

# Hazardous Materials- Operations

## Certification Procedures Guide



This Certification Procedure Guide reflects the requirements of

**NFPA 472: Standard for Professional Competence of Responders to  
Hazardous Materials/Weapons of Mass Destruction Incidents, 2013 Edition**

*May 2018*

V1.1

# Foundation of the FSTB Certification System

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## **Equal Access for All**

Registrations for certification will be accepted from any candidate meeting the criteria listed in the appropriate certification document. Applications will be accepted without regard to race, color, creed, gender, marital status, or status as a military veteran. Applications will be accepted without regard to age as long as the applicant is at least 18 years of age, and disability as long as that disability does not hinder the applicant's ability to perform the necessary skills and practices required by the National Fire Protection Association's Professional Qualifications Standards. If you have questions or comments regarding the certification, training, or other services provided by the Fire Service Training Bureau (FSTB), please call 515-294-6817.

## **Legal Authority**

Legislative authority for fire service certification was granted to the Fire Service Institute, Iowa State University Extension by the Iowa legislature in 1986. With the passing of HF 2492 and the permission of the governing International Fire Service Accreditation Congress, authority for fire service certification was granted to the Fire Service Training Bureau, Division of the State Fire Marshal effective July 1, 2000.

## **Accreditation**

The FSTB certification system has been accredited by the IFSAC to certify fire service personnel to accepted national standards. Through this process, Iowa fire service personnel achieve international certification. Accreditation of the FSTB certification system assures the Iowa fire service that programs and standards used within this system adhere to the most current recognized and adopted national standards. The assurances gained through the accreditation process provide credibility and prestige for every firefighter participating in the certification process. Firefighters certified through the Iowa system are recognized throughout the United States (and the world) as qualified and meeting the standards set forth by the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA).

## **Certification**

After participants within the FSTB certification system have met the performance requirements and successfully completed an objective evaluation process, the FSTB awards National Certification. Upon awarding National Certification, the individual's name is entered in the Iowa certification data bank as well as the national certification data bank maintained by the IFSAC at Oklahoma State University. An official seal from the IFSAC is attached to every certificate and includes an individual national certification number.

## **Standards**

NFPA Professional Qualifications Standards are used by the entities accredited by the IFSAC. To maintain accreditation, entities must certify fire service personnel to the latest edition of the "Professional Qualifications Standards" adopted by the issuing jurisdiction.

## **System Integrity**

The requirements, criteria, and processes explained in this document are used to ensure the highest possible credibility and stature for participants in the FSTB certification system. These processes help ensure that Iowa trained and certified fire service personnel are among the most highly qualified firefighters in the world.

## Entering the System

Qualified personnel within the Iowa fire service may enter the certification system for the purpose of seeking certification by contacting the FSTB. Upon receipt of a request, the FSTB will forward appropriate information to members of the fire service about any of the levels of certification available.

## Application & Fees

Every individual seeking certification within the FSTB certification system must submit an [Online Certification Testing Registration Form](#) and a \$50 Registration Fee to secure entrance into the system. Approved methods of payment are: Cash, Purchase Order, Check, Money Order, Credit Card, or Bill to Fire Department. Candidates must submit their Online Certification Registration Form and payment at least three (3) weeks prior to the requested exam date to be accepted and allow for processing.

**NO "WALK-IN" OR LATE REGISTRATIONS WILL BE ACCEPTED AT ANY TEST SITE!**

## Refunds of Registration Fees

Registration fees may be refunded only within the first two (2) months after being received by the FSTB. Registration fees will only be refunded if the individual has not taken any action towards certification, other than the submission of the registration and fee payment. Registration fees will not be refunded if any of the steps of the certification process have been initiated (e.g., submitting local documentation form, taking written or practical exams).

## Certification Process Timeline

Candidates testing for ALL LEVELS (Firefighter I and/or II, Hazardous Material Awareness and Operations, Driver/Operator - Pumper and/or Aerial, Fire Service Instructor I and/or II, Fire Officer I and/or II, Inspector I, and Fire Investigator) will be given twelve (12) months to complete the certification process. The twelve (12) month time limit begins when the application is entered into the database by the FSTB Certification and Accreditation Unit staff. The FSTB will NOT accept any documentation requirements until the candidate's registration has been entered into the certification database. After the twelve (12) month time period has expired, candidates not completing the certification process will be required to start the process over by submitting a NEW registration form and fee payment. Candidates will also be required to retake the written and practical exams (regardless of the pass/fail status from the previous exams) and re-submit all required documentation. All information and paperwork from expired certification attempts will be removed from the FSTB database.

## Certification Exam Availability

Every qualified individual seeking certification will be allowed access to the certification exam process (see "Certification Requirements"). Certification exams are offered in numerous locations throughout Iowa every year. They are conducted on a regional basis at many of the Iowa Community College regional fire schools, select fire departments, and at the Annual State Fire School conducted by the FSTB. A **Certification Schedule** is posted on the Certification Page of the FSTB website, [www.dps.state.ia.us/fm/fstb](http://www.dps.state.ia.us/fm/fstb). Each candidate seeking certification within the Iowa FSTB Certification System must submit the [Online Certification Testing Registration Form](#). Restricted test sites are also conducted for fire departments having enough candidates to "fill" a test site. Fire departments wishing to schedule a restricted test site should contact the FSTB for more information.

# Certification Requirements

## Facial Hair Policy

Persons with beards or facial hair in the area of the SCBA face piece seal (including full-face beards, mutton-chops, goatees, etc.) will **NOT** be allowed to participate in the skills exam for any certification level. This policy will be enforced regardless of the skills being tested at any site. No exceptions to this policy will be granted. This is in conjunction with 29 CFR 1910.134, Respiratory Protection Standard.

## Exam Results

After candidates have completed the exam process, the FSTB begins the process of scoring and processing the test results. As soon as scoring and documentation are completed, the results are sent to the candidate via regular mail. To ensure candidate confidentiality, certification exam scores will not be released over the telephone or any other mechanism. The candidate should receive test results within 30 working days of the exam. If candidates do not receive their test results within 30 working days, they should notify the FSTB. Exam scores will still not be released by phone, but the FSTB will begin a trace of the notification and/or explain the delay.

**Please DO NOT contact the FSTB Certification and Accreditation Unit prior to the 30-working day timeframe.**

## Certification

Upon successful completion of the certification process, the applicant's name will be entered into the Iowa certification database and the National Certification Database maintained by the IFSAC. Candidates will also receive (at no additional cost), an "Iowa/Nationally Certified" patch, a certification level bar, and an individualized certificate awarding National Certification from the FSTB. This certificate will bear a numbered seal from the IFSAC. When you have completed all of the necessary steps for your certification level, please allow 60 working days for the completed certificate. If you have not received your certification within that time period, please contact the FSTB to verify all materials are completed and received.

**Please keep a copy of all your documentation for your records.**

## Reciprocity

Individuals in possession of certifications from out-of-state/other IFSAC entities may request reciprocity from the FSTB. The FSTB will only grant reciprocity for the levels of certification that the FSTB is accredited to by the IFSAC. Individuals must complete and submit the [Online Request for Reciprocity Form](#), available on the FSTB website along with a \$50 Reciprocity Fee. Once the provided IFSAC seal has been verified, the certificate information will be entered into the Iowa certification database and the FSTB will recognize the individual as having attained national certification at the requested level. The FSTB will not provide a new IFSAC certification seal number or certificate as the individual has already attained national certification and recognition at said level. If the individual or their affiliated organization specifically desires or requires an Iowa certification for the level in question, they must complete the steps for Certification Testing Registration, as described previously, and complete the written and practical exams, along with payment of the Certification Registration Fee.

## Denial and Revocation of Certification

The FSTB may deny or revoke a candidate's certification if the candidate submits false, copied, or plagiarized information to the FSTB or is found to be cheating during any phase of the certification process.

## Testing Accommodations

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) requires that reasonable accommodations be provided to qualified individuals with disabilities. This law defines disabilities as physical or mental impairments that substantially limit one or more of a person's major life activities (e.g., walking, hearing, speaking, seeing, reading, or writing). The FSTB will provide reasonable and appropriate accommodations to qualified candidates who have documented disabilities and demonstrate a need for accommodations during the examination. A candidate must initiate a request for accommodation by completing the FSTB [Request for Accommodation Form](#), available on the FSTB website. In addition to submitting the on-line request form, a candidate must provide documentation from a qualified health professional, to include:

1. A statement of the specific diagnosis of the disability.
2. Cite the diagnostic criteria and tests given, with dates, results, and interpretations. Cite how the results support the diagnosis.
3. Describe the candidate's functional limitations due to the disability, and the impact of those limitations on physical, perceptual and cognitive abilities.
4. Recommend specific accommodation(s) and for each accommodation, provide a rationale as to how it will reduce the impact of the functional limitation(s).
5. State your professional credentials, training, work experience and any licenses you hold that support your qualifications to diagnose and/or treat this candidate's disabilities.
6. If no prior accommodations have been made for this candidate, explain why. If they have - state what was done and provide past documentation of prior accommodations.

**Please note:** The aforementioned supporting documentation provided by a qualified health professional must be received at the FSTB at least 10 calendar days prior to the test date.

### **Please mail supporting documentation to:**

Certification Unit  
Fire Service Training Bureau  
1015 Haber Road  
Ames, IA 50011

## Appeal Process

If certification is denied or revoked, the individual is entitled to due process, including an appeal and hearing. Any person believing that they have not received fair treatment within the certification process is also entitled to the appeal process.

The first step in the appeal process is for the individual to contact the Certification Manager at the FSTB. This initial contact is intended to be an informal review of the specific details. The official appeal process must be initiated in writing by email within 30 days of the action being appealed. The appeal must include the following:

- Individual's FSTB Identification number.
- Current address, phone number and email address.
- Statement of the issue(s) involved & date incident took place.
- Remedy requested.

The Certification Manager shall, within 21 working days from the date the appeal is received, provide a written response by email to the individual requesting the appeal. If the appeal is not resolved during this step, the individual appealing may move to the second step and appeal to the Bureau Chief of the FSTB. This appeal must be submitted in writing by email to the Bureau Chief within 7 working days from the Certification Manager's response. An individual may request a formal review of the appeal through an in-person meeting with the Bureau Chief. The Bureau Chief shall within 21 working days after the 2nd step appeal is received, provide a response in writing by email to the individual requesting the appeal. The decision of the Bureau Chief will be final.

**Please keep a copy of all your certification documentation for your records.**

**Certification Questions may be directed to:**

**[fstbcert@dps.state.ia.us](mailto:fstbcert@dps.state.ia.us)**

**515-294-6818**

# Introduction to HazMat Operations Certification

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## [Online Certification Testing Registration Form](#)

Certification Unit email: [fstbcert@dps.state.ia.us](mailto:fstbcert@dps.state.ia.us)

FSTB website: [www.dps.state.ia.us/fm/fstb](http://www.dps.state.ia.us/fm/fstb)

FSTB Certification phone number: 515-294-6817

Each individual seeking certification within the Iowa Fire Service Training Bureau Certification System must submit the online [Certification Testing Registration Form](#), and a \$50 Registration Fee, to secure entrance into the system.



The form is available on the Certification Page of our website at [www.dps.state.ia.us/fm/fstb](http://www.dps.state.ia.us/fm/fstb) or scan the code to go directly to the registration form.

A **Certification Schedule** (located on the Certification web page) is updated regularly to reflect a current list of available written and practical test sites.

Candidates are given twelve (12) months in which to complete the certification process. This time limit starts when the candidate's FIRST registration to test form is submitted and entered into the FSTB database.

Certification candidates are given two (2) attempts to pass each component, written and practical, of the examination process for each \$50 registration fee paid within the twelve (12) month time limit.

Candidates failing the written exam are responsible for notifying the FSTB of their desire to retest by registering for another scheduled exam on the FSTB Certification web page. Candidates may not take the written exam more than once per day. If the candidate has failed both attempts at the written exam, they must submit another \$50 registration fee, which will allow them two (2) more attempts.

Candidates will have two (2) attempts to pass each skill station during the practical exam. If the candidate fails both attempts at any skill station, this constitutes a practical exam failure for that specific certification level and the candidate will be responsible for notifying the FSTB of their desire to retest by registering for another scheduled exam on the FSTB Certification web page. Candidates may not take the practical exam more than once per day. If the candidate has failed both attempts at the practical exam, they must submit another \$50 registration fee, which will allow them two (2) more attempts.

If the twelve (12) month time limit expires and the candidate has not successfully completed all the requirements for the certification process, the candidate will have to restart the process. All information and documentation relating to the previous certification attempt will be removed from the FSTB database.

Local Documentation forms and/or Projects must be submitted and approved within the twelve (12) months from when the candidate's certification application was entered into the FSTB database.

**An official picture ID (e.g., driver's license, state-issued identification card, military ID, etc.) must be presented for admittance to ALL written and practical exams.**

**Each candidate applying to certify at this level is required to bring NFPA compliant Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) and a Self-Contained Breathing Apparatus (SCBA).**

# HazMat Operations - Certification Requirements

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## Prerequisites:

Candidates seeking certification, for HazMat Operations, within the Iowa Fire Service Training Bureau Certification System must meet the following:

1. Be a current member of an Iowa fire, emergency or rescue organization. In addition to the membership requirement, all persons must be at least 18 years of age.
2. Successfully pass the 25 question HazMat Awareness exam with a minimum of 70%.
3. Submit the **HazMat Operations Local Verification Form**, signed by the **Fire Chief** or **Training Chief**.
4. Candidate must be competent in all objectives listed in NFPA 472, *Standard for Competence of Responders to Hazardous Materials/Weapons of Mass Destruction Incidents*, 2013 edition, Chapter 5; *Core Competencies for Operations Level Responders*, Section 6.2; *Mission-Specific Competencies: Personal Protective Equipment*; and Section 6.6, *Mission-Specific Competencies: Product Control*.
5. Verification of face piece fit testing shall be documented on the **HazMat Operations Local Verification Form**.

**Any Candidate with beards or facial hair in the area of the SCBA face piece seal will not be allowed to participate in the practical skills exam for HazMat Operations. Candidates must be clean shaven.**

## Written Examination:

The HazMat Operations written certification exam is based on **Requisite Knowledge** objectives listed in NFPA 472 - *Standard for Professional Competence of Responders to Hazardous Materials/Weapons of Mass Destruction Incidents*, 2013 edition.

- This written Certification Exam contains a total of 75 true/false and multiple choice questions. The exam is composed of 25 HazMat Awareness level questions and 50 HazMat Operations level questions.
- Candidates are required to score a minimum of 70% on HazMat Awareness and a minimum of 70% on HazMat Operations written examinations.
- If the candidate were to fail either the HazMat Awareness or HazMat Operations portions the candidate would only be required to retest for the specific failed portion and not the entire test.

Number of Questions	Time
25	30 Minutes
50	60 Minutes
75	90 Minutes
100	120 Minutes



## **Practical Skills Examination:**

The HazMat Operations practical skills certification exam is based on **Requisite Knowledge** and **Requisite Skills** objectives listed in NFPA 472 - *Standard for Professional Competence of Responders to Hazardous Materials/Weapons of Mass Destruction Incidents*, 2013 edition.

- Candidates are required to complete all skills which are graded on a Pass/Fail basis.
- A minimum of two (2) skills will be selected to be tested at each exam site. Candidates should be prepared to test on any skill listed.
- Candidates failing the practical skills exam are responsible for notifying the Fire Service Training Bureau of their desire to retest by pre-registering for another regularly scheduled exam. Candidates may not take the practical exam more than once per exam day.
- Practical skill exams are graded on a pass/fail basis. Candidates must successfully complete all skill stations at an exam site to receive a passing grade for the skill exam. The candidate is allowed two (2) attempts at each station.

## **Skills Being Tested:**

1. Plan and Implement the Response
2. Demonstrate Emergency Decontamination
3. Don, Doff and Work in PPE
4. Complete Reporting and Documentation Requirements
5. Product Control Activities

## **References/Textbooks:**

- IFSTA, *Essentials of Firefighting*, 6th Edition, 2013
- IFSTA, *Hazardous Materials for First Responders*, 4th Edition, 2010
- JBL, *Hazardous Materials: Managing the Incident*, 4th Edition, 2014
- Emergency Response Guide (ERG), 2016

# HazMat Operations - Local Verification Form

NFPA 472 - 2013

Candidate's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Candidate's Fire Department: \_\_\_\_\_

FSTB ID # \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Birth \_\_\_\_\_  
*(First 5 letters of last name & last 4 digits of SS #)*

## Local Verification Requirements

### 1. 29 CFR 1910.134 - Mask Fit Documentation:

The candidate has been successfully fitted to his or her Self-Contained Breathing Apparatus (SCBA) Mask in compliance with 29 CFR 1910.134 within the last twelve (12) calendar months.

### 2. NFPA 472 - 2013, Mission Specific Competencies - Personal Protective Equipment: 6.2.4.1(4) Demonstrate local procedures for responders undergoing the technical decontamination process:

The candidate has successfully demonstrated the ability to perform technical decontamination of personnel and equipment in accordance with department policies and procedures using department facilities and other ancillary equipment.

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### This section is to be completed by Fire Department Chief or Training Chief ONLY

I have reviewed the candidate's file and affirm that the candidate identified above has met the requirements listed in paragraphs 1 and 2 above. All requirements have been successfully conducted and completed per local department protocol. **All information listed above can be validated by a copy of the documents maintained by the department.**

\_\_\_\_\_  
Typed or Printed Name of Fire Department Chief or Training Chief

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Fire Department: \_\_\_\_\_

FD Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_ FD Email: \_\_\_\_\_

This form can **ONLY** be submitted after the candidate's Certification Testing Registration Form has been received by the FSTB and entered into the Certification database.

Scan completed document and email to: [fstbcert@dps.state.ia.us](mailto:fstbcert@dps.state.ia.us)

# Certification Flow Chart for HazMat - Operations

