Information Bulletin

Minimum Standards for Career Fire Chiefs

Civil Service Law §58-a and 19 NYCRR section 426.9 establish minimum qualifications for fire chiefs appointed pursuant to the Civil Service Law [1]. In addition, General Municipal Law §204-dd and 9 NYCRR Part 227 establish minimum qualifications for fire chiefs of a career and combination fire departments. To be eligible for provisional or permanent appointment as the fire chief, pursuant to Civil Service Law, the candidate must meet the following:

1. Possess National Certification Fire Officer III, pursuant to National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) 1021 Standard for Fire Officer Professional Qualifications or possess the training, education, experience, or combination thereof, determined by the State Fire Administrator (see guidance below); and
2. Meet the minimum qualifications established by the municipal civil service agency having jurisdiction; and
3. Meet the core competencies for incident commander established by the State Fire Administrator, pursuant to General Municipal Law §204-dd and 9 NYCRR Part 227 (http://www.dhses.ny.gov/ofpc/regs/firechiefminqualifications.cfm).

Guidance regarding alternatives to meet the fire chief minimum education qualification requirement:

The State Fire Administrator will consider alternative training, education, experience, or a combination thereof, as appropriate and adequate substitute(s) for the NFPA 1021 Fire Officer III certification.

Alternate training, education and/or experience may include the following:

1. Possess NYS Supervisory Level I certification, pursuant to 19 NYCRR 426.9, or National Certification Fire Officer I, pursuant to NFPA 1021, and 10 or more years of service as the fire chief, subject to Civil Service Law §58-a; or
2. National Certification Fire Officer 1, pursuant to NFPA 1021 and completion of the National Fire Academy, Executive Fire Officer Program and supervisory experience above first-line supervisor; or
3. National Certification Fire Officer II, pursuant to NFPA 1021, supervisory experience above first-line supervisor, and 60 college credits.

Requests for review and consideration shall be sent to ofpc.firechief@dhses.ny.gov. The State Fire Administrator will respond to such request within 30 business days.

[1] Requirements of sub-section 7 of Civil Service Law 58-a do not apply to the Fire Chief employed by a fire department of a cities with a population of 1 million or more.