



PENNSYLVANIA STATE FIRE ACADEMY FIRE INVESTIGATOR SKILL STATIONS

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Fire Investigator Skill Stations

PA 1033 – Chapter 4 (2022 Edition)

Station A	Scene Examination NF	Mandatory Station
Station B	Evidence Collection / Preservation	Mandatory Station
Station C	Conduct Interview	Mandatory Station
Station D	Investigation Report	Mandatory Station
Station E	Investigation Presentation	Mandatory Station



PENNSYLVANIA STATE FIRE ACADEMY FIRE INVESTIGATOR SKILL STATIONS

STATION A: Scene Examination		Reference NFPA 1033 (2022 Edition) Chapter 4 Mandatory Station: JPRs 4.1.3, 4.1.4, 4.1.6, 4.2 (4.2.1-4.2.9), 4.3, 4.3.1, 4.3.2, 4.6.2, 4.6.4, 4.6.5	
Test Site	Test Date	Candidate #	Check the Test Type ____ Initial ____ Retest

Evaluator Note: If a task (i.e., explosions) is not applicable, please note N/A in the comments, then calculate PASS based on the remaining applicable “Yes” marks.

Directions: Evaluate a fire scene to determine the area or point of origin, source of ignition, materials ignited, act/activity that brought the ignition source and materials together and to assess the subsequent progression, extinguishment, and containment of the fire. Do you have any questions?

Performance Outcome: Pass / Fail is determined by **12 of 12** tasks being correctly performed.

No.	Tasks	Yes	No
	Secure the Fire Ground (JPRs 4.1.3, 4.1.4, 4.1.6, 4.2.1)		
1	a. Use of marking device(s) b. Site Safety Inspection performed c. Maintain necessary liaison with other interested professionals/entities		
	Conduct Exterior Survey (JPR 4.2.2)		
2	a. Ability to assess fire ground structural condition b. Interpret fire patterns c. Observe fire damage and effects of fire d. Notes weather at the time of incident		
	Conduct Interior Survey (JPR 4.2.3)		
3	a. Ability to assess structural conditions b. Observe damage and effects for fire c. Discover impact of fire suppression efforts, fire flow, fuel moisture, heat propagation d. Evaluate protected areas presence and/or absence of contents.		
	Interpret and Analyze Fire Patterns (JPRs 4.2.4, 4.2.5)		
4	a. Interpret effects of burning characteristics on diverse types of materials b. Interpret variations of fire patterns on different materials (heat release rate, ignitability) c. Distinguish impact of diverse types of fuel loads, evaluate fuel trails		
	Interpret and Analyze Fire Patterns (JPR 4.2.6)		
5	a. Interpret and analyze effects of burning characteristics on diverse types of materials b. Interpret variations of fire patterns on different materials (heat release rate, form, ignitability) c. Distinguish impact diverse types of fuel loads, evaluates fuel trails d. Identify and analyze the stage of fire development and effects of ventilation within the context of the scene in relationship with various patterns		

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Cont.' STATION A: Scene Examination

	Examine and Remove Fire Debris (JPR 4.2.6)		
6	a. Employ search techniques discovery of fire cause evidence and ignition sources b. Utilized proper tools/equipment during debris search		
	Reconstruct Area of Origin (JPR 4.2.7)		
7	a. Protected areas and fire patterns are identified b. Correlation to contents or structural remains, potentially critical to origin c. Return to pre-fire location d. Area(s) or point(s) of origin is discovered		
	Inspect Building Systems (detection, suppression, HVAC, utilities and building compartmentation) (JPR 4.2.8)		
8	a. Determine system operations effect on fire, fire growth, and fire behavior b. Identify alterations and/or failure indicators c. Evaluate impact of suppression efforts on building systems		
	Discriminate effects of explosions from other types of damage (JPR 4.2.9) (If applicable)		
9	c. Identify explosive effects on glass, walls, foundations, and other building materials d. Distinguish low and high order explosion effects e. Analyze damage to document blast zone and origin		
	Documents the Scene (JPRs 4.3, 4.3.1, 4.3.2, 4.6.2)		
10	a. Diagram the scene b. Ability to sketch the scene using basic drafting skills, evidence recognition, and observation skills c. Photographically documents the scene d. Ability to use high resolution camera flash and accessories		
	Analytical and assimilation skills (JPRs 4.6.2, 4.6.4, 4.6.5)		
11	Formulate an opinion / determine motive		
12	Reports are typed (readable), complete, & grammatically correct		
Please indicate skill outcome		PASS	FAIL

Evaluator Comments: _____

Evaluator Signature: _____

Evaluator # _____



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STATION B: Evidence Collection/Preservation		Reference NFPA 1033 (2022 Edition) Chapter 4 Mandatory Station: JPRs 4.4, 4.4.1, 4.4.2, 4.4.3, 4.4.4, 4.4.5, 4.6.1	
Test Site	Test Date	Candidate #	Check the Test Type ____ Initial ____ Retest

Evaluator Note: If a task (i.e., chain of custody) is not applicable, please note N/A in the comments, then calculate PASS based on the remaining applicable “Yes” marks.

Directions: Evaluate a fire scene, utilize proper physical and legal procedures to identify, document, collect and preserve evidence required within the investigation. Do you have any questions?

Performance Outcome: Pass / Fail is determined by **6 of 6** tasks being correctly performed.

No.	Tasks	Yes	No
	Manage Victim(s)/Fatalities (JPR 4.4.1)		
1	a. All evidence is discovered and/or preserved b. Ability to apply appropriate protocol procedure(s)		
	Locate (JPR 4.4.2)		
2	a. Ability to recognize difference types of evidence b. Impact of removing evidentiary items c. Packaging techniques and materials d. Verbalizes issues relating to spoliation		
	Select evidence for analysis (JPR 4.4.3)		
3	a. Support specific investigation needs b. Determine forensic, engineering or laboratory needs c. Verbalizes purposes for analysis and limitations of analysis		
	Maintain Chain of Custody (JPRs 4.4.4, 4.6.1) (if applicable)		
4	a. Execute chain of custody procedures b. Accurately completes necessary documents c. Methods of recording the chain of custody		
	Dispose of Evidence (JPR 4.4.5) (if applicable)		
5	a. Timely b. Safely Conducted c. Compliant with jurisdictional/AHJ requirements d. Documented		
	Evidence Collection/Preservation (JPR 4.4) (if applicable)		
6	Utilizes proper physical and legal procedures to identify, document, collect, and preserve evidence required.		
Please indicate skill outcome		PASS	FAIL

Evaluator Comments: _____

Evaluator Signature: _____ **Evaluator #** _____



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STATION C: Conduct an Interview		Reference NFPA 1033 (2022 Edition) Chapter 4 Mandatory Station: JPRs 4.5.1, 4.5.2, 4.5.3, 4.6.3, 4.6.4	
Test Site	Test Date	Candidate #	Check the Test Type ____ Initial ____ Retest

Directions: Given a fire scenario and pertinent background information, the candidate will develop an interview plan, identify sources of information, conduct interviews, interpret, and analyze data, responses, and non-verbal communications, so that the interview process(es) follow sound investigative process(es) and are applicable to relevant legal requirements.

Performance Outcome: Pass / Fail is determined by **6 of 6** tasks being correctly performed.

No.	Tasks	Yes	No
	Develops an Interview Plan (4.5.1, 4.6.3)		
1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Describes preparation efforts for interview processes b. States the purpose of the interviews c. Establishes a strategic approach for interviewing individual(s) d. Develops relevant questioning strategy 		
	Identifies sources of information; conducts interviews (4.5.2, 4.5.3, 4.6.3)		
2	Identifies sources of information; conducts interviews for the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Property owner b. Occupant c. First Responders d. Caller, witnesses, and/or bystanders 		
	Presents initial and follow-up questions as required (4.5.2, 4.6.4)		
3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Investigator completes a walkthrough of the scene prior to conducting initial interviews b. Interviewee responses are not elicited c. Investigator uses open-ended questions where applicable, during the interview process d. Investigator documents responses to questions 		
	Interprets and analyzes verbal and nonverbal communications (4.5.2, 4.6.4)		
4	Interprets and analyzes verbal and nonverbal communications <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Interprets behavior, attitude, and cooperation b. Identifies incriminating statements and/or clearly false alibis c. Analyzes consistency of statements, accounts, and/or data d. Evaluates the quality of the data obtained 		

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Cont.' Skill C: Conduct an Interview

	Exhibits active listening skills (4.5.2)		
5	a. Pays attention, uninterrupted interview b. Withholds judgement during the interview process c. Clarifies statements and responses		
	Applies appropriate legal requirements during interview processes (4.5.1, 4.5.3)		
6	Applies appropriate legal requirements during the interview process a. Interviewing minors b. Interviewing injured victims		
Please indicate skill outcome		PASS	FAIL

Evaluator Comments: _____

Evaluator Signature: _____

Evaluator # _____



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STATION D: Investigation Report		Reference NFPA 1033 (2022 Edition) Chapter 4 Mandatory Station: JPRs 4.1.2, 4.2.1, 4.2.4, 4.2.5, 4.3, 4.3.2, 4.3.3, 4.6.1, 4.6.2, 4.6.4, 4.6.5, 4.7.1	
Test Site	Test Date	Candidate #	Check the Test Type _____ Initial _____ Retest

Directions: Prepare a written report, employing all elements of the scientific method (JPR 4.1.2) and utilize investigative findings, documentation, and a specific audience so that the report accurately reflects the investigative findings. Do you have any questions?

Performance Outcome: Pass / Fail is determined by **13 of 13** tasks being correctly performed.

No.	Tasks	Yes	No
Written Report Process (JPRs 4.1.2, 4.3.3)			
1	a. Describes how and when initial findings were provided to the Fire Investigator b. Constructs investigative notes c. Applies data reduction, note taking, observational and correlating skills d. Accurately documents interview		
Secures the Area (JPR 4.2.1)			
2	Establishes/Describes how the fire scene perimeter is established (Mandatory Yes to Pass)		
3	Describes what method(s)/process was used to control access to the scene (perimeter's entrance and exit) (Mandatory Yes to Pass)		
4	Indicates how unauthorized persons are excluded from the scene (Inside the perimeter / scene) using marking devices		
Locates Origin (JPRs 4.2.4, 4.2.5)			
5	Describes common indicators for fire origin (common clues to an origin)		
6	Identifies and explains the importance of fire patterns		
7	Identifies areas of deepest char / greatest damage		
Identifies Cause (JPR 4.6.4, 4.6.5)			
8	Describes common causes of fire		
9	Utilizes scientific method to support cause		
10	Identifies possible causative item(s) for the incident/scenario (Mandatory Yes to Pass)		
11	Determines if financial gain exists from insurance compensation		

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Cont.' STATION D: Investigation Report

	Completes Reports (JPRs 4.2.5, 4.3, 4.3.1, 4.3.2, 4.3.3, 4.6.1, 4.6.2, 4.7.1)		
12	Documentation includes sketches, photographs, and diagrams		
13	a. Reports are typed (readable), complete, & grammatically correct b. Constructs investigative notes so that it represents accurate documentation of scene findings c. Relationship between notes, diagrams, photo's reduced scene information used for data reduction into a concise report		
Please indicate skill outcome		PASS	FAIL

Evaluator Comments: _____

Evaluator Signature: _____

Evaluator # _____



PENNSYLVANIA STATE FIRE ACADEMY FIRE INVESTIGATOR SKILL STATIONS

STATION E: Investigation Presentation		Reference NFPA 1033 (2022 Edition) Chapter 4 Mandatory Station: JPRs 4.7.2, 4.7.3	
Test Site	Test Date	Candidate #	Check the Test Type _____ Initial _____ Retest

Directions: Candidate will present investigative findings of assigned scenario so that pertinent investigative information and evidence are presented clearly and accurately. Do you have any questions?

Performance Outcome: Pass / Fail is determined by 9 of 9 tasks being correctly performed.

No.	Tasks	Yes	No
1	Determines accepted delivery procedures/practices for subject matter audience		
2	Pertinent investigative information: types of investigative findings		
3	Differentiate fact from opinion		
4	Type of legal proceedings		
5	Impact of releasing information		
6	Demonstrates familiarity with and competency in the subject matter presented		
7	Maintained professional demeanor a. avoids distracting mannerisms b. uses appropriate gestures		
8	Presentation completed within specified time (i.e., 20 minutes)		
9	Utilizes proper physical and legal procedures to identify, document, collect and preserve evidence required.		
Please indicate skill outcome		PASS	FAIL

Evaluator Comments: _____

Evaluator Signature: _____ **Evaluator #** _____