

National Fire Academy Criteria for Contract Instructor Selection

Course: New Executive Chief Officer Series (F/W0760, F/W0761, F/W0762 and R/N0763)

Curriculum: Leadership and Executive Development

Effective Date: October 2026

“New Executive Chief Officer: Challenging Issues” (F/W0760). This course is designed to develop the managerial, administrative and leadership skills necessary for the first-time executive chief officers who desire a leadership position in their department. This course addresses critical knowledge and skills pertaining to the responsibilities of an executive chief officer, including such topics as local politics and the role of the executive chief officer, liability and risk management, and resources and items of knowledge needed to become a first-time leader in a new position in their agency.

“New Executive Chief Officer: Administrative Issues” (F/W0761). This course provides students with the managerial, administrative and leadership skills and awareness necessary for new or recently appointed or elected executive chief officers to effectively meet the obligations of the position.

“New Executive Chief Officer: Contemporary Issues” (F/W0762). This course will develop the managerial skills, leadership skills and contemporary issues and awareness necessary for new or newly appointed or elected executive chief officers to effectively meet their obligations. The course will help to develop knowledge, skills and attitudes necessary for them to perform effectively now and in the future.

“New Executive Chief Officer” (R/N0763). This 5-day course is the combination of the three 2-day courses, “New Executive Chief Officer: Challenging Issues,” “New Executive Chief Officer: Administrative Issues” and “New Executive Chief Officer: Contemporary Issues.” It is designed to develop the managerial, administrative and leadership skills necessary for the first-time executive chief officers who desire a leadership position in their department. This course addresses critical knowledge and skills pertaining to the responsibilities of an executive chief officer, including such topics as local politics and the role of the executive chief officer, liability and risk management, resources management, planning, community engagement, capital asset planning and acquisition, and other key topics for a first-time leader in a new position in their agency.

Criteria for Contract Instructor Selection

All new contract instructors may be evaluated in 3 consecutive course deliveries in accordance with the National Fire Academy’s (NFA’s) Contract Instructor Evaluation program. Existing contract instructors are subject to evaluation in accordance with this program.

All instructor candidates must meet or exceed the published course instructor criteria and meet the general and administrative requirements (found at <https://www.usfa.fema.gov/nfa/about/contract-instructors/teach-for-nfa.html>) before being approved to bid.

1. Academic/Training Requirement

Requires a baccalaureate degree (graduate degree preferred) from a nationally or regionally accredited institution recognized by the Department of Education. The degree should be in a field closely related to the specific course's subject matter.

2. Instructional Requirement

A minimum of 2 years of experience in facilitated adult learning processes within the last 3 years, to include the use of the Socratic method of instructional delivery and student-centered learning, preferably at the baccalaureate level or higher.

3. Documented Knowledge and Experience in the Subject Area

- a. Experience and knowledge in facilitating/instructing the designated course subject areas.
- b. A minimum of 2 years of documented experience within the past 3 years as an executive chief officer.
- c. A minimum of 5 years of documented experience within the most recent 3 years presenting facilitated adult learning processes, to include use of the Socratic method of instructional delivery and student-centered learning.
- d. Successfully completed the course(s) as a student and attended the course at the NFA as an instructor candidate (at own expense).

While attending as an instructor candidate, you were assigned a topic(s) for purposes of an evaluated teaching demonstration in accordance with the NFA's Contract Instructor Evaluation program.

4. Continuing Practice and Education

Contract instructors must maintain both work experience and academic relevance specific to the course(s) for which they are approved. To maintain eligibility to instruct any of the courses in this series, contract instructors may be required to submit verification of both work experience and academic relevance. Work experience may be verified through submission of a resume.

5. Academic Relevancy

- a. Teaching the course(s) at the NFA (“W” or “R” course code) or in the field (“F” or “N” course code) at least 4 times within the last 3 years.
- b. Teaching a similar course at an accredited institution of higher learning at least 4 times within the last 3 years.
- c. Completing a similar course of instruction within the last 3 years through an accredited institution of higher learning or a nationally recognized organization providing certified continuing education credits.

6. Revisions to Criteria

These criteria are subject to revision based on course changes and NFA needs. Potential instructors will be subject to the criteria effective at the date of application. Existing contract instructors are subject to reapplication for failure to meet and/or submit verification of the continuing practice and education requirements when requested. Additionally, existing contract instructors are subject to reapplication and meeting revised criteria as determined by the NFA based on revisions to course content.

7. How to Submit an Application

The following documents are required with each submission:

- a. A cover letter listing the courses you want to teach.
- b. Your resume.
- c. Documentation that clearly addresses how you meet the instructor selection criteria for each course you are seeking to teach. Incomplete packages will not be processed. List the criteria in this order:
 - Academic requirement.
 - Instructional experience.
 - Knowledge and experience in the subject matter.
 - Continuing practice or education.
- d. Three references from persons who are knowledgeable about your character as well as your teaching ability. One reference letter should be from the department or agency head in your organization or certifying organization.
- e. Include a current email address, so we can communicate more efficiently with you.

Do not include your Social Security number and your date of birth on any of the documents you submit.

All documentation and statements provided may be subject to a request for additional verification, including, but not limited to, the following: academic transcripts, verification of work experience and professional references.

Application package(s) must be submitted to:

National Fire Academy
fema-nfainstructorapp@fema.dhs.gov