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Ohio Administrative Code

Rule 4765-20-10 Firefighter certification by reciprocity.

Effective: November 1, 2026

[Comment: For dates and availability of material incorporated by reference in this rule see rule 4765-25-02 of the Administrative Code.]

(A) For purposes of granting reciprocity, the division shall issue a firefighter certificate to an applicant if either of the following conditions apply:

(1) The applicant has a substantially similar out-of-state occupational license or certificate and has held the out-of-state licensure or certification for at least one year prior to application and has been actively engaged in the practice of that occupation for one of the five years immediately preceding the date of application, or

(2) The applicant has been actively engaged in the same occupational activity in the military, or a state or territory that does not issue a license or certificate, for at least three of the five years immediately preceding the date of application.

(B) An applicant shall provide all relevant documentation demonstrating his or her experience, education, and training to assist the division in its determination.

(C) To be eligible to receive a firefighter certificate through reciprocity pursuant to section 4765.55 of the Revised Code and this chapter, an applicant who meets the requirements in paragraph (A) of this rule shall also meet all of the following qualifications:

(1) Is at least eighteen years of age;

(2) Successfully completed the following federal emergency management agency training courses:

(a) "National Incident Management System Course IS-700";

(b) "National Incident Management System Course ICS-100" or the online equivalent;

(c) "National Incident Management System Course ICS-200" or the online equivalent.

(3) Successfully completed a structured firefighter training course in another state, the District of Columbia, a United States territory, department of defense or any branch of the United States military, or other fire training program approved by the executive director that is substantially similar to the training standards and curriculum as set forth in Chapter 4765-24 of the Administrative Code. The training course shall have met all of the following:

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(a) The training course included classroom and practical skills training in the subject areas identified in the Ohio firefighter curriculum as set forth in Chapter 4765-24 of the Administrative Code;

(b) The training course required the applicant to pass one or more written and practical skills examinations that test knowledge, skills, and ability to provide firefighter services;

(c) The training course met the NFPA 1001 or NFPA 1010 requirements at the time training was completed;

(d) The training course was completed in the previous seventy-two months or the applicant was active with a fire department within the previous seventy-two months;

(4) The applicant successfully completed an emergency vehicle operations course consistent with the course requirements set forth in the "Emergency Vehicle Operations Course Packet";

(5) The applicant successfully completed hazardous materials awareness and operations level training consistent with the course requirements set forth in the "Hazardous Materials Awareness and Operations Course Packet";

(6) The applicant submits a completed "Firefighter Reciprocity Packet" including documentation that all requirements as specified in paragraph (C) of this rule have been met;

(7) A "Firefighter Reciprocity Packet" deemed by the division to be incomplete will be returned to the applicant ninety days after original receipt;

(8) If an applicant still wishes to request to receive certification by reciprocity, they must then complete and submit a new "Firefighter Reciprocity Packet" for review by the division.

(D) The executive director may waive one or both of the following requirements:

(1) The applicant has held the out-of-state certification for at least one year prior to the application, as shown in paragraph (A)(1) of this rule;

(2) The applicant has been actively engaged in the practice of the occupation for one of the five years preceding the date of application, as shown in paragraph (A)(2) of this rule.

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(E) Upon compliance with all requirements for certification in paragraphs (A) to (C) of this rule, the applicant will be issued a letter of authorization to test by the division if required.

(1) Within twelve months after the applicant is approved for testing and the division issues a letter of authorization to test, the applicant shall pass the practical skills examination and the knowledge examination, as set forth in rule 4765-20-06 of the Administrative Code, at the level of certification sought. An applicant who fails to pass the practical skills and knowledge examinations within twelve months of the issuance of the letter of authorization to test shall complete a new course of instruction at the level of certification sought;

(2) Practical skills and written examinations may be waived for applicants successfully completing training that meets the requirements of this rule within the previous seventy-two months, or applicants that have successfully completed training that meets or exceeds Ohio continuing education requirements.

(F) The executive director may waive the requirement to test if one of the following conditions apply:

(1) The out-of-state training was completed within seventy-two months prior to submitting application; or

(2) The out-of-state certificate or license is current and the applicant has maintained continuing education requirements substantially similar to Ohio requirements.

(G) Applicants shall submit a completed "Firefighter Reciprocity Application" within ninety days of passing the practical skills examination and the knowledge examination, or after receiving a testing waiver. An applicant who fails to submit a completed "Firefighter Reciprocity Application" within the ninety days shall complete a new course of instruction at the level of certification sought.

(H) In addition to the requirements set forth in paragraphs (C) to (E) of this rule, as applicable, an applicant for firefighter:

(1) Shall pass a criminal history review;

(2) Shall not have committed fraud, misrepresentation, or material deception in applying for or obtaining a certificate issued under section 4765.55 of the Revised Code and this chapter;

(3) Shall not have been previously revoked or denied a certificate by the executive director or the licensing organization in another state;

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(4) An applicant who has not resided in the state of Ohio for five years immediately preceding the date of application shall provide the division with a criminal records check of the applicant in accordance with section 109.572 of the Revised Code obtained from the superintendent of the bureau of criminal identification and investigation and including information from the federal bureau of investigation. An applicant's failure to submit this documentation renders the application for reciprocity incomplete.

(I) In deciding whether to grant a firefighter certificate, the executive director, with the advice and counsel of the committee, has the following options:

(1) The executive director shall issue a firefighter certificate to an applicant who meets all of the requirements listed in paragraphs (C) to (F) of this rule;

(2) The executive director shall refuse to grant a firefighter certificate to an applicant who fails to meet one or more of the requirements listed in paragraphs (C) to (F) of this rule, as applicable;

(3) The executive director may grant, refuse to grant, or restrict a firefighter certificate to an applicant who meets the requirements listed in paragraphs (C) to (E) of this rule, but fails to meet one or more of the requirements listed in paragraph (H) of this rule.

(J) An applicant who is eligible for reinstatement is not eligible to apply for certification by reciprocity at or below the level of the expired certificate.