

THE IAAI-CFI PROGRAM

Purpose

The Certified Fire Investigator Program of the International Association of Arson Investigators (IAAI) has the following objectives:

- Recognition of Professional Standards of Achievement in Fire Investigation Theory and Practice by Government and Private Sector Fire Investigators.
- Encouragement of Continued Education and Training in the Field of Fire Investigation.
- Increased Professional standing in the Fire Investigation Field.
- Identification of the sources of Professional Knowledge for the Theory and Practice of Fire Investigation, Related Fields and the Laws and Regulations governing or affecting Fire Investigation.

Goals

The International Association of Arson Investigators seeks to acknowledge demonstrated competence in all phases of fire investigation, as held by numerous individuals from many fields, both public and private. This goal is accomplished by awarding points for achievements in Education, Training and Experience as they relate to Fire Investigation. These point totals are subject to maximums in each of these areas, which further assure substantial field experience as opposed to a primarily academic or theoretical background.

A test has been developed covering the various job requirements for fire investigators, as identified in NFPA Document 1033. An applicant must achieve minimum levels of Education, Training and Experience in fire investigation to be eligible to challenge the examination. Recertification opportunities are provided for CFIs who demonstrate continued Education, Training and Experience.

General Information

Membership in the IAAI and/or a state or provincial chapter of the IAAI is not required to become an IAAI CFI or to recertify.

Certification as a Fire Investigator by the IAAI does not determine whom shall engage in the practice of the investigation of fires and explosions, nor does it substitute for any licensing or registration required by law. The IAAI has no intention of determining who shall engage in the practice and profession of Fire Investigation. That a person is not certified does not indicate that he or she is unqualified to perform fire investigations, only that such person may have not fulfilled the requirements, or has not applied, for Certification.

The official mailing address of the Investigator Certification Program is:

International Association of Arson Investigators
Certified Fire Investigator Program
16901 Melford Boulevard, Suite 101
Bowie, MD 20715

You may email your application with all supporting documentation (employer letter, CFITrainer.net transcript, copies of other certificates claimed, etc.) in one pdf to IAAI-CFI@firearson.com with the credit card form (If no payment information is included, an invoice will be created which you will be able to pay online).

Administration Description

The Certified Fire Investigator (CFI) Program is administered by the International Association of Arson Investigators (IAAI) in conjunction with Participating Chapter CFI (PC-CFI) Committees.

The International CFI (I-CFI) Committee consists of seven (7) members, each appointed by the President of the IAAI. The President also appoints the Chair and Co-Chair of the Certification Committee, who must be Certified Fire Investigators. Ninety percent (or at least six members) of the committee must be Certified Fire Investigators. These members serve a term of three (3) years. A member may be appointed to the committee more than once and can serve for an unlimited number of terms. However, that member can only be appointed to one (1) term at a time. The PC-CFI Committees shall follow the I-CFI Committee structure as near as possible.

Committee appointments are made at the IAAI Annual General Meeting AGM. Two (2) appointments must be made each year, with an additional appointment every third (3rd) year.

Attached to the I-CFI Committee is a Test Maintenance Subcommittee. The sub-committee consists of five (5) members. All Test Maintenance Subcommittee members must:

- be IAAI Certified Fire Investigators, and
- have test item writing experience or receive training within a reasonable time as established by the CFI Chair and Subcommittee Chair.

Authority

The I-CFI Committee has the full and final authority to determine the qualifications of each candidate for Certification and Recertification. An Appeals Process exists for those who want to challenge the committee's decision.

The I-CFI Committee Chair is responsible for the day-to-day operation of the CFI Certification Program. The general administration of the I-CFI program and all decisions of the I-CFI Committee are made by a majority vote. All of the functions of the I-CFI Committee are conducted according to the practices and procedures manual and by "Robert's Rules of Order."

The Executive Director of the IAAI is authorized to respond to any written request for confirmation of Certification, or lack thereof, and the expiration date of such certification for any individual. No other information can be released without written instructions from the applicant or a court order.

Administration of Examinations

An examination proctor will administer each examination. The proctor may be at a college or university testing center, or an IAAI-CFI registered at the IAAI office. PC-CFI chapters are allowed to register one person to proctor for that chapter. This person must be registered and approved by the I-CFI committee 30 days before an examination. PC-CFI proctors are appointed by the President of the chapter.

Information Management

All information furnished by the applicant is open to verification by the I-CFI and PC-CFI Committees. Request to furnish additional documentation for some or all items may be made. |

The application and all documentation becomes and remains the property of the IAAI. Access to these documents is only available to I-CFI Committee members, IAAI staff, and the applicant (when written request are made). The applicant's file is maintained by I-CFI Committee at the IAAI Headquarters. Other access to the information shall only be by order of a court-of-law.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Why Certify?

There are several reasons why professional certification is vital, but the most important reason is that it provides a standardized mechanism to distinguish an individual's training and expertise. By maintaining certification, a fire investigator stays informed of the latest methods and theories and is duly recognized for their accomplishments.

What is the CFI Qualification?

It is standardized evaluation of a fire investigator's training and expertise.

What does CFI do for me?

It encourages you to be your best and stay atop the latest methods and theories of fire investigations, thus promoting quality fire cause determinations and developing self-esteem. It also provides a means to be recognized by others, in and out of a court-of-law.

Who does the certifying?

The Certified Fire Investigator Program is administered by the IAAI. Because it is nationally accredited, ProBoard certificates may also be obtained.

How do I become certified?

Once you obtain an application from the IAAI, complete and return the application to the International Office. Next, you will receive notice of your application's approval or rejection. If approved, you may challenge the examination. If you are rejected, re-submittal procedures will be forwarded to you with the notice.

What happens once I'm certified?

You must recertify every five years by completing a Recertification Application. You, alone, are responsible to ensure you submit your recertification application before the expiration date on your IAAI-CFI card.

How much does this cost me?

The application fee for IAAI members is US\$195.00. Non-IAAI members' fee is US\$570.00. Make your check out to the "IAAI" or make payment by credit card. Application fee is non-refundable.

What if my chapter isn't participating in CFI?

You can still obtain your IAAI-CFI by applying directly to the I-CFI Committee.

Documentation Requirements

Item
Number Item

Document Requirements

EDUCATION

1. High School Graduate, G.E.D. Certificate, or Equivalent
2. One Year Certificate in Fire Investigation (ex. certificate program at community college)
3. Associates Degree in field unrelated to Fire Investigation
4. Associates Degree in field related to Fire Investigation
5. Bachelors Degree in field unrelated to Fire Investigation
6. Bachelors Degree in field related to Fire Investigation
7. Masters Degree in field unrelated to Fire Investigation
8. Masters Degree in field related to Fire Investigation
9. Doctoral Degree in field unrelated to Fire Investigation
10. L.L.B. OR J. D.
11. Doctoral Degree in field related to Fire Investigation

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EXPERIENCE

12. Full-Time Fire Investigator
13. Part-Time Fire Investigator
(Investigations performed as a line officer or adjuster cannot be included here)
14. Direct Active Supervision of two (2) or more Full-Time Fire investigators.
Do not claim credit here unless you were actively involved in fire investigation.
15. Direct Active Supervision of two (2) or more Part-Time Fire Investigators.
Do not claim credit here unless you were actively involved in fire investigation.
16. Non-Fire, Full-Time Criminal Investigator
17. Fire Department Lieutenant or Police Department Sergeant or above.
Do not include time claimed in 12 through 17
18. Firefighter or Patrolman.
Do not include any of the time claimed in 12 through 16
19. Evidence Technician (Full-Time Only)
20. Private Investigator (Non-Fire)
21. Fire Insurance Adjuster
22. Published books on subject directly related to investigations of fire or explosions
23. Paper/article published on a subject directly related to investigations fires or explosions
24. Lectures given on fire investigation
25. Membership in professional organizations directly related to fire investigations
26. Per occasion testified as an expert witness regarding point of origin or cause of fire or explosions

Letter from Employers or if self-employed*

Letters from Employers or if self-employed.*

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Copy of copyright page, with Library of Congress Catalog Number.

Copies of Articles showing date and journal name of

Attestment Letter from Program Managers

Copy of Membership Cards

Letters from Attorneys, Deposition Cover Sheet and pages from transcript, or similar proof of each occasion

* letter from principal in company, client(s) or someone who can attest to experience claimed, include PI license if applicable in your region

TRAINING

27. Certified Firefighter I or substantially similar program
28. Certified Firefighter 11 or substantially similar program
29. IAAI-FIT
30. Certified Police Academy (240 Hours) or substantially similar program
31. **Tested** Fire Investigation Training Programs, seminars or college level courses conducted by a recognized agency or group (IAAI, USFA, SFM, DLE, FBI, BATF, etc.). **A passing grade is required to claim credit here.**
32. Non-Tested Fire Investigation Training Seminars conducted by a recognized agency or group. (as described above)

Certificates/Diplomas

Certificates/Diplomas

Certificate

Certificates/Diplomas

Certificates/Diplomas (if Certificate does not indicate "Tested", then Letter from the Sponsor is required)

Certificates/Diplomas

EMPLOYMENT VERIFICATION LETTER EXAMPLE

To be printed on Department/ Agency Letterhead

<Date>

International Association of Arson Investigators
Certified Fire Investigator Program
16901 Melford Boulevard, Suite 101
Bowie, MD 20715

RE: <Name of Applicant>

The above referenced applicant is in the process of making application for Certified Fire Investigator status with the International Association of Arson Investigators (IAAI). This letter will serve as verification of the applicant's background and work experience as a Fire Investigator as defined in NFPA 1033; "An individual who has demonstrated the skills and knowledge necessary to conduct, coordinate, and complete a fire investigation."

<Name of Applicant> routinely conducts scene examinations, documents the scene, conducts evidence collection/preservation of evidence, conducts and evaluates interviews, performs post incident activities, and makes presentations as prescribed in the job performance requirements (JPRs, 4.2 through 4.7) contained in NFPA 1033. My supervision of their work experience demonstrate they possess all the skills necessary to fulfill the JPRs mentioned above.

Through this employment verification letter, I attest that <Name of Applicant> serves or served as a Fire Investigator with <Agency/Department name> from <dates of service>. During this time <Name of Applicant> was directly involved as a fire investigator in determining the origin and cause of approximately <insert number> fires / explosions, of which <He/She> served as lead investigator on <insert number>. Approximately <insert number> percent of their time was devoted specifically to fire investigation duties.

The above information is a true and accurate representation of the applicant's duties as a fire investigator. I acknowledge that the IAAI-CFI committee may seek to validate any and all information provided by the applicant in his application packet to include this letter of employment and work experience.

<Signature>

Printed Name
Agency and Title
Address if different than letterhead
Telephone
Email address

TESTIMONY VERIFICATION LETTER EXAMPLE

To be printed on Department/Agency letterhead

<Date>

International Association of Arson Investigators
Certified Fire Investigator Program
16901 Melford Boulevard, Suite 101
Bowie, MD 20715

RE: <Name of Applicant>

The above referenced applicant is in the process of making application for Certified Fire Investigator status with the International Association of Arson Investigators (IAAI).

The duties of a Fire Investigator include to “testify during legal proceedings, given investigative findings” in a manner that “all pertinent investigative information and evidence are presented clearly and accurately” (NFPA 1033, 4.7.3). The IAAI-CFI application requires that the applicant provide “Expert testimony related to the point of origin or cause of a fire or explosion”. An “Expert Witness” is an individual who by virtue of their specialized knowledge, training and experience provide under oath “scientifically based opinion” testimony.

Through this testimony verification letter, I attest that <Name of Applicant> provided “Expert Witness Testimony” related to the origin or cause of a fire or explosion in the matter cited below.

Case Name:

Type of legal Proceeding:

Case Identifier:

Jurisdiction:

The above information is a true and accurate representation of the applicant’s testimony. I acknowledge that the IAAI-CFI committee may validate any and all information provided by the applicant in his application packet to include this letter of “Expert Testimony verification”.

<Signature>

Printed Name

Agency and Title

Address if different than letterhead

Telephone

Email address

APPLICATION PROCEDURES

1. Complete the page titled "Application for IAAI Certified Fire Investigator."
2. Complete the "Education" page and place the total points claimed at the bottom of the sheet. Review the Documentation Requirements page. Place your documentation behind completed "Education" page.
3. Complete the "Full/Part-Time Experience" page and place the total points claimed at the bottom of the sheet. Review the Documentation Requirements page. Place your documentation behind completed "Full/Part-Time Experience" page.
4. Complete all three pages for the "Other Experience" section and place the total points claimed at the bottom of each sheet. Review the Documentation Requirements page. In addition, total the points from the three pages and place that number at the bottom of page three in the space provided. Place all necessary documentation behind "Experience-Other (page 3)".
5. Complete the "Training" page and place the total points claimed at the bottom of the sheet. Review the Documentation Requirements page, then place your documentation behind the "Training" page.
6. Complete the Total Points and Reference page. Remember that a minimum of 150 points is required for you to challenge the examination.

Note: DO NOT put application and supporting documentation in binders or folders. Do not use staples. You may use a binder clip or a large paper clip to hold your application together.

7. You may email your application with all supporting documentation (employer letter, CFITrainer.net transcript, copies of other certificates claimed, etc.) in one pdf to IAAI-CFI@firearson.com with the credit card form (If no payment information included, an invoice will be created which you will be able to pay online).

or

Mail completed application with all supporting documentation and check to:
International Association of Arson Investigators
Certified Fire Investigator Program
16901 Melford Boulevard, Suite 101
Bowie, MD 20715

Questions? Contact 410-451-3473, 800-468-4224 or IAAI-CFI@firearson.com