Allegheny County Department of Emergency Services

Fire Academy Division

Student Policy Manual

Mission Statement:

To provide the highest level of Fire, Rescue, Haz-Mat and Terrorism Training and Certification to the emergency service responders and private industry emergency response teams in Allegheny County and those agencies that border our county. This training will be provided using County, State and National courses via classroom and field exercises designed to replicate real emergencies. Classes will be provided at the Academy and through out-reach programs where training is provided in the fire stations.
It shall be the policy of the Allegheny County Fire Academy to establish an Incident Management System to be used during any and all training events scheduled at or sponsored by the Academy. The IMS shall be readily recognizable and be NIMS compliant. This IMS system will be used whether training classes are lectures or hands-on field work.

The staff instructor on duty shall be the overall Incident Commander. Individual course instructors shall fill the position of Branch Officers. Each of the courses will divide the students into functional groups, or geographical divisions. These students report to assistant instructors, or the lead instructors (Branch Officers), who in turn, answer to the Incident Commander (Staff Instructor on duty).

We believe that this IMS system will reinforce the NIMS system being taught, but will also provide for a good accountability system.

**Example of a typical training schedule below:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Incident Commander</th>
<th>Staff Instructor On-Duty</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Engine Co. Class Lead Instructor</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assistant Instructor</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Class Team</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Class Team</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Essentials Class Lead Instructor |
| Assistant Instructor            |
| Class Team                     |
| Class Team                     |

| Haz Mat Class Lead Instructor |
| Assistant Instructor          |
| Class Team                    |
| Class Team                    |

Assistant Instructor
The Allegheny County Fire Academy shall establish the following set of Rules and Regulations to ensure that safety, security, honesty, and integrity of training sessions. These Rules and regulations are to be in force in all ACFA sponsored training whether on site, or outreach.

**A. Drug and Alcohol:**
ACFA shall have a strict zero tolerance policy for illegal drug and alcohol use prior to or during attendance of classes. Any use, distribution, possessing of illegal drugs or alcohol on ACFA grounds will result in the Allegheny County Police, or Local Police Dept, being called to investigate. More information is provided in the *ACFA Drug and Alcohol Policy*.

**B. Tobacco:**
Use of tobacco products is strictly prohibited while in ACFA buildings or while on the Fire Ground. Students may, at the instructor’s discretion take cigarette breaks and then only while in specific designated smoking areas. Cigarette butts, ashes, ECT. Are to be disposed of properly in the cans provided. Continued violation of this rule will result in suspension of privileges by the Academy staff.

**C. Electronic Devices:**
No pagers, cell phones, fire department radios or other electronic devices shall be allowed during class and training ground activities. Exceptions may be made on a case-by-case basis after review by the ACFA staff. Personal pagers and cell phones may be left on, but on a “silent” or “vibrate” setting. Fire department pagers/radios must be shut off during training.
While attending classes, all apparatus, vehicle and personnel are to be “out of service” and unable to respond to calls. Therefore, the use of emergency warning devices; both audible and visual are strictly prohibited while on academy grounds. Violation of this rule may be cause for dismissal.

D. Profanity:  
Profanity and derogatory remarks (racial, sexual, religious, ECT.) will not be tolerated in any form. Such remarks are grounds for immediate dismissal.

E. Horseplay:  
In order to maintain a safe learning environment, horseplay will not be tolerated.

F. Classroom Etiquette:  
1) All ACFA staff, visiting instructors and officials will be treated with respect and addressed as “Sir” or “Ma’am” unless otherwise stated. Staff and instructors may also be addressed as “Instructor” followed by their surname.  
2) No sitting on tables.  
3) No feet on walls, tables, or chairs.  
4) No food or drink in the classrooms. All food and drink is to be consumed outside of the building, in the vending area, or in the cafeteria.  
5) No bunker gear in the classrooms.  
6) No excessive noise in the hallways.

G. Personal Appearance:  
Students and instructors shall present a clean, neat, and professional appearance at all times. Hair will be well kept and groomed as to not interfere with PPE and SCBA. No jewelry will be worn while participating in Academy activities with the exception of a wristwatch and wedding band. Religious exceptions will be considered on an individual basis by the ACFA staff. More personal information is contained in the ACFA Dress Code and Facial Hair Policies.

H. Safety/Injuries:  
All students will follow all safety procedures at all times- NO EXCEPTIONS.

Violations of safety rules may result in serious injury or death. PPE appropriate to evolutions being performed shall be worn at all times. Students shall provide their own PPE which will be dictated by the instructor. Students shall have their PPE available to them at all times, and said PPE will be available for inspection at any given moment. Any PPE deemed to be unfit for service shall not be worn during training sessions.

Seatbelts will be worn during the movement of any apparatus during training sessions.
Any and all injuries will be reported to the instructor and the ACFA Incident/injury/Near Miss Policy will be followed.

At no time shall any student operate any ACFA vehicle or fire apparatus. Any and all power equipment will only be operated by trained personnel. ACFA vehicles and fire apparatus shall only be operated by Staff Instructors or Adjunct Instructors who have been trained and approved to operate them. No vehicle, while on Academy property, shall be moved until all crew members are seated and belted. Under no circumstances shall anyone stand while riding on vehicles or fire apparatus.

Under no circumstances shall any student operate any piece of equipment and/or machinery which he/she has not been properly trained to do so. No student shall participate in any training evolution for which they have not received proper training.

I. Attendance:
Attendance for completion of ACFA classes shall be 100%. All sessions and skills must be completed in order to receive a certificate for any course. Every attempt should be made for students to arrive on time for class. Notification should be made to either the Staff or instructor if a student will be tardy or absent from class. The academy phone number is 412-931-3158, and Fax is 724-935-6099. Any absences shall be made up with the instructor, or in a subsequent semester when the class is being offered.

In rare cases when class is cancelled due to severe weather, notifications will be delivered through the major Pittsburgh media outlets. If class is not cancelled, then student attendance is required.

NO-SHOW:
Class space at ACFA classes is limited, therefore pre-registration is a must. Any student who is registered for a class, and fails to attend without prior notice, may be suspended from ACFA classes for a period of one year. In the event that a particular department is consistently delinquent with this rule, said department may be suspended from ACFA for that period of time.

J. Parking:
Student parking shall be established in the Student Parking Areas on top of the hill at ACFA. Additionally, there is a Student Parking Area just below the Academy offices. Students shall not park in instructor parking spots, and under no circumstances drive onto or park on the Fire Grounds. Students, who park illegally, do so at their own risk.

K. Discipline:
Any student or instructor found violating any of the above Rules and Regulations or any other ACFA Policies, Procedures is subject to disciplinary action. These actions may be up to and including dismissal from a training program. Additionally, they may be
suspended for a period of up to one year, from Academy training. Any act which constitutes a criminal offense, will be turned over for investigation and prosecution by the Authority Having Jurisdiction. The Fire Chief of any student being disciplined beyond counseling by the instructor, will be notified in writing, of said action.

Any student disciplined for violating shall have the due process right of appealing their dismissal or suspension to the Academy Administrator. This appeal must be made in writing, within 10 days of the dismissal or suspension, to the ACFA Administrator.

Academy Address below:

ACFA Administrator
700 West Ridge Rd.
Allison Park, PA 15101
Allegheny County Fire Academy

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title:</th>
<th>Dress Code</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Date:</td>
<td>9-23-2008</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Revision Number:</td>
<td>2 Rescinds Previous Order</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The Allegheny County Fire Academy (ACFA) is a formidable educational institution that provides a high quality of service to the firefighters in the county and surrounding counties. In order to keep the highest quality of education at the ACFA, there must be a dress code that is commensurate of the education that is being delivered at this facility. The clothing a student wears to the ACFA can greatly affect the safety and academic focus of that student and the surrounding students. Extreme discretion is advised on the part of the students. The ACFA will become involved in the matter of dress when an individual student exercises poor judgment in his/her mode of dress; that is, the dress interferes with the learning process, constitutes a hazard to the student or others, or is deemed inappropriate for the training setting by the staff and administration. Safety issues will be addressed with clothing or shoes when seen as dangerous.

1. Armbands, buttons, and badges are permissible, as well as clothing bearing slogans, as long as they are not gang related, obscene, libelous, or display items or products that are contrary to the ACFA rules and regulations, or interfere with the educational process.

2. Objects that are sharp or protruding from the person of a student are prohibited. This specifically includes, but is not limited to spikes on collars, jackets, shoes and wristbands.

3. Duty uniforms are preferred. A few specific classes will require a professional level of dress. For these classes, appropriate dress will be noted in the student’s course acceptance letter.

4. Shorts, skirts, dresses, pajama pants, and torn-ragged clothing are NOT permitted.

5. Trousers and pants are not to sag below the waistline so that bare-midriff, gluteal cleft, and/or underwear are seen.

6. Tank type jerseys, muscle shirts, sleeveless shirts, halters, off-the-shoulder shirts, pajama shirts, and bare midriff tops are prohibited. Shirtsleeves must have a seam and two inches of material that cover the shoulders.

7. Utmost discretion is urged with the wearing of see-through or skin-tight apparel and low-cut shirts.
8. **Students MUST** wear long-sleeved shirts or sweatshirts for courses requiring protective clothing on live fire days to reduce the risk of thermal injury. It is recommended that this clothing be of natural fibers (cotton, wool, etc.) or of flame resistant material, and not of man-made sports type fabric that is designed to wick away perspiration from the body.

9. Hats (including hoods), headbands, and bandanas are not to be worn in the classroom.

10. Footwear in the classroom must cover the entire foot and be secured to the foot. No slippers, flip-flops, or clogs will be permitted. On the training ground the footwear must be work boots with safety toe protection or bunker boots.

11. Jewelry should be limited as not to interfere with the student's safety or be offensive to others.
Allegheny County Fire Academy

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title:</th>
<th>Facial Hair Policy</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Date:</td>
<td>9-23-2008</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Revision Number:</td>
<td>2 Rescinds Previous Order</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The issue of facial hair on firefighters has long plagued the fire service and, specifically fire training programs. Concern has centered around the effect of facial hair on the safety of a face piece seal on S.C.B.A. (self contained breathing apparatus).

After reviewing all evidence pro and con, pertinent legal decisions, Federal regulations and other relevant data, we at the Pennsylvania State Fire Academy and the Allegheny County Fire Academy have determined that the wearing of beards or other facial hair (other than a well-trained mustache) is incompatible with the duties of persons directly involved (or who may become directly involved) in operations at emergency scenes where S.C.B.A. is or may be required. This includes, but is not limited to, fire suppression personnel, command personnel, apparatus operators, emergency medical personnel, investigative officers and others.

In keeping with this determination, and in order to protect the interests of both students, the Commonwealth, and the County, it shall be the policy of the State Fire Academy and the Allegheny County Fire Academy that persons taking part in any class whose subject matter is concerned with or impacts directly on operations at emergency scenes shall be clean shave, except for the option of a well trimmed mustache. Other hair will be worn in such a manner as to preclude interference with an S.C.B.A. face piece seal and to be substantially covered by protective clothing.

The final determination as to whether an individual meets these criteria shall rest with the Pennsylvania State Fire Academy and the Allegheny County Fire Academy staff.

We feel that this policy will serve the best interests of the students and will set a positive example for day-to-day fire service operations.

This policy is also in effect as to the conduct of courses of the Pennsylvania State Fire Academy, the Allegheny County Fire Academy Local Level Programs and Voluntary Firefighter Certification Programs.
Allegheny County Fire Academy

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title:</th>
<th>Incident/Injury/Near Miss</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Date:</td>
<td>9-23-2008</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Revision Number:</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**General Provision:**

The Allegheny County Fire Academy will strictly follow the PA. State Fire Academy Incident/Injury/Near Miss Policy. It is the intention of the Allegheny County Fire Academy to consistently use the MOST current PSFA Incident policy for ALL training.

Incident/Injury/Near Miss reports will be filed with the ACFA even if the training is not PSFA accredited. Reports must be filed with the Academy no later than the close of business the day of the incident, by the lead instructor for the course.

It shall be the duty of every student to report any Incident/Injury or near miss to the lead instructor of the class. This policy shall be followed regardless of how slight the Incident/Injury or Near Miss may appear to be to the student.
Allegheny County Fire Academy

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title:</th>
<th>Drug &amp; Alcohol Policy</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Date:</td>
<td>10-8-2008</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Revision Number:</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**DRUG-FREE WORKPLACE POLICY**

The Drug-Free Workplace Act of 1988 and the regulations implementing it require that any County performing federal contract work worth more than $25,000 certify that it works towards providing a drug-free workplace. Allegheny County strongly supports the Drug-Free Workplace Act of 1988, and has adopted the following policy statement: Allegheny County prohibits the unlawful manufacture, distribution, dispensation, possession, or use of a controlled substance as listed in Schedules I through V of Section 202 of the Controlled Substance Act (21 U.S.C. 812) whether on or off the job. Violations of such prohibition on our premises or while conducting County related business will result in discipline up to and including discharge of the employee involved. In addition, all employees of Allegheny County are required to notify Allegheny County of any conviction under a criminal drug statute involving the use, sale or distribution of drugs in the workplace within five (5) days of such conviction. Allegheny County is required to pass this information on to the Federal Contracting Officer and to take appropriate disciplinary measures. Allegheny County will make every effort to maintain a drug-free workplace. However, should infractions occur, discipline will be assessed. Under the Drug-Free Workplace Act of 1988, as a condition of employment, employees are required to abide by the policies and statement as set forth herein. Because illegal drug usage whether on or off the job may adversely affect an employee’s job performance, jeopardize the safety of others, the public, the reliability of Allegheny County’s operations and/or equipment, cooperation of each and every employee is essential to maintain a drug-free working environment.
General Provision:

The Allegheny County Fire Academy will strictly follow the PA. State Fire Academy Structural Burn/Live Fire (SBS) Policy. It is the intention of the Allegheny County Fire Academy to consistently use the MOST current PSFA Burn policy for ALL live fire training.

Exception:

The only exception that the Allegheny County Fire Academy will have with the PSFA burn policy is on the pallet limits per fire. The limit shall be set to no more than three (3) pallets per fire.

Flashover Simulator Training: The Allegheny County Fire Academy shall establish and follow a Flashover Simulator Burn Policy.

Safety Zone:

The Allegheny County Fire Academy has established the following safety zone surrounding the fixed facility burn building. A red line has been painted on the concrete between the rehab pavilion and the burn building. When there is training being conducted, anyone crossing said line will be dressed in ALL APPROPRIATE PPE and SCBA, when operating on, around, or in the burn building.
Allegheny County Fire Academy

Title: Academic Policy
Date: 10-8-2008
Revision Number: 2

The Allegheny County Fire Academy shall establish the following Academic Policy.

General Provisions:
Honesty in all aspects of course work is essential. Any student caught cheating, plagiarizing, or otherwise claiming someone else’s work as one’s own, shall be cause for removal from training and a one year suspension.
Assignments shall be completed and turned in on time, when assigned by an instructor.
During written examinations, cell phones shall be placed on “silent” or “vibrate” and placed on the table or desk. No TEXT messages may be sent during testing. Delmar skill books are the responsibility of each student.

Co-Sponsored Courses:
Whenever a course is co-sponsored with an ETA, that ETA’s academic policy shall be in force along with the ACFA academic policy.

Reasonable Accommodations:
Whenever a student has a request for a reasonable accommodation, the ETA policy will be in effect. If not co-sponsored, the ACFA will follow the provisions outlined in an IEP provided by the school district of the student. It is the responsibility of the student to get the IEP to the ACFA, before the testing process.
NOTE: IEPs expire upon the student reaching 21 years of age.
**Student Agreement**

By signing this document I acknowledge that I have received a copy of the ACFA Student Policy Manual. I understand that it is my responsibility to read and understand all of the policies and procedures. I further acknowledge that violating any portion of the policies may be cause for my removal from ACFA training, and subject me to suspension, expulsion, or criminal prosecution.

Student Name:____________________________________
Sponsor Agency:____________________________________
   Chief:_______________________________________
Agency Address:___________________________________

Date:__________________________
Student Signature:______________________