

U.S. Fire Administration

Executive Fire Officer Program

May 2016



FEMA





Thank you for your interest in the National Fire Academy's (NFA's) Executive Fire Officer Program (EFOP). As an EFOP student, you will enhance your professional development through a unique series of four graduate and upper-division, baccalaureate equivalent courses taken over a four-year period. Each course is two weeks in length. You must complete an Applied Research Project (ARP) that relates to your organization within six months after the completion of each of the four courses.

Selection criteria and application information for the EFOP follows. For more information, call the EFOP Help Desk at 800-238-3358, ext. 1176 or send an email to angela.krantz@associates.fema.dhs.gov.

The Executive Fire Officer Program Consists Of

- “Executive Development” (R0123).
- “Executive Analysis of Community Risk Reduction” (R0274).
- “Executive Analysis of Fire Service Operations in Emergency Management” (R0306).
- “Executive Leadership” (R0125).

First-Year Course: “Executive Development” (R0123)

“Executive Development” is the foundational course for the EFOP. This 10-day course provides a framework in which leadership is a process whereby you and others perform adaptive work. The major goals are to improve the Executive Fire Officer's (EFO's) ability to:

- Build high-performance teams.
- Exercise adaptive leadership skills.
- Manage change.
- Value diversity as a fire service resource.
- Use critical-thinking skills to develop ARPs.

The curriculum includes self- and observer-based multirater assessment instruments, case study analysis, an adaptive challenge consultation, and experiential activities. This course is delivered at a graduate level using critical inquiry and Socratic dialogue.

Second-Year Course: “Executive Analysis of Community Risk Reduction” (R0274)

This 10-day course is the second course in the EFOP. The course is a mixture of philosophy and application — the value of community risk reduction and the process of applying risk reduction to the community. It involves developing partnerships with the community to implement programs, initiatives and services that prevent and/or mitigate the risk of human-caused or natural disasters. Traditional fire prevention programs are addressed.

There is an extensive pre-course assignment in which students are required to research the history of fire prevention and its evolution into community risk reduction. Students build a demographic and risk profile of their home community. They examine social, cultural, economic and environmental trends that impact community risk. The course examines the EFO as a community risk-reduction leader, assesses community risk, develops a draft plan for a local risk-reduction initiative, applies change management models, and addresses organizational and community politics. The goal of the course is to develop fire service leaders who are committed in word and deed to comprehensive, multihazard community risk reduction.

Third-Year Course: “Executive Analysis of Fire Service Operations in Emergency Management” (R0306)

This 10-day course is designed for third-year EFO students to prepare their communities for large scale, multiagency, all-hazard incidents. In this course, students analyze emergency incidents and identify lessons learned and best practices to prepare for future incidents. Students are introduced to emergency management and the workings of an Emergency Operations Center (EOC) as a framework for their analyses. This course will explore areas of the Stafford Act, Community Hazards Emergency Response–Capability Assurance Process and Critical Infrastructure and Key Resource mapping, damage assessment, incident documentation, media and political considerations, standards, legal mandates, capability assessment, emergency operations, Integrated Emergency Management System, Multiagency Coordination System including the EOC, and emergency information systems. During the analysis portion of the course, recommendations made are evaluated in order to determine the effectiveness of these recommendations relative to the fire and rescue department's operational readiness during major

incidents, such as floods, tornadoes, wildfires, earthquakes and hurricanes. The course is very intense and uses lecture, analysis of documented emergency incidents, After-Action Reports, and student participation, with “TED Talks” as instructional media.

Fourth-Year Course: “Executive Leadership” (R0125)

This capstone 10-day course of the EFOP was designed specifically to provide a framework of executive-level competencies by focusing on issues and areas of personal effectiveness.

The curriculum includes self- and observer-based multirater assessment instruments, case study analysis, role-playing, adaptive problem consultation, experiential activities, and a staff ride. Participants complete a “personal plan” to access currency and then create goals in four areas of their professional, personal, community and family life.

Course units include purpose and integrity, giving and using feedback, thinking systemically, thinking politically, developing oneself to exercise leadership, decision-making, politics and public policy, influence and persuasion, negotiation, storytelling, an exercising leadership practicum, managing multiple roles, taking risks, being in transition, staying alive, and a staff ride to the Gettysburg National Military Park.

Selection Criteria

Selection criteria for the EFOP are divided between two areas:

- Service requirement.
- Academic requirement.

Service Requirement

At the time of application, you must be in a rank/ position that complies with one of the following:

- Chief of department or equivalent.
- Chief officer or equivalent heading a major bureau or division within a fire department/ Emergency Medical Services organization. Examples of functions include suppression, emergency medical, prevention, emergency management and training.

- Battalion-level chief officer from metro-size fire organization.

If you are not in one of these positions, but you serve in a supervisory level position (e.g., battalion chief, captain, lieutenant) and aspire to a more senior position of authority, we will consider you under the service requirement **if you can demonstrate having previously exercised leadership within your organization or community.** This audience category is referred to as “Key Leading Candidates.”

Firefighters, firefighter paramedics, engineers, drivers or chauffeurs are not considered eligible.

Academic Requirement

The EFOP selection process regarding the academic prerequisite features a two-tiered, transcript-based evaluation process.

Tier 1

1. You must hold a bachelor’s degree, and a minimum of 60 college credit hours (or quarter-hour equivalent) must come from course work not associated with “credit by examination” and/or “life experiences” (including credit for nonacademic certificate courses and/or professional certifications).
 - No more than 30 college credit hours (or quarter-hour equivalent) from “credit by examination” (i.e., Defense Activity for Non-Traditional Education Support Subject Standardized Test, College Level Examination Program).
 - No more than 30 college credit hours from “life experiences” (including credit for nonacademic certificate courses and/or professional certifications).
2. Include with your application package an official transcript and one of the following:
 - A letter from the degree-granting institution certifying that no more than 30 hours of college credit (or quarter-hour equivalent) came from “credit by examination” and/ or no more than 30 hours of college credit came from “life experiences” (including credit for nonacademic certificate courses and/or professional certifications).

Visit <https://www.usfa.fema.gov/training/nfa/programs/efop.html> for more information.

- A copy of the policy of the degree-granting institution indicating that no more than 30 hours of college credit (or quarter-hour equivalent) toward a baccalaureate degree may be gained through “credit by examination” and no more than 30 hours of college credit toward a baccalaureate degree may be gained through “life experiences” (including credit for nonacademic certificate courses and/or professional certifications).

Tier 2

If you have a degree from a nationally or regionally accredited institution recognized by the United States Department of Education but you don't meet the 30/30/60 credit hours distribution described under Tier 1, you will be categorized as “Tier 2.” Tier 2 applicants

will compete for the remaining vacancies after all Tier 1 applicants have been admitted.

Other Documentation and Criteria Considerations

The NFA staff may consider additional changes in required documentation necessary to facilitate this modified selection process. For example, if details in the official transcript include the number of credits by examination and life experiences, additional documents may not be required.

Other selection criteria (e.g., rank, position, responsibilities) as previously described within the Service Requirement section remain in practice. The NFA will provide a review of the selection process and relevant criteria to the NFA Board of Visitors at the end of each year.

How to Apply

Qualified applicants may submit an application package at any time during the year. However, **there is a cutoff date of June 15 for each fiscal year (October to September)**. Applications postmarked after June 15 will be held for consideration in the next fiscal year.

For example, applications received:

On or before June 15 are considered for the upcoming fiscal year (Oct. 1 to Sept. 30) program admission.

After June 15 are considered for the following fiscal year (Oct. 1 to Sept. 30) program admission.

Application packages require the following items:

1. A Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) Form 119-25-1 General Admissions Application. In **Block 9a**, please enter “**Executive Fire Officer Program**.” A signature from the head of your sponsoring organization (e.g., chief of department, mayor, city manager) is required in **Block 22a**.
2. A signed letter from you requesting admission to the EFOP. This letter should specify your qualifications (see Selection Criteria section), commitment to complete the entire program (including the ARPs), and perceived expectation(s) of the program.

3. A signed letter of recommendation from the head of your organization. The letter should state the organization's commitment to support you in completing both courses and applied research.
4. Your resume of professional and personal accomplishments.
5. Your sponsoring organization's organizational chart that shows your position.
6. Your official transcript from a nationally or regionally accredited institution recognized by the U.S. Department of Education.
7. A FEMA Form 119-25-5 Application For Admissions short essay response form.
8. Course completion certificates for:
 - “Applied Research Self Study” (Q0123).
 - “Data Gathering Instruments to Support Applied Research Projects” (Q0170).
 - “Designing An Applied Research Project Proposal” (Q0171).

Send your application package to:

National Emergency Training Center
Admissions Office
16825 South Seton Ave.
Emmitsburg, MD 21727

Please allow until mid-August for NFA staff to evaluate your application package. We will notify you in writing if you are or are not accepted into the EFOP.