

SECTION III — TRAINING

3.2 DRIVER TRAINING

OVERVIEW

This SOP sub section supercedes the Driver Training and Qualifications sub section of the Training SOP developed and previously approved in 1990. The objective of this SOP is to establish a guide to those who aspire to become qualified apparatus operators and drivers. This sub section establishes minimum requirements concerning training, education, experience, and testing necessary to become a qualified operator or driver within the Washington Township Fire Department.

3.2.1 GENERAL

All fire department drivers/operators shall have knowledge of applicable federal, state, and local regulations governing the operation of fire service vehicles.

Fire department drivers/operators shall be familiar with all applicable DOT regulations.

All drivers/operators shall be familiar with policies and procedures of the Washington Township Fire District.

There will be two levels of qualifications as prescribed in the next two sections.

A qualified OPERATOR are those who follow the guidelines of this procedure, obtaining the necessary education and experience, as prescribed, after which they will complete the necessary testing, exhibiting his/her competence and proficiency to operate the mechanical components of the apparatus. This shall include but not limited to aerial operator, pump operator, cascade operator, etc.

A qualified DRIVER are those who complete the requirements of an operator and who completes the necessary training to drive a specific piece of apparatus.

There shall be no exemption or deviation from the standards described herein without express written consent of a certifying company chief, the district training captain, or the district fire chief. The written exemption shall specify the reasons for the exemption.

All individuals regardless of qualification and experience will be required to satisfactorily complete the prescribed testing before being considered a qualified driver/operator of any vehicle.

All fire district personnel including volunteers, career and other employees must complete the district approved driver safety course prior to starting driver training on any district owned vehicle.

Each driver/operator will be required to certify upon each individual apparatus. The only exception will be if the vehicle qualifying upon is the same manufacturer and vintage as the unit being trained upon. (ie. Engine 1012, 1021 and 1032)

3.2.2 BASIC MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS

Any member or employee of the fire district must possess and provide a copy of a valid New Jersey driver's license to the district office.

The fire district encourages and supports drivers to meet the CDL license requirements. The district will support costs associated with the CDL licensing requirements as approved through the appropriate chain of command.

All members and employees who operate district owned vehicles, shall forward a copy of a current driver's abstract to the district office every two years.

Apparatus drivers/operators shall have completed at least one (1) year of active service with the Washington Township Fire District and shall have a Firefighter I certification issued by the New Jersey Department of Community Affairs, Division of Fire Safety. (N.J.S.A. 5:18c).

Members seeking to qualify as a driver/operator on engine apparatus shall have completed a minimum of an 8-hour engine company or pump operations course approved by the district training captain.

Members seeking to qualify as a driver/operator on aerial apparatus, in addition to the engine requirements, shall have completed a minimum of an 8-hour aerial course or truck company operations course approved by the district training captain.

Members seeking to qualify as a driver/operator on heavy utility apparatus shall have completed the requirements established for engine apparatus.

Members seeking to qualify as a driver/operator on rescue apparatus, in addition to the engine requirements, shall have completed a minimum of 8 hours auto-extrication or truck company operations or technical rescue operations as approved by the district training captain.

Members seeking to qualify as a driver/operator on brush apparatus, in addition to the engine requirements, shall have completed as a minimum the NJFFS S-130 and S-190 wildland firefighting course.

Transferring members from other fire service organizations must provide documentation from that agency of driver experience and copies of that agency's driver training records.

All vehicle driver/operators must have a current physical examination in accordance with Fire Department Policy #29-03. Fire department personnel who become unqualified due to failure of the physical examination or who are not current in accordance with the policy shall be removed from the qualified driver's list until the physical examination is current and the medical review officer has qualified them.

All vehicle driver/operators shall be in full compliance with Fire Department Policy #22-02 and its amendments concerning drug and alcohol abuse.

Any member with any of the following violations in a three (3) year period may not drive Fire District vehicles, subject to a review by the Board of Fire Commissioners:

1. Driving under the influence of intoxicating liquor and/or drugs
2. Reckless Driving
3. Leaving the scene of an accident
4. Death by Auto or other related criminal offenses driving vehicles
5. CDS in a Motor Vehicle
6. Operating while suspended
7. Joy riding

OPERATORS must be at least 18 years of age, must have a Firefighter I certification and a minimum of one (1) year of active service with the Fire District.

To become qualified as an apparatus DRIVER, operators must be 21 years of age and must have at least 3 years of legal driving experience.

3.3 DRIVER TRAINING PROCESS AND RECORDING

Any member meeting the established criteria and who desires to start driver/operator training must first apply to the Company Training Officer, through their respective Chain of Command utilizing the Driver/Operator Request Form (DT-1 form). All documentation must be submitted with the DT-1 form prior to approval. Costs associated with the application process will be incurred by the fire district.

A copy of the DT-1 form will be placed into the member's personnel and training files.

When approved, the requesting member will be notified in writing.

The company training coordinator will then assign an instructor to that member and driver/operator training may commence.

Upon Completion of the training process, the assigned instructor will complete the Driver/Operator Training Progress form (DT-2 form). The form will be signed by the instructor and trainee upon completion of each module. The report will then be forwarded to the company training coordinator who will schedule the final exam and testing. The instructor may not test or certify the trainee.

Upon completion of the final exam/testing, a copy of the DT-2 form and related documentation will be forwarded to the District Training Division for certification.

Each employee and member's training file shall include a section of driver training which will include the following information:

1. All driver/operator request forms DT-1
2. Completed DT-2 forms
3. Written/practical test results
4. Copy of member's driver's license and abstract
5. Copy of all driver training related certificates
6. Any other documents pertaining to driver training

3.4 QUALIFICATION PROGRESSION

The following will be adhered to when qualifying upon apparatus as a driver/operator:

1. Staff vehicles (Inspector cars, Chief Cars, Pickups, etc.)
2. Engine Apparatus
3. Heavy Utility/Rescue Apparatus
4. Power Wagon/Brush Apparatus
5. Aerial Ladder Apparatus
6. Trailers/Specialty vehicles

Note: The above is the listed progression for obtaining training and certification to drive and operate WTFD vehicles and apparatus. A trainee does not have to train and qualify on apparatus not normally assigned to their station to progress to the next level of apparatus. All personnel seeking to become an apparatus driver/operator must begin with an engine. Engines are the main stay of the fire department

As the individual qualifies through the listed progression of vehicles, he/she must complete and test upon the lower level vehicle prior to advancing to the next level.

Each apparatus shall require a separate qualification unless the apparatus is of similar design, same manufacturer, and relative vintage as the unit being qualified on such as Engines 1012, 1021, and 1032.

3.5 NEWLY ACQUIRED APPARATUS/VEHICLES

All driver/operators who were at the time of acquisition, qualified to a specific level, (ie: Utility, Engine, Aerial, etc.) May immediately qualify upon the new apparatus of equal level. A prescribed orientation and operational course for that vehicle shall be completed, after which they will be tested on their competence to drive and operate the apparatus. Those trained by a representative of the apparatus manufacturer may also qualify immediately and be made instructors if other requirements of this procedure are met.

3.6 ATTACHMENTS TO THIS SOP

- Staff vehicle modules (Inspector cars, Chief's cars, Pickups, Light Utilities, etc.)
- Engine apparatus modules
- Heavy Utility/Rescue apparatus modules
- Power Wagon/Brush apparatus modules
- Aerial apparatus module
- Trailer/Specialty vehicle module
- DT-1 Form (Driver/Operator Training Request)
- DT-2 Form (Driver/Operator Qualification Form)
- Driver/Operator Certification

The above modules and forms are living documents and as such changes in their content may occur over time as apparatus or apparatus standards change. Content changes to the modules or forms may be initiated by the training division and apparatus driver/operator trainers, but must be approved by the district fire chief before implementation.