Fire Certification Program
Fingerprinting
Frequently Asked Questions

It was recently recognized that the minimum requirements for fire service certification did require the submission of fingerprints for fire service professionals who have never been fingerprinted for certification purposes. The Fire Policy Committee and Board reviewed this standard and recommended updating the standard to remedy this oversight. The standard was open for public comment on December 1 – 23, 2014 and was enacted on December 29, 2014.

Q: Why does DPSST require fingerprinting?

A: Current statute and administrative rule prohibits fire service professionals who have been convicted of certain crimes from holding NFPA or Oregon-specific fire service certifications in the state. (Please refer to OAR 259-009-0070 for a complete list of mandatory and discretionary crimes.) This prohibition applies to Oregon convictions as well as convictions in another state of a crime that, if committed in this state, would constitute a disqualifying crime. In order to ensure that applicants for fire service certification have not been convicted of disqualifying crimes, DPSST must conduct a state and national criminal background check.

Q: When are fingerprints required?

A: Individuals applying for DPSST fire service certification after December 29, 2014 who have never been fingerprinted for certification purposes or who are identified in the Law Enforcement Data System (LEDS) as having out of state criminal history will be required to submit fingerprints to DPSST.

Q: Does this requirement apply to both career and volunteer fire service professionals?

A: Yes. The fingerprinting requirement is related to an application for certification, not the level of affiliation.
Q: What if I currently hold certifications but have never been fingerprinted? Will I be required to be fingerprinted?
A: No, unless an application for a new fire service certification is made.

Q: I was previously fingerprinted by my employer, another State Agency (EMS), when I got my Concealed Handgun license, etc. Do I have to be fingerprinted again?
A: Yes. Unfortunately, due to privacy laws, fingerprints are not retained by the State Police or the FBI so the previous prints have most likely been destroyed. The only way to run a criminal background check is to physically submit another set of fingerprints.

Q: How will I know if I need to be fingerprinted?
A: Upon discovery that an applicant for new fire service certification has never been printed for certification purposes or the person is identified as potentially having criminal convictions outside of the state of Oregon, the DPSST Fire Certification Program will send fire agencies a letter confirming that fingerprints are required. DPSST will also send the agency a fingerprint card and a self-addressed return envelope.

**Applications will not be rejected, but placed on hold until further notice.**

Q: Where can I get fingerprinted?
A: Once you’ve received a fingerprint card from DPSST, fingerprints can be rolled by anyone. However, if fingerprints are rolled incorrectly they may be rejected by the State Police or the FBI, which would require the submission of additional fingerprints and fees. **DPSST strongly recommends** you have your fingerprints rolled by a law enforcement agency or individual familiar with the fingerprinting process.
Q: What is the cost associated with fingerprinting?
A: The fingerprinting fee for certification is $42.75. This includes the cost for processing by the Oregon State Police and the FBI. The fire service agency or the individual applying for certification is responsible for paying the fee.

Q: How do I pay the fingerprinting fee?
A: The fee should be included with the fingerprint card and returned to DPSST. Because DPSST is billed for all fingerprints submitted, checks or money orders can be made out to DPSST. Please note that DPSST cannot process fingerprint cards without payment of the fee. Non-payment will result in delay of certification.

Q: What happens once my fingerprints and fees are submitted to DPSST?
A: DPSST forwards the fingerprint card to the Oregon State Police to run a statewide and national (FBI) criminal history check. The results are sent to DPSST and the fingerprints destroyed by the State Police. Once received, DPSST will review the applicant’s criminal history, if any, and make a certification eligibility determination. If an individual is unable to be certified due to a criminal conviction, the individual will be notified. *Criminal history (fingerprint) results requested for the purposes of certification are not shared with employers, law enforcement agencies, etc.

Q: When will I receive a DPSST certification after I am fingerprinted?
A: Once the fingerprint results are obtained from the State Police and the FBI. DPSST will continue to process applications on the regular cycle (every two weeks).

Q: Do I need to be printed prior to my maintenance recertification?
A: No. The fingerprint requirement applies to applicants for new certification only.

Note to reader: Some fire service agencies have expressed interest in fingerprinting all of their fire service personnel and keeping the fingerprints on file until DPSST requests them. Unfortunately, the Privacy Laws prohibit the storing of completed fingerprint cards. Individuals should not be fingerprinted until a request is made by DPSST.
Department of Public Safety Standards and Training

Fire Certification Fingerprint Process Flow Chart

Revised 3/15

All Applicants seeking fire service certification after December 31, 2014 who have never been fingerprinted for DPSST certification purposes OR who are identified in the Law Enforcement Data System (LEDS) as having criminal convictions in a state other than Oregon (multi-source offender) are required to submit prints (refer to OAR 259-009-0059). Once the individual has been fingerprinted, individuals WILL NOT be required to be fingerprinted again unless they show as a multi-source offender in LEDS. For more information, please refer to the Fire Certification Fingerprinting FAQ.

Fire service professional seeks certification. Application for Certification sent to DPSST.

Application review: individuals who require fingerprints will be identified by DPSST.

If fingerprints are required: fingerprinting request and instruction letter with fingerprint packet mailed to agency.

Individual completes fingerprint packet and returns to DPSST with appropriate fee. Refer to OAR 259-009-0059.

DPSST forwards fingerprints to Oregon State Police (OPS)/Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI).

DPSST receives fingerprint results from OSP/FBI.

If prints are accepted by OSP/FBI, application processed/certification sent to agency provided no criminal activity is found. Allow up to 4-6 weeks for processing from submission of application.

If prints are rejected as unreadable by OSP/FBI: DPSST forwards rejected fingerprint information to fire service agency along with a new fingerprint packet to be completed.

Individual completes another fingerprint packet and returns to DPSST. No additional fee necessary.

If no fingerprints are required: application processed/certification sent to agency. Allow up to 3 weeks for processing from submission of application.

Please Note:
1. This chart applies to career AND volunteer fire service professionals.
2. This chart assumes that an individual is not designated in the Law Enforcement Data System (LEDS) as a multi-source offender.