



Pennsylvania State Fire Academy

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Minimum Standard for Accreditation (MSA)

July 1992

Course Title: Legal Aspects of the Fire Service (LAFS)

Length of Course: 16 Hours

Lecture/Lab Breakdown: 16/0

Prerequisites: None

Referenced Texts: Supplied

Course Goal: To help individuals understand general legal ramifications of the Fire Department office as well as the general liability of the Fire Department relative to the home municipality.

Description of Course: This is a must course for all emergency service personnel. In today's society we have become more vulnerable to litigation than ever before, as evidenced by the number of law suits filed in Pennsylvania against Fire and Ambulance Departments. There are Fire Departments and Ambulance Departments being sued in Pennsylvania. It is in your own personal best interest, and in the best interest of the municipality, that you plan to attend this seminar. The object of this course is to give you a working knowledge of the various statutes, case law decisions and ordinances that directly affect the operation of volunteer fire, rescue or ambulance organizations.

The class is structured so as to help you understand the general legal ramifications of your office, as well as your fire department's basic operations. Decisions are made, at the scene of an emergency, not only by officers but by non-officers as well, and these decisions will be subject to close scrutiny, if a law suit is ultimately filed by some unhappy third party. In this day and age one must be able to protect oneself on the fire ground legally, as well as physically.

Each individual enrolled should bring a copy of his Standard Operating Procedures, the department's By-laws and the department's Constitution.

Description of Methodology to be used: (Brief) Lecture, Discussion, Group Activities/Role Playing

Student Equipment/Supply Needs: Notebook, Department's Constitution, By-Laws and Standard Operating Procedures.

Equipment/Audiovisual/Supply requirements: Classroom setting, TV and VCR, Overhead and Screen
continued

MINIMUM STANDARDS FOR ACCREDITATION

COURSE OUTLINE
(General - Not Detailed)

<u>Time</u>	<u>Content</u>	<u>Instructor Notes</u>
2:00	Civil Liability	Negligence/Insurance Coverage/ Legal Definition I
2:00	Governmental Agreements	Ordinances/Workmen's Compensation Mutual Aid/Discriminations
2:00	Suit Areas	Junior Fireman/Good Samaritan
2:00	Department Procedure	Constitution/By-Laws/S.O.P./Records
2:00	Motor Vehicle Code	Blue Lights/Emergency & Private Vehicles
2:00	Your Department	Safety Standards/Dept.Regulation/Officer
1:00	Court Trial Review	Responsibility/Individual Responsibility
1:00	Compliance	SARA/OSHA/Right to Know
2:00	Non-Profit	Relief Fund/Fund Raising/Games of Chance

Competency Evaluation Mechanism (Brief description-attach copy): Refer to "Notes" under Course Outline.

Course Objectives (specific):

To provide the student with the following:

1. A working knowledge of various statutes.
2. A knowledge of case law decisions.
3. A knowledge of ordinances.
4. A knowledge of problems relative to liability in the fire service.
5. A knowledge of how to be in a court defensible position.

To provide the student with the following:

1. A knowledge of the responsibilities of the respective officers.
2. A knowledge of the authority of the respective office.
3. A knowledge of written records.
4. A knowledge of past decision which will directly affect their position.

Questions/Comments: Rita Wessel, Curriculum Specialist: Extension 106
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