



# Transition to NFPA Professional Qualifications Standards: OFMEM Grandfathering Policy

Office of the Fire Marshal and Emergency Management (OFMEM)

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## **Background**

Since the late 1980s, the Office of the Fire Marshal and Emergency Management (OFMEM) has been instrumental in the development of the professionalization process of the Ontario fire service. In partnership with the Ontario Association of Fire Chiefs (O AFC) and in collaboration with fire service stakeholders, a unique training and educational system was established based on the Ontario Fire Services Standards (OFSS), a set of nine comprehensive job performance standards.

The nine competency-based standards were used to form the basis for a comprehensive pre-service training program, as well as the firefighter curriculum, the Fire Prevention Officer Diploma program, the Company Officer Diploma program, and the Training Officer Diploma program.

In April 2013, the OFMEM announced that the decision had been made that Ontario would adopt the National Fire Protection Association Professional Qualifications (NFPA Pro-Qual) Standards. During the months that followed, working closely with the Ontario Association of Fire Chiefs (O AFC), the Ontario Professional Fire Fighters Association (OPFFA) and the Fire Fighters Association of Ontario (FFAO), the OFMEM conducted a review of the current standards model in order to determine how to transition from the Ontario Fire Services Standards to the NFPA standards for professional qualifications.

The OFMEM completed an analysis of the current diploma programs offered at the Ontario Fire College (OFC) and identified concordance between each program and the appropriate NFPA Professional Qualifications Standard and appropriate level within that standard.

## **Grandfathering**

It is the intent of the OFMEM that the transition to NFPA professional qualifications standards not cause any negative impact on members of the fire service. Consequently, the OFMEM is implementing grandfathering in order to exempt anyone from having to start over in any program and in order to give recognition for training and education already completed and for experience already gained.

Grandfathering applies to the following persons:

- firefighters who obtained their Certificate of Achievement prior to 2008;
- firefighters currently in the Ontario Firefighter Curriculum program;
- anyone who is a graduate of an Ontario Fire College (OFC) diploma or training program (e.g., Company Officer Diploma program, Fire Prevention Officer Diploma program, Training Officer Diploma program, or any diploma program offered prior to 1999);

- anyone who is currently enrolled in an OFC diploma or training program (e.g., Company Officer Diploma program, Fire Prevention Officer Diploma program, Training Officer Diploma program);
- anyone who received certification under an Ontario certification program (e.g., Company Officer, Fire Prevention Officer, Training Officer).

Grandfathering does not apply to students enrolled in pre-service programs offered at Ontario colleges of applied arts and technology, as they are already able to receive NFPA 1001 Level I and Level II certificates and NFPA 472 Hazardous Materials Awareness and Hazardous Materials Operations certificates from the International Fire Service Accreditation Congress (IFSAC) and the National Board on Fire Service Professional Qualifications (ProBoard), once they successfully complete the current provincial tests.

To implement grandfathering, the OFMEM is offering a *Letter of Compliance with NFPA Standards* to anyone who applies and who fulfills the requirements based on education/training or on experience.

Although the OFMEM intends to recognize the past training accomplishments and capabilities of all Ontario fire service personnel, it plans to do so without compromising the certification system or granting certification levels beyond a person's training, experience, and qualifications.

The OFMEM's grandfathering policy and its decision to issue a *Letter of Compliance with NFPA Standards* are in accordance with ProBoard and IFSAC by-laws and accreditation criteria.

Please note that certification programs accredited by IFSAC and ProBoard are and will continue to be voluntary.

## Implementation

Members of the fire service who wish to take advantage of the grandfathering policy and obtain a *Letter of Compliance with NFPA Standards* must submit an application through their fire department, approved and signed by their fire chief, **before December 31, 2015**. After that date, such letters will no longer be issued by the OFMEM, and anyone requesting NFPA certification will have to take both written and practical skill testing.

Fire chiefs who apply for a *Letter of Compliance with NFPA Standards* will need the approval and signature of the municipal Chief Administrative Officer (CAO).

All applications and accompanying support documentation will be reviewed by the manager of the Academic Standards and Evaluation Section of the OFMEM, who will determine if requirements have been met in order to issue a *Letter of Compliance with NFPA Standards*.

When compliance with the NFPA standards is based on experience, the applicant must be able to prove he or she has the requisite knowledge and skills. The onus will be on the applicant's fire chief to submit upon request the necessary signed knowledge and skills documents. In accordance with IFSAC and ProBoard rules and regulations, the OFMEM reserves the right to randomly audit any application where compliance with the NFPA standards is based on experience.

## Requirements

When the OFMEM conducted its analysis of current diploma and certification programs in relation to NFPA Professional Qualifications Standards, it used the following NFPA standards:

*NFPA 1001: Standard for Fire Fighter Professional Qualifications*, 2008 edition  
Level I and Level II

*NFPA 1021: Standard for Fire Officer Professional Qualifications*, 2009 edition  
Level I and Level II

*NFPA 1031: Standard for Professional Qualifications for Fire Inspector and Plan Examiner*, 2009 edition  
Level I

*NFPA 1041: Standard for Fire Service Instructor Professional Qualifications*,  
2012 edition  
Level I and Level II

*NFPA 1035: Standard for Professional Qualifications for Fire and Life Safety Educator, Public Information Officer, and Juvenile Firesetter Intervention Specialist*, 2010 Edition  
Level I and Level II

Through the OFMEM's comparative analysis, it was determined that four Ontario Fire Services Standards are aligned with NFPA Professional Qualifications Standards as follows:

- the *Ontario Firefighter Standards*, with *NFPA 1001: Standard for Fire Fighter Professional Qualifications* (2008 edition);
- the *Ontario Company Officer Standards*, with *NFPA 1021: Standard for Fire Officer Professional Qualifications* (2009 edition);
- the *Ontario Fire Prevention Officer Standards*, with *NFPA 1031: Standard for Professional Qualifications for Fire Inspector and Plan Examiner* (2009 edition);  
and
- the *Ontario Training Officer Standards*, with *NFPA 1041: Standard for Fire Service Instructor Professional Qualifications* (2012 edition).

Through the analysis, it was also determined that there was concordance between current Ontario programs and NFPA Professional Qualifications Standards as follows:

- the Ontario Firefighter Curriculum, with Level I and Level II of NFPA 1001 Standard;
- the Company Officer Diploma program, with Level II of NFPA 1021 Standard;
- the Fire Prevention Officer Diploma program, with Fire Inspector Level I of NFPA 1031 Standard; and
- the Training Officer Diploma program, with Fire Instructor Level II of NFPA 1041 Standard.

Provided below are details as to the requirements that have to be met by members of the fire service who wish to apply for a *Letter of Compliance with NFPA Standards*. The first part outlines the requirements for compliance with NFPA standards based on education/knowledge; the second, requirements based on experience.

### ***Compliance with NFPA Standards Based on Education/Knowledge***

Below are the requirements, based on education/knowledge and the Ontario Fire Service Standards (OFSS), for compliance with the various NFPA standards listed above.

<b>NFPA 1001, Fire Fighter Level I, 2008 Edition</b>
Firefighter or any rank above firefighter <i>and</i> Completion of the following Ontario Firefighter Curriculum sections: 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 27, 29

<b>NFPA 1001, Fire Fighter Level II, 2008 Edition</b>
Firefighter or any rank above firefighter <i>and</i> Completion of the following Ontario Firefighter Curriculum sections: 26, 31, 32, 34, 35, 36, 37, 39, 44, 45

<b>NFPA 1021, Fire Officer Level I, 2009 Edition</b>
Firefighter or any rank above firefighter <i>and</i> Completion of the following Ontario Fire College courses: CO 101, CO 201, CO 202, CO 30102, CO 401, CO 50102

**NFPA 1021, Fire Officer Level II, 2009 Edition**

Firefighter or any rank above firefighter

*and*

Completion of the following Ontario Fire College courses or programs:

CO 50345, CO 60102, CO 901, FSA; or

OFC Company Officer Diploma; or

Company Officer Certification

**NFPA 1031, Fire Inspector Level I, 2009 Edition**

Firefighter or any rank above firefighter

*and*

Completion of the following Ontario Fire College courses or programs:

FPO 301, FPO 302, FPO 401, FPO 505; or

OFC Fire Prevention Officer Diploma; or

Fire Prevention Officer Certification

**NFPA 1041, Fire Service Instructor Level I, 2012 Edition**

Firefighter or any rank above firefighter

*and*

Completion of the following Ontario Fire College courses:

TF Course; or TFPS Course; or CO 702/FPO 602 after January 2010

**NFPA 1041, Fire Service Instructor Level II, 2012 Edition**

Firefighter or any rank above firefighter

*and*

Completion of the following Ontario Fire College courses or programs:

TO 401, CO 702/FPO 602, TFPS course; or

Training Officer Diploma; or

Training Officer Certification

**NFPA 1035, Fire and Life Safety Educator Level 1, 2010 Edition**

Firefighter or any rank above firefighter

*and*

Completion of the following Ontario Fire College course:

FPO 603

## ***Compliance with NFPA Standards Based on Experience***

Below are the requirements, based on experience and the Ontario Fire Service Standards (OFSS), for compliance with the various NFPA standards listed above.

### **NFPA 1001, Fire Fighter Level I**

5 years of experience as a firefighter, **BASED ON** the following *Ontario Firefighter Standards* general performance objectives (GPO):

- GPO 1 Performs fire ground operations
- GPO 2 Performs rescue operations
- GPO 3 Performs hazardous materials and CBRN operations
- GPO 4 Provides emergency patient care
- GPO 5 Performs firefighter safety practices
- GPO 7 Maintains fire equipment
- GPO 10 Performs communications duties
- GPO 13 Demonstrates a commitment to personal and professional development

### **NFPA 1001, Fire Fighter Level II**

5 years of experience as a firefighter, **BASED ON** the following *Ontario Firefighter Standards* general performance objectives (GPO):

- GPO 6 Operates and maintains fire apparatus
- GPO 8 Participates in fire safety inspections
- GPO 9 Performs public education and public relations activities
- GPO 11 Develops pre-incident plans
- GPO 12 Performs administrative duties

### **NFPA 1021, Fire Officer Level I**

5 years of experience in a rank above firefighter, **BASED ON** the following *Ontario Company Officer Standards* general performance objectives (GPO):

- GPO 1 Organizes initial response to emergency situations
- GPO 2 Initiates and implements incident management system
- GPO 3 Co-ordinates and controls fire ground operations
- GPO 4 Co-ordinates and controls emergency medical operations/scene
- GPO 5 Co-ordinates and controls emergency rescue response operations
- GPO 8 Supervises fire department personnel
- GPO 9 Trains fire department personnel
- GPO 14 Performs public relations and public education activities
- GPO 15 Demonstrates commitment to personal and professional development



**NFPA 1021, Fire Officer Level II**

5 years of experience in a rank above firefighter, **BASED ON** the following *Ontario Company Officer Standards* general performance objectives (GPO):

- GPO 6 Co-ordinates and controls potential Hazmat/CBRN incidents
- GPO 7 Investigates and documents fire scenes
- GPO 10 Assesses status of fire department equipment, apparatus and stations
- GPO 11 Performs administrative duties
- GPO 12 Recognizes and refers fire safety infractions/violations
- GPO 13 Prepares and updates building audits and pre-incident plans

**NFPA 1031, Fire Inspector Level I**

5 years of experience as a fire prevention officer, **BASED ON** the following *Ontario Fire Prevention Officer Standards* general performance objectives (GPO):

- GPO 2 Performs public relations activities
- GPO 4 Conducts fire and life safety inspections
- GPO 5 Evaluates, recommends for approval and/or approves fire safety plans
- GPO 8 Reviews and evaluates submitted building drawings, calculations, documents, plans and specifications
- GPO 9 Conducts inspections of new or renovated buildings
- GPO 10 Initiates and participates in prosecutions
- GPO 11 Examines fire scenes
- GPO 13 Performs administrative activities
- GPO 14 Demonstrates a commitment to personal and professional development

**NFPA 1041, Fire Service Instructor Level I**

5 years of experience in a training position, **BASED ON** the following *Ontario Training Officer Standards* general performance objectives (GPO):

- GPO 3 Manages the training environment
- GPO 4 Implements and delivers training programs
- GPO 6 Assesses performance of learners
- GPO 7 Incorporates technology into the training environment
- GPO 11 Supervises assigned staff
- GPO 13 Demonstrates commitment to personal and professional development

<b>NFPA 1041, Fire Service Instructor Level II</b>	
5 years of experience in a training position, <b>BASED ON</b> the following <i>Ontario Training Officer Standards</i> general performance objectives (GPO):	
GPO 1	Develops training programs and learning materials
GPO 2	Organizes and coordinates the delivery of training programs
GPO 5	Evaluates training programs
GPO 8	Researches and evaluates fire department policies, operating guidelines, techniques and equipment
GPO 9	Organizes and/or conducts career development activities for fire department personnel
GPO 10	Performs administrative duties
GPO 12	Performs public relations and public education duties

<b>NFPA 1035, Public Information Officer</b>
5 years of experience as a fire prevention officer, deputy fire chief or fire chief

## Appeals

Upon receiving their *Letter of Compliance with NFPA Standards*, members of the fire service have 45 days to appeal in writing the NFPA standard level that appears on the letter. The appeal should be sent to Appeal Board, Academic Standards and Evaluation Section, Office of the Fire Marshal and Emergency Management, 5775 Yonge Street, 7<sup>th</sup> floor, Toronto, Ontario, M2M 4J1. Members of the fire service can also appeal if their application for a *Letter of Compliance with NFPA Standards* is unsuccessful.

The Appeal Board is composed of the following members:

- the manager of the Academic Standards and Evaluation Section, OFMEM;
- an educational consultant from the Academic Standards and Evaluation Section, OFMEM; and
- the principal of the Ontario Fire College or a designate.

The Appeal Board will review the written appeal and may elect to do as follows:

- grant the appeal; or
- deny the appeal; or
- make a recommendation to the Fire Marshal based on information provided in the written appeal submission; or
- hold an appeal hearing.

The Appeal Board shall notify the Fire Marshal and the person making the appeal of its decision within 90 days of the receipt of the written appeal.

## **Instructions to complete the Application Form for *Letter of Compliance with NFPA Standards***

The fire chief will submit one application for each applicant within the fire department.

Both the applicant and the fire chief must sign the application form.

For each applicant, the fire chief will check off as many boxes that apply. For each NFPA standard/level box checked off, the fire chief must check off the "Based on Knowledge" box, *or* the "Based on Experience" box, *not both*.

Refer to the Requirements section above (page 5) to identify the proper NFPA standard and level for each member of the fire department applying for a *Letter of Compliance with NFPA Standards*. Checking off "Based on Knowledge" on the application form means that the OFC courses or programs listed under the standard/level in question have been completed by the applicant. Checking off "Based on Experience" on the application form means that the OFSS general performance objectives (GPOs) listed under the standard/level in question have been achieved by the applicant. The onus is on the fire chief who signs the application form to ascertain that the GPOs have been met.

The OFMEM reserves the right to audit any application at any time.

The OFMEM reserves the right to refuse to issue a *Letter of Compliance with NFPA Standards*, to revoke it once it has been issued, or to suspend the review of an application at any time.

## **Acronyms**

CBRN	Chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear
CO	Company officer
FPO	Fire prevention officer
FSA	Fire scene assessment
GPO	General performance objective
IFSAC	International Fire Service Accreditation Congress
NFPA	National Fire Protection Association
OFC	Ontario Fire College
OFMEM	Office of the Fire Marshal and Emergency Management
OFSS	Ontario Fire Services Standards
ProBoard	National Board on Fire Service Professional Qualifications

TFPS	Trainer Facilitator Presentation Skills
TF	Trainer Facilitator
TO	Training Officer

## **Application Form**

The application form to obtain a *Letter of Compliance with NFPA Standards* can be found on the next page.



Office of the Fire Marshal and  
Emergency Management

Application form for  
*Letter of Compliance  
with NFPA Standards*

Information requested below is gathered to correctly identify applicants who should receive a *Letter of Compliance with NFPA Standards* and to evaluate the implementation of the OFMEM's grandfathering policy. Information is being collected solely for the purposes listed above in accordance with the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act*.

Title (please print)		Last name		Given names	
Address: (street number and name)			(apartment/unit number)		
(city)	(province)	(postal code)	Telephone No. (include area code) ( ) -	Fax Number (include area code) ( ) -	
Employer (use the four/six digit local code)		Fire Department Name/Address: (street number and name)			
(city)	(province)	(postal code)	Telephone No. (include area code) ( ) -	Fax Number (include area code) ( ) -	
If you are successful in obtaining a <i>Letter of Compliance with NFPA Standards</i> , please indicate how you wish your name to appear on it (please print)					

**Confirm completion of the following requirements:** Check all boxes that apply.

<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Continuous service - has been with a fire department(s) continuously for a minimum of 5 years</b>	
<input type="checkbox"/> <b>NFPA 1041, Fire Service Instructor, Level I</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Based on KNOWLEDGE <input type="checkbox"/> Based on EXPERIENCE	<input type="checkbox"/> <b>NFPA 1041, Fire Service Instructor, Level II</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Based on KNOWLEDGE <input type="checkbox"/> Based on EXPERIENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> <b>NFPA 1021, Fire Officer, Level I</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Based on KNOWLEDGE <input type="checkbox"/> Based on EXPERIENCE	<input type="checkbox"/> <b>NFPA 1021, Fire Officer, Level II</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Based on KNOWLEDGE <input type="checkbox"/> Based on EXPERIENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> <b>NFPA 1031, Fire Inspector, Level I</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Based on KNOWLEDGE <input type="checkbox"/> Based on EXPERIENCE	<input type="checkbox"/> <b>NFPA 1035, Public Information Officer</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Based on KNOWLEDGE <input type="checkbox"/> Based on EXPERIENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> <b>NFPA 1001, Fire Fighter, Level I</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Based on KNOWLEDGE <input type="checkbox"/> Based on EXPERIENCE	<input type="checkbox"/> <b>NFPA 1001, Fire Fighter, Level II</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Based on KNOWLEDGE <input type="checkbox"/> Based on EXPERIENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> <b>NFPA 1035, Fire and Life Safety Educator, Level I</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Based on KNOWLEDGE (ONLY)	

**I certify that the information provided above is true. I am aware that if any of the information provided is willfully false, issuing the *Letter of Compliance with NFPA Standards* may be denied, or if it is later discovered that the information is false, it may be revoked.**

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of applicant

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of fire chief

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

**For Office Use Only**

<b>Date Received</b>	<b>Registration Number</b>	<b>Compliance Number</b>
<b>Date Reviewed</b>	<b>AS&amp;E Staff</b>	<b>Compliance Awarded</b>

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FM CERT 02 (11/13)

**Return completed form to:**

**Manager, Academic Standards & Evaluation Section  
Office of the Fire Marshal and Emergency Management  
5775 Yonge Street, 7<sup>th</sup> floor  
Toronto, Ontario  
M2M 4J1**