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*The Commonwealth of Massachusetts*  
*Executive Office of Public Safety and Security*  
*Department of Fire Services*

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### **Licensing Guidelines**

- 1.0 The purpose of these guidelines is to provide clear protocol to license applicants and staff of the Division of Fire Safety's expectations on license applications, fee schedule, test preparation, cheating, multiple re-exams, and related testing responsibilities.
- 2.0 All license applications contain clear and specific instructions for both new applicants and renewals. Fees, where applicable, must be paid in full by check or money order; cash is not accepted. All applicants must provide an email address with their application and keep that email address current for renewal purposes.
  - 2.1 All incomplete and insufficient applications will be returned to the applicant. An application will be considered incomplete if any portion of the application is incomplete, if any of the documents or photographs required for that license are not attached, or if the applicable fee is not paid in full. Any delay in the issuance of a license or permit, due to an incomplete filing, will be the sole responsibility of the applicant. Renewal of a license or permit on or before the expiration date is the applicant's responsibility. A license or permit may be renewed within one year of the expiration date. After the one year period it is treated as a new application.
  - 2.2 All examinees' are allowed a maximum of 90 minutes per exam. When taking more than one exam the maximum time allowed will be 2 hours. A maximum of three exams will be given at one sitting.
- 3.0 All license applicants must be pre-registered in order to sit for an exam. The completed application must be received by the deadline provided in the exam schedule posted on the DFS website. No walk in applicants will be permitted to sit for a license exam unless designated by special circumstance by the Director of the Division of Fire Safety.
  - 3.1 All license applications must be made on an approved application, with required attachments and notarizations as listed on the application.
  - 3.2 In the event that an applicant's check is returned from the bank due to insufficient funds, the applicant must submit a money order or bank check in the

amount of the monies due, plus a returned check charge of \$15.00 assessed under the provisions of 801 CMR 4.08.

- 3.3 Any person or business entity applying for a license or permit, either as a new applicant or as a renewal applicant, must pay any and all outstanding fees, penalties, and non-criminal tickets, and if appropriate resolve any and all other outstanding code compliance and enforcement matters prior to the processing of their application.

EXCEPTION: There is one exception available for license holders who have served in the military. If those licenses have expired while the license holder has been on active duty, the one year renewal requirement may be waived upon proof of said military assignment, including dates of deployment and return.

- 4.0 License applicants must observe all security regulations on the Stow and Springfield campuses of the Department of Fire Services. At the Stow campus applicants must park in the overflow parking in the remote lot on the hill at the east side of the DFS campus and at the Springfield campus applicants park outside of the fenced area. Failure to comply with this directive may result in your vehicle being towed at your expense. Driver's license or other government issued identification is needed before the applicant enters the exam room.

- 5.0 Applicants enter the exam room and are seated, leaving every other seat open. They are reminded that there is no eating, drinking, smoking or talking in this room. Before exam questions, answer sheets and pencils are distributed, applicants are given the following information:

- 5.1 If you need to use the rest room, please do so now as you will not be allowed to leave the exam room once the exam material is distributed.
- 5.2 All cell phones, pagers and electronic devices are to be turned off. If you have an urgent situation, leave your cell phone/pager with the exam proctor. A sign with this information will be posted at the front of the room.
- 5.3 In the unlikely event of a fire alarm, the proctor will identify the room exits and an outside meeting location. Leave exams, answer sheets and pencils in the exam room. The proctor will lead the applicants back into the exam room when the all clear is sounded.
- 5.4 All study materials, paper, etc. are to be placed on the table next to the exam proctor. Using reference materials during the exam is considered cheating.  
Exception: Those taking the blasting certificate of competency exam are allowed to have a calculator and a copy of the Orica Blasters' Handy Tables, the Dyno Nobel Explosives Engineers' Guide, or similar manufacturers' product guide and those taking the certificate of competency for servicing portable fire extinguishers R46 may use an original bound NFPA 10 during the test. This book may not be tabbed, highlighted, have any physical markers or have any notes written inside the book. The proctor has the right to examine aforementioned material at any time.
- 5.5 No applicant will be permitted to enter the exam room beyond the posted start time, unless there are extenuating circumstances (i.e. significant traffic or weather issues) at the discretion of the exam proctor.

5.6 Effective January 1, 2011, all license exams administered by the Division of Fire Safety use answer sheets that will be scanned by computer. If the applicant has a cognitive or physical disability that would prevent the applicant from using these answer sheets, they may request an alternative test or extended time. Written requests for accommodation must be received by the Director of the Division of Fire Safety no later than thirty (30) business days prior to the exam date. The written request must include the original letter from a medical doctor on letterhead.

## 6.0 Cheating

- 6.1 If an examinee is caught allegedly cheating by the proctor, the exam shall be confiscated from the examinee and the person shall be dismissed immediately from the exam room.
- 6.2 Upon return to the office, the proctor will immediately advise the Division Director of the allegation, and within 48 hours, submit a detailed written report of the incident.
- 6.3 The examinee will be banned from taking any future exam for one (1) year. Upon expiration of the one (1) year, the applicant will need to submit a new application with new fee. They will be considered a new applicant.
- 6.4 Any examinee that feels that they have been wrongly accused of cheating may submit a written appeal, on a form from the Division of Fire Safety, explaining their position. The appeal form must be submitted to the Director, Division of Fire Safety within ten (10) days of the date of on the letter.
- 6.5 The Division Director will review the form, the written responses from the proctor and examinee and any other pertinent material.
- 6.6 The Director will render a decision within seven (7) days of receipt. The decision of the Director is final.

## 7.0 Multiple Retakes

- 7.1 This will establish the criteria for examination retakes within a two-year period starting from the date of the original application received by the Division of Fire Safety.
- 7.2 If an examinee fails a particular exam or fails to appear for an exam for which they have registered, they may retake the exam on the next scheduled exam date, upon payment of the designated fee.
- 7.3 If an examinee fails a second time or fails to appear for an exam for which they have registered, the examinee may retake the exam on the next scheduled exam date, upon payment of the designated fee. This retake will be considered the third exam.
- 7.4 If an examinee fails a third time or fails to appear for the exam for which they have registered, the examinee must submit a new application and fee, with acceptable proof of their attendance at an acceptable class of instruction related to the exam materials. The class information material will be reviewed by the Director, Division of Fire Safety, whose decision will be rendered within seven (7) days of receipt. The decision of the Director is final.