**Section 141.215 Non-Affiliated Individuals**

a) Notwithstanding the other requirements of this Part, this Section establishes the process, effective January 1, 2023, for the Division to recognize non-affiliated individuals who complete select, approved courses, pass select State Written and Practical Examinations, and, upon becoming engaged as fire service personnel, have an opportunity to obtain Basic Operations Firefighter and Hazardous Materials Operations certifications.

1) The Division will recognize course completion by non-affiliated individuals who complete an approved course for Basic Operations Firefighter or Hazardous Materials Operations.

2) The Division will allow non-affiliated individuals the opportunity to challenge the State Written Examinations for Basic Operations Firefighter and Hazardous Materials Operations courses.

3) The Division will recognize a non-affiliated individual's passage of State Practical Examinations upon completion of an approved course from a training facility for Basic Operations Firefighter and Hazardous Materials Operations.

4) Non-affiliated individuals who pass the State Written and Practical Examinations for Basic Operations Firefighter and Hazardous Materials Operations shall be issued a Recognition of Completion.

5) Non-affiliated individuals who have been issued a Recognition of Completion and subsequently become engaged as fire service personnel may receive certification from the Office for Basic Operations Firefighter and Hazardous Materials Operations if requirements under Subpart D are met.

b) A training facility may add non-affiliated individuals to their roster utilizing the DPSE WebAccess Portal for the purpose of submitting course completions and Requests for Examination as described in this Section.

1) Information required to be added on the DPSE WebAccess Portal shall include the non-affiliated individual's:

A) Name;

B) Address;

C) Date of birth;

D) Last 8 digits of their driver's license;

E) Status as "non-affiliated"; and

F) Other optional statistical data at the discretion of the training facility.

2) A training facility submitting course completions for non-affiliated individuals will be limited to submitting course completions for Basic Operations Firefighter and Hazardous Materials Operations and shall not submit course completions for non-affiliated individuals for any other courses.

3) The training facility may submit Requests for Examinations for Basic Operations Firefighter or Hazardous Materials Operations State Written Examinations for non-affiliated individuals who have completed an approved course for Basic Operations Firefighter or Hazardous Materials Operations, respectively, on the DPSE WebAccess portal. To submit a Request for Examination, a training facility shall follow the process of Section 141.200(a)(5)(A) through (C) except that the verification required by 141.200(a)(5)(B) shall be provided by the training facility.

4) A non-affiliated individual must be at least 18 years of age prior to challenging a State Written Examination.

c) Non-affiliated individuals shall be allowed to register on the DPSE WebAccess Portal to access their records. Registration using a valid email address shall be required prior to submission of request for examination and challenging State Written Examinations.

d) When a Request for Examination is approved, a confirmation e-mail will be sent to the non-affiliated individual's registered e-mail from the vendor with instructions and examination requirements. The non-affiliated individual has 45 days after the test start date to schedule their examination date. The test start date shall be submitted as part of the Request for Examination.

e) When challenging a State Written Examination, a non-affiliated individual shall follow established rules and guidelines set forth by the vendor proctoring the State Written Examination.

f) A non-affiliated individual is responsible for paying costs for State Written Examinations.

g) A non-affiliated individual shall be permitted reasonable modifications for Basic Operations Firefighter and Hazardous Materials Operations State Written Examinations in accordance with Section 141.200(a)(5)(H).

h) The Division will recognize a non-affiliated individual's passage of State Practical Examinations upon completion of an approved course from a training facility for Basic Operations Firefighter and Hazardous Materials Operations, as follows:

1) The non-affiliated individual must be at least 18 years of age prior to challenging a State Practical Examination.

2) State Practical Examinations for Basic Operations Firefighter are valid for 5 years. If a non-affiliated individual does not pass the State Written Examination within 5 years after passing the State Practical Examination, the non-affiliated individual must retake the State Practical Examination.

3) State Practical Examinations for Hazardous Materials Operations are valid for 12 months. If a non-affiliated individual does not pass the State Written Examination within 12 months after passing the State Practical Examination, the non-affiliated individual must retake the State Practical Examination.

4) If a non-affiliated individual passes the respective State Written Examination within the required practical examination time limit, a passed practical examination will remain valid with no expiration deadline.

i) In order to challenge a State Written Examination or State Practical Examination, a non-affiliated individual must meet the minimum requirements set forth in Section 141.200, except for the requirement to be engaged as fire service personnel. A non-affiliated individual who does not meet the minimum requirements set forth in Section 141.200 (except for the requirement to be engaged as fire service personnel) shall not be allowed to challenge a State Written Examination or State Practical Examination.

j) A non-affiliated individual who is ill or obviously under the influence of drugs or alcohol may not challenge the State Written Examination or State Practical Examination. In making the determination of drug or alcohol impairment, the Division shall consider, but is not limited to, observation of demeanor, slurred speech, odor of alcohol, general behavior and other considerations that may aid in making the determination.

k) A non-affiliated individual shall be required to achieve a passing score for State Written and Practical Examinations for Basic Operations Firefighter and Hazardous Materials Operations equivalent to those set forth in Section 141.200.

l) State Written Examination results shall be posted to the non-affiliated individual's records and made available by accessing the DPSE WebAccess Portal. The Division shall maintain these scores and shall use them internally for statistical or employment purposes.

m) No non-affiliated individual shall be re-examined without further documented learning experiences in each of the failed subject areas. There is no limit set by the Division for the number of times a non-affiliated individual may take the State Written Examination.

n) Where an additional requirement not specified in this Section 141.215 applies to candidates for State Written and Practical Examinations under Section 141.200, non-affiliated individuals shall also be subject to such requirement, except if that requirement is to be engaged as fire service personnel.

o) A non-affiliated individual shall be subject to Section 141.210, except that notification required under that Section to be provided to the chief shall not be provided.

p) The Division shall issue a Recognition of Completion to a non-affiliated individual who completes approved Basic Operations Firefighter and Hazardous Materials Operations courses and passes the respective State Written and Practical Examinations according to this Section. The Recognition of Completion shall, at minimum:

1) Recognize that the non-affiliated individual has completed select courses and passed select State Written and Practical Examinations;

2) List all referenced standards applicable to the courses completed; and

3) Specify that the recognition is not equivalent to a certification.

q) A non-affiliated individual who becomes engaged as fire service personnel at any time during the process of courses and State Written and Practical Examinations allowed under this Section prior to receiving a Recognition of Completion may use completed courses or passed State Written and Practical Examinations in pursuit of certification, provided they meet requirements under this Part.

r) A non-affiliated individual shall not receive a certification.

s) When a non-affiliated individual who has received a Recognition of Completion subsequently engages as fire service personnel, the fire chief may submit, via the DPSE WebAccess Portal, an Application for Certification for both Basic Operations Firefighter and Hazardous Materials Operations, in accordance with Sections 141.301 and 141.344.

t) The process outlined in Section 141.255 for the invalidation of State certifications shall apply to the invalidation of a non-affiliated individual's Recognition of Completion, except that the notification required under that section to be provided to the fire chief shall be provided to the non-affiliated individual.

u) The Office shall not reimburse any costs related to course completion, including tuition and fees, or examination of a non-affiliated individual. No non-affiliated individual, fire service personnel or local governmental agency may make claims for reimbursement or receive reimbursement for any cost related to course completion, including tuition and fees, or examination of any non-affiliated individual. If a non-affiliated individual becomes engaged as fire service personnel, any course that commenced prior to engagement as fire service personnel shall be ineligible for reimbursement.

v) The Office may extend deadlines for requirements of this Section for good cause shown (e.g., military deployments, medical leaves, personal emergencies, Acts of God or natural disasters, Gubernatorial Disaster Proclamation, etc.).

(Source: Amended at 48 Ill. Reg. 10877, effective July 11, 2024)