



Texas Commission on Fire Protection

P.O. Box 2286, Austin, Texas 78701-2286

PH# 512-936-3838

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NFPA 1550 (2024) Compliance Guide

SOP Development — Chapters 17–20 (NFPA 1561)

1. Compliance Philosophy

Your SOP must demonstrate:

- **Conformance** → Meets NFPA requirements
- **Documentation** → Written, accessible, version-controlled
- **Implementation** → Actually used in operations
- **Verification** → Measurable and auditable

If it's not documented **and** recorded, it won't pass compliance review.

2. Required SOP Framework for Compliance

Each SOP section should include:

A. Policy Statement (Mandatory)

- Clear statement of compliance with NFPA 1550
- Example:
 - “The agency shall maintain operational readiness in accordance with Chapter 17...”

B. Procedures (Mandatory)

- Step-by-step actions using “**shall**” statements

C. Roles & Responsibilities (Mandatory)



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- Position-based (not names)
- Must align with ICS/NIMS structure

D. Records & Documentation (Critical for audits)

- What records are created
- Where they are stored
- Retention period

E. Performance Metrics (Required)

- How compliance is measured

F. Review Cycle (Required)

- Annual or post-incident review requirement

Chapter-by-Chapter Compliance Recommendations

CHAPTER 17 — Operational Readiness Compliance

Required SOP Elements

- ✓ Personnel qualification tracking
- ✓ Training program with documented completion
- ✓ Equipment inspection and maintenance logs
- ✓ Resource availability status system
- ✓ Risk monitoring procedures

Required Documentation

- Training records (certifications, drills)



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- Equipment maintenance logs
- Staffing rosters
- Readiness status reports

Compliance Metrics

- % personnel meeting qualifications
- Training completion rates
- Equipment readiness rate (e.g., 95% operational)

Auditor Will Look For:

- Proof of **routine readiness checks**
- Evidence that deficiencies are corrected

CHAPTER 18 — Emergency Response Operations Compliance

Required SOP Elements

- ✓ Formal activation criteria
- ✓ Incident Command System implementation
- ✓ Communications protocols (primary + backup)
- ✓ Resource deployment procedures
- ✓ Accountability system

Required Documentation

- Incident reports
- ICS forms (e.g., 201, 214 logs)
- Dispatch logs
- Communication logs



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Compliance Metrics

- Response times vs benchmarks
- ICS compliance rate
- Communication failure incidents

Auditor Will Look For:

- Evidence ICS is actually used (not just written)
- Consistent documentation across incidents

CHAPTER 19 — Continuity of Operations (COOP) Compliance

Required SOP Elements

- ✓ Identification of essential functions
- ✓ Orders of succession
- ✓ Delegation of authority
- ✓ Alternate facility plans
- ✓ IT/data backup procedures

Required Documentation

- COOP plan
- Continuity exercise reports
- Backup system logs
- Succession lists

Compliance Metrics

- Recovery Time Objective (RTO) achievement
- COOP exercise frequency
- System uptime during disruptions



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CHAPTER 20 — Recovery Compliance

Required SOP Elements

- ✓ Damage assessment procedures
- ✓ Service restoration priorities
- ✓ Cost tracking and financial documentation
- ✓ After-Action Review (AAR) process
- ✓ Corrective action program

Required Documentation

- Damage assessment reports
- Financial reimbursement records
- AAR reports
- Improvement plans

Compliance Metrics

- Time to restore critical services
- % corrective actions completed
- Funding recovery success rate

Auditor Will Look For:

- Closed-loop improvement system
- Evidence lessons learned are implemented

3. Compliance Matrix

Create a matrix like this:



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NFPA Requirement SOP Section Evidence Responsible Role Frequency
Ch.17 Training Sec 1.2 Training logs Training Officer Quarterly

4. Records Management Requirements

Your SOP must define:

- Record type
- Storage location (physical/digital)
- Retention period
- Access control

Examples:

- Training records → 5 years
- Incident reports → Permanent or per jurisdiction
- COOP tests → 3–5 years

5. Continuous Improvement (Mandatory for Compliance)

Include a **Corrective Action Program (CAP)**:

- Identify deficiencies
- Assign responsibility
- Set deadlines
- Track completion
- Verify effectiveness

6. Testing & Exercises (Critical for Compliance)

You must document:

- Tabletop exercises



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- Functional exercises
- Full-scale exercises

Each must include:

- Objectives
- Participants
- Results
- Improvement actions

7. Common Compliance Failures to Avoid

- ✗ SOPs written but not used
- ✗ Missing documentation/records
- ✗ No proof of training or exercises
- ✗ COOP plans not tested
- ✗ After-action reports with no follow-up

8. Final Compliance Checklist

Your SOP is compliant if it:

- ✓ Uses “shall” language aligned with NFPA
- ✓ Includes measurable performance metrics
- ✓ Defines required records and retention
- ✓ Demonstrates implementation (not just intent)
- ✓ Includes testing and validation processes
- ✓ Has a documented improvement cycle