

Firefighter Certification in Ohio.....

Ohio law permits communities to decide the level of certification they require of their fire personnel, with the exception of the Level II being required of full-time paid firefighters. Communities may choose to engage as part-time firefighters persons trained only to the volunteer level. Communities may also choose to recognize the transition process, or require certified applicants to repeat training to meet their local needs. It is recommended individuals contact potential employers and develop a career plan to direct their training plan.

Applicants for firefighter training must have medical clearance, and meet moral, ethical, and substance use policies of the Ohio Department of Public Safety (OAC 4765). Students must provide their own protective clothing and self contained breathing apparatus, either from department sponsorship or rental.

Certification Levels:

In the State of Ohio there are three levels of training for firefighters and five courses to obtain those certification levels.

The certification levels are:

- Volunteer Firefighter
- Firefighter Level I
- Firefighter Level II

Volunteer Firefighter

This course is thirty-six hours in length, and introduces the student to basic concepts, equipment and techniques. This course does not include fighting real fires. After successful completion the student may take the State certification examination.

Level I Certification

Level I certification requires a minimum of 120 hours training; the course provides comprehensive introduction and practice of basic fire fighting concepts and skills, and permits the students to practice the skills. Includes live fire training.

Level II

Required for full-time paid (career) firefighters, this course is a minimum 240 hours in length. Additional practice of skills is included, and advanced rescue and prevention concepts are introduced. Includes live fire training.

Training Courses:

Persons may obtain these certifications in five ways:

- Volunteer Firefighter
 - Completing a 36 hour training course
- Firefighter Level I
 - An eighty-four hour training course, entitled “Level I Transition”, after completing the 36 Hour Volunteer Firefighter Certification
 - Completing a 120 hour “Firefighter Level I” class
- Firefighter Level II

- Obtain Level I certification, then complete a “Level II Transition” class of 120 hours.
- Completing a 240 hour “Firefighter Level II” class

Other Certifications:

The State also certifies Fire Safety Inspectors and Fire Instructors. These programs are available to persons previously certified as Firefighters. Time in service requirements also exist for these additional levels.

Firefighter Training - Content:

Fire training courses familiarize the individual with protective equipment, tools, equipment and various appliances to conduct safe and efficient fire suppression activities. Depending on the program length, the student will also be trained in hazardous materials operations, rescue techniques, fire prevention education, fire alarm systems, and more in-depth practice and knowledge of basic subjects. The objectives of the classes are to prepare the student to safely perform at the target level, and prepare the student to pass the appropriate State certification examination.