

**VERMONT FIRE ACADEMY**  
**STANDARD OPERATING GUIDELINES**

Title: Reciprocity

Section: Certification

Section Number:

Council Approval: June 27, 2017

Council Endorsement: N/A

Effective Date: July 1, 2017

Approved By:



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**Purpose:** This policy shall establish the process for which a fire service certification that was issued by an entity other than the Vermont Fire Academy can be recognized for course prerequisite purposes or to gain Vermont Firefighter Certification.

**Definitions:**

**Accredited:** officially recognized as meeting the requirements of the Pro Board, International Fire Service Accreditation Congress (IFASC), or United States Department of Defense (DOD).

**Affiliated:** having membership, employment and/or sponsorship of an organization.

**Certification Term:** The period of time beginning when a Vermont certification is earned and ending at the date when recertification training hours are due. The initial expiration date of a certification is December 31<sup>st</sup> of the subsequent year and then December 31<sup>st</sup> of each year thereafter.

**Reciprocal:** equivalent regardless of the fact that it originates from another entity.

**Sponsoring Department Delegate:** A person designated by an agency head that signs the general admission application indicating that the agency is fiscally and physically responsible for the applicant.

**Guideline:**

1. A person may apply for reciprocal recognition of a fire service certification that has been issued by an entity other than the Vermont Fire Academy under the following conditions:

a. The applicant is currently affiliated with a Vermont Fire Department, or;

b. The applicant is applying to take a course or program from the Vermont Fire Academy that requires recognition of prerequisite certification(s).

2. A Vermont certification can only be issued for certification levels that are authorized by the Vermont Fire Service Training Council.

3. The granting of reciprocity will not lead to the issuance of a Pro Board certificate. A Pro Board certificate can only be issued to an individual who has successfully passed the current certification exam for a given level.
4. A certification that is recognized as reciprocal for prerequisite purposes only shall be recognized during the time that it is compliant with the current or previous two editions of the applicable standard.
5. Applications for reciprocity
  - a. Reciprocity requests must be made using the approved Vermont Fire Academy Certification Reciprocity Application form.
  - b. The Certification Reciprocity Application form must be signed by the applicant and the chief or sponsoring department delegate.
  - c. It is the responsibility of the applicant to provide the necessary proof of certification with the application. This includes copies of certificates and/or official training transcripts.
  - d. Applications for reciprocity will be reviewed by the Chief of Training or his/her designee and a decision shall be issued within 30 days of receipt of a completed application.
6. Reciprocity for certification earned within the current certification term.
  - a. A Vermont certification shall be issued to anyone who has achieved an accredited certification within the current certification term and who meets any additional training requirements for certification as required by the Vermont Fire Service Training Council.
7. Reciprocity for certification earned within the previous three certification terms.
  - a. A Vermont certification shall be issued to anyone who has achieved an accredited certification within the previous three certification terms and who meets any additional training requirements for certification as required by the Vermont Fire Service Training Council, and;

- b. The applicant has provided proof of continued annual training relevant to their level of certification that is equal to or exceeds the minimum requirements for renewal of a Vermont certification at that same level.
- c. An applicant who has an accredited certification as indicated above, but *does not* have the proof of continued annual training equal to or exceeding the minimum requirements for renewal of a Vermont certification at that same level shall have their certification recognized for course prerequisite purposes only.
- d. An applicant who does not have an accredited certification as indicated above, but has proof of previous training that is clearly compliant with an applicable standard may have that training recognized for course prerequisite purposes only. These requests shall be evaluated on a case by case basis under the following circumstances:
  - i. Reciprocity is being sought for a certification level that has been added by the Vermont Fire Service Training Council within the last three years.
  - ii. The training was delivered by a contractor when there was no accredited certification training available in Vermont at the time that the certification was obtained.

8. Reciprocity for certification earned prior to the previous 3 certification terms.

- a. An applicant who has achieved an accredited certification prior to the previous three certification terms shall be granted reciprocity for prerequisite purposes if the certification is compliant with the current or previous two editions of the applicable standard.
- b. An applicant who does not have an accredited certification but has proof of previous training that is clearly compliant with an applicable standard may have that training recognized for course prerequisite purposes only. These requests shall be evaluated on a case by case basis under the following circumstances:
  - i. Reciprocity is being sought for a certification level that has been added by the Vermont Fire Service Training Council within the last three years, or;
  - ii. The training was delivered by a contractor when there was no accredited certification training available in Vermont at the time that the training was obtained.

9. Vermont certification that is granted through reciprocity.

- a. Applicants who are granted Vermont certification through reciprocity shall be placed on the recertification roster of the sponsoring department.
- b. The expiration date of a Vermont certification that is achieved through reciprocity shall be the same as though the certification was initially issued by the Vermont Fire Academy.
- c. The recertification requirements for a Vermont Certification received through the reciprocity process shall be the same as that for certifications received through passing the certification exam for that level.

**Reference:**

1. Vermont Fire Academy Certification Reciprocity Application

## Reciprocity Application Flow Chart

