

FIRE INVESTIGATOR APPLICATION
 PENNSYLVANIA VOLUNTARY FIRE SERVICE CERTIFICATION PROGRAM
 NFPA 1033 – 2022 Edition



Effective March 1, 2026:

- All certification candidates are required to maintain an active Acadis user portal account. (Acadis portal location = OSFC website/ Training and Certification Portal, or click here: [ENVISAGE Acadis®](#))
- All certification candidates are to be registered with the designated test site and rostered for the certification test.

Method: Certification as a Fire Investigator can be completed via one of two (2) options: open challenge or approved training program: **Please Check Method Used:** _____ Challenge _____ Course Completion

SECTION I

<p align="center">FEMA Student Identification Number (FEMA SID#): To register or view your FEMA SID, go to https://cdp.dhs.gov/FEMASID</p>	<p><i>Enter your 10-digit FEMA SID#</i></p>
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Last Name	First Name	M.I.	Suffix	SSN# (last 4-digits only)
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Mailing Address	City	State	Zip Code	County
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Date of Birth	Primary Phone	Alternate Phone	Email Address
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Affiliation (Fire Dept./Organization)	Title/Rank	Date Hired/Joined
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Fire Dept./Organization Address	City	State	Zip Code	County
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Please Read and Check One:

I read (or had explained to me) and understand the job performance requirements for the Fire Investigator certification test. I have no conditions which preclude me from safely or effectively performing all functions and tasks (practical skills and written test) for the level which I am seeking national certification.

I read (or had explained to me) and understand the job performance requirements for the Fire Investigator certification test. I will submit a request for accommodation for the written national certification test. I understand I MUST contact the Certification Program Manager no later than twenty days prior to the scheduled certification exam.

Disclosure of your social security number is required. Your social security number is being solicited pursuant to Pennsylvania Crimes Code *18 Pa C.S. 4904* and Section 7384 of the Emergency Management Services Code (35 Pa. C.S. §§ 7101 *et seq.* The Office of the State Fire Commissioner/ Pennsylvania State Fire Academy collects these numbers only for tracking, processing of certifications, and verification purposes; information is only shared where required to do so for and is not sold, bartered, rented, or otherwise distributed.

By signing and dating this document, I certify that the information contained in this Application and any attachments is accurate and complete to the best of my knowledge and submitted as true and correct in accordance with the OSFC/PSFA certification testing policy and in accordance with Pennsylvania Crimes Code *18 Pa C.S. 4904*, relating to unsworn falsifications to authorities.

[Click Here to View Candidate Handbook](#)

Signature of Candidate _____

Date _____

Test Site Official Use Only: Test Site: _____ Test Site Number: _____ Date Application Received at Test Site: _____ Date Application Approved: _____ Candidate Number: _____ Written Exam Results ___ PASS ___ FAIL Skills Exam Results ___ PASS ___ FAIL

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SECTION II

Act 168 of 2006 amended Title 18 (Crimes and Offenses) of the Pennsylvania Consolidated Statutes, Section 2, subsection (h) (1) Arson and related offenses reads:

“A person convicted of violating this section or any similar offense under Federal or State law shall be prohibited from serving as a firefighter in this Commonwealth and shall be prohibited from being certified as a firefighter under Section 4 of the Act of November 13, 1995 (P.L. 604, No.61), known as the State Fire Commissioner Act.”

All individuals making application for certification testing must provide documentation of a background check. Proof of a non-conviction MUST consist of *either* of the following:

1. An official criminal history record check obtained pursuant to Chapter 91 (relating to criminal history record information) indicating no arson convictions.

OR

2. By dating and signing of the following statement by the person swearing to the following:

“I have never been convicted of an offense that constitutes the crime of “arson and related offenses” under 18 Pa. C.S. 3301 or any similar offense under any Federal or State law. I hereby certify that the statements contained herein are true and correct to the best of my knowledge and belief. I understand that if I knowingly make any false statement herein, I am subject to penalties prescribed by law, including, but not limited to, a fine of at least \$1,000.00”

Signature of Certification Candidate

Name of Certification Candidate (please type)

Date

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SECTION III - Please read and complete all information:

A candidate should meet the requirements of *NFPA 1580 (2025) Standard for Emergency Responder Occupational Health and Wellness* prior to physical testing to ensure his/her ability to safely perform the required tasks.

During your participation in certification testing, in the event of injury/illness are you protected by an insurance carrier providing hospitalization and/or Workmen's Compensation? ___ YES ___ NO

Liability Waiver

I, the undersigned, have hospitalization insurance and do hereby release the following individuals and organizations from any and all liabilities or causes of action for any injuries or illness incurred during or after my participation in the Voluntary Certification Program Test sponsored by the Office of the State Fire Commissioner/Pennsylvania State Fire Academy, Pennsylvania Emergency Management Agency and hosted by the

(Name of Test Site)

The release covers all the aforementioned individuals and agencies as well as their agents, employees, or volunteers participating in this event.

This release covers all injuries or illnesses occurring during or because of the activities engaged in by the undersigned during the Voluntary Certification test including any injuries which might result from physical abuse from third party participants or other individuals in or around the area where the examination is being conducted.

This release is intended to release all injuries, damages, or law suits to the undersigned person and property, whether known, unknown, foreseen, unforeseen, patent or latent which the undersigned may have against the Office of the State Fire Commissioner, the Pennsylvania Emergency Management Agency, the Host Entity, or its agents as listed above. The undersigned understands and acknowledges the significance and consequence of such specific intentions to release all claims, and hereby assumes full responsibility for any injuries, damages, or losses that may occur from the above-mentioned event.

By signing and dating of this document **I HEREBY ACKNOWLEDGE** that **I HAVE READ THE CONTENTS** of this waiver, and that **I FULLY UNDERSTAND THE SAID CONTENTS** of the release, and that **I HAVE SIGNED INTENDING TO BE LEGALLY BOUND.**

Candidate Name (please type)

Signature of Candidate

Date

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SECTION IV

It is understood the candidate registered on this form does so with full knowledge and approval from the named organization on Page One of this application; furthermore, the candidate is protected by an insurance carrier or the organization. I attest the candidate meets the requirements noted in **Section III**. Participation approved by:

Chief Officer Name (please type)	Daytime Phone	Email
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Signature of Chief Officer	Title	Date
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SECTION V

****All challenge or training methods must meet the following requirements****

REQUIREMENT - NFPA 1033 (2022 Ed) Chapter 4:

Candidates **MUST** be trained or certified at the Hazardous Materials Operations Level in accordance with NFPA 1072 (2017), Chapter 5 (Core Competencies) and Chapter 6 (Mission-Specifics) Section 6.2 (PPE) and Section 6.6 (Product Control), **OR** NFPA 470 (2022) *Hazardous Materials/Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD) Standard for Responders*. Training standards as outlined in Chapters 6 and Chapter 8, Section 8.2 (PPE) and Section 8.6 (Product Control) or in Certification standards as outlined in Chapter 7 and Chapter 9, Section 9.2 (PPE) and Section 9.6 (Product Control)

Attach a copy of one of the following recognized certificates. Training certificates **MUST** be from the PSFA-approved Jones & Bartlett curriculum **OR** the PSFA-approved IFSTA curriculum.

- _____ Hazardous Materials Operations Level training **OR**
- _____ Hazardous Materials Operations Level Annual Refresher training (candidate must have completed an approved operations initial course) **OR**
- _____ Hazardous Materials Operations Level Responder National Certification (ProBoard or IFSAC)

NOTE: The certificate (training, refresher training, or certification) **MUST** be current and dated within one (1) year of the certification application and **MUST** meet the requirements of NFPA 1072 (2017) **OR** NFPA 470 (2022).

REQUIREMENT: NFPA 1033 – 2022 Chapter 4: Fire Investigations

Candidates are required to document their participation in **10** fire investigations on the Summary Sheet found at the end of this application. The investigations should be from the types of incidents listed below:

- | | |
|---------------------------|-----------------|
| A. Residential structural | E. Wildland |
| B. Commercial structural | F. Marine |
| C. Industrial | G. Railroad |
| D. Vehicle | H. Refuse waste |

The summary sheet is to be used to document your participation. Your immediate supervisor **MUST** sign the summary sheet verifying that you completed the reports, and the reports are on file, understanding these may not be the official report on file for said case.

NOTE: Any identifiable information of a person or party involved **MUST** be blacked out to protect privacy.

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Method: Certification as a Fire Investigator can be completed via two (2) options: open challenge or an approved training program: Both methods address the requirements established in JPR's 4.2 through 4.7 of NFPA 1033.

Please Check Method Used:

Course Completion - Fire Investigate Certification via Training:

To certify by this method, you must successfully complete all training courses of instruction approved by the State Fire Academy. **Section VI** details specifically what is required for completion via training. If choosing this option, complete Sections 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, and the verification form at the end of the application. The completion of any course **MUST** be within the current edition of the NFPA 1033 standard being tested.

Challenge Method:

If you are completing the Fire Investigator certification through the challenge process, you will need to complete the application and all practical skills. **Section VII** details specifically what is required for completion via the challenge method. You will need to complete, assemble, and submit all required documentation to the State Fire Academy for review. Your materials will be evaluated against the JPR's of the NFPA 1033 Standard. If choosing this option, you must complete sections 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, and 7.

SECTION VI - Complete this section only if the Course Completion method is selected.

Please select the appropriate discipline which you will be using to complete the certification test process.

Law Enforcement (i.e., persons who are current Act 120 certified):

Submit copies of training certificates for the following courses (please check the course you completed):

1. Successful completion of:

_____ Fire Arson Investigation – National Fire Academy (RO772) 80 hours,

OR

_____ Successful completion of PA two (2) week Fire Investigator program.

2. Successful program completion in an accredited Pennsylvania law enforcement academy:

_____ Certificate of accredited PA Police academy.

3. Successful completion of Associates degree or higher utilizing the Act 46 process,

OR

_____ NFA Principles of Building Construction (QO751) on-line,

OR

_____ Successful completion of NFA Building Construction: Wood and Ordinary (BCP),

AND

_____ Successful completion of NFA Building Construction: Noncombustible and Fire Resistive (BCN).

4. Successful completion of:

_____ Pennsylvania State Police Forensic Photography course,

OR

_____ CFI Trainer – Digital Photography and the Fire Investigator.

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NOTE: Mandatory for the challenge process. A prerequisite for the training process and must be completed prior to attending training course.

Fire Marshal (County or Municipal)

Submit copies of training certificates for the following courses (please check the course you completed):

1. Successful completion of:

_____ Fire Arson Investigation – National Fire Academy (RO772) 80 hours,

OR

_____ Successful completion of PA two (2) week Fire Investigator program.

2. Successful completion of Associates degree or higher utilizing the Act 46 process,

OR

_____ Principles of Building Construction (QO751) on-line

OR

_____ Successful completion of NFA Building Construction: Wood and Ordinary (BCP),

AND

_____ Successful completion of NFA Building Construction: Noncombustible and Fire Resistive (BCN).

3. Successful completion of:

_____ Pennsylvania State Police Forensic Photography course,

OR

_____ CFI Trainer – Digital Photography and the Fire Investigator.

NOTE: Mandatory for the challenge process. A prerequisite for the training process and must be completed prior to attending training course.

4. Successfully complete the following CFI trainer programs *prior* to attending PSFA course:

_____ Introduction to Evidence

_____ Documenting the Event

_____ Search and Seizures

_____ Fundamentals of Interviewing

NOTE: Utilizing the verification form or Act 46 equivalency form, a candidate may be able to meet this prerequisite via an alternative option; however, this must occur prior to attending PSFA courses or the submittal of this application.

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Fire Services Personnel or Others (i.e., insurance representative, private investigator, etc.):

Submit copies of training certificates for the following courses (please check the course you completed):

1. Successful completion of:

_____ Fire Arson Investigation – National Fire Academy (RO772) 80 hours,

OR

_____ Successful completion of PA two (2) week Fire Investigator program.

2. Successful completion of Associates degree or higher utilizing the Act 46 process,

OR

_____ Successful completion of NFA Building Construction; Wood and Ordinary (BCP),

AND

_____ Successful completion of NFA Building Construction: Noncombustible and Fire Resistive (BCN).

3. Successful completion of:

_____ Pennsylvania State Police Forensic Photography course,

OR

_____ CFI Trainer – Digital Photography and the Fire Investigator.

NOTE: Mandatory for the challenge process. A prerequisite for the training process and must be completed prior to attending training course.

4. Successfully complete the following CFI trainer programs *prior* to attending PSFA course:

_____ Introduction to Evidence

_____ Documenting the Event

_____ Search and Seizures

_____ Fundamentals of Interviewing

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SECTION VII - Complete this section only if Challenge method is selected.

There are five (5) parts to the challenge process; the specific, required details for each part is provided below. All materials should be assembled in a sequential order (i.e., Part I through Part V). The materials submitted should be properly labeled to indicate the JPR(s) met; in addition, the materials submitted shall be the candidate's own, original work. If a JPR cannot be found, you will not receive credit for that specific JPR.

Part I – Scene Examination

Provide a plot plan, floor plan, and/or photographs of the scene, rooms, and burn patterns, and complete the following:

- 4.2.1 / 4.3.2 Securing the Fire Ground
Mark the plot plan and/or floor plan, or show in the photos, how the scene would be / was secured.
- 4.2.2 / 4.3.2 Conducting Exterior Survey
Assess the exterior of the scene. Document the type of building construction and the effects of fire on the construction and materials. Determine the presence and/or absence of contents, the structural condition, observe fire damage, and interpret burn patterns. Report what you find.
 - Photographs, **AND**
 - Written documentation
- 4.2.3 / 4.3.2 Conducting Interior Survey
Assess the interior of the scene. Determine the presence and/or absence of contents, the structural condition, observe fire damage, and interpret burn patterns. Report what you find.
 - Photographs, **AND**
 - Written documentation
- 4.2.4, 4.2.5 / 4.3.2 Interpret & Analyze Fire Patterns
Assess the scene, observe fire damage and determine the structural condition and report the effect of the fire on different types of materials. Interpret and report variations in burn patterns dependent on fuel, fuel loads, trails, heat release ratio, ventilation, and ignitability. Analyze and document hypothetical areas of origin recognized and tested as well as false or refuted hypothetical areas of origin. Report what you find.
 - Photographs, **AND**
 - Written documentation
- 4.2.6/4.2.9 Examining & Removal of Fire Debris
Determine what search techniques would be used to discover fire cause evidence and ignition sources. Explain the removal of debris vs. possible evidence and preservation of evidence without investigator-inflicted damage, contamination, or spoliation. Complete the necessary documentation and provide an example(s) of the evidence you would submit.
 - Photographs, **AND**
 - Written documentation.

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- 4.2.7 / 4.3.2 Reconstructing the area of origin
Reconstruct the area of origin so that all protected areas and fire patterns are identified and correlated to the contents or structural remains, and potential items critical to area of origin determination and photo documentation are returned to their original (i.e., pre-fire) position.
 - Photographs, **AND**
 - Written documentation.

- 4.2.8 Inspecting the performance of building systems
Inspect the performance of the buildings systems, including detection, suppression, HVAC, utilities, and building compartmentation and documentation of such. Explain (written) the possible need and use of expert resources and possible systems operating impact on fire growth and spread.
 - Photographs, **AND**
 - Written documentation.

- 4.3.1 Diagramming the scene
Submit diagram(s) of the scene, so that the scene is accurately represented and evidence, pertinent contents, significant patterns, and area(s) or point(s) of origin are identified.
 - Photographs, **AND**
 - Written documentation.

- 4.3.3 Constructing Investigative notes
Construct investigation notes, available documents (e.g., pre-fire plans and inspection reports) and interview information so that the notes are accurate, provides further documentation of the scene, and represents complete documentation of the scene findings.

Part II – Evidence Collection / Preservation

- 4.4.1 Utilizing Proper Procedures for Managing Victims and Fatalities
Explain proper procedures/protocols for collecting and preserving evidence about the and fire victims/fatalities. (Attach SOP if needed)

- 4.4.2, 4.4.3, 4.4.4, 4.4.5 Evidence Collection / Preservation Procedure / Disposal of Evidence
 - Identify the potential types of evidence and determine if evidence is critical to the investigation.
 - Collect, package and properly label relevant evidence for preservation, testing, and decontamination while maintaining the chain of custody.
 - Identify proper reports/documents necessary for investigation and in the chain of custody.
 - Utilize the fire scene information to determine types of analytical services needed and report forensic, engineering and/or laboratory findings.
 - Explain how to properly dispose of evidence in accordance with jurisdictional and/or agency regulations/requirements.
 - Photographs, **AND**
 - Written documentation.

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Part III – Interview

- 4.5.1 Developing an Interview Plan**
Submit a written plan of persons to be interviewed and list questions to be asked during interview
- 4.5.2 Conducting Interviews**
Submit an interview that has been conducted given incident information, so that all pertinent information is obtained, follow-up questions are asked, response to all questions are elicited, and the response to each question is accurately documented. If questions strategy changed, explain why.
- 4.5.3 Evaluating Interview Information**
Evaluate interview information and incident data from the investigation. Correlate the data and evaluate the source of the information. Document any new leads from the interviews.

PART IV – Post-Incident Investigation

- 4.6.1 / 4.6.2 Gathering Reports and Records**
Gather reports and records, so that all gathered documents are applicable to the investigation, complete, and authentic; the chain of custody is maintained; and the material is admissible in a legal proceeding.
- 4.6.3 Coordinating Expert Resources**
Coordinate expert resources, given the investigation file, reports, and documentation, so that the expert's competencies are matched to the specific investigation needs, and utilization clearly furthers the investigation goals of determining cause or affixing responsibility.
- 4.6.4 / 4.6.5 Formulating and Opinion of person(s) and/or Product(s) Responsible for the Fire**
Document the opinion concerning origin, cause, or responsibility for the fire, given all investigative findings, so that the opinion regarding origin, cause, or responsibility for a fire is supported by data, facts, records, reports, documents, scientific references, and evidence.

PART V – Presentations

- 4.7.1 Preparing a Written Investigation Report**
Prepare a written investigative report documenting all aspects included in the investigation in a clear concise file, including all documentation (e.g., notes, photos, logs, research reports, resource reports, etc.).
- 4.7.2 Verbally Expressing Investigation findings**
Prepare and present a 15-20 presentation of investigative findings to include only need to know information for intended audience. Identify the specific audience and the impact of releasing information.
- 4.7.3 Testifying during legal Proceedings**
Present documentation of testifying at a pre-trial hearing or higher. Answer questions pertaining to investigation following 4.7.2.

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Prerequisite Verification Form

Candidate Name: _____

My signature below indicates that I read and understand the requirements of the Fire Investigator certification program; furthermore, I meet the prerequisites established by the Standard or the Authority Having Jurisdiction.

- _____ I am 18 years of age or older;
- _____ I signed the Act 168 form or provided an official criminal history record check obtained pursuant to Chapter 91;
- _____ I signed the application (Wet signatures (blue or black ink) OR digital signatures - but they **MUST** Adobe Signatures - **NOT** Freedom Signatures);
- _____ I signed the liability wavier section of the application;
- _____ I had a chief officer read and verify then sign Section IV of this application;
- _____ I attached a copy of an approved current course completion certificate (Jones & Bartlett curriculum) of a Hazardous Materials Operations Course or Operations Refresher Training Certificate;
- _____ I attached my summary sheets of 10 documented fire investigations.
- _____ I have registered with the designated test site and rostered for the certification test
- _____ I have also registered with Acadis for the certification test.

Complete this section only if using the Course Completion Method

- _____ I attached a copy of my Arson Investigation course (Section VI, Item 1);
- _____ I attached a copy of my certificate of program completion at an accredited PA Police academy (*if applicable*);
- _____ I attached a copy of the NFA Building Construction: Wood and Ordinary course (BCP);
- _____ I attached a copy of the NFA Building Construction: Noncombustible and Fire Resistive Course (BCP);
- _____ I attached a copy of my forensic photography course completion certificate;
- _____ I attached a copy of the CFI trainer programs (i.e., evidence, documentation, search & seizure, Fundamentals of Interviewing, and Documenting the Event) course completion certificates (*if applicable*).

Complete this section only if using the Challenge Method

- _____ I have attached the documentation for Part I – Scene Examination and Documentation; 1 through 9
- _____ I have attached the documentation for Part II– Evidence Collection/Preservation; 10 through 11
- _____ I have attached the documentation for Part III – Interview; 12 through 14
- _____ I have attached the documentation for Part IV – Post Incident Investigation 15 through 17
- _____ I have attached the documentation for Part V – Presentations; 18 through 20

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Testing Assistance

- _____ I am physically capable of completing the practical skill exercises.
- _____ I am able to read and comprehend the written test and related materials.
- _____ I **will not** be submitting a request for accommodation for National Certification exam.

OR

- _____ I **will** be submitting a request for accommodation for the National Certification exam. I understand that I **MUST** contact the Certification Program Manager no later than two weeks prior to the certification exam

Candidate Name (please type)

Signature of Candidate

Date

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Summary Sheet of Arson Investigations

Candidate Name: _____

No	Incident Number	Type of Investigation	Location of Incident City/State	Your Agency During Investigation Activity	General Description of Investigation	Outcome	Contact Person to Verify Information: Name and Phone #
1							
2							
3							
4							
5							
6							
7							
8							
9							
10							

Officer/Supervisor Name _____ Officer/Supervisor Signature _____ Date _____