

**DEPARTMENT OF LABOR
BUREAU OF LABOR STANDARDS
BOARD OF OCCUPATIONAL SAFETY AND HEALTH**

Chapter 7: MINIMUM DRIVER TRAINING REQUIREMENTS FOR FIRE APPARATUS

Summary: This standard identifies the minimum job performance requirements for career and volunteer fire fighters who drive fire apparatus in order to reduce accidents, injuries and loss of fire equipment.

SECTION I. APPARATUS DRIVER OPERATING PROCEDURES AND POLICIES

All Maine Fire Departments must establish Standard Operating Procedures or Policies (SOPs) for all fire apparatus drivers that, at a minimum, include the following:

- A. All apparatus drivers must possess a valid driver's license.
- B. The Fire Department shall have written SOPs/Policy for:
 - 1. Apparatus driver selection.
 - 2. Annual review of each apparatus driver's motor vehicle driving history by the Chief.
 - 3. Emergency vehicle response.
 - 4. Use of seatbelts.
 - 5. Backing the apparatus.
 - 6. Apparatus maintenance.
- C. Each emergency fire apparatus must have a proper State of Maine motor vehicle inspection.

SECTION II. APPARATUS DRIVER TRAINING REQUIREMENTS

All Maine Fire Departments must establish training programs for all fire apparatus drivers that, at a minimum, include the following:

- A. A review of all applicable Maine Title 29-A motor vehicle laws.
- B. Apparatus drivers must complete an Emergency Vehicle Operations Course (EVOC), or attend Commercial Driver License (CDL) training or other training that meets National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) 1002 training for drivers.
- C. Apparatus drivers must have a general knowledge of the specific vehicle(s), equipment and their proper operation.

- D. Apparatus drivers' skills must be evaluated on each vehicle they will drive using a skills evaluation form such as: Bureau of Labor Standards (BLS), Volunteer Fireman Insurances Services (VFIS), Maine Municipal Association (MMA) or other.
- E. Apparatus drivers' skills must be assessed every 3 years.

SECTION III. APPARATUS DRIVER APPROVAL

Apparatus drivers must be approved by the Chief.

SECTION IV. APPARATUS DRIVER TRAINING RECORDS

Individual apparatus driver training records must be maintained for duration of the individual's employment.

STATUTORY AUTHORITY:

26 M.R.S. §2107

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“Minimum Driver Training Requirements for Fire Apparatus”

Purpose. To reduce deaths, accidents, injuries and loss of fire equipment due to fire apparatus-related driving incidents.

Scope. This technical standard clarifies the minimum training requirements for career and volunteer fire fighters who drive fire apparatus pursuant to Title 26 Ch. 28 2102 1E (training and education for all fire fighters commensurate with the duties they are expected to perform).

Background. All Maine fire departments must establish a training program and Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) for all fire-apparatus drivers and, at a minimum, include the following:

- 1) All apparatus drivers must possess a valid driver’s license.
- 2) The fire department shall have written SOPs/policy(ies) for:
 - Driver selection.
 - Annual review of all operators’ motor vehicle driving history by the Chief.
 - Emergency vehicle response.
 - Use of seatbelts.
 - Backing apparatus.
 - Vehicle maintenance.
- 3) Each emergency fire apparatus must have a proper State of Maine motor vehicle inspection.
- 4) Training must consist of:
 - A review of all applicable Maine Title 29-A motor vehicle laws.
 - All apparatus drivers must complete an Emergency Vehicle Operations Course (EVOC) or attend Commercial Driver License (CDL) training or other training that meets National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) 1002 training for drivers.
 - Operators must have a general knowledge of the specific vehicle(s), of equipment and of their proper operation.

- Drivers' skills must be evaluated on each vehicle they will drive using skills evaluation form, such as from the Bureau of Labor Standards (BLS), or from the Volunteer Fireman Insurance Services (VFIS), or other form as long as it meets the minimums listed in the BLS form.

5) All apparatus drivers must be approved by the Chief.

6) Individual driver training records must be maintained for duration of employment.

7) All driver's skills must be assessed every three years.

Recommended Guidance for the Above Regulations

Section 1. Driver's License Required

In Maine, all apparatus drivers must have a valid driver's license, which complies with Maine Title 29-A Motor Vehicle laws.

Section 2. The Department Shall Have a Policy/SOP That Addresses:

- 1) The department's criterion for selection of drivers, who, what training, ages, etc. The Chief or designees review each driver's driving history through the DMV or local law enforcement annually. This should aid the Chief to make informed decisions on the suitability of the assigned drivers. (Only current DMV records need to be kept on hand.)
- 2) Emergency Vehicle Response Policy—an SOP/SOG or policy regarding speed, traffic control (stop/yield/speed) signs and regulations, use of emergency lights, sirens, and if warranted, what the department considers a code 1, 2 or 3 (emergency or non-emergency response) and other related issues.
- 3) Use of seatbelts for drivers and passengers in conformity with Maine Title 29-A.
- 4) When and how backers/spotters will be used. (Focus should address avoidance of backing whenever possible.)
- 5) A statement of when and type of maintenance is required, frequency and criterion or regular in-house checks of apparatus/equipment, pump and or aerial testing and motor vehicle inspections and process to ensure that defects are reported and corrected.

Section 3. Motor Vehicle Inspection

Following Maine Title 29-A and/or Commercial vehicle requirements.

NOTE: Fire Department vehicles under 26,000 lbs. must have at least a regular annual motor vehicle inspection. Fire Department vehicles over 26,000 lbs. must have a Class D (commercial) inspection; however, since the vehicle is not engaged in commerce the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Regulations do not apply.

Section 4: Training Requirements

- 1) A “one time” review of all applicable Title 29-A motor vehicle laws (specific sections) relating to fire departments and apparatus, equipment and driving/response with all approved drivers.
- 2) All drivers must have passed an Emergency Vehicle Operations Course (EVOC), Commercial Driver’s License (CDL) or an in-house class that meets the requirement of National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) 1002. This training is the Chief’s choice and courses can be a combination of any or all three of the above.
- 3) Drivers should have a basic knowledge of the vehicle, its equipment and proper operation. **EXAMPLE:** training on how to use the pump or operate the aerial ladder etc.
- 4) Each driver’s “on road” driving skills must be evaluated on each apparatus they will operate using an evaluation form from the Bureau of Labor Standards, or they can use another form from Volunteer Firemen Insurance Service (VFIS), Maine Municipal Association (MMA) or other equivalent form. The hands-on part of EVOC will not qualify as it is on a controlled and closed course. (In addition to the other requirements, this will help the chief make informed decisions relative to driver selection.)

NOTE: Apparatus with the same cab/chassis, pump and water capacities will not need individual driver evaluation to be approved on each similar vehicle.

Section 5. Driver Approval

All drivers must be approved (signed off) by the Chief for each operator and vehicle after all of the required criteria have been met. The Chief can assign all training, reviews and evaluations to other staff as long as all completed requirements are presented to the Chief for his/her final approval.

Section 6: Driver Training Records

All training records (including drivers) shall be kept for the duration of employment. (Any training records of drivers who have retired or left employment need not be kept in the files of regular members but must be available if needed.)

Section 7: Driver's Skills Reassessed Every Three Years

Once all of the initial requirements have been met, the driver's skills must be re-assessed every three years on each apparatus they will be designated to drive by the Chief. This is simply an "on road" evaluation of the drivers' skills on a course in the department's own response area.

NOTE: This document addresses the requirements specifically for **fire apparatus** drivers. In addition, many departments have ambulance vehicles and employers are strongly urged to use this program for the ambulance operations as well.

NOTE: 12-179CMR Ch 7 was passed 12/02/2010 with an effective date of 3/4/2011. Departments were given one year from the effective date for compliance.

NOTE: (Recommendation) The Fire Chief should additionally consider a policy on "Response in Personally Owned Vehicles" (POVs).