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FIRE SERVICES

COVID-19 Update – Michigan Fire Fighters Training Council Courses and Certification Examination Guidelines

To: Michigan's Fire Service

Date: May 15, 2020

To: Michigan's Fire Service

Cc: Michigan Fire Fighters Training Council

From: Kevin J. Sehlmeyer, State Fire Marshal/Director of the Bureau of Fire Services

On May 7, 2020, Gov. Gretchen Whitmer issued Executive Order 2020-77, temporary requirement to suspend certain activities that are not necessary to sustain or protect life. Per Executive Order 2020-77, Section 10(i), "workers necessary to train, credential, and license first responders (e.g., police officers, fire fighters, paramedics) …" may resume activities provided that as much instruction as possible is provided remotely. As such, Michigan Fire Fighters Training Council (MFFTC) courses can resume immediately and certification examinations may resume after Monday, May 25, 2020. However, the following guidelines must be followed and maintained until further notice.

Requirements for All MFFTC Courses using Fire Training Facilities and Examination Sites:

The course manager shall coordinate exam dates and locations with the appropriate training coordinator. The course manager is responsible for ensuring

the following guidelines are met and maintained at all fire training facilities and examination sites:

- Create a dedicated and clearly marked entry point into the fire training facility/examination site.
- Create a dedicated and clearly marked location prior to the dedicated entry point of the fire training facility/examination site to conduct daily health screenings.
- Conduct daily health screenings prior to all individuals entering the fire training facility/examination site. The daily entry health screening will include:
    - Temperature checks with a no-touch thermometer. The course manager shall ensure a no touch thermometer is available on site.
    - A series of health screening questions.
        - Does the individual have any of the known symptoms of COVID-19, such as fever, cough, shortness of breath or difficulty breathing, sore throat, muscle pain, and/or new loss of taste or smell?
        - Does the individual have a pending COVID-19 test?
        - Has the individual travelled internationally or outside of Michigan in the last 14 days?
        - Does anyone in the individual's household have a temperature of 100.4 degrees or more, or other known symptoms of COVID-19?
        - Has the individual had contact with another person diagnosed with COVID-19 in the last 14 days or has pending testing results?

Please note: Individuals who decline to participate in the daily entry health screening, have a temperature of 100.4 degrees or more, or answer "yes" to any of the health screening questions will not be permitted to enter the fire training facility/site.

- The course manager shall maintain the daily entry health screening results and return them to the Bureau of Fire Services at the end of the course with their course paperwork.

- Post information on how COVID-19 is transmitted from person to person.
- Post information on the signs and symptoms of COVID-19, and what students and instructors should do if they are sick, and how they should notify the course manager.
- Post information on how students and instructors can protect themselves and the proper use of personal protective equipment (PPE).
- Only one (1) person can use a bathroom at a time and a plan should be developed for cleaning to occur before, during and after the training session or examination. This plan should be shared with all participants at the beginning of the training session or examination.
- There should be additional designated hand washing areas for staff and students to use as needed.
- No food or drinks will be provided. Drinking fountains may not be used.
- Hand sanitizer must be provided at the check-in/sign-in table. The course manager shall ensure hand sanitizer is provided.

Requirements Specific to Fire Training Facilities:

The course manager is responsible for ensuring the following guidelines are met and maintained at all fire training facilities:

- Limit classroom/lecture venue occupancy (total number of participants) to the area available. Maintain a six (6) foot distance between each participant using chairs, tables or the required seating arrangements per the course.
- All tables and chairs in the classroom/lecture area must be cleaned and disinfected prior to the participants arriving to the fire training facility and immediately after the course ends. The course manager shall ensure the cleaning supplies are available at the site.
- Limit the hands-on training site occupancy (total number of participants) at a location to the area available to maintain a six (6) foot distance between all participants while doing hands-on training.
    - **Exception:** We understand that some firefighter skill drills require a person to be closer than six (6) feet apart (i.e. Search & Rescue and Firefighter Survival Skills training). Anytime during a MFFTC course that two (2) students must be within six feet of each other to perform or practice search and rescue or firefighter survival skills, they must

be wearing full PPE, to include a SCBA on air during the training evolution.

Requirements for Individuals Entering a Fire Training Facility/Examination Site:

The following applies to all course managers, training coordinators, instructors, support staff and students:

- Must arrive wearing a face mask. Face masks must be worn for the duration of the training session or examination, unless otherwise specified (specifically, during the Search & Rescue and Firefighter Survival station of the practical exam).
- Must participate in a daily entry health screening prior to entering the fire training facility/site. **Please note:** Individuals who decline to participate in the daily entry health screening, have a temperature of 100.4 degrees or more, or answer "yes" to any of the health screening questions will not be permitted to enter the fire training facility/site.
- All fire instructors and participants are minimally required wear a face mask during skill demonstration and practice of practical skills while maintaining six (6) feet between each other.

Students must also:

- Bring two (2) number two pencils to their written examination site.
- Bring personal hand sanitizer.
- Bring drinking water. No food or drinks will be provided at the fire training or examination site.
    - During a practical exam, students must bring (1) gallon of drinking water and may bring food and snacks. The food and drink must be kept within the student's assigned staging area.
- During a practical exam, students must bring their own turnout gear, SCBA, and two (2) full SCBA bottles and a cloth face mask to their practical exam site. No sharing of PPE or SCBA equipment will be allowed.

Requirements Specific to MFFTC Written Examination Sites:

The course manager is responsible for ensuring the following guidelines are met and maintained at all MFFTC written examination sites:

- The examination site occupancy (total number of participants) will be limited to the number of tables that can be set up while maintaining a six (6) foot distance between all participants in that room.

- All fire certification examinations will be done using paper tests until further notice.

- All tables in the testing area must be cleaned and disinfected prior to the participants arriving and being allowed in the fire certification examination site. All tables and chairs should be cleaned and disinfected again immediately after the examination.

Requirements Specific to MFFTC Practical Examination Sites:

The course manager is responsible for ensuring the following guidelines are met and maintained at all MFFTC practical examination sites:

- Assign a designated area for each student in an established staging area. The area must be at least 6 feet apart and clearly marked on the floor/ground.

- Instruct each student to wait in their designated staging area until called upon for a practical examination station. Between each practical station the participant must return to their assigned staging site and use hand sanitizer prior to eating or drinking.

- The examination briefing/instructions provided to the proctors and staff by the training coordinator must be done while maintaining six (6) feet of social distancing between everyone.

- Ensure the examination briefing/instructions provided to the students by the training coordinator are done while maintaining six (6) feet of social distancing between everyone.

- Set up each practical station to keep the proctors and students at least six (6) feet apart.

- Ensure that all proctors and students are wearing a face mask.

- Ensure that all firefighting equipment used at each practical station (including tables) is disinfected between use of each student.

- Provide the necessary cleaning products and hand sanitizer at each practical station.

- At the Search & Rescue and Firefighter Survival station the students will be fully dressed in fire gear with a SCBA on their back standing six feet apart. When instructed by the proctor they will go on air. The proctor will bring the students together to demonstrate the skill(s). Upon finishing the station, the students will be separated at least six (6) feet apart before removing the SCBA face piece and then will return to their assigned staging area.

Thank you in advance for your cooperation. If you have any questions about an MFFTC course or MFFTC certification examination, please contact Region Coordinator Dan Hammerberg by phone at 906-399-4399.

You may also wish to view the Department of Labor and Economic Opportunity's Return to Work Guidelines for Manufacturing, as a helpful guide.

Information regarding this outbreak is changing rapidly. The latest information is available at www.michigan.gov/coronavirus and www.CDC.gov/Coronavirus.