



R0763

Dear National Fire Academy Student:

By now you should have received an email notification from the National Emergency Training Center (NETC) Admissions Office. This notification indicates your acceptance into the U.S. Fire Administration (USFA), National Fire Academy (NFA) “New Executive Chief Officer” (NECO) course.

Congratulations on your acceptance to the USFA’s/NFA’s NECO course.

The NECO course presents a variety of contemporary topics that address your roles and responsibilities as a new fire chief. You have been entrusted by your community with the opportunity and responsibility to exercise leadership and management for residents’ safety, the safety of their families and local businesses. In most cases, a new fire chief has a brief time to establish themselves as a credible and legitimate source of the effective exercise of management, leadership and stewardship. To this condition, you will need to be strategic and thoughtful in your approach and efforts.

This course addresses critical knowledge and skills pertaining to the responsibilities of a fire chief, including such topics as local politics and the role of the chief officer, liability and risk management, resources management, planning, community engagement, capital asset planning and acquisition, and other key topics for first-time leaders assuming a new position in their agency.

Prior to your arrival, you have two pre-course activities to complete. Activities #1 and #2 in the syllabus are due upon your arrival in the classroom.

For Activity #1, you need to consider the important issues and/or challenges you are facing as a new fire chief. You will prepare a written paper along with an in-class presentation on these issues and challenges. Use the information below to help guide your thoughts. As the course progresses through the various topics, you will have the opportunity to modify your paper and presentation. The final document and an in-class presentation will be evaluated for purposes of determining a final course grade.

As a new fire chief, consider the three most important issues and/or challenges that you believe you can realistically address within the next year. Use the below questions to guide your consideration.

- What is the issue?
- Why is this a top-three choice?
- What do you need to do and/or want to do with these issues or challenges?
- How will you do it? Be specific in your thoughts.

Your days at the NFA will be busy and challenging. In addition to classroom time, there will be both individual and group evening study activities and networking. Please plan accordingly. Throughout your course, various representatives of the USFA and the NFA will be visiting and providing you with insights into the resources available to make your transition to fire chief as successful as possible.

This is a six-day class that starts on Sunday at 8 a.m. Subsequent classes will meet daily from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., with evening classes possible.

The course materials for this course are now available in a Bring Your Own Device (BYOD) format that will function on any electronic device. If you own an electronic device (laptop computer, tablet, etc.) and are familiar with its document reader functions, we are asking you to download the Student Manual (SM) **before you travel to Emmitsburg** and bring the preloaded device with you. Please see the page following this letter for complete instructions on successfully downloading your course materials. Please note: If you plan to bring/use an iPad, you may experience issues with saving/storing/printing course assignments since there is no USB/thumb drive capacity for these devices.

The NFA classroom environment is computer based. Increased numbers of students and instructors are bringing laptop computers or other electronic devices to campus; you are responsible for the security and maintenance of your equipment. The NFA cannot provide computer software, hardware (which includes disks, printers, scanners, monitors, etc.), or technical support for your device. For your convenience, we do provide surge protector power strips at each classroom table.

If you need additional information related to your course's content or requirements, please contact Mr. Edward Kensler Jr., training specialist, Leadership and Partnership Branch, at 301-447-1158, or by email at edward.kenslerjr@fema.dhs.gov. Good luck, and I hope to see you on campus.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Eriks J. Gabliks". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "E" and "G".

Eriks J. Gabliks, Superintendent
National Fire Academy
U.S. Fire Administration

Enclosure

National Fire Academy Bring Your Own Device (BYOD) Course Materials/Download Instructions

If you own an electronic device (laptop computer, tablet, etc.) and are familiar with its document reader functions, we are asking you to download the Student Manual (SM) before you travel to class and bring the preloaded device with you.

The **first step** is to download Adobe Acrobat Reader to your device. This will enable you to read and manipulate the course materials. Adobe Acrobat Reader can be used to comment and highlight text in PDF documents. It is an excellent tool for note-taking purposes.

For laptops and computers

Adobe Acrobat Reader can be downloaded from www.adobe.com/downloads/. It is a free download. Please note that depending on your settings, you may have to temporarily disable your antivirus software.

For tablets and other similar hand-held devices

Adobe Acrobat Reader can be downloaded onto devices such as iPads, Android tablets and other hand-held devices. The application can be found in the device's application store using the search function and typing in "Adobe Acrobat Reader." Follow the instructions given. **It is a free application.**

After you have successfully downloaded the Adobe Acrobat Reader, please use the following web link to download your SM. You may copy/paste this link into your web browser.

https://apps.usfa.fema.gov/ax/sm/sm_0763.pdf

Note: In order to have the editing capabilities/toolbar, the SM needs to be opened with Adobe Acrobat Reader. There should be a function on your device to do this.

If you need assistance, please contact nfaonlinetier2@fema.dhs.gov.