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RECRUIT FIRE ACADEMY

Policies and Procedures

September 2023





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Emergency Services Training Institute (ESTI) Mission and Vision

ESTI supports the Texas A&M Engineering Extension Service's (TEEX) mission by leveraging its exceptional facilities, outstanding instructional staff, and world-class training materials to prepare emergency responders, community leaders, and military personnel from Texas, the United States, and around the world to protect their communities. ESTI supports the TEEX vision as we strive to be the premier emergency services training organization sought out by emergency responders around the world.

Texas A&M Engineering Extension Service (TEEX) Values

- **Safety**— We place safety and well-being above all by focusing on prevention and response.
- **Teamwork**— We embrace collaboration and encourage involvement.
- **Adaptability**— We rapidly adjust to the needs of our team members, our customers, and our environment.
- **Respect**— We value the unique skills and ideas of every individual.
- **Stewardship**— We commit to the wise management of our human, natural, and material resources.

TEEX Recruit Fire Academy Mission Statement

The TEEX Recruit Fire Academy (the Academy) develops premier candidates to gain knowledge and skills to enter the workforce and become effective leaders in their community.



Standard Operating Procedures (SOP)

Realizing the public holds fire protection personnel to a high standard of conduct and behavior, it is important to remind ourselves of the obligation we have to the community as a public service agency. These standards have been placed into effect and will assist in forming a guide for recruits participating in the Academy.

Recruits shall be governed by the policies and procedures contained in this manual, the [Catalog of Vocational Programs](#), [TEEX Rules and Administrative Procedures](#), and those outlined in the [TEEX Participant Handbook](#). Recruits who violate any of these rules of conduct will be subject to disciplinary action up to and including dismissal from the Academy.

You are now participating in a training program that strives to be one of the finest. You will receive many hours of preparation in all phases of fire fighting. Upon completion of this training, you will have the basic background and foundation upon which to build increasing competency throughout your career.

It is the responsibility of the Academy to train you to serve a complex and multiethnic community. Nothing short of your maximum effort will be accepted.

Our standards are high; the next few months will not be easy. Those who are unwilling or unable to meet the standards in academics, physical performance, and mental fortitude may be removed from the program. Those who measure up should be justifiably proud to join the ranks of one of the most honored professions in the world.

Additionally, upon successful completion of the state minimum standards testing process and receipt of your certification as a firefighter from the State of Texas and National Board on Fire Service Professional Qualifications (Pro Board), you may be eligible to compete for positions with any fire/rescue department in the state of Texas, possibly other states, and possibly around the world.

The following documents are the SOPs for the Academy. Be advised that there are two delivery methods for the Academy:

- TEEX Recruit Fire Academy (RFT001): Face-to-face delivery
- National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) 1001 Firefighter I and II (ORA101): Online blended delivery

Be sure that you are making note of the indicated policy that is particular to the delivery of the class for which you've registered.



SOP 001: Supervision and Authority

Purpose: The fire service is a paramilitary organization in regard to structure and chain of command. Therefore, the chain of command will be observed at all times during the Academy. The chain of command is the pathway of authority/responsibility from the highest level of an organization to the lowest:

- Recruits who have a concern of any kind should first approach their Academy officers (company lieutenant, battalion captain, and class captain) and follow the Academy chain of command (see Figure 1).
- The Academy instructor will serve as the first line of supervision for the recruit's daily activities.
- The Training Coordinator (TC) will serve as the next line of supervision for the Academy. The TC will provide daily guidance to recruits and be responsible for assigning instructors to teach all training modules.
- The Training Manager (TM) will be the next line of supervision.
- The Public Sector Program Director will serve as the final line of supervision.
- Issues should be resolved at the lowest level possible; however, if someone in the chain of command is part of the problem, then it is permissible to proceed to address the problem at the next highest level of authority within the chain of command.
- The Academy instructor will have control and authority over all training delivery sessions assigned by Academy staff. All recruits will comply with instructions and/or directions received from the Academy instructor.
- Any appeal or question regarding these instructions and/or directions is to be addressed through the Academy staff.
- Personal concerns may be directed to the TC or TM.
- Only in an emergency should Academy staff be contacted outside of normal working hours.

At any point in time, participants may file a complaint or appeal a decision in accordance with the [Training Participant Grievance Process](#).

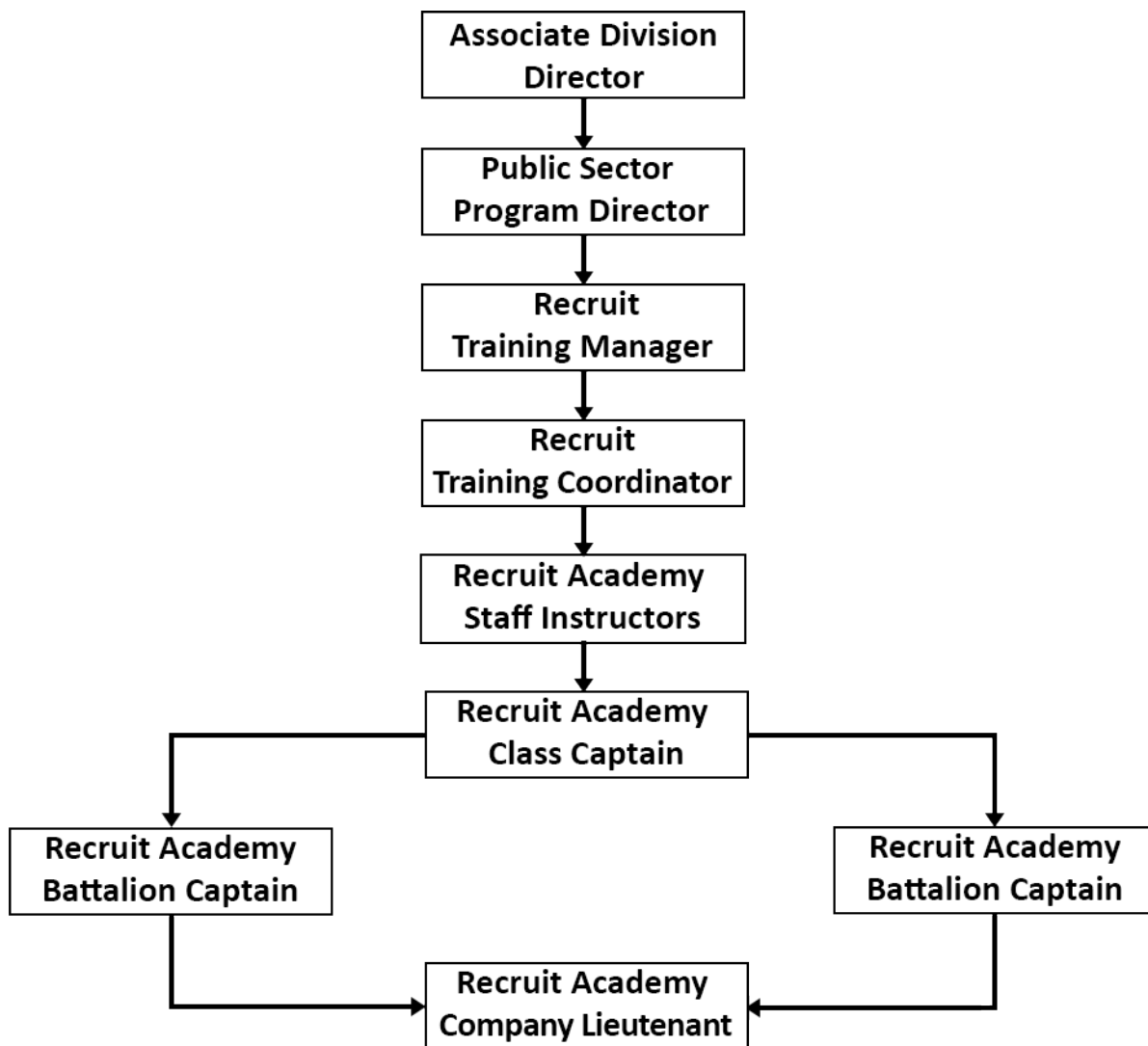


Figure 1: Academy Chain of Command

The recruits are assigned as follows (see Figure 2):

- Recruits will be assigned to a grouping called a company, with a lieutenant in charge.
- Companies are grouped into a larger unit called a battalion, with a captain in charge.
- The Academy has a class captain.
- In the absence of their assigned battalion captain, recruits may temporarily report to another battalion captain. If no battalion captain or class captain is available, any Academy instructor can be contacted.

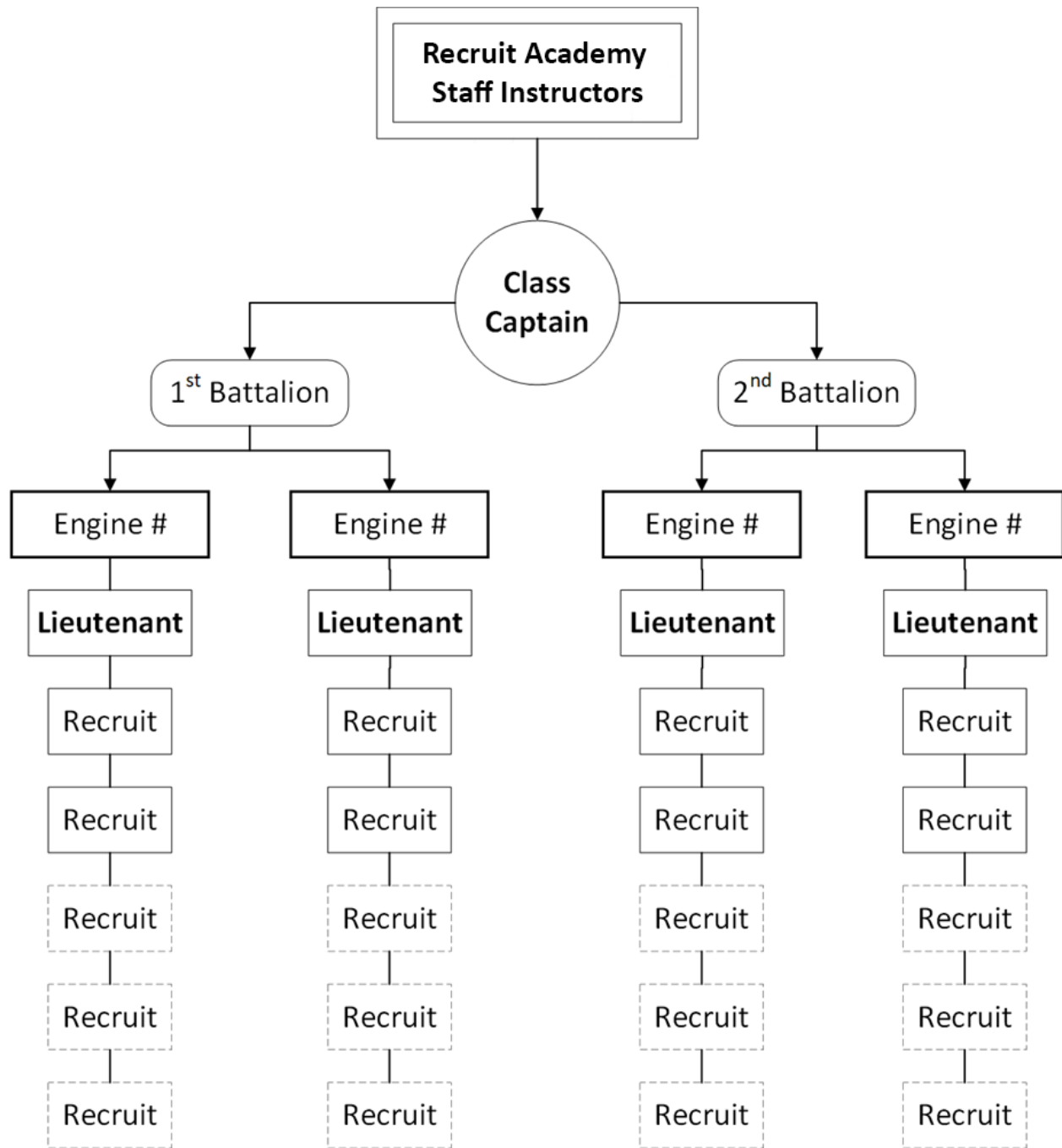


Figure 2: Academy Rank and Structure



SOP 002: Attendance

Purpose: Recruits are expected to maintain an exemplary attendance record. Dependability is a required trait of a public servant. Absence, early departure, and tardiness by a recruit are detrimental to the training process, and unexcused absence/tardiness will not be tolerated. The TM or the TM's designee will be the authority in determining whether an absence meets the criteria for excused or unexcused leave, as outlined below.

Minimum Attendance Requirements

Recruits are required to attend at least 545 hours of the traditional Academy or 545 hours of the online/blended Academy.

Excessive absences, early departure, or tardiness may place participants at risk of academic failure and place a significant burden on the rest of the class. Therefore, participants who miss 32 hours or more of the traditional Academy or 24 hours or more of the skills camp portion of the online/blended Academy will be subject to disciplinary action up to and including dismissal from the Academy. Participants will be counseled by the Academy staff on excessive absences. Absences will be charged in 1-hour increments. Participants that leave early will be charged per hour of absence.

Online Attendance

During the online component, participants are required to contribute to discussions, submit assignments, and take exams. The Academy is structured with weekly lectures and assignments. Attendance will be tracked by the instructor based on submission of assignments and participation in all online activities and components of the course.

Participants who stop communicating with the instructor, stop submitting weekly assignments, or fail to log into the learning management system for two weeks will be administratively withdrawn.

In-Person Attendance

Class attendance is an essential part of the education process, and participants in TEEX courses are expected to attend all class sessions and field exercises. Attendance and participation are components of successful course completion.

Attendance is documented on the daily sign-in sheet or with a scanning barcode system. Participants must sign in or be scanned daily for the morning and afternoon sessions. Participants may request to review past sign-in sheets or scanning logs to ensure attendance requirements are met.

Recruits will be given a weekly calendar depicting dates, times, and scheduled topic(s) of instruction. The calendar is subject to change at any time. Recruits will be notified of any schedule changes as soon as possible; however, recruits are responsible for noting the changes and preparing accordingly.

If for any reason the recruit must leave after arriving on TEEX grounds, the recruit **must** contact Academy staff or the lead instructor and company officer in accordance with the absence notification protocol below.



Absences

An absence is defined as not attending class for any reason. Excused absences include bereavement leave, injury with doctor release, illness with doctor release, court summons, entrance exams for fire service employment, or military obligations. All absences, excused or unexcused, will count as absences in the calculation of attendance. The maximum number of allowable absences will not increase.

Absence Notification Protocol

If a recruit misses a portion of the course, it is the recruit's responsibility to contact the Academy staff no later than 6:00 a.m. on the date the recruit will not be present to determine if and/or how missed work can be made up. The instructor will evaluate, on a case-by-case basis, whether or not the missed instruction can be made up. In some cases, make-up work will not be available (due to equipment/facility needs), and the hours missed will be deducted from the overall hours. If make-up work is assigned, it will be comparable to the content, time, and delivery of the portion of the class missed. If the recruit is unable to speak directly to the Academy TC or TM, the recruit must leave a detailed voicemail and/or text message, including:

- Full name
- Company number
- Reason for absence/tardiness
- Estimated time and date of return

This procedure should be followed for every absent day. The recruit is required to email the TC and TM to follow up.

The following guidelines are applicable if a recruit's physical condition due to an injury limits his/her ability to perform as required:

- The recruit may be allowed to transfer to a future Academy or be permanently removed from the class.
- Injuries or illnesses which result in the recruit being unable to participate in the Academy activities for more than three consecutive class days will be subject to the attendance policy guidelines.
- Academy staff will make a recommendation on the best course of action.

Recruits are advised to schedule medical appointments after duty hours or late in the day in order to minimize lost training time. Any doctor's appointments that result in lost time will be handled according to the absence policy.

Recruits who miss class due to excused absences may be able to transfer to a later Academy offering if an alternative is available within six months of their original Academy start date. Participants that miss four days or 32 hours of the traditional Academy or 24 hours of the online/blended Academy skills camp without communicating to the Academy staff will be administratively withdrawn.



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Tardiness and Early Departures

Tardiness is defined as not being in class and prepared to begin at the scheduled start time. **If recruits are tardy, they will be allowed to attend class but will be charged a minimum of 1 hour. They will continue to be charged in 1-hour increments of absence until they arrive at class.**

Early departure is leaving before the instructor dismisses class for the day. Recruits that leave early will be charged per hour of absence.

Documentation of all tardiness/early departures will be kept on the daily sign-in sheet for attendance, in the class captain's logbook, and by Academy staff.

Make-Up Procedures

If a recruit is absent, all class time missed, either excused or unexcused, must be made up either in the form of an assigned paper, eLearning material, test, or skill practice, as assigned by Academy staff:

- If a recruit is assigned a paper, the subject will be assigned by Academy staff and will be one page per hour missed. The paper must be typed in Times New Roman font at font size of 12 with 1.5 line spacing.
- If a recruit misses a skill day, then arrangements will be made for the recruit to make up the skill practice.

Once the Academy class begins, if a recruit cannot continue for any reason, refunds will be issued according to TEEX Standard Administrative Procedure (SAP) 26.01.99.N0.01 – Participant Refunds, except as governed by the Blinn College Fire Science Degree program or the Veteran's Administration.



SOP 003 Academic Requirements

Purpose: This is to inform the recruit(s) of the academic standard that must be attained to successfully pass the Academy and be allowed to take the certification exams administered by Pro Board and the Texas Commission on Fire Protection (TCFP).

The participant must meet the following requirements to pass the course:

- Achieve a final overall average score of 70 percent on course exams
- Achieve a 70 percent on the comprehensive final exam
- Successfully complete all skills mandated by TCFP
- Successfully complete all interactions and activities

Participants will have two chances to successfully complete the comprehensive final exam. Failure to pass the comprehensive final exam will result in academic dismissal. Participants who do not successfully complete the Academy may request a Letter of Attendance stating the number of hours of training completed.

Note: Participants are not allowed to use their book(s) during any course examinations.

Course grading is as follows:

- 10 percent quiz average
- 30 percent chapter test average
- 20 percent midterm exam
- 30 percent comprehensive final exam
- 10 percent participation (includes external courses, additional assignments, discussion threads, notebook, and Physical Fitness Training [PT])



SOP 004: Physical Fitness Training (PT)

Purpose: Physical fitness is a key component to a firefighter's safety, survival, and career longevity. Fit firefighters are better able to cope with the varied environments that they will face, can perform at a higher level for a longer duration at a scene, are more resistant to fatigue and injury, and are also at a reduced risk of cardiovascular compromise (a leading cause of Line of Duty Deaths [LODD]/injury for firefighters). Modern research also cites that physical fitness in firefighters can reduce the risk of cancer. The Academy puts an emphasis on improving conditioning and preparing recruits for the physical demands that they will experience in the field.

Participation in PT is mandatory. Participation is defined by the Academy staff as maximum effort throughout the entire PT session.

PT will consist of the following:

- Recruits will conduct PT when the Academy is in session, unless instructed otherwise by the Academy staff or lead instructor.
- The PT uniform (see SOP 005) is the only approved uniform during PT.
- The required physical fitness will consist of:
 - Dynamic warmup
 - Cardiovascular training
 - Muscular strength training
- To increase effectiveness, physical training sessions will vary in length and intensity.
- PT may also be completed in a structural firefighter ensemble to help recruits with physical ability and comfort of wear.

Physical training will intensify during the duration of the program. Immediately after working out, recruits will ensure they shower and put their proper duty uniform on.

Injuries

In the event of an injury occurring during the Academy, a recruit can be placed on limited duty status by a licensed physician and may continue to participate in modified PT, provided he/she is able to perform basic bodyweight exercises or cardio and not violate restrictions documented on his/her physician's paperwork:

- The extent to which a recruit may participate will be determined by documentation provided by a licensed physician, which must include definitive dates filled in by the physician.
- This documentation will specifically describe what activities/tasks the injured recruit may not perform.
- The limited duty program is designed to allow recruits sustaining minor injuries and/or illnesses the opportunity to remain in the Academy program within a reasonable amount of time; however, recruits will not be permitted to remain on limited duty indefinitely or when a return to full-duty status is not expected within a reasonable amount of time.
- The physician's assessment and recommendations will be strictly followed.



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- At the discretion of the Academy staff, a follow-up physician's assessment may be requested to reevaluate the physical limitations or timeframe of limited duty.

In the event of an off-duty injury that impacts the recruit's ability to complete course curriculum, documentation must be provided with restrictions noted from a licensed physician:

- This documentation will be reviewed by the Academy staff to determine if reasonable accommodation can be provided.
- In the event that reasonable accommodation cannot be made, the case will be assessed for a recommendation of transferring into the next Academy class or a recommendation of dismissal by TEEX Strategic and Education Services (SES) - Disability Resources.

Safety

Recruits will practice safety in all aspects pertaining to physical fitness:

- This may include but is not limited to the use of issued or personal braces/supports and assistance from a PT instructor on movements.
- Hydration is paramount and recruits are encouraged to keep hydrated by drinking plenty of water before and during PT.
- Recruits should not overexert themselves; if they become ill, they should immediately notify Academy staff.



SOP 005: Uniform Standards

Purpose: To ensure uniformity of clothing during the Academy, recruits will wear the authorized recruit uniform while attending the Academy.

Unless otherwise directed, recruits will wear the required uniform at all times while participating in Academy activities. Physical training attire is to be considered an Academy uniform and shall be maintained as such. Recruits will not be allowed to participate in classroom activities unless they are wearing the complete Academy uniform. Recruits not in complete Academy uniform will be dismissed from class until they are properly dressed. Recruits will be counted absent until they return to class in complete Academy uniform.

Academy uniforms will be kept pressed (non-wrinkled), clean, and well-maintained. Recruits are responsible for replacing any lost or damaged parts of the uniform. Outer clothing such as sweaters, coats, or head coverings shall be navy blue in color to match as closely as possible to the uniform and shall not be bright, faded, multicolored, or camouflaged. No logos or writing will be permitted except for TEEX-approved logos and writing. Any exceptions must be approved by Academy staff.

The recruit may wear the Academy uniform while traveling to and from the Academy and during breaks. When recruits are in Academy uniform, the uniform will be worn in its entirety and to classroom standards. However, the Academy uniform may not be worn by a recruit while performing off-site activities or while purchasing and/or consuming alcoholic beverages. If it is determined that a recruit was wearing an Academy uniform while consuming or purchasing alcoholic beverages, he/she will be disciplined up to and including dismissal.

The following are the recognized parts of the Academy uniform:

- Light blue dress shirt for classroom attire:
 - Only the top button of the uniform shirt is to be left unbuttoned.
 - Uniform shirts will be kept tucked into the waistband of the pants at all times.
- Navy blue T-shirt for drill ground
- Navy blue uniform pants (Dickie style or tactical) for classroom and drill ground
- Black station shoes or boots made from polishable leather (safety toe required), which should be clean, shined, and tied, if applicable, at all times
- Navy blue or black socks if wearing “low quarter” shoes; white socks if wearing boots with 6-inch (15-centimeter) tops or higher
- Black leather or web belt with silver or pewter finish buckle
- Black or navy blue backpacks for carrying classroom materials
- PT uniform: Navy blue T-shirt, navy blue gym shorts, white or black socks, gym shoes:
 - If the weather is cold, sweatshirts and pants are allowed but will be navy blue in color.
 - If undergarments or compression attire is worn with the T-shirt and gym shorts, they will be navy blue or gray in color. Compression shorts must not extend past the bottom of the PT shorts while in a standing position.



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Glasses and Jewelry

Recruits are permitted to wear American National Standards Institute (ANSI) Z.97-approved sunglasses and glasses with corrective lenses per TEEX/ESTI safety manual requirements. Eyeglasses of any kind are to be placed in a shirt or pants pocket when not in use. At no time will glasses be worn anywhere but on a recruit's face when not being kept in a pocket. Sunglasses are only authorized to be worn outdoors.

For safety reasons, only minimal jewelry is allowed during class participation. Recruits can wear one ring per hand and a watch. One neck chain is permissible if it is worn on the inside of the shirt, if it can go unnoticed, and if it is not the choke type. No bracelets, except "medical alert" type, will be worn. The wearing of earrings is expressly prohibited.



SOP 006: Grooming and Hygiene

Purpose: This SOP exists to ensure that all participants understand the importance of appropriate grooming and hygiene during the Academy or when representing the Academy. The standards of grooming and hygiene outlined below set forth the minimum requirements to which all recruits are required to adhere.

Recruits are expected to represent the Academy and respect fellow recruits by following this SOP. Every recruit is expected to practice daily hygiene and good grooming habits. Recruits shall meet requirements prior to the start of every class session.

Hair

Hair shall be kept clean and well-trimmed and be properly combed at all times during class hours. The length, fullness, style, and shape of hair must comply with the following restrictions and always conform to safety:

- While in any Academy uniform, the height and/or bulk of the hairstyles shall not jeopardize the personal safety of the firefighter in the performance of fire fighting or other emergency operations.
- The hair of all personnel will not be worn in such a way as to interfere with the proper wearing of the facepiece or fire helmet when these items are part of the Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) ensemble or are worn independently.
- The fire-fighting hood shall cover all hair.
- If the hair extends past the top of the uniform shirt collar, the hair must be in one of the approved styles at all other times than when wearing a fire-fighting hood. Approved styles are one French braid, one plait braid, a twist style, or a bun style that is neatly worn. All styles must be pulled away from the front of the face with hair either secured naturally or with an approved hair restraint. The hairstyle shall be in place at the start of class each day.
- Any stripes, spots, or color other than that of a natural hair color is prohibited.
- Hair will not be worn in an extreme fad or style including but not limited to mohawks or any cut, color, or design that brings undue attention to the individual, as deemed by an Academy staff member. Hair is not to be cut in an asymmetrical or lopsided manner.
- Approved hair restraints are rubber bands, barrettes, plastic clips, and/or clincher combs which are black or dark navy blue in color with no designs or attachments. Bobby pins that are black or brown in color may also be worn.

If recruits are unable to properly manage their hair according to these requirements, they will be required to cut their hair to a manageable length.



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Facial Hair

Mustaches are allowed but must be trimmed and neat to the corner of the mouth and cannot cover the mouth when closed. Sideburns shall not exceed 1 inch (2.5 centimeters) in width and shall not surpass the base of the earlobe. Beards and facial hair of any length that contact the seal of the Self-Contained Breathing Apparatus (SCBA) mask are prohibited. Recruits are expected to be clean-shaven in the morning before reporting to inspection.

Cosmetics

Cosmetics may be worn, but only natural skin colors are permitted, and in a conservative manner. Excessive use of perfumes or colognes may distract other recruits or Academy staff and are not allowed.

Fingernails

For personal safety, fingernails must be kept neatly trimmed and not extend past the end of the finger. Fingernail polish and acrylic nails are prohibited.

Piercings

Body piercings are not authorized while in uniform due to safety considerations. No articles shall be attached to or through the ear, nose, tongue, eyebrow, or any other body part, with the exception of a clear tongue retainer. No other body piercings or retainers are permissible.

Exemptions

A recruit may request a grooming exemption through the TC and/or TM. These requests will be weighed on a case-by-case basis.



SOP 007: Behavior Expectations

Purpose: An Academy recruit is considered a representative of TEEX/ESTI. Recruits are reminded that their activities are subject to public scrutiny and review at all times, whether they are in or out of the classroom. As such, recruits should remember that these same high ethical standards likewise apply in their individual activities, regardless of duty status. Any act which may bring discredit to any recruit, the Academy, ESTI, or TEEX may result in disciplinary action up to and including dismissal from the Academy.

Participant Code of Conduct

- Follow TEEX policies and local, state, or federal laws.
- Comply with the directions of TEEX instructors, administrators, or authorized personnel.
- Respect fellow participants and TEEX staff by not discriminating or harassing individuals on the basis of race, color, national or ethnic origin, religion, sex, disability, age, sexual orientation, or veteran status.
- Support a safe and healthy learning environment.
- Avoid participating in hazing or conduct that threatens or endangers the mental or physical health or safety of others.
- Do not participate in academically dishonest actions such as cheating, plagiarizing, fabricating, or falsifying work, or impersonating another in a training/testing environment.

General Expectations

- All personal vehicles shall be parked in designated, specified parking areas. Recruits shall not park or relocate their personal vehicles to any other area without receiving permission from Academy staff.
- Recruits will rise to attention upon the initial arrival of the instructor for the day. When any staff member or guest enters the classroom, recruits will rise to attention unless otherwise directed by the classroom instructor.
- Recruits will stay on the right side of any hallway, roadway, or sidewalk when moving about the Academy grounds.
- When approached by anyone that is not an Academy recruit, the recruit will move to the side of the passageway, come to attention, and wait until the person either passes or gives permission to proceed.
- When a recruit approaches a group of two or more people other than fellow recruits, the recruit will come to a stop and ask for permission to pass.
- If two or more recruits are grouped together and approached by anyone other than fellow recruits, a command of “make a hole” will be given and the recruits will move out of the way to allow the person(s) to pass.
- Recruits are only authorized to enter the administrative office area of the Academy when granted permission by a member of the Academy staff.
- Possession or viewing of pornographic material, in any form, is strictly prohibited on TEEX property.
- Recruits may not gamble in or around TEEX training facilities.



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- Recruits shall refrain from using inappropriate or abusive language in the learning environment.
- Fraternalization among recruits during the Academy is highly discouraged in an effort to minimize potential situations that can adversely jeopardize the recruit's enrollment status. Fraternalization with instructors is prohibited.
- Horseplay or the like will not be tolerated on Academy grounds.
- Recruits will do daily maintenance duties to keep facilities and grounds clean and neat. These duties shall not be restricted to only during the assigned time, but policing facilities shall be done throughout Academy hours.
- Visitors are not permitted for recruits without the prior approval of Academy staff.
- Recruits are required to provide their current address of residence, primary contact number, and any emergency contact number(s). Any changes to these items must be reported in writing at the first opportunity to the TC or TM.
- Recruits are encouraged to bring any problems of a personal nature to the attention of the TC or TM, including those that may affect them or their classmates during the course of the Academy.
- Instances of academic dishonesty will be investigated as outlined in the TEEX Participant Handbook.
- Any recruit found in violation of this code will be subject to disciplinary procedures.

Classroom Expectations

- Recruits of the Academy are required to have all manuals, books, handouts, and other materials assigned to them in the classroom at all times, unless otherwise directed by Academy staff. Time spent correcting such deficiencies may be considered an absence.
- Recruits are expected to keep their personal cellular devices in their packs on silent mode when not being utilized for class information and/or study applications. While cell phones are accessible, it is still the expectation that the devices are not used for personal matters in the duration of training or testing. Since recruits will not be using their cell phones during training or testing, they should notify friends and family to contact them via the following TEEX/ESTI administration phone number in case of emergencies: (866) 878-8900.
- Recruits are prohibited from bringing food into the classroom or onto any field project, except for a water bottle, during class lecture time.
- While in class, slouching, leaning, reclining, or resting the head in any manner will not be permitted. If a recruit begins to struggle with drowsiness, he/she may move to the back of the classroom and stand during the lecture.
- The only items allowed on the desk are textbook(s), a water bottle, any note-taking materials, or items approved by the classroom instructor. A recruit's book bag will be kept under the recruit's chair unless the entire class is leaving the classroom, when it will then be placed in the chair and the chair will be pushed up to the desk. Recruits' water bottles will be taken with them at all times. When not wearing the uniform dress shirt or coat, the dress shirt or coat will be hung neatly on the back of the recruit's chair.



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Breaks

- Recruits will be allowed 60 minutes for lunch each day. There will be no off-campus privileges. Daily lunch breaks will be scheduled as near to the middle of the day as possible but may not occur at the exact same time each day. Microwave ovens and refrigerators are available.
- Recruits will be given short breaks from classroom lectures as deemed appropriate or necessary by the instructor.

Health and Wellness

- Water will be the only beverage permitted for consumption by recruits during Academy duty hours in an effort to maintain hydration. Proper hydration is a continuous process. It must begin more than 24 hours before working, exercising, or training.
- The recommended water container will be a 32-ounce (946-milliliter) reusable clear plastic container.
- Energy drinks are prohibited during Academy hours and strongly suggested to be avoided during off hours due to detrimental effects on health.
- Avoiding alcohol, caffeine, and dietary/muscle-building supplements during the Academy is highly recommended to reduce the risk of dehydration.

Personal Effects

- Gym bags and personal effects will be stored in the recruit's vehicle during Academy hours.
- Recruits are allowed to carry backpacks/book bags into the classroom.



SOP 008: Discipline

Purpose: The standards set forth within this document are intended to establish clear and understandable guidelines for conduct and expectations in both academic and practical applications (skills and evolutions). The procedures below will be followed in the event of an infraction of Academy guidelines and/or poor academic or skills performance. The procedures are intended to provide a fair and predictable chain of events should corrective discipline need to be considered.

Unsatisfactory Performance

- In the event that a recruit's personal conduct, attendance, or academic performance falls below accepted standards, the Academy staff instructors will submit the appropriate reports to the Academy TM and/or TC. The report shall outline the nature and scope of the recruit's substandard performance, attendance, or conduct.
- The Academy TM shall consider the nature and scope of the recruit's substandard performance and determine the appropriate course of action.
- Recruits who wish to register a complaint regarding concerns over personal treatment while at the Academy shall do so through the Academy staff or via the [Training Participant Grievance Process](#).

Disciplinary Action

A recruit may be subject to any or all of the following disciplinary actions for violation(s) of the TEEX/ESTI/Academy rules:

- **Informal discussion:** This level in the disciplinary steps is reserved for minor and/or first-time offenses. This will usually be done by any of the Academy instructors immediately upon observing the infraction. This will not be noted in the recruit's personnel file but may be used when considering compounding.
- **Verbal reprimand:** This is the next level of correction after the informal discussion. This level is reserved for more serious initial or repeat offenses. Basic information regarding the verbal counseling will be recorded in the recruit's personnel file. Verbal counseling will be administered by the TC or TM.
- **Written reprimand:** This is the next level of correction after verbal counseling. It is used when the previous two steps of the process have not corrected the undesirable behavior, or for first-time, serious offenses. A letter of reprimand will be provided to the recruit and a copy filed in the recruit's personnel file. The letter will contain basic information including the nature of the infraction, pertinent events, previous actions taken (if any), and a detailed report of the circumstances involved in the infraction. The letter of reprimand will be signed by the TC or TM and the recruit who committed the infraction. The original letter goes to the recruit being reprimanded; a copy will be provided to the recruit's file.
- **Placed on disciplinary probation:** Disciplinary probation, when imposed, shall be for a time period ranging from two weeks to the end of the Academy. The recruit will be informed, in writing, of the basis, length, and condition of probation. The recruit will be expected to abide by all conditions imposed by probation. Disciplinary probation will be issued by the TM when all



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other attempts to correct the unwanted behavior have failed to produce the desired results. Any additional infractions of any Academy SOPs and the TEEX Participant Code of Conduct while on disciplinary probation may result in dismissal.

- **Dismissal:** This is the last level of discipline at the Academy. A package of documentation will be created that will consist of all previous documented attempts at correction, new documentation stating the newest infraction and all pertinent events, and a detailed report of the circumstances involved in the infraction. This letter will be signed by the training director and the recruit. A copy will be provided to the recruit.

An Academy instructor may either reprimand a recruit verbally, temporarily remove a recruit from the classroom, or temporarily dismiss the recruit from the skill training if actions by the recruit are causing a disruption, a safety concern, or a violation of the rules of the Academy.

Appeal Process

Participants who wish to appeal a decision made by Academy staff should refer to the [Training Participant Grievance Process](#).



SOP 009: Reporting Accidents and Injuries

Purpose: The safety and health of recruits is a priority of the Academy. If a recruit has an injury during the Academy, he/she must report it immediately to an Academy staff member, regardless of whether the recruit will be seeking medical attention.

- A recruit who has been involved in an accident or received an injury as a result of training shall notify Academy staff of the accident or injury immediately so appropriate measures can be taken to ensure the health and wellness of the recruit and the Academy.
- Injuries suffered by the recruit that are unrelated to Academy training but may interfere with the recruit's performance during subsequent training shall also be reported.
- Injuries that interfere with performance will require a physician's letter indicating the nature of the injury and the level of activity allowed. Recruits will not be allowed to return to full Academy activity without a completed form from the treating physician clearly stating that they are released without restrictions to participate in the Academy.
- Recruits shall immediately notify their sponsor and/or employer of any accident or injury, if applicable.
- Medical costs as a result of an injury or accident will be the responsibility of the recruit, their sponsor, or their employer. TEEX, the Academy, and their staff are not responsible for any loss or injury that occurs because of participation in the Academy.
- To ensure compliance with TEEX and The Texas A&M System regulations, documentation of a safety incident or injury is required to be turned in within 24 hours. Therefore, it's important for the student to notify the Academy staff immediately:
 - If necessary, the Academy staff will seek support for the recruit and/or the proper reports from the ESTI Environmental Health and Safety (EHS) Program Director or his/her designee.
- Further, all recruit injuries shall adhere to the TCFP Rule 435.23 *Fire Fighter Injuries*:
 - Investigable injuries are those resulting from the malfunction of PPE, failure of PPE to protect the firefighter from injury, or injuries sustained from failure to comply with any provision of TCFP-mandated department SOPs.
 - Investigable injuries shall be reported within five business days of the injury event.
 - The regulated entity (the Academy) shall secure any PPE involved in a firefighter injury and it shall be made available to TCFP for inspection.