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CERTIFICATE OF FITNESS PROGRAM FOR CHIEF'S REGULATION NO. 4 TESTING

The information presented in this document is intended to explain the general procedures and policies for the Certificate of Fitness Program for Chief's Regulation No. 4 testing. It is not a recital of the Los Angeles Fire Code. However, some repetition may be found; this is intentional in order to clarify and reemphasize crucial points. This material is used to prepare for the written examination to obtain a Certificate of Fitness to perform Chief's Regulation No. 4 testing.

GENERAL INFORMATION

WHAT IS A CERTIFICATE OF FITNESS?

Section 57.02.02 of the Los Angeles Fire Code defines a Certificate of Fitness as a written document issued by the authority of the Chief to any person for the purpose of granting permission to such person to conduct or engage in any operation or act for which approval of the Fire Department is required by Division 6 of the Los Angeles Fire Code. The document issued in a wallet-sized identification card.

WHEN WAS THE CERTIFICATE OF FITNESS PROGRAM ESTABLISHED FOR CHIEF'S REGULATION NO. 4?

On May 11, 1987, the City of Los Angeles adopted a new Fire Code. One of the provisions of the new Fire Code mandated that Chief's Regulation No. 4 testing be conducted by a person with a valid Certificate of Fitness or by qualified building employees, and witnessed by the Fire Department. A person having a valid Certificate of Fitness for such testing is known as a Certified Tester.

WHAT IS THE INTENT OF THE CERTIFICATE OF FITNESS PROGRAM?

The Certificate of Fitness Program is intended to relieve the Fire Department of many hours spent witnessing Chief's Regulation No. 4 tests. In the past, the Fire Department witnessed all Chief's Regulation No. 4 testing. However, this became unmanageable for the Department's operations and awkward for testing companies.

WHAT IS THE OBJECTIVE OF THE CERTIFICATE OF FITNESS PROGRAM?

There are two major objectives of the Certificate of Fitness Program. The first is that Chief's Regulation No. 4 Testers certified by the Fire Department will perform testing. The second is to establish more uniform test procedures. This Program establishes uniform standards and guidelines for application and qualification of candidates, and for testing and documentation.

CERTIFIED TESTERS

HOW IS A CERTIFIED TESTER IDENTIFIED?

The Fire Department issues an identification card to a qualified tester upon successful completion of the examination process. The card will have a number system, which indicates the type of approval a Certificate of Fitness to perform Chief's Regulation No. 4 testing was issued for.

Upon qualification, the Certificate of Fitness card shall be carried whenever the Certified Tester is performing any Chief's Regulation No. 4 testing; it shall be produced on demand by any person for whom testing is being performed, or by any member of the Fire Department.

WHAT INFORMATION IS ON THE CERTIFICATE OF FITNESS IDENTIFICATION CARD?

The Certificate of Fitness identification card provides the following information about the Certified Tester:

1. Name of Certified Tester.
2. Business affiliation of Certified Tester.
3. Specific system/equipment for which the Tester is certified.
4. Approval signature of Fire Marshal.
5. Signature of Certified Tester.
6. Certification number of Certified Tester.
7. Expiration date of Certificate of Fitness.

8. Address of business affiliation of Certified Tester.
9. Personal identification characteristics of Certified Tester; i.e., date of birth, height, weight, color of eyes, and hair.
10. One-inch square, color passport-type photograph.

In addition, the card contains specific information, which the Fire Marshal considers necessary and proper.

FOR WHOM IS THE CERTIFICATE OF FITNESS VALID?

The Certificate of Fitness is only valid for the individual designated on the card; it is not valid for the affiliated testing company. However, each Certified Tester must be affiliated with a firm qualified and licensed by the State of California, and that firm's name must be listed on the Certificate.

FOR HOW LONG IS THE CERTIFICATE OF FITNESS VALID?

The Certificate of Fitness is valid for a period of three years. However, the City reserves the right to revoke this card for cause.

DOES THE CERTIFICATE ALLOW THE TESTER TO PERFORM NON-WITNESSED TESTING?

At the discretion of the Chief, the Certified Tester shall be allowed to conduct Chief's Regulation No. 4 testing, which is not witnessed by the Fire Department. However, the Fire Department may witness any portion or all of ANY Chief's Regulation No. 4 test. In all cases, the Certified Tester is required to verbally notify the Fire Department Inspector or fire station, as well as the Chief's Regulation No. 4 Unit by email (LAFDreg4@lacity.org) at least two (2) working days prior to any testing.

DOES THE CERTIFIED TESTER HAVE TO BE PRESENT AT THE TEST SITE?

The Certified Tester must be present at the Chief's Regulation No. 4 test site throughout all portions of the test in order to personally attest to all test results.

HOW IS THE CERTIFICATE OF FITNESS RENEWED?

If the Certified Tester applies for renewal prior to expiration, a new application with 50 percent of the current fee must be submitted. It is the certified tester's responsibility to renew his or her certificate whether a courtesy renewal letter was or was not sent. Renewal will be based on past performance records.

WHAT HAPPENS WHEN THE CERTIFICATE OF FITNESS EXPIRES?

If the Certified Tester allows the Certificate to expire, a new application must be submitted with the current full fee. If a great length of time has passed, the Certified Tester will have to submit an initial application and start the testing process over.

HOW IS ADDITIONAL EQUIPMENT ADDED TO THE CERTIFICATE OF A PREVIOUSLY CERTIFIED TESTER?

A Certified Tester may add additional categories of equipment and systems to their Certificate by submitting an Application and full current fee. Chief's Regulation No. 4 testing requirements will be determined by past records and performance. However, an Oral Interview and a Field Proficiency Test in the new categories must be taken and passed. Documentation on F-340R4 must be submitted for review prior to approval of certification.

WHAT PROCEDURE IS FOLLOWED WHEN THERE IS A CHANGE OF ADDRESS, TELEPHONE NUMBER OR BUSINESS AFFILIATION OF A CERTIFIED TESTER?

A Certified Tester is required to notify the Fire Department in writing of any change in residence or business address and/or telephone numbers within ten days of the change. Submitting a new application with the new information shall do this. In addition, the applicant must submit two (2) one-inch by one-inch square, color passport-*type* photographs (not Polaroid type) before issuance of a new identification card. A new identification card must be issued any time a Certified Tester has a name, address, business affiliation change, or adds or deletes equipment or systems during the period the Certificate is valid. If a Certified Tester terminates affiliation with a firm, their Certificate of Fitness becomes invalid. (According to the Fire Code, the Certified Tester must notify the Fire Department within ten days of any changes).

HOW DOES A TESTER BECOME RECERTIFIED AFTER LEAVING A FIRM?

To regain status as a Certified Tester, a new application, resume, minimum fee, and two (2) one-inch by one-inch passport type photos must be submitted within ten days. The evaluation to reinstate the Certificate will be determined on an individual basis by the Chief's Regulation No. 4 Unit. Factors to be evaluated will be knowledge of Chief's Regulation No. 4 program and procedures, and past performance as evidenced in the case file.

HOW CAN A CERTIFICATE BE REVOKED OR SUSPENDED?

Section 57.03.11 of the Los Angeles City Fire Code provides provisions and prescribes what action the Fire Department may pursue when any person violates any rule or regulation adopted by the Board of Fire Commissioners.

The law grants the Chief the power to revoke, suspend, or deny the granting of any Certificate of Fitness for any of the following reasons:

1. Violation of any provision of the Los Angeles City Fire Code or any rule or regulation as adopted.

EXAMPLE: Certified Tester alleges to a building owner that they are certified to test equipment not listed on their card.

2. Violation of any of the terms or conditions of the Certificate of Fitness.

EXAMPLE: Certified Tester is not present throughout Chief's Regulation No. 4 test for which Certified Tester is signing test results.

3. Changing the condition of fire protection equipment or systems in such a manner as to create a greater risk of fire or less protection than was present prior to the testing of such equipment or system.

EXAMPLE: Certified Tester fails to restore equipment to its normal operating condition after test, or certifies equipment not tested.

4. Upon a finding by the Chief of any deceptive practice constituting a fraud upon the public.

EXAMPLE: Certified Tester lists equipment defective when in fact it is not.

5. Upon a finding by the Chief of evidence of inability, lack of necessary expertise, or willful or negligent failure to properly and safely perform the duties for which a Certificate of Fitness is granted.

EXAMPLE: Certified Tester attempts a test on a complex system for which he has inadequate background and knowledge.

6. Violation of applicable law.

EXAMPLE: Certified Tester makes repairs on equipment without proper permits, or is not licensed to perform such work.

EXAMINATION PROCESSWHAT ARE THE REQUIREMENTS AND HOW TO APPLY FOR A CERTIFICATE OF FITNESS TO PERFORM CHIEF'S REGULATION NO. 4 TESTING?

Applicants for a Certificate of Fitness to perform Chief's Regulation No. 4 testing must meet the following requirements:

1. Applications may be obtained from Chief's Regulation No. 4 Unit, 200 North Main Street, Room 1700, (City Hall East) Los Angeles, CA 90012 or via website: www.lafd.org/prevention/reg4.html. Application must be on form F-322-R4. Applications shall be filed with the Chief's Regulation No. 4 Unit of the Bureau of Fire Prevention and Public Safety. The application may be filed in person. Applications must be filled out completely, signed and dated by the Applicant. All applications must first come to the Chief's Regulation No. 4 Unit then he or she will be sent to the accounting office to have the fee processed. The accounting office address is:

**Los Angeles City Fire Department
200 North Main Street, Room 1620, (City Hall East)
Los Angeles, CA 90012
Attention: Accounting Services**

2. Applicants must be affiliated with a firm who has a valid business license with the City of Los Angeles, and a State Contractor's License or a license issued by the State of California Fire Marshal as per Section 13196.5, of the Health and Safety Code. Qualified building employees and civil service employees are exempt only with the proper exception issued by the State Fire Marshal as per Title 19, Section 904.2
3. Applicants must possess a valid California Driver's License.
4. Applicants must provide a resume listing references, experience, training, competency with and working knowledge of the materials, tools, equipment, standards, techniques, formulas, and recognized good maintenance practices pertaining to the fire protection equipment and systems for which they are applying for the past two (2) years.
5. Applicants must have at least two years full-time job-related experience as an installer journey person, maintenance or repairperson, or related experience at a company, firm, or business that performs such services. This experience requirement may be reduced at the discretion of the Chief for basic fire protection equipment, e.g., fire escape assemblies, simple sliding fire doors, or unit emergency lighting.

Educational courses in fire protection engineering at a recognized college or university, seminars about fire protection equipment, and other such training that provides solid technical background for understanding how to conduct tests of fire protection equipment, may be substituted for up to one year of the required experience. Proof in the form of course completion certificate(s) or degree from a recognized college, university, or trade school shall be required for submission at the time of application.

6. Applicants shall submit, along with the completed application form and the written resume, the current established application fee. The fee is currently \$936.00 for each category. The fee is periodically adjusted by the Board of Fire Commissioners in accordance with Section 57.04.12C of the Fire Code.

WHAT ARE THE COMPONENTS OF THE EXAMINATION PROCESS?

Applicants must successfully complete the following four steps of the examination process before receiving a Certificate of Fitness to perform Chief's Regulation No. 4 testing.

1. General Written Examination.
2. System Written Exam and Oral Exam.
3. Practical Field Performance Test.
4. Evaluation of Applicant's Field Test Documentation on F-340R4

WHAT IS THE WRITTEN EXAMINATION?

After a valid application is delivered to the Chief's Regulation No. 4 Unit, the written examination will be administered. The written examination is the first step toward obtaining a Certificate of Fitness. The test is based on written material available from the Chief's Regulation No. 4 Unit.

The written examination may include questions on knowledge of procedures, policies, and practices related to Chief's Regulation No. 4, definition and testing intervals, Fire Department notification requirements, general test precautions, system descriptions, repair requirements, preparation and use of Forms F-340C, F-340D and F-340R4 the requirements and procedures for obtaining a Certificate of Fitness, revocation or suspension of certification, rectification, and other relevant knowledge and abilities.

The test will consist of 100 multiple-choice questions.

The written examination will take approximately two hours, and will be conducted by the Chief's Regulation No. 4 Unit. Valid applicants must make arrangements to take the written examination. To make an appointment, please call (213) 978-3596.

The Applicant must attain a passing grade of 80 percent on the general written examination to proceed with the Certificate of Fitness testing process.

WHAT HAPPENS AFTER THE WRITTEN EXAMINATION?

Upon notification of successful completion of the written examination, the Applicant must schedule a date for the oral interview. Contacting the Chief's Regulation No. 4 Unit at (213) 978-3596.

To expedite the candidate's ability to perform Chief's Regulation No. 4 testing, a Temporary Certificate of Fitness (TCF) may be issued to the Applicant upon request after passing the written examination upon request.

WHAT IS THE TEMPORARY CERTIFICATE OF FITNESS (TCF)?

The TCF is valid for up to three months. It enables an Applicant who has submitted a valid application and has passed the written examination to perform Chief's Regulation No. 4 testing under specified conditions. These conditions are specified on the TCF, and are as follows:

1. When a Chief's Regulation No. 4 test is conducted, an appropriate Fire Inspector must witness it. The Inspector will complete evaluation on the performance of the Tester.
2. An Emergency Inspection Fee will be charged for the Inspector whenever testing must be witnessed at other than regular inspection hours (7:00 a.m. to 5:30 p.m., Monday through Friday).
3. Two copies of the test results on Form F-340D or F-340R4 shall be submitted to the Chief's Regulation No. 4 Unit within seven (7) days after the completion of the test. F-340D and F-340R4 forms received more than thirty (30) days after test will be considered invalid and will not be accepted.
4. The TCF shall be in the possession of the Tester during the test and shall be produced upon demand by the Fire Department.
5. The TCF is valid only for the person listed and only while employed by the firm listed.

WHAT IS THE VALUE OF THE TEMPORARY CERTIFICATE OF FITNESS?

The TCF is beneficial to both the candidate, in lieu of a regular Certificate of Fitness, and to the Fire Department. It allows the Applicant to test fire protection equipment and systems during this interim period. At the same time, the Fire Department has an opportunity to evaluate "hands-on" the performance and skills of the Applicant.

Currently, the TCF is no longer available.

WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF THE ORAL EXAM?

The purpose of the oral interview is to determine competency with and working knowledge of the materials, tools, equipment, standards, techniques, formulas, and recognized good maintenance practices pertaining to the testing of equipment and systems for which the candidate has applied.

In particular, the Applicant must be thoroughly cognizant of all applicable Chief's Regulation No. 4 test procedures and requirements in the categories in which they have applied.

The Applicant shall contact the Chief's Regulation No. 4 Unit to schedule an exam. The exam will be scheduled on a Tuesday, Wednesday, or Thursday. First the Applicant will take a short multiple-choice test on the system(s). The Applicant must attain a passing grade of 80 percent on the multiple-choice test. Following the short test, the Applicant will have his interview. The interview will take approximately 30 minutes to one-hour and will be conducted by one or two member(s) of the Bureau of Fire Prevention and Public Safety.

The Applicant shall report to the Chief's Regulation No. 4 Unit a few minutes before the scheduled interview time. The Applicant should bring two "passport-type" one-inch square color photographs (not Polaroid type); one will be placed in the Applicant's file and the other affixed to the Certificate of Fitness card upon successful completion of the examination process. After the oral exam, the Applicant must schedule a date for a field performance test.

WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF THE FIELD PERFORMANCE TEST?

During the field performance test, the Applicant is required to demonstrate proficiency in all aspects of the Chief's Regulation No. 4 test procedures for which they have applied. The Applicant shall be available at a site and time acceptable to the Fire Department.

More than one test may be required to suitably demonstrate proficiency. Proposed test sites and times shall be reviewed by the Chief's Regulation No. 4 Unit.

WHY IS DOCUMENTATION OF THE FIELD PERFORMANCE TEST SUBMITTED FOR EVALUATION?

At the conclusion of each field performance test, the Applicant is required to submit documentation of the test results on the approved form F-340R4 to the Chief's Regulation No. 4 Unit within seven days of the test. The test results are then examined to determine whether the Applicant meets Fire Department requirements.

HOW DOES AN APPLICANT FAIL THE CERTIFICATION PROCESS?

An Applicant who does not pass any one of the four steps of the examination process has failed the certification process. Applicants must wait at least 30 days to reapply, and in no event shall the examination be given to the same Applicant more than twice in any one-year period.

Whenever an Applicant fails an examination and takes a second examination within *90 days* of such failure, the fee for the second examination is *50 percent* of the initial application fee.

NOTE: Applicant with multiple categories who fails a part of the examination process can still continue with the certification process in the categories they have passed.

WHEN IS THE CHIEF REGULATION NO. 4 CERTIFICATE OF FITNESS ISSUED?

Upon successful completion of all examination requirements, the Fire Department issues a Certificate of Fitness Identification Card to the Applicant. At that time, the Applicant becomes a Certified Tester.