



FIRE PLAN EXAMINER

Candidate Handbook



This Fire Plan Examiner Candidate Handbook contains important program information along with the following documents:

Please carefully review this handbook and retain it for reference.



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NFPA's MISSION

Our vision: We are the leading global advocate for the elimination of death, injury, property and economic loss due to fire, electrical and related hazards.

Our mission: To help save lives and reduce loss with information, knowledge and passion.

MISSION OF NFPA CERTIFICATION PROGRAMS

The overall mission of NFPA's Certification Program is to enhance human and organizational performance as related to the use and application of NFPA codes and standards.

FIRE PLAN EXAMINER CERTIFICATION PROGRAM

The NFPA Fire Plan Examiner certification program was created in response to repeated requests by local entities, state agencies, and national organizations for certification programs founded on the *NFPA 1031, Standard for Professional Qualifications for Fire Inspector and Plan Examiner*. These requests suggested that NFPA be the main catalyst and ultimate certifying body for such programs. In late 1996, an independent organization conducted research that validated this need and in 1998 the certified fire plan examiner program became operational.

PRO BOARD ACCREDITATION

NFPA received its Pro Board accreditation on April 1, 2015. CFI-I, CFI-II, and CFPE certifications are now recognized by the Pro Board. Those candidates taking the NFPA exam after April 1, 2015, will be entered into the Pro Board registry and receive a certificate with both the NFPA and Pro Board seals.

CFPE PROGRAM GOALS:

- Enhance professionalism within the fire inspection community
- Ensure a uniform, fair process for certification that is accessible to everyone who is eligible
- Ensure proficiency in the use of codes and standards
- Facilitate success for those seeking certification
- Promote professional development through continuous learning
- Recognize and provide evidence of competence as related to *NFPA 1031, Standard for Professional Qualifications for Fire Inspector and Plan Examiner*

FEATURES & BENEFITS

CFPE credential holders receive the following benefits:

- A Pro Board recognized certification
- Recognition as an expert by your colleagues
- Greater confidence in your abilities
- Improved job performance
- Career advancement opportunities

Certificate holders also receive an NFPA / Pro Board CFPE certificate that further highlights their accomplishment.

ELIGIBILITY

A candidate for the CFPE certification must have a high school diploma or the equivalent, before being allowed to sit for the exam.

APPLICATIONS & FORMS

All CFPE applications including the program application, and retest application can be found online at nfpa.org/cfpe.

APPLICATION ACCEPTANCE

An application is accepted only when both the completed and signed application is received by NFPA, and when the examination fee has been processed.

Important: When emailing this application to NFPA, you must use the NFPA secure email server at web1.zixmail.net/s/welcome.jsp?b=nfpa. Once you access this server and create your NFPA secure email account, you should select OTHER from the "To" pull-down list, and then enter adminsvecs@nfpa.org in the address box. Complete the email process by attaching your personal documentation and clicking "Send."

Following the receipt of your CFPE application form and exam fee, the NFPA will send you an authorization letter with instructions on how to schedule your computer based exam.

PROGRAM FEES

\$350 USD for the initial exam. \$150 USD to recertify at the end of each three (3) year certification period. The most up to date fee schedule may be found on the applicable forms at nfpa.org/cfpe.

VETERANS AFFAIRS BENEFITS

The U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) has approved the CFPE certification program for reimbursement of exam fees. Contact your local veterans' affairs office for details.

NON-DISCRIMINATION

NFPA evaluates all CFPE candidates without regard to race, color, national origin, religion, sex, gender identity (including gender expression), sexual orientation, disability, age, marital status, or family/parental status.

SPECIAL ACCOMMODATIONS

NFPA provides special accommodations in accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1991 (ADA). If a disability prevents you from taking the exam under standard conditions, you may request special accommodations. Written requests explaining the nature of the disability (i.e., the diagnosis), the type of accommodation you feel is appropriate, and supporting documentation of the diagnosis from a qualified healthcare professional must accompany the registration application. NFPA reserves the right to request reasonable documentation from healthcare or other professionals to support requests for special accommodations.

STEPS TO CERTIFICATION

Step 1 – Application – Submit your application online at <https://www.nfpa.org/-/media/Files/Training/certification/CFPE/CFPEApplication.ashx>, using a credit card or mail your application with a check to the address on the application form.

Step 2 - Exam - You will have to sit for the exam within four months of entering the CFI-I program. If you fail your exam, you are permitted to retest two (2) additional times (*completing a retest application and paying a retest fee each time*) within twelve (12) months from the day your original CFPE application was accepted. If you fail the exam three (3) times within this period, you must wait until the twelve (12) month testing period expires before you will be allowed to restart the registration process.

Step 3 - Practicum - Complete the required CFPE practicum and submit the required practicum verification forms to NFPA within twelve (12) months from the day your original CFPE application was accepted. For those candidates working with a partnering agency, please submit practicum verification forms to your program administrator.

REFERENCE MATERIALS

It is the candidate's responsibility to obtain materials needed for study purposes and to have present during the exam. The following list contains resources that may be used in preparing for and taking the exam. All exam questions are compatible with these code sets. Please verify which set you require, with your jurisdiction or certification partnership agency.

2015 NFPA Code Set:

- NFPA 1, Fire Code - 2015 Ed.
- NFPA 13, Installation of Sprinkler Systems - 2013 Ed.
- NFPA 72, National Fire Alarm Code® - 2013 Ed.
- NFPA 101®, Life Safety Code® - 2015 Ed.

2018 NFPA Code Set:

- NFPA 1, Fire Code - 2018 Ed.
- NFPA 13, Installation of Sprinkler Systems - 2016 Ed.
- NFPA 72, National Fire Alarm Code® - 2016 Ed.
- NFPA 101®, Life Safety Code® - 2018 Ed.

These NFPA codes and standards have been conveniently packaged into reference sets and are available for people registering for the CFPE exam at a discounted price, only through NFPA Admin. & Support Services. Refer to the CFPE application form to order these references.

IFSTA PLANS EXAMINER FOR FIRE AND EMERGENCY SERVICES, 2nd EDITION.

A portion of the exam questions are based on content found in the *IFSTA Plans Examiner for Fire and Emergency Services, 2nd Edition*. This publication may be purchased on the International Fire Service Training Association's website at ifsta.org.

EXAM PREPARATION

The NFPA CFPE exam is based on the job performance requirements for the fire plan examiner I level that are defined in chapter 7 of the 2014 Edition of *NFPA 1031, Standard for Professional Qualification for Fire Inspector and Plans Examiner*. (See NFPA 1031 requirements section.)

Review Reference Materials - it is not necessary to memorize the references, but it is important to know what content is found in each of the referenced NFPA documents. For example, NFPA 101 covers egress requirements among other topics. Know the general format of the NFPA documents. Each NFPA document is laid out in the same way and divided into similar sections, beginning with administration and definitions, followed by the specific requirements in the code. Look for tables in the reference materials that summarize requirements. These tips will help you find specific information quickly during the examination.

Sample Questions – the exam study guide contains 20 sample questions to help you become familiar with similar types of questions found on the examination. Answers to the sample questions can be found on the last page of this section.

Sample Question - what is the occupant load factor used for determining the required means of egress for an existing business occupancy?

- (A) 20 sq ft (1.9 sq m)
- (B) 50 sq ft (4.6 sq m)
- (C) 100 sq ft (9.3 sq m)
- (D) 200 sq ft (18.6 sq m)

Analyze the Question - This is an occupancy question. Means of egress provisions and other occupancy questions are addressed by *NFPA 101[®], Life Safety Code[®]*.

EXAM FORMAT

The exam is designed to evaluate the candidate's knowledge of fire inspection principles and code application skills at the level of fire plan examiner (as defined in *NFPA 1031*). The exam is a four hour, 100 multiple-choice question, open-book exam. It is compatible with the 2015 and 2018 reference sets listed above. The exam is only available in English.

- **Computer Based Exam** - is available on demand at test centers throughout the world. Upon receipt of the application and test fee, the applicant will receive their authorization letter with instructions on how to schedule their computer-based exam.

EXAM RULES AND PROCEDURES

The following policies and procedures pertain to every candidate taking the exam. Failure to comply will be grounds for dismissal from the exam location:

- You must present a valid photo ID.
- Smart phones and other electronic devices are not permitted in the testing area.
- Personal calculators are NOT permitted at the test center. A scientific calculator is available on-screen.
- You will not be permitted to continue the test beyond the established four-hour time limit.
- You should bring only the approved, published and copyrighted documents identified in this handbook into the exam room. Photocopies of documents, additional pages with notations, and other test taking aids are not permitted. All materials taken into the exam room are subject to review by the proctor.
- Electronic versions of NFPA documents are not permitted to be used at the test site.
- You may highlight, tab, and make notations within your NFPA documents prior to entering the exam room. Only commercial permanent adhesive type tabs are allowed. Post-it type or other types of easily moveable tabs are **not** permitted. You may **not** write on, mark in, or tab the pages of your NFPA documents during the exam.
- If you wish to leave the room during the test, you must secure the proctor's permission. You will not be allowed to make up lost time.
- Visitors are not permitted at the testing location.
- Smoking is not permitted in the testing area.
- For the paper and pencil exam, bring three sharpened soft-lead (No. 2) pencils or mechanical pencils and a good eraser. Pencils and erasers will not be furnished.
- Candidates may provide comments on exam items during the exam, directly on the screen. All comments will be reviewed by NFPA certification staff. Candidates will not receive responses to their comments.

EXAM RESCHEDULING/CANCELATION

If you wish to change your exam date or time, you may do so through the Prometric scheduling portal at <https://proscheduler.prometric.com/?prg=NFPA2&path=confirm> or by contacting Prometric's contact centers listed on <https://www.prometric.com/nfpacert>.

There is no charge for reschedule or cancellation of an appointment if the change is made 30 or more days prior to your appointment date.

Between 29 and 5 calendar days prior to your appointment date, you may cancel or reschedule your appointment, but you will be required to pay a \$50 fee (to Prometric). 4 or fewer days prior to your appointment date, you may not reschedule. If you cancel your appointment during this period or fail to appear for your appointment, you will be considered a no-show, and will need to submit a retest application with NFPA and pay applicable fees prior to scheduling a new appointment. Information on how to submit retest application can be found on the applicable certification program website at <https://www.nfpa.org/certification>.

EXAM SECURITY

Failure to follow candidate instructions regarding exam security will result in your application being voided and forfeiture of your application fee. Conduct that results in violation of exam security or disrupts the administration of the exam could result in cancellation of your exam and dismissal from the testing center. In addition, your exam will be considered void and will not be scored. Examples of misconduct include, but are not limited to, the following: writing on anything other than the margins of your test booklet, looking at another candidate's exam, or talking with other candidates anytime during the entire exam period.

You may not attend the exam only to review or audit test materials. You may not copy any portion of the exam for any reason. No exam information may leave the test room under any circumstances. This includes memorizing questions for distribution to any other person. No unauthorized persons will be admitted into the testing area. It is very important for you to note all exam content is strictly confidential. You may only communicate about the test, or questions on the test, using the appropriate forms provided within the exam delivery system. At no other time, before, during or after the exam, may you communicate orally, electronically or in writing with any person or entity about the content of the exam or individual exam questions.

The NFPA shall have the right to revoke or invalidate any exam score with or without a finding of fault or misconduct if data forensic analysis or other credible evidence establishes a reasonable possibility that a score is not valid or the integrity or security of the exam was compromised.

COPYRIGHT

CFPE exam questions are copyrighted by the NFPA. All rights reserved. Reproduction, distribution or display in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical or otherwise, is strictly prohibited.

EXAM RESULTS

The computer-based examination allows candidates to receive their results immediately upon completion. The exam results are reported as pass or fail. Your actual exam score or percentage will not be provided. You will also receive an email with a diagnostic report that provides an infographic indicating how you performed on each content area so that you may see which topics you will need to study to prepare for a retest if necessary.

RETEST

If you fail your exam, you are permitted to retest two additional times (completing a retest application and paying a retest fee each time) within 12 months from the day your original CFPE application was accepted. If you fail the exam three times within this period, you must wait until the 12-month testing period expires before you will be allowed to restart the registration process. The retest application is online at nfpa.org/cfpe. The cost to retest is \$175 USD.

CONFIDENTIALITY

The identity and information concerning all candidates is confidential. Information regarding exam results are only communicated in writing from NFPA Admin. & Support Services directly to the candidate. Exam results are never provided over the phone.

PRACTICUM PHASE EXPLANATION

The objective of the practicum phase is to provide the CFPE candidate with an opportunity to demonstrate the application of the skills and knowledge that are used on the job through actual plan reviews, and to satisfy any NFPA 1031 job performance requirement's that may not have appeared on the exam. Successful completion of the practicum is a requirement for certification. The evaluation parameters are based on the requirements of chapter 7 in *NFPA 1031, Standard for Professional Qualifications for Fire Inspector and Plan Examiner*.

The practicum consists of 7 activities including five related to the review of different types of fire protection plans, and two to related to administration. A signed verification form is required for each activity. For detailed information refer to the CFPE Practicum Phase Workbook.

USE OF YOUR CFPE CREDENTIAL

Once granted the CFPE credential, the certified may refer to themselves as a CFPE credential holder as long as the certified has an active certification status. The certified is authorized to use the CFPE designation after their name on business cards, personal letterhead, resumes, websites and in their email signature.

RECERTIFICATION

Once a candidate has been certified as a fire plan examiner, recertification every three years is required. If NFPA does not receive the necessary recertification materials within the three year period, the certification holder will no longer be considered a certified fire plan examiner, and will no longer be entitled to use the CFPE credential in professional communications. To regain certification, the candidate must successfully complete the entire CFPE certification program (subject to the applicable application fees).

In order to maintain currency and relevancy in the profession, CFPE certification holders are required to demonstrate their continuing participation in professional development activities. NFPA awards points towards recertification for various activities. Sixty (60) points of professional development activities related to fire plan review must be earned and submitted during the 3-year recertification cycle. Certification holders are required to complete and return the Summary of Recertification Points Form attesting that they have 60 recertification points. Recertification forms are available at nfpa.org/cfpe. Back up documentation is not required when submitting the Summary of Recertification Points Form.

RECERTIFICATION AUDIT

Certification holders may be subject to a random audit of their CFPE recertification documentation for a period of up to six (6) months after their recertification date. Accordingly, certification holders are expected to retain recertification documentation in their possession for six (6) months beyond their recertification date.

In order to recertify, the certificant must accumulate continuing education points. It is important that you begin accumulating the required points as soon as possible. All activities must be clearly related to the plan examiner field of practice. If college courses are declared for training hours, the same course cannot be taken twice within the 3-year period, and the candidate must convert credit hours to actual hours spent in the classroom.

The certified must submit documented evidence of a total of 60 credit points from the following categories:

<u>Category</u>	<u>Allotment</u>	<u>Minimum Points</u>	<u>Maximum Points</u>
Training	One point per contact hour	Fifteen (15)	Sixty (60)
Teaching	Two points per contact hour	Zero (0)	Forty-five (45)
Professional Practice	½ point per hour of plan review	Zero (0)	Thirty (30)
Writing for Publication	Five points per article	Zero (0)	Fifteen (15)
Writing for Publication	Ten points per book	Zero (0)	Fifteen (15)

Documentation – Reasonable proof of attendance or participation in the described categories will be accepted. Reasonable includes:

- Course certificates (in person or online)
- Letters of attestation from course sponsors
- College transcripts
- Letters from employers
- Other evidence as required

REPLACEMENT CERTIFICATES

Replacement certificates are available at a charge of \$15.00 per certificate by contacting NFPA Admin. & Support Services at adminsvcs@nfpa.org.

CONTACT INFORMATION

NFPA Admin. & Support Services
11 Tracy Drive
Avon, MA 02322

Email: adminsvcs@nfpa.org

CFPE EXAM WEIGHTED CRITERIA TABLE

The following table indicates the percentage (%) of exam content for the five major domains of the NFPA CFPE exam. The domains and their sub-components are from the 2014 Edition of *NFPA 1031, Standard for Professional Qualifications for Fire Inspector and Plan Examiner*. This exam weighted criteria is in effect as of March 1, 2019.

I. Administrative	10%
A. Prepare reports given observations from a plan review, so that the report is clear and concise, and reflects the findings of the plan review in accordance with applicable codes and standards and the policies and procedures of the jurisdiction. (7.2.1)	
i. (A) Requisite Knowledge. Codes and standards, legal requirements for plan review reports, and accepted practices, policies, and procedures of the jurisdiction.	
ii. (B) Requisite Skills. The ability to conduct code-related research and write reports.	
B. Facilitate the resolution of deficiencies identified during the plan review, given a submittal and the established policies and procedures of the jurisdiction, so that deficiencies are identified, documented, and reported to the plan submitter with applicable references to codes and standards. (7.2.2)	
i. (A) Requisite Knowledge. Policies and procedures of the jurisdiction regarding the communication of discrepancies, the appeals process, and codes and standards.	
ii. (B) Requisite Skills. The ability to communicate orally and in writing.	
C. Process plan review documents given a set of plans and specifications, so that required permits are issued in accordance with the policies of the jurisdiction. (7.2.3)	
i. (A) Requisite Knowledge. Plan review policies and procedures of the jurisdiction.	
ii. (B) Requisite Skills. The ability to review applications for completeness.	
D. Recommend policies and procedures for the delivery of plan review services, given management objectives, so that plan reviews are conducted in accordance with the policies of the jurisdiction and due process of the law is followed. (7.3.8)	
i. (A) Requisite Knowledge. Policies and procedures of the jurisdiction related to plan review and sources of detailed and technical information relating to fire protection and life safety.	
ii. (B) Requisite Skills. The ability to identify construction methods and materials related to fire safety, read and interpret construction plans and specifications, communicate orally and in writing, educate, research, make decisions, recognize problems, and resolve conflicts.	

- II. General Knowledge** **15%**
- A. Determine the applicable code or standard given a fire protection issue, so that the proper document, edition, and section are referenced. (7.2.4)
 - i. (A) Requisite Knowledge. Applicable codes and standards adopted by the jurisdiction, format of codes and standards, interrelationship of codes and standards, and procedures adopted by the organizations responsible for promulgating these documents.
 - ii. (B) Requisite Skills. The ability to conduct code-related research, apply codes and standards, and make decisions.
 - B. Participate in legal proceedings given the findings of a plan review and consultation with legal counsel, so that testimony is accurate and the plan reviewer's demeanor is appropriate to the proceeding. (7.3.9)
 - i. (A) Requisite Knowledge. The legal requirements pertaining to evidence rules in the legal system and the types of legal proceedings.
 - ii. (B) Requisite Skills. Familiarity with courtroom demeanor, communication and listening skills and the ability to differentiate fact from opinions
- III. Site Plan Review** **20%**
- A. Evaluate code compliance for required fire flow and hydrant location and spacing, given a plan, codes and standards, and fire flow test results , so that hydrants are correctly located, required fire flow is determined, and deficiencies are identified , documented, and reported in accordance with the policies and procedures of the jurisdiction (7.3.6)
 - i. (A) Requisite Knowledge. Standard civil engineering symbols; types of water supply and distribution systems; water distribution system test methods; characteristics of public and private water supply systems, water meters, backflow prevention, and other devices that can impact on fire flow; the effects of friction loss and elevation on water flow; potential impact of state health regulations on fire flow; and the applicable codes and standards related to fire flow in the jurisdiction.
 - ii. (B) Requisite Skills. The ability to interpret fire flow test results, determine fire hydrant locations and spacing, and read fire flow graphs.
 - B. Evaluate emergency vehicle access, given a plan, so that emergency access is provided in accordance with applicable codes and standards and deficiencies are identified, documented, and reported in accordance with the policies of the jurisdiction. (7.3.7)
 - i. (A) Requisite Knowledge. Operating requirements for fire department apparatus, planning and zoning requirements, and emergency access requirements of applicable codes and standards.
 - ii. (B) Requisite Skills. The ability to interpret and use plan scale.

IV. Building Plan Review

35%

- A.** Verify the occupancy classification, given a set of plans, specifications, and a description of a building and its intended use, so that the classification is made in accordance with the applicable codes and standards and the policies of the jurisdiction. (7.3.2)
 - i.** (A) Requisite Knowledge. How to calculate occupant loads for an occupancy and for building use, and code requirements, regulations, operational features, and fire hazards presented by various occupancies.
 - ii.** (B) Requisite Skills. The ability to calculate occupant loads, identify occupancy factors related to various occupancy types, and use measuring tools.
- B.** Verify the construction type, given a set of plans, including the occupancy classification area, height, number of stories, and location, so that the building is in accordance with applicable codes and standards and deficiencies are identified, documented, and reported. (7.3.3)
 - i.** (A) Requisite Knowledge. Types of construction, fire-rated construction components, typical building construction methods and materials, and code requirements related to construction types.
 - ii.** (B) Requisite Skills. The ability to read plans, determine construction types, and conduct code-related research.
- C.** Verify the occupant load, given a set of plans, so that the maximum allowable occupant load is in accordance with the applicable codes and standards. (7.3.4)
 - i.** (A) Requisite Knowledge. How to calculate occupant loads for an occupancy and for building use, and code requirements, regulations, operational features, and fire hazards presented by various occupancies.
 - ii.** (B) Requisite Skills. The ability to calculate occupant loads, identify occupancy factors related to various occupancy types, and use measuring tools.
- D.** Verify that required egress is provided, given a set of plans and an occupant load, so that all required egress elements are provided and deficiencies are identified, documented, and reported in accordance with the policies of the jurisdiction. (7.3.5)
 - i.** (A) Requisite Knowledge. Applicable code requirements for means of egress elements, occupancy egress requirements, and the relationship of fixed fire protection systems to egress requirements.
 - ii.** (B) Requisite Skills. The ability to determine egress requirements based on occupant load and research codes.

V. Fire Protection and Life Safety Systems Review

20%

- A.** Identify the requirements for fire protection or a life safety system given a set of plans, so that deficiencies are identified, documented, and

reported in accordance with the policies and procedures of the jurisdiction. (7.3.1)

- i. (A) Requisite Knowledge. Applicable code requirements for life safety systems, interior finish, and third-party testing and evaluation.
 - ii. (B) Requisite Skills. The ability to read basic floor plans or shop drawings and identify symbols used and apply codes and standards.
- B.** Evaluate plans for the installation of fire protection and life safety systems, given a plan submittal, so that the fire protection systems, including pre-engineered systems, and equipment are reviewed and deficiencies are identified, documented, and reported in accordance with the policies and procedure of the jurisdiction. (7.3.10)
- i. (A) Requisite Knowledge. Applicable codes and standards for fire protection systems, basic physical science as it relates to fire behavior and fire suppression, basic system design criteria, material listing requirements, material specifications, installation techniques, acceptance inspection/testing of completed installations, construction types and techniques, and classification of occupancies.
 - ii. (B) Requisite Skills. The ability to review specifications, read plans, classify occupancies, and apply standards.

CFPE EXAMINATION STUDY GUIDE

The objective of this examination study guide is to provide resource materials and study recommendations relating to preparation for the NFPA Fire Plan Examiner Examination. This document is designed to help you improve your test taking skills.

To make the task of preparing for the examination more manageable, this examination study guide has been organized into five steps:

1. Using the examination study guide
2. Sample examination questions
3. Sample examination answer key

USING THE EXAMINATION STUDY GUIDE

To maximize the efficiency of your preparation, begin by studying this section of the examination study guide. It has been carefully organized and written to provide you with important information to assist you in successfully completing the NFPA Fire Plan Examiner Examination. There is no easy approach to prepare for the written examination. However, through the use of this examination study guide, your approach will be more systematic and logical.

The examination study guide provides you with preparation recommendations including good study habits, resources you will need for the examination, what is important to know and understand for taking the examination, and additional references that are useful as you prepare. The examination study guide provides you with a sample examination, 20 questions, and an answer key.

A good study strategy includes preparation. To prepare, determine first what you need to learn, choose your study materials, and select a quiet, comfortable place that allows you to focus. Before you begin, check to make sure you have everything you need. Try to avoid interruptions for any reason.

Developing a study plan will allow you to learn the most as you study. Include setting goals in your study plan. Review what you have studied as often as possible. The more you review, the more you will retain.

When you begin studying, learn the layout of the codes and standards that will be used as reference material during the examination. While it is not necessary to memorize the specific requirements contained in the codes and standards, it is important to know what information is covered by the documents and how to quickly locate information in them. Look for tables that summarize requirements, these could save you valuable time during the examination. Know the format of documents such as the Life Safety Code® occupancy chapters. This will assist in finding specific information rapidly during the examination.

The Fire Plan Examiner Examination is a four-hour open-book exam. The open-book examination will require you to respond to questions that are tied to a plan set that will be provided to you at the examination site.

The following list contains the resources to be used in preparing for the examination. Remember, it is your responsibility to obtain materials you will need for study purposes and to have present during the examination. No references will be provided at the exam locations.

Reference material **allowed** at test site:

- NFPA 1, Fire Code®, 2015 or 2018 edition
- NFPA 13, Installation of Sprinkler Systems, 2013 or 2016 edition
- NFPA 72, National Fire Alarm & Signaling Code®, 2013 or 2016 edition
- NFPA 101, Life Safety Code®, 2015 or 2018 edition
- IFSTA Plan Examiner for Fire and Emergency Services, 2nd Edition

Once you have access to, or have obtained, all the resource materials necessary for study, what are the important points to focus on? Begin by learning the layout of your resource materials. Each NFPA document is divided into similar parts, beginning with administration and definitions, followed by the specific requirements in the code. The better you understand the layout of the resources, the easier it will be to find answers to questions during the examination.

Develop an understanding of the general content of each resource. For example, *NFPA 1, Fire Code*, covers all aspects of fire protection and prevention utilized in other NFPA codes and standards. With an understanding of the resource, it will be easier to determine the applicable document for answers to questions during the examination.

It is important to know how to find things quickly in your resource materials. The better you know the layout, and general content of each resource, the quicker you will be able to find what you are looking for. It is extremely important that you pace yourself during the examination. This is one reason why review of materials is so important.

This examination study guide provides a sample question that takes you step-by-step through a code research problem. The ability to look at a question or problem related to a code issue, identify the relevant code or standard, and then locate the correct answer is one of the most essential skills for the fire plan examiner. While this step-by-step review may not be enough to make the user an expert at code research, it is intended to demonstrate a process that can be used during the examination and on-the-job. Follow the path through the codes and standards until you can see how the problem was addressed and answered. After reviewing this sample question and analysis, think of similar issues and use the format introduced to reach an answer to the question.

During the examination, this process may assist you in quickly identifying the issue and the related document that must be used to correctly answer specific questions.

During the examination, you will interpret and apply code-related material in response to selected test questions. As previously stated, pacing yourself and knowing the general layout and content of the NFPA codes and standards are very important to your strategy for success.

PRACTICE EXAM

There is a 100-question practice exam available for purchase on the NFPA website using retired CFPE exam questions, and new questions written specifically for the practice exam. The practice exam may help you become familiar with the structure and content of the actual CFPE exam. Your results should help identify strengths and weaknesses in your knowledge of the content covered by the actual CFPE exam and can help you tailor your study strategy.

SCORING THE EXAMINATION

The examination allows candidates to receive their results immediately upon completion. The exam results are reported as pass or fail. Your actual exam score or percentage will not be provided. You will also receive an email with a diagnostic report that provides an infographic indicating how you performed on each content area so that you may see which topics you will need to study to prepare for a retest if necessary.

SAMPLE QUESTIONS AND ANALYSIS

The following sample outlines a typical process that may help you to find the correct answer during the exam.

Question - What is the occupant load factor used for determining the required means of egress for an existing business occupancy?

- (A) 20 ft² (1.9 m²)
- (B) 50 ft² (4.6 m²)
- (C) 100 ft² (9.3 m²)
- (D) 200 ft² (18.6 m²)

Analyze the Question – This question refers to the requirement of occupancy load factors for determining means of egress.

Find the right reference document – Means of egress provisions are addressed by *NFPA 101®*, *Life Safety Code®*. Check the contents page and/or index – By scanning the contents and/or the index pages, you should be able to find the appropriate chapter or section. In this case, checking the content pages, you will find it listed under Section 7.3, Capacity of Means of Egress. The index also gives you an additional reference. Under **Occupant load** there is reference to “**Existing Business Occupancies**,” in Section 39.1.7. This section sends you to table 7.3.1.2.

Use the information to answer the question – Based on the information provided, the correct answer to the sample question would be: (C) 100 ft² (9.3 m²).

SAMPLE EXAMINATION QUESTIONS

Test-taking skills are as important as study skills. Practice tests are invaluable in preparing for the examination. When taking the examination, it is important to read and follow the directions, budget your time and pace yourself, and read carefully and literally each question and all the answer choices.

The following sample examination questions are multiple-choice questions similar to those on the actual examination. Before you begin, prepare yourself as you would for the actual examination. Organize your resource materials, obtain pencils, and situate yourself in a quiet, comfortable location.

- Which of the following should **not** be included on a certificate of fitness?
 - Expiration date
 - Signature of applicant
 - Purpose of certificate
 - Notary public seal
- What is the **minimum** per occupant floor area requirement for a new educational classroom facility?
 - 7 ft² (0.6 m²)
 - 15 ft² (1.4 m²)
 - 20 ft² (1.9 m²)
 - 50 ft² (4.6 m²)
- Which of the following occupancies and occupant loads are **not** properly paired?

<u>Type of Occupancy</u>	<u>Number of sq ft (sq m) required per person</u>
(A) Library (reading room)	100 (9.3)
(B) Conference Room (unconcentrated)	15 (1.4)
(C) Swimming Pool (water surface)	50 (4.6)
(D) Lodge Hall (concentrated use)	7 (0.65)
- What is the wall that separates a legitimate stage from the auditorium seating area?
 - Curtain wall
 - Parapet wall
 - Proscenium wall
 - Panel wall

5. A non-sprinklered boiler room in an existing business occupancy must be separated from the rest of the building by fire barriers having what **minimum** fire resistance rating?
- (A) 3/4 hour
 - (B) 1 hour
 - (C) 1-1/2 hours
 - (D) 2 hours
6. What is the **minimum** thickness required for a solid bonded-wood-core door with a 20-minute fire protection rating, used between a living unit and corridor in an existing apartment building?
- (A) 1-1/4 in. (31 mm)
 - (B) 1-1/2 in. (38 mm)
 - (C) 1-3/4 in. (44 mm)
 - (D) 2 in. (51 mm)
7. How often are fire drills required for each shift of facility personnel in acute care hospitals?
- (A) Monthly
 - (B) Quarterly
 - (C) Semiannually
 - (D) Annually
8. Which of the following devices are required to activate the smoke-control system in a new atrium?
- I. Automatic sprinkler systems
 - II. Smoke detectors
 - III. Manual controls for fire departments use
 - IV. A manual fire-protective signaling system
- (A) I + II
 - (B) I + III
 - (C) II + III
 - (D) II + IV
9. In a fire resistance rated assembly, what is the **minimum** fire-resistive rating for a door in an exit access corridor?
- (A) 20 minutes
 - (B) 30 minutes
 - (C) 45 minutes
 - (D) 60 minutes

10. A Class B interior wall or ceiling finish has which of the following flame-spread ratings?
- (A) 0-25
 - (B) 26-75
 - (C) 76-200
 - (D) 201-400
11. What is the **maximum** allowable smoke-developed rating of an interior wall or ceiling finish material?
- (A) 25
 - (B) 75
 - (C) 200
 - (D) 450
12. In theaters, during times that seats are not available, people will be allowed to wait in lobbies based on how many square feet (square meters) per person?
- (A) 3 ft² (0.3 m²)
 - (B) 5 ft² (0.5 m²)
 - (C) 7 ft² (0.6 m²)
 - (D) 10 ft² (0.9 m²)
13. In a new nursing home sleeping area, the occupant load for which a means of egress is provided shall be the **maximum** number of persons intended to occupy that floor, but not less than one person for each:
- (A) 100 ft² (9 m²)
 - (B) 120 ft² (11 m²)
 - (C) 140 ft² (13 m²)
 - (D) 240 ft² (22 m²)
14. What is the **minimum** allowable per-person floor area on either side of a horizontal exit in an educational occupancy?
- (A) 3 ft² (0.3 m²)
 - (B) 7 ft² (0.6 m²)
 - (C) 20 ft² (1.8 m²)
 - (D) 30 ft² (2.8 m²)
15. What is the **minimum** required total stair width in a non-sprinklered hotel with an occupancy capacity of 650?
- (A) 130 in. (330 cm)
 - (B) 195 in. (495 cm)
 - (C) 217 in. (551 cm)
 - (D) 455 in. (1156 cm)

16. What is the occupant load of a 6,000 ft² (557 m²) restaurant dining room?
- (A) 60 people
 - (B) 100 people
 - (C) 400 people
 - (D) 600 people
17. A board of appeals must meet within how many days of the filing of a notice of appeal?
- (A) 30 days
 - (B) 60 days
 - (C) 90 days
 - (D) 120 days
18. When is an applicant for plan review relieved of responsibility for compliance with NFPA 1?
- A. Under no circumstances
 - B. When the project has been reviewed by an architect
 - C. When the project has been approved by the AHJ
 - D. When the project has been reviewed by an engineer
19. Which of the following is true regarding the ground enclosed by any tents or temporary membrane structures?
- A. It shall not be a maximum of 5,000 ft² (464 m²)
 - B. It shall be designed to support fire apparatus
 - C. It shall be cleared of all flammable or combustible material
 - D. It shall be a maximum of 80 percent of the premises
20. What use classification is a community college classroom with an occupant load of 60 persons or more?
- A. Business
 - B. Educational
 - C. Assembly
 - D. Institutional

SAMPLE EXAMINATION ANSWER KEY

Question	Answer	Reference Source
1	D	NFPA 1: 1.13.10, 2015, 2018
2	C	NFPA 101: 14.1.7.1, Table 7.3.1.2, 2015, 2108
3	A	NFPA 101: 12.1.7.1, Table 7.3.1.2, 2015, 2018
4	C	NFPA 101: 3.3.288.2, 2015; 3.3.299.2, 2018
5	B	NFPA 101: 39.3.2.1, & 8.7.1.1 (1) 2015, 2018
6	C	NFPA 101: 31.3.6.2 & 8.3.4.4, 2015; 31.3.6.2.1 & 8.3.3.2.4, 2018
7	B	NFPA 101: 18.7.1.6 & 19.7.1.6, 2015, 2018
8	B	NFPA 101: 8.6.7(6), 2015, 2018
9	A	NFPA 101: 8.5 & Table 8.3.4.2, 2015; 8.5 & Table 8.3.3.2.2, 2018
10	B	NFPA 101: 10.2.3.4.2, 2015; 10.2.3.3, 2018
11	D	NFPA 101: 10.2.3.4.1 – 10.2.3.4.3, 2015; 10.2.3.3, 2018
12	A	NFPA 101: 12.1.7.2(3) & 13.1.7.2(3), 2015, 2018
13	B	NFPA 101: 18.1.7, & Table 7.3.1.2, 2015, 2018
14	A	NFPA 101: 14.2.2.5, 15.2.2.5, 7.2.4.2.4, 2015, 2018
15	B	NFPA 101: 28.2.3.1, 29.2.3.1, Table 7.3.3.1, 2015, 2018
16	C	NFPA 101: 12.1.7.1, 13.1.7.1, Table 7.3.1.2, 2015, 2018
17	A	NFPA 1: 1.10.5.1, 2015, 2018
18	A	NFPA 1: 1.14.4, 2015, 2018
19	C	NFPA 101: 11.11.4.1, 2015, 2018
20	C	NFPA 101: 6.1.2.1 & 3.3.190.2, 2015; 6.1.2.1 & 3.3.196.2, 2018



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