

CERTIFICATION CURRICULUM MANUAL

CHAPTER TWELVE

HEAD OF A FIRE DEPARTMENT

2019 Edition

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Texas Commission on Fire Protection
P.O. Box 2286 Austin, Texas 78768-2286 (512) 936-3838

REFERENCE LIST FOR THE HEAD OF A FIRE DEPARTMENT CURRICULUM

Certified Training Facilities approved to teach this curriculum must have the following reference materials:

Standards Manual for Fire Protection Personnel Austin, TX: Texas Commission on Fire Protection.

Web access to the Texas Commission on Fire Protection website: www.tcfp.texas.gov

SECTION 1201 **HEAD OF A FIRE DEPARTMENT**

The information in this chapter is presented as a guide for self-study.

The Head of a Fire Department is a member of the fire service, responsible for the overall operation of a fire protection agency, who has demonstrated the knowledge and ability to:

- **lead members of a fire department in times of emergency;**
- **develop and maintain procedures for safe and effective operations at emergency and non-emergency incidents;**
- **meet the record-keeping requirements of the authority having jurisdiction.**

1201-1.0 **General**

For certification at the Head of Department level, the candidate shall meet the requirements defined in Sections 1201-1.0 through 1201-10.2 and meet any other certification requirements.

1201-1.1 **Texas Commission on Fire Protection Mission and Goals**

1201-1.1.1 The commission's authority is defined by [Chapter 419 of the Texas Government Code](#). The commission's statutory authority and role within this community is to serve Texas fire departments.

1201-1.1.2 The commission's strategic plan includes two major goals:

- To provide education and assistance to the fire service
 - Fire protection resource library
- To enforce statewide fire service standards
 - Four program areas
 - Certification
 - Training approval and testing
 - Standards compliance
 - Curriculum development

1201-1.2 **Compact with Texans**

1201-1.2.1 The commission's statutory authority and role within this community is to serve Texas fire departments by:

- Providing resources to Texas fire departments with critical equipment and training needs; and
- Establishing and enforcing standards for fire protection personnel training, protective clothing, and self-contained breathing apparatus.

1201-1.3 **Agency services and customer service standards**

1201-1.3.1 **Providing fire protection resources**

- Fire protection resource library
 - The Ernest A. Emerson Fire Protection Resource Library provides fire protection research and educational materials to Texas fire departments, schools and the general public.

1201-1.3.2 **Establishing and enforcing fire protection standards**


- Fire protection personnel certification
 - The commission's [certification section](#) certifies approximately 34,000 fire protection personnel in Texas.
 - Paid fire protection personnel are required by state law to be certified by this commission; volunteers and individuals not affiliated with a paid or volunteer department can choose to be certified by the commission on a voluntary basis.

- Examination and training standards
 - The commission's [testing and training approval section](#) administers the written and performance examinations for certification.
 - The testing and training approval program staff evaluate prior training completed by individuals to determine whether individuals are eligible to sit for the commission examination.
 - The testing and training approval program staff also evaluate and approves training academy certification classes.

- Standards Compliance
 - The goal of the commission's [compliance program](#) is to ensure the safety of the states' fire protection personnel by inspecting fire departments and other regulated entities to confirm that they are in compliance with state laws and rules.
 - The compliance inspectors also inspect training records to ensure that fire protection personnel are in compliance with the appropriate certification rules for their disciplines.
 - The commission compliance officers travel to every regulated entity at least once every two years to inspect fire protection personnel certifications, training records, breathing air test records, protective clothing and self-contained breathing apparatus.
 - If a department is found to be in violation of a state law or commission rule, the compliance section works with the entity to develop a plan that will lead to compliance.

1201-1.4 Contacting the Commission

1201-1.4.1 Contacting agency staff

- The commission's main phone number is (512) 936-3838
- Executive staff members are on the web site's [staff](#) page. Contact information is found on the [Contact Us](#) page.
- The commission's mailing address is Texas Commission on Fire Protection, PO Box 2286, Austin, TX 78768-2286. The commission's main e-mail address is info@tcfp.texas.gov 

1201-1.4.2 Contacting commissioners and advisory board members

- The names and brief biographical information about the commissioners and advisory board members are also listed on this web site's Commissioners and committee members page. Phone numbers for each section are found on the [directory](#) page.
- Staff will forward letters to commissioners and advisory committee members.

1201-1.4.3 Requests for items to be placed on future meeting agendas

- Items for future commission or advisory committee meetings should be submitted in writing to the agency at least 30 days before the meeting.
- In no event should items be submitted later than 15 days prior to the meeting.
If the item requested is a petition for new rules, the agency recommends that the submitter review [Chapter 401.19](#).

1201-1.4.4 Open records requests

- Requests for records under the Texas Open Records Act should be submitted in writing via email to info@tcfp.texas.gov.

1201-1.4.5 Complaints about entities regulated by the commission

- Complaints about a violation of a rule within the agency's jurisdiction should be made in writing to the agency's standards compliance section at the Texas Commission on Fire Protection, Compliance Section, PO Box 2286, Austin, TX 78768-2286.

1201-1.4.6 Appeals of agency decisions or actions

- Appeals of agency decisions or actions should be submitted to the agency in accordance with [Chapter 401.51](#).

1201-1.4.7 Complaints about the agency

- Persons with complaints about a staff member or about the agency's service should contact the agency's customer relations representative at (512) 936-3838, or by writing in care of the Texas Commission on Fire Protection, Customer Relations Representative, PO Box 2286, Austin, TX 78768-2286.

1201-1.5 FAQ's

1201-1.5.1 Tuition Assistance for Fire Protection Education

- The State of Texas offers tuition exemptions or financial aid for fire protection training.
- The Texas Education Code, [Title 3 - Higher Education, Chapter 54 - Tuition and Fees, Section 54.208 - Firemen Enrolled in Fire Science Courses](#), states that personnel employed as fire fighters who attend a state-supported school and take courses in a fire science or fire technology program do not have to pay tuition fees.

1201-1.5.2 Volunteer Fire Fighter Certification

- Volunteer fire fighters and individual fire fighters who are not affiliated with a department can participate voluntarily in the commission's certification programs.
- Volunteers who have achieved a Fire Fighter II certificate or an advanced fire fighter certification with the State Firemen's and Fire Marshals' Association of Texas (SFFMA) may qualify to complete the commission-designated skill evaluation process and take the certification exam (please see [Chapter 423](#) of the Standards Manual).

1201-1.5.3 Establishing a Volunteer Fire Department

- The [Texas Department of Agriculture](#) has more information about rural volunteer fire departments and emergency service districts (ESDs).
- The State Firefighters' and Fire Marshals' Association (SFFMA), a nonprofit association, also offers a great deal of assistance to volunteer fire departments.


1201-1.5.4 Funding and Other Resources for Texas Fire Departments

- The Texas Forest Service offers several types of assistance to Texas fire departments. [TFS assistance programs](#).
- The United States Fire Administration publishes a reference titled [Fire Service Grants and Funding](#)
- For non-firefighting equipment, the Texas Facilities Commission publishes a monthly [state surplus property](#) listing.

1201-1.5.5 Death and Disability Benefits

- The Texas Forest Service maintains an extensive [list of resources](#) that are available to the fire fighter or the fire fighter's family.
- The [National Fallen Firefighters Foundation](#) offers resources including the [Chaplains Manual](#) and [other resources](#)
- The [Texas LODD Task Force](#) also assists departments with line of duty deaths.

1201-1.5.6 **TEXFIRS, Fire Extinguishers, Fire Sprinklers, Fire Alarm Systems, and Firefighter Fatalities**

- The [State Fire Marshal's Office \(SFMO\)](#) regulates the fire extinguisher, fire protection sprinkler, and fire alarm system industries in Texas.
- The SFMO also administers the Texas Fire Incident Reporting System (TEXFIRS). The SFMO is a division of the Texas Department of Insurance (TDI).
- The SFMO is responsible for investigating all firefighter fatalities in Texas.
- The SFMO's e-mail address is fire.marshall@tdi.texas.gov 

1201-1.5.7 **Building and Fire Codes**

- The commission does not have any jurisdiction with regard to building or fire codes.
- If your building is in an area that does not have local codes, the requirements of the [National Fire Protection Association's](#) Life Safety Code 101 (2009 edition) have been adopted by the [State Fire Marshal's Office](#) for fire safety inspections.

1201-2.0 **Fire Protection Personnel Certification**

1201-2.1.1 **Certification Program Overview**

- The commission annually renews the certificates of approximately 34,000 fire protection personnel in basic, intermediate, advanced and master levels.
- General certification requirements:
 - Certification for paid fire protection personnel in Texas is mandatory.
 - Volunteer fire protection personnel participating in a certification program is strictly voluntary.
 - Volunteers who have achieved advanced certification with the State Firemen's and Fire Marshals' Association of Texas (SFFMA) may qualify for commission certification by completing the commission's designated skill evaluation and certification examination processes.
 - Individuals not affiliated with fire departments can maintain their own certifications, provided continuing education requirements (see [Chapter 441](#)) continue to be met.

The certification program also certifies [fire protection training facilities](#). Rules governing the certification of these facilities are in [Chapter 427](#).

- 1201-2.1.2 Fire Suppression, including Structure, Aircraft Rescue, and Marine Fire Protection.
- Standards for structure fire protection certification are in [Chapter 423, Subchapter A](#). The basic fire suppression curriculum is in [Chapter 1](#) of the curriculum manual.
 - Standards for aircraft rescue fire protection certification are in [Chapter 423, Subchapter B](#). The basic aircraft rescue fire protection curriculum is in [Chapter 2](#) of the curriculum manual.
 - Standards for marine fire protection certification are in [Chapter 423, Subchapter C](#). The basic marine fire protection curriculum is in [Chapter 3](#) of the curriculum manual.
- 1201-2.1.3 Fire Investigation, including Fire Investigator and Arson Investigator.
- Standards for fire investigation are in [Chapter 431](#).
 - Standards for arson investigator certification are in [Chapter 431, Subchapter A](#).
 - Standards for fire investigator certification are in [Chapter 431, Subchapter B](#). The basic fire investigator curriculum is in [Chapter 5](#) of the curriculum manual.
- 1201-2.1.4 Fire Instructor I, II & III
- Standards for fire service instructor certification are in [Chapter 425](#). The fire service instructor curriculum is in [Chapter 8](#) of the curriculum manual.
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- 1201-2.1.5 Fire Inspector & Plan Examiner
- The standards for fire inspector certification are in [Chapter 429, Subchapter A](#).
 - The standards for Plan Examiner certification are in [Chapter 429.201, Subchapter B](#).
 - The basic fire inspector & Plan Examiner -curriculum are in [Chapter 4](#) of the curriculum manual.
- 1201-2.1.6 Head of a Fire Department
- The standards for Head of a Fire Department certification are in [Chapter 449](#). The head of a fire department self-study curriculum is in [Chapter 12](#) of the curriculum manual.
- 1201-2.1.7 Hazardous Materials Technician and Incident Commander
- The standards for these certifications are in [Chapter 453](#). The hazardous materials certification curricula are in [Chapter 6](#) of the curriculum manual.

1201-2.1.8 Driver/Operator Pumper and Aerial

- . The standards for these certifications are in [Chapter 433](#). The driver/operator-pumper curriculum is in [Chapter 7](#) of the curriculum manual.

1201-2.1.9 Fire Officer I, II, III and IV

- The standards for these certifications are in [Chapter 451](#). The fire officer curricula are in [Chapter 9](#) of the curriculum manual.

1201-2.1.10 Basic & Intermediate Wildland Firefighter

- . The standards for these certifications are in [Chapter 455](#). The wildland firefighter curriculum is in [Chapter 11](#) of the curriculum manual.

1201-2.1.11 Safety Officer

- .The standards for this certification are in [Chapter 457](#) The Safety Officer curriculum is in [Chapter 10](#) of the curriculum manual.

1201-2.1.11 Fire & Life Safety Educator I & II

The standards for these certifications are in [Chapter 459](#). The Fire & Life Safety Educator curriculum is in [Chapter 13](#) of the curriculum manual.

1201-2.2 Individual Renewals

If you are currently employed by a regulated entity (e.g., a fire department or fire marshal's office) in Texas, your department is responsible for your renewal.

1201-2.3 Basic Fire Suppression Certification

To work in Texas as a paid fire fighter, personnel have to earn a Texas "basic structure fire suppression" certificate. To earn the certificate, you must:

1201-2.3.1 Complete a commission approved Structure Fire Suppression training program

Qualify for and pass all four (4) sections of the structure exam; you must have unexpired exam scores in FIDO to qualify for certification

Document completion of medical training equal to EMR, ECA, EMT or Paramedic certification

Complete a fingerprint-based background check via IdentoGo

Apply and pay for certification. The quickest option is to pay with a credit card via your FIDO account

Individuals may be exempt from the exam requirement if TCFP certification has never been held and they hold an IFSAC seal or TEEEX Proboard certificate

1201-2.4 Transferring to Texas

- If personnel are coming to Texas from an IFSAC jurisdiction, please refer to the first part of this page: [Transferring to Texas from an IFSAC jurisdiction.](#)
- If personnel are coming to Texas from a non-IFSAC jurisdiction, please refer to [Transferring to Texas from a non-IFSAC jurisdiction](#)

1201-.2.5 A-List and B-List Courses

- To earn intermediate, advanced and master certifications in fire protection, certificate holders must meet specific time and training requirements. Certain combinations of the A-List and B-List courses listed below can help fire protection personnel meet the training requirements. For information on specific requirements for higher levels of certification in each discipline, please refer to the appropriate sections of the [Standards Manual for Fire Protection Personnel.](#)
- [A-List Courses](#)
- [B-List Courses](#)

1201-2-6 Certification Verification

To verify an individual's certification status, simply enter the individual's last name or the name of his or her department in the appropriate box on the commission's web site. [Certification verification](#)

1201-2.7 Courage to be Safe Resources

The Texas Commission on Fire Protection adopted the [National Fallen Firefighters Foundation](#) Fire Fighter Life Safety Initiatives <https://www.everyonegoeshome.com>. (See [Chapter 435.25](#)).

1201-2.8 Federal Highway Administration Traffic Incident Management Program

Commission rule [§435.29 - Federal Highway Administration Traffic Incident Management Program](#) requires regulated entities to ensure that the FHA's Traffic Incident Management program, or an equivalent commission-approved course, is completed by certified fire protection personnel by Dec. 1, 2020.

1201-3.0 Training Approval and Testing Program

- The fire service standards and certification division's training approval and testing program approve certification courses and administers examinations for fire service personnel certification.
- The International Fire Service Accreditation Congress (IFSAC) has accredited the commission's fire fighter testing process as meeting the national standards for Fire Fighter I and Fire Fighter II as specified in

the National Fire Protection Association's NFPA 1001, *Standard for Fire Fighter Professional Qualifications*, and hazardous materials awareness and operations levels as specified in NFPA 472. The commission's hazardous materials technician, hazardous materials incident commander, aircraft rescue fire fighter, fire inspector, fire investigator, hazardous materials technician, driver/operator-pumper, driver operator aerial, fire instructor, fire officer, incident safety officer and fire & life safety educator certification programs are also accredited by IFSAC.

1201-3.1 Regional Testing

- Written examinations are administered at various regional testing sites. The following examinations can be administered at the regional testing sites:
 - Basic Fire/Arson Investigator
 - Basic Aircraft Rescue Fire Fighter
 - Basic Marine Fire Fighter
 - Hazardous Materials Technician
 - Driver/Operator-Pumper
 - Fire Officer I, II, III, and IV
 - Fire Instructor I, II, and III
 - Fire Fighter I and II
 - Hazardous Materials Awareness
 - Hazardous Materials Operations
 - Fire Inspector I and II
 - Plan Examiner
 - Basic & Intermediate Wildland Firefighter
 - Safety Officer
 - Fire & Life Safety Educator I and II

- The Basic Structure Fire Fighter examination can only be administered at academy testing sites, not at regional testing sites

Individuals log into their FIDO account to apply for the exam, after they choose the type of exam (on line or classroom), have been approved, pay their invoice, they get an endorsement of eligibility to take to the examination facility.

On line exams locations are available here: <https://www.tcfp.texas.gov/services/sites/online>

Exams that are available for On Line Testing:

- Aircraft Rescue Firefighter
- Basic Wildland Firefighter
- Driver Operator-Aerial

- Driver Operator-Pumper
- Hazardous Materials Awareness
- Hazardous Materials Incident Commander
- Hazardous Materials Operations
- Hazardous Materials Technician
- Incident Safety Officer
- Inspector I-II
- Instructor I-III
- Investigator
- Officer I-IV
- Marine Fire Fighter
- ~~Plan Examiner I~~
- ~~_____~~
- Fire Safety Life Educator 1

ATTENTION: Structure Firefighter, Firefighter 1, Firefighter II, Intermediate Wildland Firefighter, Fire and Life Safety Educator II ARE NOT AVAILABLE TO BE TAKEN ONLINE

1201-3.2 Field Examiner Course

Many certification exams include a skills evaluation conducted by a certified Field Examiner. Certified instructors may complete the on-line Field Examiner course found on the commission's web site.

1201-3.3 IFSAC

IFSAC is the acronym for the International Fire Service Accreditation Congress, an organization that accredits international, national, or regional fire service certification programs, with emphasis on the certification testing process. IFSAC is a peer-driven organization that not only ensures compliance with IFSAC policy and procedures but improves the quality of an entity's program. Specific information about the organization is available on their website here: <https://ifsac.org/>

1201-4.0 Compliance Program Overview

- The goal of the commission's compliance program is to ensure the safety of the state's fire protection personnel by inspecting fire departments and other regulated entities to see that they are following state laws and rules. The compliance inspectors also inspect training records to ensure that fire protection personnel are following the appropriate certification rules for their disciplines.
- Rules governing fire fighter safety, including protective clothing and self-contained breathing apparatus, are in [Chapter 435](#) of the Standards Manual. Rules governing the commission's compliance inspections are in [Chapter 445](#)

- The agency has compliance inspectors in **6 Regions located throughout the State.** <https://www.tcfp.texas.gov/services/compliance#maps>. These inspectors travel to every regulated entity at least once every two years to check fire protection personnel certification status, training records, breathing air test records, protective clothing and self-contained breathing apparatus.

1201-4.1 **Complying with NFPA Standards**

- The commission has adopted the following National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) Standards listed below; regulated departments must comply with these standards.
 - [NFPA 1971, 2018 Edition.](#) *Protective Ensembles for Structural Fire Fighting and Proximity Fire Fighting.*
 - [NFPA 1851, 2020 Edition.](#) *Selection, Care, and Maintenance of Protective Ensembles for Structural Fire Fighting and Proximity Fire Fighting.*
 - [NFPA 1981, 2019 Edition.](#) *Open-Circuit Self-Contained Breathing Apparatus (SCBA) for Emergency Services.*
 - [NFPA 1852, 2019 Edition.](#) *Selection, Care, and Maintenance of Open-Circuit Self-Contained Breathing Apparatus (SCBA).*
 - [NFPA 1982, 2018 Edition.](#) *Personal Alert Safety Systems (PASS).*
 - [NFPA 1989, 2019 Edition.](#) *Breathing Air Quality for Emergency Services Respiratory Protection.*
 - [NFPA 1561, 2014 Edition.](#) *Emergency Services Incident Management System.*

1201-4.2 **Compliance Guides**

The Texas Commission on Fire Protection makes available on-line guides to assist agencies in preparation for an inspection by commission compliance officers. <https://www.tcfp.texas.gov/services/compliance-files>

1201-4.2.1 **Compliance Inspection**

The [Compliance Inspection Guide](#) lists information that is to be readily available during a compliance inspection.

1201-4.2.2 **Certified Training Facility Inspection Guide**

The [Certified Training Facility Inspection Guide](#) lists information that is to be readily available for review during a training facility inspection.

1201-4.2.3 **Wellness-Fitness Rule**

- Compliance officers will ask to see a document that describes the procedure the department used for assessing and maintaining the wellness and fitness needs of the personnel in the department.

- Compliance officers will ask to see a written Standard Operating Procedure to address wellness and fitness needs of the department based on local resources.

1201-5.0 **Injury Reporting**

Texas Government Code, [Chapter 419.048](#), which took effect Sept. 1, 2009, requires all fire protection entities in Texas to report injuries to the commission.

1201-5.1 **Kinds of Injuries to Report**

- A fire department should report all injuries.
- Fire departments must report minor injuries within 30 business days of the injury event. Minor injuries are injuries that do not result in the fire fighter missing more than one full duty period.
- Fire departments must report:
- **Serious or fatal** injuries within five (5) business days of the injury event. **Serious** injuries are those that require the fire fighter to miss more than one full duty period.

1201-5.2 **Inquiries and Investigations**

- An inquiry is a non-punitive gathering of additional information on the reported incident for statistical purposes.
- An investigation is a non-punitive compliance inspection directed primarily at determining the circumstances of the injury. In general, the commission's compliance officer will inspect the injured individual's PPE and other items related to fire fighter safety mandates.
- Investigable injuries are injuries that result from:
 - Failure or malfunction of self-contained breathing apparatus (SCBA).
 - Failure of personal protective equipment (PPE).
 - Failure to comply with commission-mandated department standard operating procedures (SOPs).

1201-5.3 **Return to Work**

For injury reporting purposes, the commission defines missed work as "lost time" when an individual misses more than one full duty period as a direct result of an injury. Lost time includes time during which the individual does not return to the duties to which the department assigned the individual prior to the injury.

1201-6.0 **Library**

The Texas Commission on Fire Protection administers the Ernest A. Emerson Fire Protection Resource Library to provide resources and assistance for fire protection research and to provide educational materials to fire departments and other entities.

1201-6.1 **Library Mission**

The Texas Commission on Fire Protection established the Ernest A. Emerson Fire Protection Resource Library as the preeminent statewide resource library for fire protection, fire prevention and education, research and educational materials for all fire service organization and professionals as well as private citizens and entities interested in improving the safety and life quality of all Texans from the hazards associated with fire, man-made and natural disasters.

1201-6.2 **Resource Library-Services**

- Audio Visual Training Library
- Research Services
- Print Collection

1201-7.0 **Manuals**

1201-7.1 **[Standards Manual for Fire Protection Personnel](#)**

The Texas Commission on Fire Protection's *Standards Manual for Fire Protection Personnel* is a compilation of the state laws codified in Title 37, Part 13 of the Texas Administrative Code (TAC). When the commission proposes or adopts "rule changes," these are the laws that the commission is changing.

1201-7.2 **[Certification Curriculum Manual](#)**

The Texas Commission on Fire Protection's curriculum program staff works with the [committee members](#) to update and distribute the *Certification Curriculum Manual*, which provides the curriculum for the training of structural fire suppression personnel, aircraft rescue fire protection personnel, and marine fire protection personnel, as well as fire inspectors, fire investigators, hazardous materials technicians, driver/operators-pumper, fire instructors and fire officers.

1201-8.0 **[Texas Government Code Chapter 419](#)**

GOVERNMENT CODE TITLE 4. EXECUTIVE BRANCH SUBTITLE B.
LAW ENFORCEMENT AND PUBLIC PROTECTION CHAPTER 419.
TEXAS COMMISSION ON FIRE PROTECTION

1201-9.0 **[FIDO](#)**

FIDO is a tool which allows commission-regulated entities & individuals to create user accounts.. Departments can create "departmental accounts" to allow their personnel to manage commission-required data. Individuals can also create accounts " manage their own personal data.

1201-9.1 **FIDO for registered entities**

- File injury reports with TCFP.

- Renew certified personnel
- Apply for eligible testing, certificates and IFSAC seals
- Manage department data.
- Manage department employee data.
- Generate reports in real time.

1201-9.2 FIDO for Individuals

- Manage personal data.
- Renew certification
- Apply for eligible testing, certificates and IFSAC seals
- Generate reports in real time, such as certification cards and test results.