

Standard Operating Guidelines

FIRE OFFICIAL UFD

Guideline # 120.03.11

Date: 5/1/12

1. The Fire Official UFD shall be appointed in the manner provided for in the ordinance establishing the local enforcing agency and be certified by the Commissioner of the Department of Community Affairs to direct the enforcement of the NJ State Uniform Fire Safety Act
2. Shall serve as the Chief Administrator of the agency having overall responsibility for the daily operations and supervision of all personnel conducting fire inspections under the local enforcement agency jurisdiction.
3. Shall be certified in accordance with N.J.A.C. 5:71-4. and shall administer and direct the enforcement of provisions of relevant fire safety codes and related regulations, He or she shall establish the day-to-day operating routines of the agency and shall coordinate the activities to personnel conducting fire safety inspections or activities. .
4. Shall report to the Board of Fire Commissioners District No. 3
5. Shall supervise Fire Prevention Specialist and company inspection crews for quality and consistency
6. Shall submit a monthly activity report to the Board of Fire Commissioners, Fire Chiefs and employees
7. Shall attend local, state & county meetings, hearings & court as required by the code or regulations.
8. Shall attend conventions, seminars, training and workshops related to Fire Bureau duties
9. Shall manage the Fire Bureau website.
10. Shall coordinate with appointed legal counsel to assist in matters related to the code.
11. Shall review & comment on construction plans submitted.
12. Shall manage and oversee the Fire Bureau budget
13. Shall coordinate with the administrative clerk's who perform the routine accounting work for the Bureau
14. Shall be the custodian of the Fire Bureau petty cash fund.
15. Shall maintain and wear the uniform as outlined within the uniform guidelines.
16. Shall schedule routine maintenance of the Fire Official vehicle and fire safety trailer
17. Shall investigate or cause to have investigated fire cause and origin and fire safety complaints
18. Shall register, maintain and update business registrations on file annually
19. Shall issue and collect fees & penalties as per code and are properly accounted for
20. Shall issue permit applications as per code
21. Shall ensure periodic inspection and reinspection are done timely

22. Shall ensure life hazards are registered and updated with the NJ DFS.
23. Shall ensure all variances are documented and approved in a timely manner
24. Shall ensure that all persons seeking an appeal are referred to the Construction Code of Appeals.
25. Shall record notice of violations & determine amount of penalty for non-compliance
26. Shall ensure all reports and complaints are properly completed and filed
27. Shall take reasonable measure to determine imminent hazards and enforce the law as per code.
28. Shall file reports, forms and certifications as the Division may require
29. Shall ensure procedures of the LEA conforms with requirements of the code & regulations
30. Shall receive or create written reports and documentation of fire investigations
31. Shall seek training in arson and fire investigation in determining fire origins
32. Shall coordinate with the Construction Official on various matters of the code or imminent hazards.
33. Shall coordinate with OC Health Dept concerning health violations
34. Shall meet with developers of new construction for fire safety compliance
35. Shall issue fire reports according to OPRA requests
36. Shall monitor products for product recalls
37. Shall maintain files in file cabinets and computer record and receive various computer training
38. Shall keep record of all inspections, complaints, permits and investigations.
39. Shall create policies or operating guidelines related to fire code enforcement & prevention
40. Shall issue summons and report to court for fire code violations within the NJ UFC or JTFC Ch.61
41. Shall prepare annual state audit of the Fire Bureau
42. Shall update NFIRS as to the cause & origin of fires
43. Shall enforce compliance and be the custodian of the emergency key box

CIVIL SERVICE EXAMPLES OF WORK RESPONSIBILITY

FIRE OFFICIAL-UFD CIVIL SERVICE REQUIREMENTS

Positions in this class may be filled through promotional examination procedures only. Candidates must meet those requirements and qualifications for promotion specified in Civil Service law, rules, and regulations.

FIRE OFFICIAL-UFD DEFINITION

Under direction administers and directs the enforcement of provisions of relevant fire safety codes and related regulations, establishes day-to-day operating routines of the code enforcement agency, coordinates and supervises activities of any fire safety specialists or other staff employed by the agency and responds to fire alarms and participates in extinguishing fires; does related work as required.

FIRE OFFICIAL-UFD EXAMPLES OF WORK

Inspects or directs the inspection of various structures and premises for the purpose of ascertaining and causing to be corrected any conditions liable to cause fire, contribute to the spread of fire, interfere with fire operations, endanger life, or for any violations of the provisions or intent of the New Jersey Uniform Fire Code or any other law, rules, or regulations affecting fire safety. Investigates or causes to be investigated every reported fire or explosion occurring within the jurisdiction that involves loss of life or injury or causes destruction or damage to property.

Takes charge immediately of physical evidence, and, to preserve any physical evidence relating to the cause or origin of such fire or explosion, takes the steps necessary to prevent access by any person or persons to such building, structure, or premises until such persons designated by law to pursue investigations into such matters become involved, and cooperates with such authorities in the collection of evidence and prosecution of the case.

Keeps a record of all reported fires in life hazard use structures and all facts concerning same including investigation of findings and information as to the cause, origin, and extent of such fires and the deaths, injuries, and damage caused. Whenever the following dangerous or hazardous conditions or materials are found in any structure or on any premises, orders such conditions or materials to be removed or remedied in accord with provisions of the New Jersey Uniform Fire Code or any other law, rules, or regulations affecting fire safety:

1. Dangerous conditions which are liable to cause or contribute to the spread of fire in or on said premises, building, or structure, or endanger occupants thereof.
2. Conditions which would interfere with efficiency and use of any fire protection equipment.
3. Obstructions to or on fire escapes, stairs, passageways, doors, or windows, liable to interfere with egress of occupants or operation of the fire department in case of fire.
4. Accumulations of dust or waste material in air conditioning or ventilating systems or grease in kitchen or other exhaust ducts.
5. Accumulations of grease on kitchen cooking equipment or oil, grease, or dirt on, under, or around any mechanical equipment.
6. Accumulations of rubbish, waste, paper, boxes, shavings, or other combustible materials, or excessive storage of any combustible material.
7. Hazardous conditions arising from defective or improperly used or installed electrical wiring, equipment, or appliances.
8. Hazardous conditions arising from defective or improperly installed equipment for handling or use of combustible, explosive, or otherwise hazardous materials.
9. Dangerous or unlawful amounts of combustible, explosive, or otherwise hazardous materials.
10. All equipment, materials, processes, or operations which are in violation of provisions and intent of the Code.

Prepares written notice of violations describing the condition deemed unsafe and specifies the time limit for the required repairs or improvements to be made to render the building, structure, or premises safe and secure. May grant extensions of time when it is determined that, despite diligent effort, compliance cannot be accomplished within the time specified in the notice. If the notice of violation is not complied with within time periods specified, institutes appropriate enforcement proceedings to restrain, correct, or abate such violation or to require removal or termination of the unlawful use of the building or structure in violation of provisions of the Code or other related directive or regulation.

Conducts hearings, assesses penalties, and sets and collects fines for violations of fire regulations. Ensures that all life hazard use structures are inspected in accord with the schedule established by the Code. Ensures that notices of violations are served whenever inspections reveal violations. Ensures that permit applications are available and assists the public in preparing them when necessary. Reviews all permit applications for completeness as to form. Ensures that the inspection required for issuance of a permit is performed in a timely manner. Ensures that no activity or use, which requires a permit, is carried out without one.

Ensures that all life hazard use structures are registered. Assists the state when requested with any registration survey. Coordinates activities with the fire subcode official where the work to be performed, to comply with the fire safety code, requires a construction permit. Collects all fees and penalties due the local enforcing agency and ensures that they are properly accounted for. Responds to and causes to be investigated any complaints brought under the New Jersey Uniform Fire Code. Ensures that all requests for variances are properly prepared. Ensures that all appeals are promptly referred to the Construction Code Board of Appeals. Records all notices of violation and determines the amount of all penalties for noncompliance. Ensures that a report of every inspection is completed and properly filed. Takes reasonable measure to determine when imminent hazards exist and enforce the law as provided for by the Code. Files such reports as the state may from time to time require.

Supervises the work of any assigned enforcement personnel to ensure completeness and accuracy. Ensures that any agency staff members requiring certification possess such certification. Ensures that procedures of the local enforcing agency conform to requirements of the Code and regulations. Prepares and obtains reports required by regulations. Attends meetings and hearings as required by the Code and regulations. Coordinates activities of the local enforcing agency with other code enforcement agencies and state agencies having a related interest or responsibility.

May confer with and speak before civic, school, and community organizations and groups concerning fire prevention methods. May plan and direct a public relations program to present the need for and encourage the use of fire prevention methods among community residents. May direct a public information and education program designed to improve fire safety measures in the home, office buildings, industrial and commercial structures, and other locations. May confer with public officials or civic representatives to improve fire safety education programs. May give talks and demonstrations before adults and/or children in methods for ensuring proper use of fire safety procedures in the home, school, or other buildings.

Participates in fire drills and other training courses. Responds to fire alarms, drives or accompanies fire apparatus, and assists other uniformed personnel in extinguishing fires. Operates and uses fire hoses and other firefighting equipment and apparatus. Performs special duty at theaters, schools, and other public gatherings to help maintain proper fire precautionary measures. Responds to calls concerning bomb threats. Inspects the condition of fire protection apparatus in public and private buildings.

FIRE OFFICIAL-UFD KNOWLEDGE AND ABILITIES

Knowledge of fire prevention measures required in residential, commercial, industrial, and public buildings. Knowledge of administration and enforcement of fire codes. Knowledge of laws, rules, and regulations concerning all types of fire prevention measures. Knowledge of provisions of the New Jersey Uniform Fire Code and regulations.

Knowledge of the fire safety system of buildings and uses including but not limited to means of egress, fire suppression systems, fire alarm systems, and methods for limiting the flame spread, flammability, or combustibility of materials. Knowledge of safe use and maintenance of facilities, buildings, and uses of such structures which are subject to the New Jersey Uniform Fire Code. knowledge of safe handling, storage, and use of materials which pose a fire hazard.

Knowledge of supervision and management techniques needed to effectively manage a large staff of field personnel. Knowledge of operation and maintenance of smoke detectors and types of smoke detectors and alarms available. Knowledge of principles, methods, and procedures used in organizational analyses and program management. Knowledge of principles and practices of fire safety and protection systems including limitations, types, operation, maintenance, and installation.

Knowledge of methods for handling and storing hazardous materials. Knowledge of means of egress requirements including exit access, exit discharge, and exit signs. Knowledge of methods and administrative and operational procedures applied to ensure the timely inspection and reinspection of life hazard use structures and high rise buildings required by the New Jersey Uniform Fire Code and regulations.

Knowledge of methods of preparing inspection reports. Knowledge of problems, procedures, and equipment involved in the installation, repair, and maintenance of various signal systems. Knowledge of laws and ordinances which are significant from the firefighting point of view. Knowledge of methods likely to be effective in fighting various types of fires.

Knowledge of varied kinds of firefighting equipment and apparatus. Knowledge of the location of schools, large buildings, streets, and fire alarm boxes in the municipality. Knowledge of types of fire alarm communications that are useful and feasible in the fire department. Knowledge of procedures likely to be effective in enlisting support of citizens and others in taking fire precautionary measures.

Knowledge of procedures involved in amending technical requirements and in promulgating needed administrative rules and regulations. Knowledge of provisions under the Uniform Construction Code Act, Hotel and Multiple Dwelling Law, and Rooming and Boarding House Act, and their relation to the Uniform Fire Safety Act.

Ability to organize assigned fire prevention and safety field inspections and investigative work. Ability to make required field visits, inspections, and investigations. Ability to conduct hearings and assess penalties. Ability to maintain essential records and files. Ability to give appropriate assignments, instructions, and supervision to employees. Ability to comprehend, interpret, and apply basic laws and regulations pertaining to fire safety, protection, and prevention. Ability to recognize existing and potential fire safety hazards, call these to the attention of the persons concerned, and prepare detailed reports.

Ability to establish cooperative work relationships with tenants, owners, municipal officials, and others interested in or concerned with enforcement of laws relating to fire safety. Ability to estimate time required to abate violations and establish realistic deadlines by which owners must complete abatement of violations. Ability to supervise the establishment and maintenance of essential records and files. Ability to prepare extensive, detailed, and technical correspondence in the course of official duties. Ability to prepare or supervise preparation of detailed narrative and statistical reports containing findings, conclusions and recommendations. Ability to act as a witness in hearings and court procedures and give testimony under oath.

Ability to perform strenuous physical activities such as lifting heavy firefighting equipment, climbing standard and aerial ladders and lifting and carrying people and equipment for rescue and salvage. Ability to work under conditions of heavy physical exertion in extreme heat and dust, in high and confined areas and smoke filled spaces, and in all kinds of weather and to maintain physical activity for prolonged periods of time.

Ability to understand and carry out written and oral instructions. Ability to record information in written form. Ability to function independently and without direct supervision. Ability to think clearly and to apply knowledge under stressful conditions and to handle more than one task at a time. Ability to work closely with people including functioning as a team member, to exercise tact or diplomacy, and display compassion, understanding, and patience.

Ability to use and maintain firefighting equipment and to apply the theory necessary for effective firefighting and equipment operation. Ability to apply basic techniques of fighting fires and rendering first aid. Ability to learn to utilize various types of electronic and/or manual recording and information systems used by the agency, office, or related units. Ability to read, write, speak, understand, or communicate in English sufficiently to perform the duties of this position.

The local enforcing agency shall maintain a central file system for each property, building or use that requires a periodic inspection or a permit. The files shall contain all information, including inspection reports, correspondence, notices and orders, and so forth, relevant to each property, building or use. The files shall contain, or indicate the storage location of, all plans and reports too bulky for inclusion in the central file. The files and records of the local enforcing agency shall be open to Division review and audit and public inspection at reasonable times. File copies of all documents shall be retained in the official records as provided by law.

Any record required by law to be kept confidential, including, but not limited to, records of trade secrets related to hazardous or potentially hazardous substances, shall not be open to public inspection. The fire official shall keep a record of all reported fires in life hazard uses and all facts concerning the same, including investigative findings and information as to the cause, origin and the extent of such fires and the deaths, injuries, and damage caused thereby.

The Fire Official shall ensure that the construction official and fire sub code official are notified when a notice of violation directs work which will require construction permit. He shall assist the fire subcode official to determine whether the work for which a permit is applied will correct the violation. The fire official shall ensure that a permit was obtained and any work done was approved by the construction official and fire subcode official before a violation is abated.

FIRE OFFICIAL-UFD LICENSE AND CERTIFICATE

Possession of a current and valid fire official certificate issued by the New Jersey Department of Community Affairs. Appointees will be required to possess a driver's license valid in New Jersey only if the operation of a vehicle, rather than employee mobility, is necessary to perform the essential duties of the position.

FIRE OFFICIAL-UFD EXPERIENCE

Five (5) years of experience in one or more of the areas indicated below or some combination thereof: (1) as a firefighter in a paid or volunteer fire company, and/or (2) in the inspection of buildings to detect fire hazards and to enforce fire safety codes and regulations, and/or (3) in the investigation of fires to determine their cause, and/or (4) in the inspection of the construction of buildings and the review of building construction plans and specifications to ensure compliance with fire protection codes and regulations, and/or (5) in the installation of fire protection equipment.