



CHARLES D. BAKER
GOVERNOR

KARYN E. POLITO
LT. GOVERNOR

DANIEL BENNETT
SECRETARY

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

P.O. Box 1025 ~ State Road

Stow, Massachusetts 01775

(978) 567~3100 Fax: (978) 567~3121

www.mass.gov/dfs



STEPHEN D. COAN
STATE FIRE MARSHAL

MEMORANDUM

To: Heads of Fire Department

From: Stephen D. Coan
State Fire Marshal

Date: April 8, 2015

RE: **Changes to Massachusetts Firefighting Academy Policies by
Massachusetts Fire Training Council**

On March 12, 2015, the Massachusetts Fire Training Council (“the Council”) made several important changes to its policies regarding Dismissal, Withdrawal and Readmission for students attending the **Career Recruit Firefighter Training Program**. In addition, the Council made additional changes to its Reasonable Accommodations Policy, which applies to all Massachusetts Firefighting Academy Programs. I have summarized these changes below:

1. Dismissals

The biggest change regarding Dismissal affects students who are dismissed (for **non-disciplinary** reasons) such as: absences; poor academics or skills or failing the certification exam. In such cases, these students will now be considered dismissed “without prejudice” meaning that he or she may attend a future Academy Career Recruit Firefighter Training Program, subject to meeting all employment and enrollment requirements. This is a substantial change from the previous “one and done” policy that prohibited such students from ever attending the Career Recruit Firefighter Training Program, if they were dismissed for any reason. Now such students will, as outlined, get a second bite at the apple.

Please note that **disciplinary** dismissals are “with prejudice” and such students may never attend future Academy Recruit Programs.

2. Withdrawals

Withdrawals will also be treated “without prejudice” if submitted by the head of the student’s fire department **and** approved by the Director of the Academy. The Council has clarified that withdrawals will only be allowed for reasons which are **unanticipated** and **serious** in nature such as: medical issues affecting the student or his/her immediate family, military duty, jury duty, etc. Withdrawals are **never** appropriate for disciplinary reasons.

3. Readmission

Students who have been either dismissed or withdrawn “without prejudice” will be allowed to return to a future Academy class, subject to meeting all employment and enrollment requirements. It is important to note that **no student** who has been allowed to attend the Academy for a second time will be given any more chances to complete the program. **Any student dismissed or withdrawn for a second time will be considered dismissed or withdrawn “with prejudice” which means that student may never be allowed to attend the Career Recruit Training Program.**

Reasonable Accommodations

The Council has also modified its Reasonable Accommodation policy to clarify that:

- Requests for reasonable accommodations must be made no later than thirty (30) days **prior** to the start date of the program
- Students must provide either medical documentation by a licensed provider documenting the disability and stating the accommodations sought **or** if applicable, an IEP (Individual Educational Plan) documenting a learning disability and accommodations which address the disability (the IEP cannot be older than 5 years from the date of issue); and
- Such documentation shall be submitted to the Department of Fire Services’ Civil Rights Officer.

The revised Reasonable Accommodation Policy also documents an appeals process consistent with the Governor’s Executive Order No. 246, most recently amended by Executive Order # 526.

Please review the attached policies in their entirety. If you have any questions regarding these policy changes, please contact the Massachusetts Firefighting Academy, Deputy Director Joseph Klucznik at (978) 567-3220.

THE COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS
EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF PUBLIC SAFETY AND SECURITY

Massachusetts Fire Training Council

Subject: Reasonable Accommodation Policy	Policy Adopted on: March 12, 2015
Purpose: The Massachusetts Firefighting Academy (MFA), a division of the Department of Fire Services (DFS), and the Massachusetts Fire Training Council (MFTC) are committed to equal opportunity for individuals with disabilities to access firefighter programs and training. In conformity with the Americans with Disabilities Act, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (where applicable) Massachusetts General Law and the Governors Executive Order no. 246, the MFA and MFTC will provide reasonable accommodations to qualified individuals with a disability if such accommodations do not fundamentally alter the nature of the program or affect academic requirements essential to the program or to certification requirements	
<u>Definitions:</u> “Reasonable Accommodation” means any academic adjustment or modification to the learning environment to allow a qualified individual with a disability to receive an equal opportunity to participate, providing such accommodations do not involve undue hardship to the MFA. “Undue Hardship” means significant difficulty or expense in the provision of a reasonable accommodations and is determined by assessing: • The nature and cost of the accommodation; • The size of the budget and resources; • The size of the agency, its composition and structure of its workforce. “Individual with a Disability” means any person who has a physical or mental impairment, which substantially limits one or more major life activities, has a record of such impairment, or is regarded as having such impairment. “Physical Impairment” Means any physiological disorder or condition, cosmetic disfigurement or anatomical loss affecting one or more of the following body systems: neurological, musculoskeletal, special sense organs, respiratory, cardiovascular, reproductive, digestive, genito-urinary, hemic and lymphatic, skin and endocrine. “Mental Impairment” means any psychological disorder, such as mental retardation, organic brain syndrome, emotional or mental illness and specific learning disabilities. “Major Life Activities means functions such as caring for one’s self, performing manual tasks, walking, seeing, hearing, speaking, breathing, learning, and working. “Has a Record of such Impairment” means has a history of or has been classified as having mental or physical impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities. “Is Regarded as having an Impairment” means has a physical or mental impairment that does not substantially limit major life activities but is treated as constituting such a limitation, or has a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits major life activities of others toward such impairment.	

“Qualified Individual with a Disability” means a person with a disability who satisfies the required skills, experience, education or other admission requirements for a recruit or applicant and who with or without reasonable accommodation can perform the essential functions necessary to participate in the MFA’s programs, activities and services.

“Essential Functions” means student assignments that are fundamental not marginal to course of study and requirements for certification or graduation.

Procedure:

Any student with a diagnosed disability seeking a reasonable accommodation should, at the earliest time possible (but no later than thirty (30) days prior to the start date of the program), make a written request for such reasonable accommodations to the DFS Civil Rights Officer. Every request must be accompanied by either medical documentation by a qualified provider documenting the disability and providing the reasonable accommodations sought; or, in the alternative, a student may, if applicable, submit a valid individual education plan (IEP) which documents a learning disability and reasonable accommodations. Such IEP may not be older than five (5) years from its date of issue. All written requests will be acknowledged in writing within ten (10) business days, and approved or denied within twenty (20) business days of receipt unless further medical or technical documentation/evaluations are required by the Civil Rights Officer, who has granted such extension of time.

It shall be the student’s responsibility to explain why the accommodation is necessary. It is important and necessary for a student to cooperate in the evaluation process. A request for accommodation can be denied if the student refuses to cooperate.

Reasonable Accommodation:

Upon review of all required documentation, the DFS Civil Rights Officer will recommend reasonable accommodations to the MFA Director. The approved reasonable accommodations provide for academic adjustments to provide an equal opportunity to participate, provided that such accommodations do not involve undue hardship to the MFA or interfere with an essential function of instruction or training. Examples of academic adjustments may include:

- Additional time to complete tests.
- Quiet testing location.
- Tape Recording of Classes

A student may appeal an adverse decision in the following manner:

- Forward the complaint (appeal) to the DFS ADA/504 Coordinator.
- The ADA/504 Coordinator will investigate and issue a written decision and, where the complainant prevails, a corrective action plan should be implemented within 30 Days of the filing of the original complaint.
- If the complaining party gives oral or written notice to its ADA/504 Coordinator that he/she is not satisfied with the action taken, the ADA/504 Coordinator must forward the matter to the ADA/504 Coordinator for their Secretariat.

- If the Secretariat ADA/504 Coordinator is inclined to uphold the denial, he or she is strongly encouraged to review the merits of the claim with the ADA/504 Coordinator for the Massachusetts Office on Disability, as soon possible.
- If not resolved by the Secretariat to the satisfaction of the complainant within 10 business days, the Secretariat shall notify the complainant and the Massachusetts Office on Disability of the denial and the reasons for it, or in the case of a delay in resolving the matter, of the reasons for the delay and when a decision should be expected.

Effective Date: March 12, 2015

Revision Date: March 12, 2015

**Rules and Regulations
For the
Career Recruit Firefighter Training Program
Massachusetts Firefighting Academy**

I. UNIFORM OF THE DAY

- A. Uniform shall be a clean departmental work uniform, Class B pants, shirt, black belt, and black leather shoes, unless otherwise specified by the Recruit Program Coordinator or the Officer of the Day (OD).
- B. For physical training (PT) only, sneakers or gym shoes, navy blue t-shirt or sweatshirt, and navy blue sweatpants or navy blue shorts shall be worn. All t-shirts, sweatshirts, sweatpants, and workout shorts worn at the Academy shall be plain navy blue, either with no lettering or with the department-approved emblem only. All physical training clothing is subject to approval by the Massachusetts Firefighting Academy. **Hooded sweatshirts shall not be worn.**
- C. Students should report each day in a clean departmental Class B work uniform. Sneakers shall not be worn in the classroom or at any other time except physical training. Class B uniform shall include a collared button-down or "polo" type shirt. A clean class B departmental uniform shall be worn for graduation. Dungarees may not be worn in place of uniform pants.

On Fridays only, for "Support Our Troops Fridays," red shirts may be worn as part of the Class B uniform. Red shirts, however, must include a collared button-down or "polo" type shirt. Red shirts may be worn only according to the uniform protocol of the respective city or town.
- D. All students shall change from PT clothing to clean departmental Class B uniform prior to start of classroom or practical evolutions for the day unless otherwise specified by the recruit program coordinator or the OD.
- E. Only department issue or department approved hats or caps will be worn on Academy grounds or other training sites. Hats or caps are not to be worn in the classroom, during PT or during any practical evolutions. During outside PT in extremely cold weather, knit hats are allowed with permission of the lead PT instructor.
- F. No glasses other than prescription glasses or clear safety glasses will be worn at the Academy or other training sites.
- G. All students shall be clean-shaven at morning roll call. Mustaches may be allowed if allowed by the student's department; however, in no case shall beards or any facial hair be in contact with or impact the seal of the self contained breathing apparatus (SCBA) face piece.
- H. Hair shall be cut neatly and students shall be well groomed. Students with long hair must keep the hair secured in back neatly, away from the facial area, during the

training day. For safety purposes, the student with long hair may be required to wear a Nomex hood for all training per discretion of the Recruit Program Coordinator.

- I. Any jewelry, i.e. chains, hoop earrings, etc., which presents a safety hazard shall not be allowed.
- J. Audio/video recorders and still photography equipment shall not be allowed except by permission of the Director of the Academy or his/her designee.

II. DEPARTMENT

- A. No abusive language may be used and no obscene or offensive literature shall be brought onto any Academy training site.
- B. All gambling is prohibited at any Academy training site.
- C. Alcoholic beverages and/or narcotics are prohibited and may not be consumed at any Academy training site or during any break period or lunch hour. Students who appear at any training session while under the influence of alcoholic beverages or any illegal substance will not be allowed to participate in training for the day and their department will be immediately notified as to the alleged condition of the student. Students will not be allowed to leave the Academy training site until a departmental decision is made for their safe transportation back to the student's respective community.
- D. Smoking or the use of tobacco products is prohibited.
- E. No visitors other than chiefs of department and/or training officers shall be allowed at any Academy training site. All visitors shall check in with the Recruit Program Coordinator or OD.
- F. All telephone calls shall have prior approval by academy staff. Pagers, cell phones, and other electronic devices are to remain in the student's vehicle during the training day.
- G. "Mr.", "Sir", "Ms." or "Ma'am" shall be used when addressing visiting lecturers and instructors.
- H. All students and visiting officers will be respectful and courteous to each other, the staff and all other visitors. Harassment of any manner is prohibited.
- I. Gum chewing, eating, and drinking (except via the MFA issued water bottle for hydration purposes) in the classroom areas are not allowed.
- J. Students will not, for any reason, approach, enter, or remain proximate to their vehicles during the training day without the express permission of the Coordinator or OD.

III. ATTENDANCE

- A. Students shall not leave the training sites while assigned to the Academy.
- B. Any student who anticipates being absent or is absent from the recruit program due to illness or injury shall be required to notify the Program Coordinator and his/her Fire Chief.
- C. The student shall call 978-567-3218 or 978-567-3219 at least one half-hour prior to roll call to report an absence.
- D. Any student who is absent shall be required to complete an absence report immediately following any absence. Other documentation may be required. Absence reports will become part of the student's permanent record and copies shall be forwarded to the chief of department. In order to be eligible to return to recruit training following any absence due to injury or illness, the recruit must present medical authorization from a physician/physician assistant. The documentation must state the reason for the absence and must include authorization to return to training, *"full-duty with no restrictions"*.
- E. In the event of a one (1) training day or longer absence due to minor illness or injury, the Program Coordinator or Lead Instructor may request such other supporting documentation to determine if a student is fit for duty and able to return to full training activities.
- F. Unexcused absences will be cause for dismissal. Any absence shall be evaluated as to the impact and effect on the student's attainment of proper skills and knowledge necessary to complete all graduation requirements. Any absence may be considered as grounds for dismissal from the class, and may result in consultation between the chief of department, academy representative, and the student, as to the student's continued attendance and participation in the recruit training program.
- G. A student, who through verified illness or injury (or any other serious reason approved by the Chief of Department and the Academy Director) is absent from more than 5% of the mandated curriculum (19 hours) may be dismissed from the program. That student may be eligible for attendance at a future Academy recruit session, based on a review of the circumstances by the Massachusetts Fire Training Council.
- H. A student, who is absent from more than 5% of the mandated curriculum (19 hours) because of the death of an immediate family member or because of other serious or extenuating circumstances may be allowed to continue only at the discretion and approval of the Academy Director or his/her designee in consultation with the Chief of Department. Without the approval above, the recruit firefighter will be dismissed from the program and will likely be eligible for attendance at a future Academy recruit session. Immediate family member shall mean spouse, child, mother, father, brother, sister, mother-in-law, father-in-law, brother-in-law, sister-in-law, or grandparent only.
- I. Any student who is not present at roll call at the start of each training day shall be recorded as absent for the period of time missed. This absentee time shall be recorded

in hours and minutes. A student who is tardy 1/2 hour or more must call the academy at 978-567-3218 or 978-567-3219 prior to the start of the training day. The tardy time shall be included in the sum of absentee time noted in Section E above.

- J. Platoon assignments will be given to students on Training Day One. Said platoon assignments will be rotated throughout the program on direction of the Recruit Coordinator.
- K. Any student, who is absent on Training Day (TD) 1A, 2A, 2C, 3B, 3C, 4A, 4C, 5C, 6A, 6B, 6C, 7A, 7B, 7C, 8A, 8B, 8C, 9B, 10B, 11A, 11B, 11C, 12C, 13C, 14B, 14C, 15A, 15B, or from any live fire training (including live fire Hose Evolutions) within his/her assigned platoon shall be dismissed from the program. Attendance at and active participation in all live fire evolutions shall be considered as requirements for graduation from the Career Recruit Training Program.
- L. Attendance shall mean participation in and performance of all tasks that take place during the training day.
- M. Any student unable, for any reason, to participate in physical fitness or other rigorous activities shall be counted as absent for the training day.
- N. Student shall have an obligation to notify the Academy, in writing, of any change in employment status.

IV. CLASS CANCELLATIONS

- A. Classes at Academy Headquarters - Scheduled Classes to be held at the Massachusetts Firefighting Academy in Stow may be cancelled due to severe weather or other major reasons on the decision of the Academy Director, or the person designated in his/her absence. Students should call the recorded line, 978-567-3248, for information specific to the recruit program.
- B. If the Academy must cancel a program for any other reason, every attempt will be made to notify all pre-registered students.
- C. The Recruit Program Coordinator will also initiate a call-down tree to notify the affected recruits if there is a cancellation.
- D. Cancellation/delay announcements for the Massachusetts Firefighting Academy in Stow may be carried on WHDH TV Channel 7 Boston.

V. MISCELLANEOUS

- A. No ball playing or Frisbee playing is allowed in any building or on academy property.
- B. All students shall read the bulletin board daily before a.m. and p.m. roll call.
- C. Students shall complete all study assignments as directed by the Academy Staff.

Violation of any of the above rules, regulations, or requirements shall be cause for appropriate punitive action leading to dismissal from the recruit training program.

VI. REQUIREMENTS FOR SUCCESSFUL COMPLETION OF RECRUIT TRAINING

The following list contains skills that will be required for successful completion of the recruit training program, and are referred to as "Critical Skills". Testing on all of these skills will be conducted during the regularly scheduled training. If by the end of training day 14C the student is unable to perform any of these "critical skills", he/she will be dismissed from the program.

- A. Failure, refusal or inability to proficiently raise, climb, or work from all types of fire department ladders both with and without hand tools, in the performance of accepted firefighting practices.
- B. Failure, refusal or inability to wear self-contained breathing apparatus (SCBA) in the performance of accepted firefighting practices. This is to include the tendency to display any indication of claustrophobia.
- C. Failure, refusal, or inability to operate effectively at all live fire training sessions in the presence of heat, smoke, flame, and other products of combustion.
- D. Failure, refusal, or inability to perform all Academy evolutions proficiently and in accordance with Academy policy as prescribed by the Massachusetts Fire Training Council and taught by Academy instructors. Such evolutions of accepted firefighting practices include, but are not limited to, ladder carrying and raising, hose handling and movement, pump operations, tying and hauling, search and rescue, and use of SCBA.
- E. Failure, refusal, or inability to proficiently carry, raise, and deploy a 16' roof ladder using the two-person method according to Academy policy. Deployment includes safely securing the ladder to the peak of the roof by means of the roof hooks. Proficiency shall be demonstrated in both the butt and tip positions.
- F. Failure, refusal, or inability to proficiently advance and operate 1-3/4" and/or 2-1/2" hose lines while flowing appropriate gallonages using both fog and solid hose streams. Hose lines may require deployment to areas above and/or below grade within a structure. These skills will be completed as a member of a two or three person hose line team.
- G. Failure, refusal, or inability to proficiently establish a positive water supply to the pump. The establishment of water supply shall include the connection of the supply hose to the hydrant using the appropriate gates and hydrant wrench.
- H. Failure, refusal, or inability to safely and proficiently assist both a conscious and unconscious victim down a ladder.
- I. Evidence of deception, cheating, or collaboration during any written or practical exam will result in dismissal from the program.

VII. GRADING SYSTEM FOR WRITTEN EXAMINATIONS

A. Grades achieved on written examinations will be calculated as follows:

- There will be five written quizzes during the 9-week period. Each module quiz will consist of 50 multiple-choice questions. One hour will be allowed to complete the examination.
- Students must achieve a minimum average of 70% in the module quizzes in order to be eligible to take the final written examination.
- Module quizzes will be administered as follows:
 - Module A:
 - Quiz #1 on Training Day 8A
 - Quiz #2 on Training Day 15A
 - Module B:
 - Quiz # 3 on Training Day 8B
 - Quiz #4 on Training Day 15B
 - Module C:
 - Quiz # 5 on Training Day 8C
- The Final Examination will be administered on Training Day 13C.
- Additionally the Hazardous Materials Operational Level First Responder (HazMat OLR) certification examination will be administered on Training Day 5C. The HazMat OLR examination will not affect the academic average.
- Additionally there will be a NIMS (National Incident Management System) 700 exam on TD 3A and a Incident Command System (ICS) 100 exam on Training Day 13B. These examinations will not affect the academic average.
- Following each module quiz, any student who does not maintain a minimum of 70% will participate in a counseling session with the Recruit Training Coordinator or his/her designee.
- The final examination will consist of 150 questions. One hundred of these will be Firefighter-I (FF-I) questions. Fifty of these will be Firefighter-II (FF-II) questions. Three hours will be allowed to complete the final examination. A student must attain a score of 70% on the FF-I questions and 70% on the FF-II questions in order to graduate.
- A student who does not successfully complete the final examination will be allowed to take one re-examination. If he/she does not successfully pass this retake examination, he/she will be dismissed from the program.

B. Final grades will be determined as follows:

- The average of five intermediate module quizzes will count for 50% of the final grade.
- The final examination score will count for the other 50% of the final grade.

VIII. GRADING SYSTEM FOR PRACTICAL EVOLUTIONS - (Objective Evaluations)

Practical evolutions will be subject to grading at all times during the program. The individual techniques, evolutions, and proper sequence of accomplishment as stated in the drill manual or appropriate reference, i.e. instructor reference, student handout, etc. for the purpose of grading, have been divided into two categories, major and minor errors.

A. Major Errors - Major errors are those errors that are classified as an act or omission that does any of the following:

- Endangers the safety of personnel
- Prevents placing water on the fire
- Requires the assistance of another member of the crew for the evolution to be successful
- Causes total breakdown of the evolution due to lack of completion of a key technique
- Results in undue loss of time

Committing a major error will result in the student being charged with five (5) deficiency points for each error.

B. Minor Errors - Minor errors are those acts or omissions that, while incorrect, will not:

- Impair the safety of personnel
- Impair placing water on the fire
- Prevent completion of the evolution

Committing a minor error will result in the student being charged with one (1) deficiency point for each error. Minor errors will not be charged against the student if, in the opinion of the Instructor, the student, without assistance from other students, instructors or visitors, discovers and corrects the mistake within a reasonable time period.

IX. CONSULTATIONS REQUIRED BY ACCUMULATION OF DEFICIENCY POINTS

- A. At 32 points, the student shall meet with a Recruit Coordinator or his/her designee.
- B. At 63 points, the student shall meet with a Recruit Coordinator or his/her designee and the Director of the Fire Academy or his/her designee.
- C. At 93 points, the student shall meet with a Recruit Coordinator or his/her designee, the Director of the Fire Academy, and his/her Chief of Department or his/her designee.

- D. At 124 points, the student shall meet with a Recruit Coordinator or his/her designee, the Director of the Fire Academy or his/her designee, and his/her Chief of Department or his/her designee, and shall be terminated from the program and returned to his/her respective department.

X. SUBJECTIVE EVALUATIONS

- A. Subjective evaluations will be written as necessary by all instructors to document each student's performance. These evaluations may be positive and/or negative in nature and will be written when a student operates outside the scope of his/her training skills during either a graded or non-graded evolution.
- B. Subjective evaluations will be written to document a student's unprofessional or unsafe behavior, inability to operate within fire academy guidelines and training procedures, and non-compliance with the Rules and Regulations for the Career Recruit Training Program.
- C. A subjective evaluation as written by an instructor, and verified by the coordinator, that meets any of the following criteria: endangers the safety of personnel, impairs placement of water on the fire, requires the assistance of an instructor for the evolution to be successful, or causes the breakdown of the evolution due to lack of completion of a key technique will be given five deficiency points.
- D. There shall not be more than three of these counted that would amount to not more than 15 total deficiencies as a result. The coordinator or assistant coordinator must verify this particular subjective before points are assessed. If no points are assessed, then it will be treated as a normal subjective with a copy sent to the chief.
- E. If a subjective evaluation is written, and points are assessed, then a consultation will be held with the Recruit Coordinator or his/her designee, the Director or his/her designee, the Chief of the respective department or his/her designee, and the candidate.
- F. These subjective evaluations shall be limited to areas that have no grading associated with them, but still represent issues that could cause personal injury or meet the above stated guidelines:
- Phase I through Phase III fires, live fires with extinguishers, and car fires.
 - Rappelling
 - The Draeger maze
 - All gas evolutions, including vapor releases
 - Aerial ladder practical evolutions
 - Timed combined evolutions (after grading)
 - Vehicle extrication practical scenario
 - Rescue over ladders
- G. If review of these evaluations indicates a need for realignment of a student's behavior or performance (as observed by an individual instructor or the Recruit Program Coordinator), all available methods will be utilized by the Academy to correct this

behavior or performance. For those with adverse reports, the subject evaluations may be a contributing factor in prohibiting or denying graduation from the Academy.

XI. REPORTS TO CHIEF OF DEPARTMENT

Student grades are sent to the chief of department together with any late arrival and absence reports, injury reports, subjective evaluation reports, warning and dismissal notices, and consultation reports. These reports are sent on the following schedule:

- Initial progress report at the end of three weeks (at the end of Module A)
- Second progress report at the end of six weeks (at the end of Module B)
- Final report is sent following graduation (following completion of Module C)

XII. WARNING AND DISMISSAL NOTICES

- A. Warning notices shall be issued to students for the following reasons:
 - Academic deficiency
 - Failure to comply with Rules and Regulations
 - Unacceptable level of deficiency points
- B. Warning notices shall become a part of the student's file with a copy sent to the chief of department.
- C. Dismissal notices shall be issued to students who fail to meet the graduation requirements as set forth in the Rules and Regulations or who fail to comply with the Rules and Regulations as established by the Massachusetts Fire Training Council.

XIII. PHYSICAL REQUIREMENTS, DISABILITIES, INJURIES, AND ILLNESS

- A. Any student with a diagnosed disability seeking a reasonable accommodation should, at the earliest time possible (but no later than thirty (30) days prior to the start date of the program), make a written request for such reasonable accommodations to the DFS Civil Rights Officer. Every request must be accompanied by either medical documentation by a qualified provider documenting the disability and providing the reasonable accommodations sought; or, in the alternative, a student may, if applicable, submit a valid individual education plan (IEP) which documents a learning disability and reasonable accommodations. Such IEP may not be older than five (5) years from its date of issue. All written requests will be acknowledged in writing within ten (10) business days, and approved or denied within twenty (20) business days of receipt unless further medical or technical documentation/evaluations are required by the Civil Rights Officer, who has granted such extension of time.
- B. Every student is required to inform a Recruit Coordinator of any physical infirmity that he/she may have, on their first day of the program.
- C. Every student is required, upon entry, to report to a Recruit Coordinator if he/she is using any form of medication.

- D. Every student is required to report any injury or illness to a Recruit Coordinator or his/her designee immediately. If a student is required to withdraw from an Academy session due to injuries or illness not brought about by his/her own misconduct, he/she may be eligible for entry to another approved Academy session based on a review of the circumstances by the Massachusetts Fire Training Council.
- E. If a student, through his/her own misconduct, becomes so incapacitated by injury that he/she is unable to complete the mandated course, he/she may not be eligible for entry to another approved Academy Career Recruit Training Program. Such final decision shall be the decision of the Massachusetts Fire Training Council.

XIV. DISMISSAL

- A. Non-Disciplinary – A student who is dismissed for any non-disciplinary reason (i.e. absences, poor academics, inability to perform critical skills, failing final exam certification) is dismissed without prejudice and may attend a future Academy Recruit Training Program subject to all employment and applicable enrollment requirements.
- B. Disciplinary – A student dismissed for disciplinary reasons is dismissed with prejudice and may not enroll or attend any future Academy Recruit Training Program.

XV. WITHDRAWAL

A student may be withdrawn without prejudice at the request of the head of his/her fire department and the approval of the Director of the Academy for any non-disciplinary reason which is unanticipated and serious in nature (i.e. serious medical issues affecting the student or his immediate family, military duty, jury duty, etc.).

XVI. READMISSION

- A. Dismissal (Non-Disciplinary) – A student who has been dismissed without prejudice in accordance with this policy, shall be allowed to attend, subject to all employment and enrollment requirements, a future Academy Recruit Training Program starting on Training Day 1A. Students seeking readmission as a result of failing the final examination under Section VII, A, shall submit a new career recruit application and follow the new candidate timeline.
- B. Withdrawal – A student who has been withdrawn without prejudice at the request of the head of his/her fire department and with the approval of the Director of the Academy for any non-disciplinary reason which is: unanticipated and serious in nature, and substantially interferes with the student's ability to remain in the Recruit Training Program, shall be allowed to attend, subject to all employment and enrollment requirements, a future Academy Recruit Training Program, subject to the following provisions:
 - The approval of the Director of the Academy is conditioned upon receipt of satisfactory evidence as requested by the Director of the Academy.

- If the basis for the withdrawal is medical, the student must submit to the Academy, a medical release from a physician/physician assistant stating that he/she may return to "full duty" with no limitations.
 - A student who has been withdrawn for less than ninety (90) calendar days may be readmitted to the Recruit Training Program on Training Day 1A or any other day as determined by agreement of the Director of the Academy and the student's head of his/her fire department. A student who has been withdrawn for more than ninety (90) calendar days shall be readmitted to the Recruit Training Program on Training Day 1A.
 - A student withdrawn for less than ninety (90) calendar days will, upon his/her return, carry over any accrued absentee time, academic scores, deficiency points or subjective evaluations received prior to withdrawal.
 - A student withdrawn for more than ninety (90) calendar days will not retain any previously accrued absentee time, academic scores, deficiency points and subjective evaluations received prior to withdrawal.
- C. No student dismissed or withdrawn without prejudice shall be readmitted to a future Academy Recruit Training Program more than once. Any student who has been dismissed or withdrawn for a second time, shall be considered to be dismissed or withdrawn with prejudice.

All students shall be required to submit a rules and regulations compliance sheet signed by both the student and Chief of the Department.



Rules and Regulations
For the
Call/Volunteer Recruit Firefighter Training Program
Massachusetts Firefighting Academy

UNIFORM

- A. Students should report to each training session in a clean departmental work uniform, Class B pants and shirt, black belt and black shoes or boots. All t-shirts and polo shirts shall be home department labeled or shall be plain navy. T-shirts worn under another shirt shall be navy blue only. Dungarees may not be worn in place of uniform pants. Sneakers shall not be worn at any time. Only the Student's fire department sweatshirt and/or firefighting turnout coat shall be worn while at the training site. No other coats, jackets or hooded sweatshirts are acceptable.
- B. No hats or caps are permitted any time or place.
- C. No glasses other than prescription glasses or clear safety glasses will be worn at the Academy or other training sites.
- D. All Students shall be clean-shaven when they arrive for each training session. Mustaches may be allowed if allowed by the Student's departments; however, in no case shall beards or any facial hair, which may impair the safety of the Student or the proper operations of self-contained breathing apparatus, be worn. If a question of impairment arises, the MFA will have final determination if the facial hair needs to be removed.
- E. Hair shall be cut neatly and Students shall be well groomed. Students with long hair will have the hair secured in back neatly, away from the facial area, during the training day.
- F. Any jewelry, i.e. chains, earrings, necklaces, facial piercings, tongue piercings etc. that presents a safety hazard, shall not be allowed. If a question of safety arises, the MFA will have final determination if the item presents a safety hazard and shall be removed.
- G. All clothing worn under personal protective equipment (PPE), will be Department Class B uniform or a cotton t-shirt. Shorts are not permitted to be worn under any PPE.
- H. Graduation: A clean class B departmental uniform shall be worn for graduation. No t-shirts or polo shirts will be allowed. The Student must wear a collared uniform shirt with a department patch. Badge is optional, but encouraged.

DEPORTMENT

- A. No obscene or abusive language may be used and no obscene or offensive literature shall be brought onto any academy training site.
- B. All gambling is prohibited at any academy training site.

- C. Alcoholic beverages and/or narcotics are prohibited and may not be consumed at any academy training site or during any break period or lunch hour. Students who appear at any training session while under the influence of, or suspected to be under the influence of, alcoholic beverages or any illegal substance will not be allowed to participate in training for the day and their department notified as to the alleged condition of the Student. Students will not be allowed to leave the academy training site until a departmental decision is made for their safe transportation back to the Student's respective community.
- D. No smoking, chewing of tobacco or snuff shall be allowed during classes, in the classroom or at any training site.
- E. No visitors other than Chiefs of Department and/or Training Officers shall be allowed at any academy training site. All visitors shall check in with the Lead Instructor.
- F. All cell phones, beepers, department radios, and pagers, will not be allowed to be present during all training sessions
- G. No telephone calls shall be placed by a Student unless in the event of an emergency during training and then after receiving permission from the Lead Instructor.
- H. "Mr.", "Sir", Ms. or "Ma'am" shall be used when addressing Lecturers and Instructors.
- I. All Students and visiting officers will be respectful and courteous to each other, the staff, and all others. Harassment and/or disrespectful comments of a personal or sexual nature will not be tolerated.
- J. Gum chewing, eating and drinking (except for the MFA issued water bottle) in the classroom and all other training areas is not allowed. Only water shall be used in the MFA water bottles.
- K. Audio/video recorders and still photography equipment shall not be allowed except by permission from the Program Coordinator.

SAFETY RULES AND REGULATIONS

- A. Students will keep clear of any training equipment, building or prop unless accompanied by an MFA instructor.
- B. Horseplay will not be tolerated. Any infraction of the Rules and Regulations or breach of discipline will be cause for immediate dismissal from and failure of the training program.
- C. All personal vehicles will be parked in the area designated the first day of class. Students will not return to their vehicles without permission of the Lead Instructor.
- D. All Students while engaging in training exercises must wear full protective clothing. Full protective clothing according to the NFPA shall include; turnout coat, turnout pants, helmet with eye protection, earflaps and chinstrap secured under chin, gloves, boots and hood.

- E. All gear will be inspected the first night by the MFA. Students are required to have a full set of NFPA compliant turnout gear from the first class forward. If any turn out gear is not in NFPA compliance the Student will be notified and given an opportunity to correct the deficiency. Under no circumstances will any Student be allowed to participate in any live fire evolutions without fully compliant turn out gear.
- F. While participating in training evolutions, including going between training stations, Students shall be fully dressed using all of their protective equipment unless directed differently by the Lead Instructor. When wearing turnout gear, it will be properly worn and secured including the use of chinstraps, gloves, coat closed and properly secured, etc. Protective hoods worn over the head unless changed by the Lead Instructor. Any Student not in compliance with the above turnout gear requirements will not be allowed to participate in the training and will not receive credit for the training session.
- G. Students will bring to all classes a Department SCBA with a full cylinder and a spare full cylinder. All bottles must be within current hydrostatic date in order for the bottle to be refilled. This shall be brought on the first night and every training date. The SCBA and spare bottle will be inspected on the first night.

ATTENDANCE

Attending on day one is mandatory. To attend this program you must be there on Day 1

- A. Students shall not leave the training sites during classes. This includes all-day sessions. Students shall make lunch arrangements ahead of time for full day sessions.
- B. Any Student who anticipates being absent or is absent from recruit class due to illness or injury shall be required to notify the Lead Instructor and their Fire Chief. The Student shall also complete an absence report immediately upon return to class following any absence. Absence reports will become part of the Student's permanent record and copies shall be forwarded to the Chief of Department.

Any illness or injury which requires a Student to miss two (2) or more consecutive recruit training classes shall be required to present upon their return to recruit training a written medical authorization from a Physician or Physician Assistant stating the reason for the absence and must include authorization for the Student to return back to recruit training on "full-duty with no restrictions".

If necessary, following a one (1) class or longer absence due to minor illness or injury, the Program Coordinator or Lead Instructor may request other supporting documentation in order to determine if a Student's fitness for duty to return to full training activities is appropriate.

- C. Unexcused absences will not be tolerated. Any unexcused absence shall be evaluated as to the impact and effect on the Student at the attainment of proper skills and knowledge necessary to complete all graduation requirements. Any unexcused absence may be considered as grounds for dismissal from the class, and may result in consultation between the Chief of Department, academy representative, and the Student, as to the Student's continued attendance in the

program. All Students will be allowed a total of eighteen hours of excused absence. If a Student is late for class, the time tardy will be deducted from the eighteen hours allowed.

- D. Students who miss more than **eighteen hours** of absence will not meet the requirements for graduation from the class and shall be dismissed from the class. When a Student exceeds the eighteen hours they shall be removed from the class. A Student whom is dismissed for exceeding the eighteen hours must take the entire course over to attain completion of the program. Absence abuse may result in consultation between the Chief of the Department, the program representative and the Student as to the Students continued attendance in the program.
- E. A Student must have all required turnout gear and SCBA to participate in practical skills. Students who fail to bring the required gear will not be allowed to participate and will be considered absent from the skills training. Attendance and active participation in all practical skill evolutions is a course requirement for graduation from the class. Any Student who is absent from practical skill classes may be subject to dismissal.
- F. It is the Student's responsibility to be in attendance for the class roll call. Students who are tardy will be marked tardy for the period of time they missed. Constant abuse of punctuality will result in a consultation between the Chief of Department, the Program Coordinator and the Student resulting in possible dismissal from the program.
- G. Attendance at and active participation in ALL live fire evolutions as well as the maze trailer and maze is considered a requirement for graduation. Any Student absent or whom does not participate in any live fire evolution or maze training shall be subject to immediate dismissal. Student may return to this training day in another class and finish from that point if within six months. Beyond six months will require taking the entire program over.

Missing a Mandatory Class will result in IMMEDIATE dismissal from the program

A list of the Mandatory Sessions will be issued at the First Session

- H. Attendance shall mean participation in and performance of all tasks that take place during the training day.
- I. Any Student unable, for any reason, to participate in training shall be counted as absent for the entire training day.
- J. Student shall have an obligation to notify the academy, in writing, of any change in fire department employment status also their phone number or address

MISCELLANEOUS

- A. No ball or Frisbee playing is allowed
- B. Students shall complete all study assignments and homework as directed by the academy staff.

Violation of any of the above rules, regulations, or requirements shall be cause for appropriate punitive action leading to dismissal from the training program.
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CLASS CANCELLATIONS

If any class is canceled for any reason including inclement weather the MFA will take all possible steps to contact the Students prior to the training session. It is important that the Student keep the MFA informed of all current contact information (i.e. telephone number). The program coordinator will set up a telephone call matrix with the Students of each class.

REQUIREMENTS FOR SUCCESSFUL COMPLETION OF TRAINING

No Student will graduate from the training program if, in the opinion of the Training Staff, Program Coordinator and/or MFA Director the Firefighter displays any of the following:

- A. Failure, refusal or inability to climb or work from all types of fire department ladders in the performance of firefighting practices. Failure to Climb Aerial Ladder to assigned height.
- B. Failure, refusal or inability to wear self-contained breathing apparatus in the performance of accepted firefighting practices. This is to include the tendency to display any indication of claustrophobia.
- C. Failure, refusal or inability to operate effectively or as directed during live fire operations
- D. +Failure, refusal or inability to operate effectively in the presence of heat, smoke, flame or gases.
- E. Failure to perform all academy evolutions in accordance with program policy as prescribed by the academy instructors. No other method shall be accepted.
- F. Failure to attend, perform and operate effectively at all live fire training sessions.
- G. Failure, refusal, or inability to proficiently advance and operate 1 ¾ " and/or 2 ½ " hose lines while flowing appropriate gallonages using both fog and solid hose streams. Hose lines may require deployment to areas above and/or below grade within a structure. These skills will be completed as part of a two or three person hose line team.
- H. Failure to complete successfully the execution of at least two stipulated exercise encompassing the training maze.
- I. Evidence of deception, cheating or collaboration during a written examination will result in dismissal from the program.
- J. The Student Final Grade Point Average of 70% is the minimum average for passing the program.

GRADING SYSTEM FOR WRITTEN EXAMINATIONS

A. Final grades will be determined as follows:

- **Program Average-** The program average will be determined by averaging all of the quizzes together to count as one exam score. This score (the average of all the quizzes) will then be

averaged with the other five written exams administered throughout the program and will be the academic Program Average for the Student. This averaged percentage will count for 50% of the Students Final Grade Point Average.

- **Final Exam-** A final written examination that will count for the other 50% of the final grade.
- **Student Final Grade Point Average-** The final grade point average for the Student will then be determined by averaging the overall program average and the final exam score.

B. Grades achieved on written examinations will be calculated as follows:

- Total Average of all Quizzes will equal One Exam Grade
- Students must achieve a minimum average of 70% in the five intermediate written examinations and the Quiz grades to be eligible to take the final written examination.
- After each intermediate exam, all Students who are not maintaining a minimum average of 70% will participate in a counseling session with the Call/Volunteer Training Coordinator.
- Students who do not achieve a minimum grade average of 70% after four intermediate examinations and one Quizzes grade, and who mathematically cannot raise their average to a minimum 70%, shall be dismissed from the program and can repeat the entire program at a later time.
- Students must achieve a minimum of 70% for their final Grade Point Average in order to graduate from the program.
- Students who do not receive 70% for their final Grade Point Average after the first attempt on the final exam will be provided an opportunity to retake the examination. Failure to obtain a minimum Student Grade Point Average of 70% will result in dismissal from the program and the Student can repeat the entire program at a later time.

GRADING SYSTEM FOR PRACTICAL EVOLUTIONS

Practical evolutions will be subject to grading at all times during the program. The individual techniques, evolutions, and proper sequence of accomplishment as stated in the drill manual or appropriate reference, i.e., instructor reference, Student handout, etc. for the purpose of grading, have been divided into two categories; Major Errors and Minor Errors.

MAJOR ERRORS – Major errors are those errors that are classified as an act or omission that does any of the following:

- Endangers the safety of personnel
- Prevents the placing of water on the fire
- Requires the assistance of another member of the crew for the evolution to be successful

- Causes total breakdown of the evolution due to lack of completion of a key technique
- Results in undue loss of time

Committing a major error will result in the Student being charged with five deficiency points for each error.

MINOR ERRORS – Minor errors are those acts or omissions that, while incorrect, will not:

- Impair the safety of personnel
- Impairs placing water on the fire
- Prevents completion of the evolution

Committing a minor error will result in the Student being charged with one deficiency point for each error. Minor errors will not be charged against the Student if, in the opinion of the Instructor, the Student, without assistance from any other Student, instructor or visitor, discovers and corrects the mistake within the given time period.

CONSULTATIONS REQUIRED BY ACCUMULATION OF DEFICIENCY POINTS

- At 30 points, the Student shall meet with the Call/Volunteer Coordinator*
- At 75 points, the Student shall meet with the Call/Volunteer Coordinator* and the Director of the Fire Academy* and his/her Department Chief*
- At 120 points the Student shall meet with the Call/Volunteer Coordinator* and the Director of the Fire Academy* and his/her Department Chief* and shall be terminated from the program

*or their designee

SUBJECTIVE EVALUATIONS

Subjective evaluations will be written as necessary by all instructors to document each Student's performance. These evaluations may be positive and/or negative in nature and will be written when a Student operates outside the scope of his/her training skills during either a graded or non-graded evolution.

Subjective evaluations will be written to document a Student's unprofessional or unsafe behavior, inability to operate within fire academy guidelines and training procedures, and non-compliance with the Rules and Regulations for the Call/Volunteer Firefighter Recruit Training Program.

A subjective evaluation as written by an Instructor, and verified by the Coordinator or their Designee, that meets any of the following criteria: endangers the safety of personnel, impairs placement of water on the fire, requires the assistance of an Instructor for the evolution to be successful, causes the breakdown of the evolution due to lack of completion of a key technique, will be given five deficiency points.

There shall not be more than three of these counted that would amount to not more than 15 total deficiencies as a result. The Coordinator or their Designee must verify this particular subjective before points are assessed. If no points are assessed, then it will be treated as a normal subjective with a copy sent to the Chief.

If a subjective of this type is written, and points are assessed, then a consultation will be held with the Program Coordinator*, the Chief of the respective department, and the Student.

These subjective evaluations shall be limited to areas that have no grading associated with them, but still represent issues that could cause personal injury or meet the above stated guidelines:

- All live fire scenarios including live fires with extinguishers and car fires.
- The Draeger maze
- All gas evolutions, including vapor releases
- Aerial ladder practical evolutions
- Timed combined evolutions (after grading)
- Extrication practical scenario
- Rescue over ladders

If review of these evaluations indicates a need for realignment of a Student's behavior or performance (as observed by an individual Instructor or the Call/Volunteer Program Coordinator, all available methods will be utilized by the Academy to correct this behavior or performance. For those with adverse reports, the subject evaluations may be a contributing factor in prohibiting or denying graduation from the Academy.

REPORTS TO CHIEF OF DEPARTMENT

The following written reports and grades are sent to the Chief of Department:

- Student progress report consisting of Grade Average, time missed and deficiency points. These will be generated after Exam 2 and Exam 4
- Late arrival and absence reports
- All injury reports
- Subjective Evaluations
- Deficiency Consultation Forms

WARNING AND DISMISSAL NOTICES

- A. Warning notices shall be issued to Students for the following reasons:
 - Academic deficiency
 - Failure to comply with Rules and Regulations
- B. Warning notices shall become a part of the Student's file with a copy sent to the Chief of Department.

- C. Dismissal notices shall be issued from the Fire Academy Director to Students who fail to meet the graduation requirements as set forth in the Rules and Regulations or who fail to comply with the Rules and Regulations.
- D. Students dismissed are not allowed to graduate with the class or to attend the closed Certification test scheduled for this class.

PHYSICAL REQUIREMENTS, DISABILITIES, INJURIES AND ILLNESS

- A. All Students shall be at least eighteen (18) years of age by the first day of class.
- B. All Students shall be required to participate in vigorous physical activities.
- C. Any student with a diagnosed disability seeking a reasonable accommodation should, at the earliest time possible (but no later than thirty (30) days prior to the start date of the program), make a written request for such reasonable accommodations to the DFS Civil Rights Officer. Every request must be accompanied by either medical documentation by a qualified provider documenting the disability and providing the reasonable accommodations sought; or, in the alternative, a student may, if applicable, submit a valid individual education plan (IEP) which documents a learning disability and reasonable accommodations. Such IEP may not be older than five (5) years from its date of issue. All written requests will be acknowledged in writing within ten (10) business days, and approved or denied within twenty (20) business days of receipt unless further medical or technical documentation/evaluations are required by the Civil Rights Officer, who has granted such extension of time.
- D. All Students are required to inform the Program Coordinator of any physical infirmities that they may have on their first day of class.
- E. All Students are required, upon entry, to report to the program coordinator, or OD if they are using any form of medication.
- F. All Students are required to report any injury or illness to the OD immediately
- G. A Doctors note will be required for Students to return to class after they are absent for serious illness or injury.

ALL STUDENTS MUST SHOW A PICTURE ID TO BE ALLOWED ENTRY TO THE FIRST CLASS