy alleviates unnecessary nervousness and ensures that candidates will demonstrate their own knowledge.

All OSU FST representatives shall adhere to the following procedures:

- Do not leave test materials unattended unless all materials are sealed in the test kit and materials are stored in a secure fashion. If the test kit must be left unattended, the proctor is responsible to ensure it stays secured (sealed).
- Any test kit found open, tampered with or unsealed shall be considered compromised; the proctor must cancel the exam, and report this incident immediately to the Certification Staff.
- If an unsealed test kit must be left unattended, all materials must be placed in a secure and locked location (e.g.: car trunk).
- Do not reproduce, give away, nor take any of the materials in the test kit without the express permission of the certification coordinator. When permission is granted, it is on a case-by-case basis.
- Proctor's shall seal all test kits and return test kit to OSU FST immediately.

9.2.3 Evaluator "Pre-Test Briefing"

A "Pre-Test Briefing" to evaluators shall be conducted prior to beginning the test and shall include the following information:

1. Review the evaluator's responsibilities/determine the evaluator assignments for the practical exam
2. Direct all evaluators to refer to and follow the skill checklists provided.
3. Review the skills to be tested.
4. Identify safety procedures to be followed during testing.
5. Review the acceptable performance criteria.
6. Assign and instruct any silent partners/role players on their roles and responsibilities.
7. Assign evaluators to check all equipment that will be used by candidates for proper operation before the test.
8. Give direction in the proper completion of all forms used for evaluation, pay, and travel.
9. Describe test logistics, rotation, breaks, holding areas, and site-control.
10. Explain the procedures to be used for handling questions or problems, which may arise during testing.
11. Clarify any questions.

9.2.4 Registration

The proctor shall complete the registration. During the registration evaluators will assist the proctor with handing out/collecting materials. The proctor is responsible to ensure that all registration materials are legible and complete.

9.2.4.1 Introduction:

1. Welcome candidates to the exam:

- Introduce yourself as a representative of OSU FST.
 - Advise candidate of the building exits and emergency procedures.
 - Advise candidates of the smoking/tobacco use policies for the building/test.
2. Write the following information on a white board or flip chart:
 - Exam proctor's name
 - OSU FST # (800) 304-5727
 - Exam title
 - Today's date
 - Exam location
 - OSU FST Website: www.osufst.org

9.2.4.2 Registration:

The following items shall be completed (as applicable):

1. Registration forms – All candidates must complete a Course Registration Form for the certification test. (Single page – white)
2. Check student identification – government issued identification.
3. Discuss the results procedures:
 - Advise candidates that results Pass/Fail will be sent to their department or career center.
 - Explain that grades can be expected within three weeks. If grades have not arrived after six weeks, candidates may request this information in writing. [OSU FST Fax # - (405) 744-7377]
 - Advise candidates that OSU FST will not give out grades or pass/fail information over the phone.
4. *Skill sheets shall be completed by the proctor/evaluator*
5. Discuss the OSU FST retest policy:
 - Any candidate who is unsuccessful in either the written or skills exam may retest that portion.
 - Candidates only need to retest the portion that they did not pass.
 - Written retests are offered at the OSU FST office during working hours or at another certification examination for the same subject.
 - Skills retests are most often offered at another certification examination for the same subject.
 - Call the OSU FST office for any questions.

6. Collect registration forms and place in the manila folder provided in the test kit.
7. Certification Results Request: If a candidate wishes to have their numeric scores he/she can complete this form and mail it in with a self-addressed stamped envelope and OSU FST will send individual results to the candidate.

9.2.5 Written Testing

The time allowed to complete each written examination shall begin after the proctor has completed the registration, given the pretest briefing, read the instructions for that examination, and answered all questions. From that point forward all discussion shall cease, and candidates will not be allowed to talk or otherwise communicate with other candidates until they complete the examination, return the examination materials to the proctor, and leave the testing room. OSU FST discourages the testing of "on-duty" candidates; however, there are times when this will be necessary. If a candidate is called away to an incident during a test, the proctor must secure the candidates testing materials and note the time. When the candidate returns, he/she will be granted the full remainder to complete the test. The proctor will wait no more than two (2) hours for the candidates to return to resume the written exam.

9.2.5.1 Candidate Pre-Test Briefing:

Prior to beginning any written testing, brief/instruct candidates as follows:

1. Instruct candidates to space themselves appropriately and to clear all non-tests related items from the desk area.
2. Direct candidates to turn off all cellular phones and pagers. (Radios/pagers are allowed for on-call personnel)
3. Distribute test answer sheets - Candidates should fill out and darken the ID# with the last four (4) digits of their social security number, Last Name, "FI," "MI," and "Date" areas. In addition, candidates should complete the information blocks as follows:
 - Class: name of certification
 - Test: test and version number (completed after the test is passed out)
 - Instructor: name of test proctor
 - Date: self-explanatory
 - Name line 1: Signature
 - Name line 2: Booklet Number
 - Special Codes: Date of birth (mm/dd/yy)

NOTE: Refer candidates to the example of the proper mark at the bottom of the answer sheet and remind them to use only #2 pencil.

4. Distribute any other materials required for the written exam (ex: ERGs, reference materials, etc.)
5. Pass out test booklets
 - Direct candidates not to open test booklets until instructed.
 - Instruct candidates to write test #, version # and booklet # in the “Test” area on the answer sheet.
6. Provide Instructions:
 - Multiple choices with (4) possible answers. An occasional question is a “true-or-false”. Note on the answer sheet – “A” is “True” and “B” is “False”.
 - Select the one best answer for each question.
 - Erase any unwanted or stray marks.
 - DO NOT write in the test booklets.
 - DO NOT remove any test materials from the test area.
 - There can be no communication with other candidates during the test.
 - Candidates are responsible for doing their own work – Tell them “If a proctor or evaluator suspect’s academic dishonesty, your test will be collected and you will be dismissed from the testing site.”
 - No visitors are allowed in the room during the test.
 - Candidates may only use the materials provided-no outside reference materials.
 - You will have _____ minutes to complete the test.
 - Minimum passing score for written tests: 70%.
 - Return the answer sheet and test materials to the proctor when finished.
 - Instructions what to do/where to go when finished.
 - If you need to take a break or have a question during the test, raise your hand. One person at a time will be allowed.
7. Ask if there are any questions.
8. Instruct candidates to open their test booklets and begin.
 - Note start time on the board.
 - Write finish time on the board.
 - Advise candidates at ½ waypoint and again when approximately 5 minutes are left.

9.2.5.2 Concluding the Written Exam:

1. Place answer sheets inside of the manila folder provided.
2. Organize and account for all other test materials. Place back in the test kit.

- Instructors who taught a portion of a course shall not proctor the written test.

9.2.6 Skills Testing

Skills testing shall be conducted in a manner that provides consistency from candidate-to-candidate and from test-to-test. OSU FST tests are designed to measure critical tasks associated with a given skill. Desired outcomes are directly related to NFPA objectives or job performance requirements and are detailed on individual skill sheets. Skill sheets will also identify if candidates will be tested individually or as a team.

Instructors who taught a portion of a course may serve as a certification test evaluator for the same course; however, he/she may not evaluate the same skill(s) he/she taught during the course.

Candidates who fail a skill may be allowed one immediate on-site retest on one skill only. If the candidate does not successfully complete the skills retest then he/she will have failed the skills portion of the exam and will not be allowed to continue the examination. In addition, the candidates may not communicate with other candidates until the testing period is over. If it is an option, it is preferred that candidates who fail the skill portion of the exam be dismissed at that time.

If the testing process requires that skills testing be conducted first candidates who fail the skills portion will be allowed to continue the written testing process.

9.2.6.1 Test Site Arrangement:

When skills testing requires multiple simultaneous testing stations, the test area and rotation sequence shall be arranged so that the identity of the skills being tested are protected, and candidates are not permitted to “study” after testing has commenced.

Example: For a three-skill test, the ideal test setup would consist of rotation with three pre-test holding areas (one for each skill), three testing areas, and three post-test holding areas. The enrollment would be split into three groups and each group would begin in a pre-test holding area. As candidates finish the skill, they would go to the corresponding post-test holding area. When all groups are finished, they would rotate to the next pre-test holding area and begin testing for the next skill. A candidate who has failed a first attempt at a station shall not be allowed to enter a pre or post-test holding area where he/she could either divulge information about a skill or get help from other candidates.

9.2.6.2 General Evaluation Guidelines:

The following are general guidelines for evaluating candidate performance:

- The evaluator will state the skill/objective to be tested, read all instructions for the skill, the time limit, and the PPE to be worn.

- Evaluators may not assist or coach candidates in any skill.
- Before the candidate begins, evaluators may answer specific questions on equipment including, but not limited to, loaner PASS devices, loaner SCBAs, powered equipment, foam eductors, and audiovisual equipment. Answers shall be limited to those that do not disclose how to operate the equipment, but will assist the candidate with equipment that is different than that of their local jurisdiction. Evaluators may not answer any questions once a candidate has begun performing a skill.
- Evaluators are to allow the candidate to complete the skill uninterrupted, unless:
 1. The safety of the candidate, the evaluator, or other personnel is in question.
 2. One candidate is instructing other candidates in the performance of skills.
- Evaluators will indicate to the candidate “Pass or Fail.” The evaluator shall advise the candidate of the step or steps that were missed. For example, evaluators may tell a candidate their SCBA donning time once complete.
- The evaluator (and candidate if necessary) shall reset the skill station before a new candidate is permitted to enter the station.
- Any issues/decisions in which the evaluator is in question shall be directed to the proctor.
- If the proctor observes an evaluator's performance and considers the performance questionable, the proctor should assign the candidate to another evaluator and immediately meet, in private, with the evaluator.
- The performance of an evaluator must not affect a candidate's ability to successfully complete a skill demonstration. If the proctor witnesses a flagrant violation of testing procedures, the candidate must retest the skill under the observation of another evaluator.

9.2.6.3 Team Skills:

Evaluators shall ensure that competent individuals are not failed for the poor performance of a teammate. The following guidelines are intended to assist evaluators when candidates are evaluated as part of a team:

1. The entire team is evaluated for the desired outcome. (i.e. the team accomplished the objective/JPR/skill or they did not)
 - For example, a team of two candidates is performing an extension ladder raise and neither candidate checks for overhead lines or obstructions. This would be cause for both candidates to fail because it is denoted as “critical” on the skill sheet and it would be the responsibility of any person who was doing a ladder raise.
 - For example, a team of four candidates is performing an auto extrication evolution and the team is unable to roll the dash of a vehicle. The team would fail.

2. Individual members of a team will have inherent personal responsibilities or will be assigned positions or responsibilities by the evaluator. An individual member may be passed/failed based on his/her performance of his/her role.
 - For example, a team of 2 candidates is performing a trash storage container live burn evolution. The individual assigned as the nozzle person put his/her head over the edge of the container. In this instance, if all other aspects were performed properly, the nozzle person would fail because he/she failed to meet critical criteria.
 - For example, during a team skill, an individual removes part of his protective equipment before reaching a safe area. This individual's actions represent his competency and are not related to the rest of the team. In this instance, this individual would fail, and the rest of the team would pass.
3. Candidates should be reminded at the outset of the skill that they are permitted and encouraged to communicate and work together to perform the skill.

9.2.6.4 Candidate Pre-Test Briefing:

Before starting the skills exam, brief the candidates on the following:

1. Detail the schedule, logistics, rotation, breaks, holding areas and site-control.
2. Candidates will not be informed of the skills before they arrive at the skills station.
3. Candidates may not assist each other, study, divulge information about the identify of skills, or otherwise give an unfair advantage to themselves or another candidate.
4. The evaluator at each station will read the objective, time, and any pertinent instructions. Candidates may ask questions and arrange/check equipment before beginning.
5. Candidates performing team skills are encouraged to communicate and work as a team.
6. Give directions to follow if a candidate has a question or needs to take a break during a test.
7. Identify proper safety procedures to be followed during testing.
8. Explain the use of skill sheets
9. Allow for a question and answer period.
10. Explain on-site retesting policy.

9.2.6.5 On-Site Retesting:

If permitted by the applicable skill sheet, candidates failing to demonstrate a skill involving hands-on equipment shall be granted one immediate on-site retest on one skill only. This retest (2nd attempt) must be evaluated by either the proctor

or a different evaluator (assigned by the proctor). The evaluators for the 1st and 2nd attempts must not discuss the candidate's performance on the first attempt. No additional retests are authorized. Skills involving some manipulative skills, presentations, and written documents do not lend themselves to on-site retesting. Consult the individual skill sheet to determine the on-site retest policy.

If an on-site retest on one skill is indicated, the candidate must complete the entire skill over again on the second attempt.

9.2.6.6 Dealing with Candidates Who Fail:

When a candidate fails the skills exam, the proctor should discuss with the candidate his/her option to retest and encourage the candidate to do so when he/she feels comfortable. The candidate should be advised to contact the OSU FST Certification Office to obtain information concerning retesting. (See Section 9.5 *Retest Procedures* for more information)

9.2.7 Test Site Records/Paperwork

Upon completion of the examination, the proctor shall complete and place the following in the manila folder(s) provided:

- Answer sheets
- *Course Registration* and/or *Certification Training Verification Forms*
- *Skills Sheets*.
- Scratch paper
- *Evaluator Pay Request(s)*: The proctor should fill out the *Evaluator Request for Pay*. The total time worked should be the actual time each individual evaluator worked. A "blanket" time should NOT be applied to the evaluators. The proctor will verify that the total time worked is correct for each individual. The proctor is insuring the correct information is represented on the form. Proctors/evaluators will be paid drive time for official FST business.
- Individual evaluator *Mileage and Expense Forms*: each evaluator should fill out A Mileage and Expense Form. This form is for the examination only. If evaluators were involved in the instruction for a class, the coordinator of that particular training program should handle the mileage and expenses incurred. If a proctor or evaluator has any expenses that relate to the examination, it must be turned into the Certification Coordinator. An overnight stay or a trip that is over 21 hours is required before any per diem is reimbursed. Reimbursement rates will vary depending on the location of travel. Additional funds are accrued every 6 hours after the 24 hours.
- *Evaluator Performance Evaluations*
- *Problem Report Form* (if applicable)

NOTE: The OSU FST staff will complete the *Certification Form 10*. It is no longer necessary for proctors to complete these forms in the field.

Examination booklets shall be counted, organized by number, banded in groups of ten, and then placed back in the test kit. All other materials shall also be returned to the test kit. When all materials have been returned to the test kit, the test kit is sealed. If an area proctor has administered a test the proctor will UPS all examination paperwork back to OSU FST as soon as possible.

9.3 Problems

Any problems that arise with a certification exam that do not require the immediate attention of the certification staff should be documented on a *Problem Report Form*. The proctor is the primary person who is responsible for completing these forms and they shall return this and other forms in with the test kit. The certification staff will review the forms and correct the problems as necessary.

Additionally, the *Quick Reference Binder* in each proctor test kit will have names of emergency contact people that may be able to provide assistance on the day of the test.

9.4 Test Grading

The use of skill sheets, their grading criteria, and the utilization of a computerized medium allow for impartial scoring.

9.4.1 Written Examinations

An overall grade of 70% is required for the successful completion of a written examination. All written examinations are graded by the Certification System and are recorded in OSU FST files.

9.4.2 Skills Examinations

Successful completion of all skills evaluated on a given examination day shall be required for certification. Successful completion shall mean a minimum of 80% to 100% of the items listed on each skill sheet with no failure to properly complete any listed critical skills. All skills examinations are graded by an OSU FST representative and shall be recorded OSU FST files.

9.4.3 Notification of Test Scores

Test results will normally be returned to the candidates' fire department or career center within two (2) weeks of the test. This will also apply to the results for any skills tests that were not graded on-site. When possible and practical, the proctor will notify candidates of their skills exam results on the day of the exam. Skills examinations, which are scored at the time of the evaluation, may be reviewed with the test proctor on the day

of the test. Skills exams, which are graded after the testing period, may be reviewed in the FST office by appointment.

When test results are returned by mail, a standard letter indicating whether the candidate passed or failed each portion of the exam will accompany them. This letter contains information pertaining to retests for candidates who fail a portion of an exam.

OSU FST will not give out exam results over the telephone, fax or via e-mail. Requests for exam results must be made in writing by mail.

The candidate's organization will be advised "Certification Complete," or "Certification Pending." If a certification is pending, OSU FST will advise the organization of one or more of the following:

- Has not successfully completed written test
- Has not successfully completed skills test
- Training not verified – Certification Training Verification Form needed
- Pre-requisite certifications not met – The following certifications are needed....

9.5 Retest Procedures

If a candidate fails to successfully complete either portion of an examination (written or skills), the candidate will be allowed to retest the portion(s) failed at a later date. Candidates wishing to retest must arrange the retest with the Certification Staff at least 10 business days prior to the desired exam date.

Candidates who score less than 70% on a written exam must retest the entire written portion of the exam. A different version of the written exam will be used for the retest examination. Candidates who fail to successfully complete all required skill components of a skills exam must retest the entire skills portion of the exam at a later date. Skills evaluated during the retest will be randomly selected. Upon successful completion of any previously failed portion(s), the final grade of record for the examination shall be the passing score received during the successful reexamination. The score(s) of the reexamined portion(s) shall then become candidate's final score.

A candidate may retake any written or skills examination, after a period of 30 calendar days from the previous attempt. A candidate will be allowed no more than three (3) attempts in one (1) calendar year from the date of the completion of the course. Any candidate who has not successfully completed all certification examination portions for a particular level by the end of the accreditation cycle for an edition of a standard shall lose all satisfactory scores. The candidate will then be required to retake the entire examination under the provisions and requirements of the newly accredited edition of the standard. Both the written and skills examinations must be completed in compliance with the same edition of the standard tested.

Retests for written exams only are normally conducted at the OSU FST Office during normal working hours. Retests for skills exams will not normally be administered at the OSU FST Office; however, OSU FST may offer these retests when there is not another exam available or the location/date of the next exam is prohibitive. OSU FST may also make special arrangements for retesting when it is feasible and logical.

9.6 Test construction

Test banks shall be maintained which give the ability to test all job performance requirements through written or skills testing. Written test banks for each level shall contain a minimum of two times the number of questions as found on a written exam for that level. In addition, written test banks shall contain a minimum of one question for each area that is designated by the Certification System as cognitive.

All test revisions, developments, or changes shall be submitted to the OSU FST staff for review to ensure uniformity and consistency. Editorial changes shall be made as needed to maintain compliance with appropriate standards and OSU FST policies and procedures. Correlation sheets shall be maintained for each level. At a minimum, correlation sheets include:

- The appropriate standard component(s) and requisite knowledge and skill number/identifier.
- A description of how the standard component(s) are to be tested.
- Number of test items evaluating each number/identifier.

9.6.1 Written Tests

Written examinations shall consist of the number of questions deemed appropriate by OSU FST to adequately measure the cognitive knowledge of the objectives required for certification of the level specified. At a minimum, test banks are maintained and specified as follows:

- Enough questions to correlate to 100% of the appropriate standard/level.
- There will be at least twice the number of test questions in the exam bank than what is generated on the individual written exam. OSU FST staff shall identify the total size of the test bank.
- Each professional qualification level shall have its own test bank. Each question shall be referenced to the appropriate standard, edition, and supporting text.
- Reading assignments are maintained for each test. If the reference materials are not readily available for candidates to purchase they will be made available from OSU FST. OSU FST reserves the right to charge for these materials.
- Time limits for written tests will be 30 minutes per 25 questions.

Written certification examinations are drawn from test banks maintained by the Certification System. Test banks for each level of certification are maintained in

categories by their appropriate Job Performance Requirements or objectives. When constructing different versions of an examination, questions are randomly selected within each category.

9.6.2 Skills Tests

Skills examinations shall evaluate the number of practical skills deemed appropriate by OSU FST. The procedures used in selecting skills will ensure a fair dispersion of the JPR's/pre-requisite skills/objectives. Skills are randomly drawn. The following are two exceptions to this procedure:

1. At selected levels, some skills are mandatory.
2. At selected levels, skills are grouped prior to random selection.

The time allowed for each examination shall be as deemed appropriate by OSU FST. Skills sheets shall be developed with the outcome as the basis for success. Skill sheets shall allow for different methodology, but ensure that the following criteria are met:

- Shall be performed within the allotted time, safely and with competence.
- Each objective shall be met in its entirety.
- Unless so indicated on the practical skills evaluation sheet, it is not required for the objectives to be mastered in the order they appear.

The skill sheet (and associated skill exam if applicable) shall also serve as a grading implement. Items/criteria may be weighted as follows:

1. On manipulative skills exams, items designated as critical are required to be completed successfully to pass the skill. If critical items are not completed, the candidate, other emergency responders, or civilians may be placed in jeopardy, or the task would not be completed.
2. On-paper skills exam, items may be weighted by point value representing their importance to the successful completion of the skill.

9.6.3 Re-test Examinations

Test materials used for re-testing are constructed following the procedures listed above; however, a different version of the written examination is used and skills are randomly selected.

9.6.4 Reliability/Validity of Testing Instruments

All written test questions are referenced to an appropriate text, or resource (i.e. course handout). Where possible IFSTA texts/materials will be used. The latest edition of all reference materials will be adopted with each change in NFPA standard revision to ensure currency.

First, to establish technical content validity, all written test questions and skill sheets are first developed or adopted/adapted based on a direct correlation to a specific job performance requirement or learning objective. Additionally, written test questions and skill sheets will be reviewed by a committee of experts (SME's) in the appropriate field to establish face validity. There will be a minimum of five standing committees

1. Fire Fighter, NFPA 1001
2. Hazardous Materials, NFPA 472
3. Inspector, NFPA 1031
4. Instructor, NFPA 1041
5. Officer, NFPA 1021

The committee make-up will consist of the Certification Coordinator, Programs Coordinator and four (4) to six (6) representatives from both career , volunteer and other organizational stakeholders. Each committee shall have training at the beginning of a project assignment on the subjects of: correlation matrices, test item development and security. Upon completion of a committee project, the OSU FST staff shall conduct an additional review for fairness, consistency, compliance with the applicable standard, and format.

For each examination that is administered, the machine scoring process yields test and items statistics; these statistics include reliability. The Certification Coordinator is responsible to periodically analyze the LXR-produced statistics to identify any interim issues. Additionally, each test is sent out with “Problem Report Forms.” Test proctors use these forms to report questions in need of review. LXR statistics for each accredited level shall be gathered over time as certification examinations are administered and reviewed to enhance testing instruments. At a minimum there will be an annual review of test scores and test instruments by the Program Coordinator(s) and the Certification Coordinator. This will include an analysis of written test questions, statistics, validity, and reliability.

Section 10: Proctors and Evaluators

10.1 Responsibilities

10.1.1 Certification Coordinator/Certification Staff

- Confirm the location, date, and time for the examination.
- Provide all materials and equipment required for the examination.
- Select the test version and skills to be evaluated.
- Select the evaluation team.
- Process test materials and issue final grades.
- Process pay and travel request for evaluators.
- Support the evaluation team as needed.

10.1.2 Proctor

The proctor is responsible for the security and administration of the examination. The proctor's responsibilities include:

- Manage the test site and initiate the exam process.
- Proctor the written examination.
- Assign duties to assisting evaluators.
- Ensure that all safety precautions are followed.
- Ensure the security of test materials and integrity of the exam process.
- Complete all necessary exam and personnel paperwork.
- Support the evaluation team as needed.
- Perform 2nd attempt testing on skills as needed.
- Discuss the basis for a candidate's failure with the skills evaluator prior to dismissing the candidate from the skills test – inform candidates of reason for failure.
- Grade on-paper skills exams.
- Return all test materials and paperwork to the Certification Coordinator.
- Monitor testing for compliance with procedures.
- Evaluate the performance of evaluators.

10.1.3 Evaluator(s)

- Assist the proctor with the written examination.
- Evaluate each candidate in accordance with the criteria identified on the skill sheet(s).
- Ensure that all safety precautions are followed.
- Monitor students waiting to test or who have completed the test.

10.2 Selection

OSU FST will select and assign all proctors and evaluators for certification examinations. Through its program delivery efforts, OSU FST maintains a list of approved instructors representing various emergency response organizations. Successful Instructors are the primary source of evaluators. In addition, by networking with fire service and other emergency response professionals, the OSU FST staff receives recommendations for potential proctors and evaluators. From these recommendations, the Certification Coordinator in conjunction with the Program Coordinators will qualify, screen, select and train proctors and evaluators. All evaluators and proctors must meet the minimum requirements specified by OSU FST.

Proctors or evaluators shall receive training and sign a letter of agreement acknowledging full understanding and intention to comply with OSU FST policies and procedures before being approved to act in their assigned roles.

10.3 Training/Qualifications

All proctors and evaluators must maintain current training through the OSU FST in order to remain eligible for assignment. Training is offered periodically by the Certification System at various locations throughout the state. In addition to initial training, proctors and evaluators must maintain their Basic Proctor/Evaluator Certification by attending a four-hour bi-annual refresher course. Proctor and evaluator training address pertinent OSU FST policies and procedures, Certification System Policies & Procedures, and testing methodology.

Proctors and evaluators shall be certified to the Instructor I level and demonstrate technical competence in the area that they will evaluate. Certification to the commensurate level is preferred; however, consideration will give to other education and/or related job experience. Required training is as follows:

Qualification	Training/Requirement
Proctor/Evaluate: HM Awareness HM Operations HM Technician FFI & FFII Instructor I	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Instructor I</i> • <i>OSU FST Proctor/Evaluator Certification – Basic</i> • Commensurate certification, education, or experience.
Proctor/Evaluate: Instructor II Fire Officer I & II Inspector I	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Instructor I</i> • <i>OSU FST Proctor/Evaluator Certification – Basic</i> • Commensurate certification, education, or experience. • Specialty Certification – (Obtained through mentoring or special training in specific certification levels.) <p>Note: Specialty Certifications are granted on a level-by-level basis.</p>

10.4 Performance Monitoring/Evaluation

OSU FST maintains a personnel file for each proctor/evaluator. At each test offering where evaluators are used, the proctor shall monitor and evaluate the performance of each evaluator. At the conclusion of each test, the proctor will fill out a *Proctor/Evaluator Evaluation Form* and forward it to OSU FST in the test kit. Proficiency of skills and knowledge, compliance with rules and procedures, and the need

for additional training will be considered. Proctors and evaluators performing below acceptable levels will undergo retraining before they are permitted to participate in any other certification exams. Any proctor/evaluator who continues to perform below acceptable levels will not be allowed to participate in the certification process. OSU FST makes periodic visits to test sites. Upon these visits, the OSU FST representative will perform an evaluation of the proctor.

10.5 Dress Code and Equipment/Tobacco Use Policy

OSU FST proctors and evaluators are expected to wear appropriate professional clothing, gear and equipment at exams.

For emergency response exams the appropriate gear includes appropriate PPE and SCBA (if indicated). Where testing conditions do not require PPE and SCBA, the proctor and evaluator may substitute with hardhat, utility gloves, steel-toed boots, clean shirt (example: OSU FST Shirt) and jeans. Local fire department shirts are not allowed.

For administrative exams the appropriate dress is "casual office." Dress slacks, golf shirt or similar shirt, and dress shoes/boots or loafers are expected.

Selected skills may require adjustments to the dress code. The proctors and evaluators are expected to respond to those requirements while meeting the intent of the dress code.

Tobacco use is prohibited at all OSU facilities and during all OSU FST testing events (written and skills). For non-OSU facilities, tobacco use is permitted according to local policy.

10.6 Code of Conduct

A Proctor/Evaluator:

- Behaves at all times in a professional and positive manner - as OSU FST's primary ambassador.
- Presents and grooms him/her in a manner that is appropriate for the high level of influence and responsibility that accompany the role of an OSU FST representative.
- Arrives on time, showing respect for our customers by being ready to begin the test at the designated start time.
- Is attentive and responsive to all questions. Evaluators are empowered to carry the OSU banner. If they don't know the answer, they refer the person to the appropriate OSU FST contact or find out and report back.

- Shows respect for candidates and other evaluators in language and actions, and through the exercise of fundamental human courtesy and a respect for diversity of all people.
- Refrains from any sexual advance, innuendo, or harassment towards candidates or other evaluators.
- Treats candidates and evaluators with the same honesty he/she expects - honesty that extends to his/her handling of certification, assessment of students' abilities, and any circumstances that might exhibit potential for conflicts of interest.
- Uses OSU FST materials and resources in proper and authorized manners.
- Supports and helps evaluators who are less experienced so that they can achieve a high level of success.
- Recognizes the confidential nature of information concerning students and only gives information about a student to authorized personnel.
- Does everything possible to achieve excellence in professional conduct and delivers the highest quality instruction and evaluation services to our customer.

Section 11: Record Keeping

The OSU FST staff shall maintain computerized records of candidate performance for 30 years and a hard copy record for 1 year. These records shall include:

- Names of candidates tested.
- Date of birth for each candidate (or student ID number).
- Individual records of each candidate's certification level with that candidate's IFSAC registry number.

The Certification Coordinator shall maintain candidate records at the OSU FST office at 1723 West Tyler, Stillwater, Oklahoma. Request for disclosure or amendment of candidate records should be directed to the OSU FST Administrative Manager.

A record of all candidates successfully completing each certification level shall be generated, filed, and maintained. A list of newly certified candidates will be provided to IFSAC at least annually. A file created for each certification exam shall contain written exam results, skills evaluation results, candidate registration forms, number of persons tested, distribution of test scores, and average test scores. The OSU FST office will only retain pertinent skill cards and pertinent skill exams of failed individuals.

All records shall be maintained in a secure environment under the direct control of OSU FST staff. All sensitive material on computer systems shall be password protected to prevent unauthorized access to the information.

Section 12: Security

All test materials shall be maintained in a secure environment under the direct control of OSU FST staff. All sensitive material on computer systems shall be password

protected to prevent unauthorized access. Test items under development shall be distributed to subject matter experts and have been trained to ensure test security. Upon completion of the development tasks at hand, all electronic and hard copy test materials shall be returned to the OSU FST staff for secure storage. All other material will be destroyed by proper means (erased from electronic format/paper copies shredded). Copies of test booklets shall be maintained within a locked cabinet until used. Only selected OSU FST staff shall have access to these items. The Certification Coordinator can sign out the appropriate test banks to the Program Coordinator, Program Manager, or Director so that test development may occur. These individuals are responsible to ensure security of all testing material while checked out.

The Certification Coordinator or his/her designee is the only individual allowed to draw tests from the test banks, and make changes to the banks. In the absence of the Certification Coordinator the Director shall delegate this responsibility to an appropriate staff member.

OSU FST's Director, Certification Coordinator, and Senior Administrative Support Assistant are the only individuals who have access to secured testing materials. This is achieved by limiting access to others by restricting computer access with password restricted areas of the computer network and by storing testing items in locked cabinets or sealed test kits.

For additional information, see *Section 9.2.2 Test Site Security*.

Section 13: Appeals Process

It shall be the policy and practice of the OSU FST to ensure candidates are provided an orderly and systematic means to appeal professional qualifications certification testing and/or OSU FST policies and procedures without fear of restraint, coercion, or reprisal. When an appeal has been placed, a review may occur.

Conditions under which a participant may exercise appeal rights

- Noncompliance to written testing procedures and policies as outlined elsewhere in this document.
- Validity of test questions or application of skills evaluations.
- Discrimination with regard to race, religion, creed, color, sex, age, disability, or national origin.

13.1 Appeals Procedure

13.1.1 On-Site Appeals

Candidates may appeal any of the conditions listed above to the proctor on the day of the examination. The proctor may correct deficiencies in the process used or reexamine practical skills to correct a valid grievance.

Any candidate may inspect their practical skills grading sheet to verify the mathematical accuracy of the grade and may, upon request, be apprised as to which section needs further preparation.

13.1.2 Post-Examination Appeals

Candidates may appeal any of the conditions listed in above to the Certification Coordinator. Any candidate may inspect their written examination answer sheet or practical skills grading summary sheet to verify the mathematical accuracy of the grade and may, upon request, be apprised as to which section needs further preparation. A candidate may appeal any appropriate examination grade or other OSU FST representative's decision, by writing, within 30 days of OSU FST's mailing of examination grades.

13.1.3 Chain of Appeal/Timeline

- Candidates may submit appeal to the Certification Coordinator after the examination is complete, but in no case may this appeal be made more than 30 days after OSU FST has mailed examination results to the candidate.
- Candidates may telephone the Certification Coordinator for an appointment or make an appeal in writing to the Certification Coordinator. The candidate shall provide specific and detailed information with regard to the alleged occurrence/violation in writing.
- If the Certification Coordinator cannot resolve the grievance, the Certification Coordinator will notify the Director of OSU FST within 15 days of the appeal.
- The Director will convene the Appeals Board within 30 days after the Notice of Appeal is received.
- The Appeals Board will review the appeal and records all proceedings, make a decision on the suggested action to be taken, set forth the reason for its decision and submit their finding to the Director of OSU FST.
- The Appeals Board shall, in every case, make a recommendation to the Director of OSU FST without an unreasonable or unnecessary delay.
- The Director will review the Board's recommendation and provide written notification of the final decision to the candidate.

If the decision is in the favor of the appellant, provisions for correction shall be made as quickly as possible.

13.2 Appeals Board

The Director of OSU FST shall establish an Appeals Board. The Appeals Board shall consist of the Certification Subcommittee Chair (non-voting) and three (3) voting members (representing OSU FST program delivery, and Oklahoma emergency

responders). At least one voting member shall not be an OSU FST employee. The Director shall not be a member of the Board. Two (2) members of the Board shall constitute a quorum. Affirmative votes of the majority present shall be required for any decision. The Board will meet as needed to review appeals. A Board member shall not act in any case, in which the member has a personal interest.