ENTRY-LEVEL FIRE SERVICE TRAINING REIMBURSEMENT

1. Subject:

Entry-level Fire Service Training Reimbursement

2. Purpose:

To establish policy and procedures for the administration of an entry-level fire service training reimbursement program as provided for in Connecticut General Statutes Sec. 7-323p effective July 1, 2007.

3. Scope:

This policy and corresponding procedures applies to the Commission on Fire Prevention and Control (Commission), Department of Administrative Services Small Agency Resource Team Business Office, municipalities, municipal and state agency fire departments who may formally request reimbursement for entry-level training.

4. Policy:

The State Fire Administrator or his designee is responsible for the administration of state funds appropriated specifically for the purpose of "buying down" the cost of attending entry-level fire service training culminating in certification by the Commission.

4.1 Definitions. As used in this Policy:

4.1.1 "Certification" shall mean any student who has satisfactorily demonstrated to the Commission their ability to meet the requirements as defined in the most current edition of the applicable National Fire Protection Association Professional Qualifications Standard, adopted by reference by the Commission, except as amended, altered or deleted by State of Connecticut Regulations.

4.1.2 “Entry level training” shall mean Firefighter I as promulgated by CGS 7-323l-80 or the Connecticut Fire Academy’s Recruit Firefighter Training program as defined by the Commission.

4.1.3 “Firefighter I” shall mean an individual who has satisfactorily met or exceeds the requirements as promulgated by CGS 7-323l-80.

4.1.4 “Municipal Fire Department” shall mean any town, city, borough, or tribal nation fire department or incorporated fire district organized and located within the State of Connecticut for the protection thereof from fire.

4.1.5 “Municipality” shall mean any town, city, borough or incorporated fire district within the State of Connecticut.

4.1.6 “Pre-Approval Process” shall mean the procedure that a municipality or municipal fire department shall follow to become eligible for reimbursement of their personnel participating in entry level training.

4.1.7 “Recruit Training” shall mean the Commission approved 14-week residential based program called ***Recruit Firefighter*** and delivered by the Connecticut Fire Academy (CFA). Municipal or State Agency Fire Departments conducting Recruit Training shall submit a program syllabus and budget for review and approval as equivalent training. The Recruit Firefighter Training program syllabus is approved and monitored by the Veteran’s Administration and the Connecticut Career Fire Chiefs Association.

4.1.8 “Reimbursement” shall mean the payment of funds to a municipality, municipal or state agency fire department for the cost of entry level training of fire department personnel.

4.2 Pre-Approval Process

4.2.1 A municipality, municipal or state agency fire department shall apply to, and secure a Reimbursement Authorization Identification Number from the Commission prior to commencing training. Municipalities, municipal and state agency fire departments not securing a Reimbursement Authorization Identification Number shall only be reimbursed within available resources.

4.3 Reimbursement Authorization Identification Number

4.3.1 Upon receipt of an application for a Reimbursement Authorization Identification Number, the Office of State Fire

Administration will review said application for completeness and verify with the Business Office sufficient funding is available. The Business Office will encumber funds internally to satisfy the reimbursement request.

4.3.2 Upon confirmation of sufficient funds by the Commission's Business Office, the Office of State Fire Administration will issue a Reimbursement Authorization Identification Number on an approved form within ten (10) business days. This form shall be used by the municipality, municipal or state agency fire department to formally request said reimbursement upon the successful completion of training and certification of its personnel.

4.3.3 Municipalities, Municipal or State Agency Fire Departments with personnel registered in the Connecticut Fire Academy's Recruit Training program shall have the option to issue a Purchase Order for the full tuition cost. Within the first seven weeks of the Recruit Firefighter training program the Commission on Fire Prevention and Control will invoice the Municipality, Municipal or State Agency Fire Department for 50% of the tuition. Upon successful completion of training and attainment of certification the Commission shall process an internal transfer of funds in order to be made whole.

4.4 Reimbursement for Training

4.4.1 Upon completion of training and documentation of each candidates certification, the municipality, municipal or state agency fire department shall be reimbursed for one-half the cost of any pre-authorized training. Eligibility for reimbursement shall only be valid for one year from the candidate's date of certification.

4.4.1.1 In cases where a candidate has been responsible for and directly paid entry level training tuition, reimbursement may be made to the candidate through a municipality, municipal or state agency fire department. The municipality, municipal or state agency fire department must agree in writing to this transfer arrangement.

4.4.2 A reimbursement cost cap has been established at a maximum rate of $300 for Firefighter I and $2,887.50 for Recruit Training for each candidate certified.

4.4.3 Reimbursement may be claimed by submitting to the Commission's Office of State Fire Administration the Reimbursement Authorization Identification Number form. Supporting documentation detailed on the form shall also be submitted prior to final processing of payment.

4.4.4 Reimbursable expenses include invoice from a Regional Fire School or thorough documentation of instructor salaries, training Manuals, certification testing expenses, consumables, etc. All Instructors utilized in training shall be certified by the Commission as Fire Service Instructor I minimum.

4.5 Appeal

4.5.1 A municipality, municipal or state agency fire department may appeal a denied claim for reimbursement or denial of a request for issuance of a Reimbursement Authorization Identification Number.

4.5.2 A municipality, municipal or state agency fire department wishing to appeal a decision regarding a denied claim of reimbursement or a request for issuance of a Reimbursement Authorization Identification Number may do so in writing within thirty (30) days of a decision. The State Fire Administrator shall arrange a hearing not more than thirty (30) days after receipt of the appeal. The hearing board shall be comprised of an Appeal Committee consisting of the State Fire Administrator and three persons representing the Connecticut Fire Chiefs Association, Connecticut Career Fire Chiefs Association and the Connecticut Fire Department Instructors Association. The Appeal Committee shall render a decision and notify the appellant in not more than ten (10) business days.

4.5.3 In the event the appellant is not satisfied by the aforementioned decision, further appeal may be made to the Commission on Fire Prevention and Control, in writing, not more than thirty (30) days after said hearing. The Commission shall schedule the appeal as an item on the agenda for a regularly scheduled Commission meeting not more than sixty (60) days after receipt of the request and shall notify the appellant not less than twenty (20) days prior to the date of said meeting. The decision of the Commission shall be final.

4.6 Audit

4.6.1 All claims of reimbursement shall be subject to audit by the Commission on Fire Prevention and Control and the Auditors of Public Accounts. Municipalities, municipal and state agency fire departments shall maintain, for a minimum of three (3) years, accurate records and documentation of expenses (ie, Payroll records, invoices, etc.) incurred in the direct delivery of Firefighter I or Recruit Training.