

4765-11-18

Online education and distance learning for initial fire certification training programs offered through a chartered program.

(A) The executive director, with the advice and counsel of the committee, may approve a chartered program to provide a fire training program through online education and/or distance learning, as defined in rule 4765-11-01 of the Administrative Code, if the institution is of good reputation and meets the following requirements:

- (1) Meets all requirements for chartering as set forth in rule 4765-11-03 of the Administrative Code and currently possesses a charter at the level(s) of fire training program for which the institution seeks to provide the online and/or distance learning;
- (2) Submits to the division an application, approved by the executive director, to offer online education/distance learning. Such a request shall indicate the level or levels of fire training proposed to be offered and shall include documentation of how the chartered program meets the requirements set forth in this rule;
- (3) Has maintained a charter for at least the preceding three full years at or above the level of the fire training program for which the chartered program seeks to provide the online and/or distance learning;
- (4) Has completed at least one fire training program in the traditional classroom setting at or above the level of the chartered program for which the chartered program seeks to provide the online and/or distance learning;
- (5) Is not currently under any disciplinary action imposed by the executive director at the classification of training proposed to be offered;
- (6) Has written policies, that will be made available to each student, regarding all of the following:
 - (a) Admission requirements;
 - (b) Minimal requirements for technological needs for students enrolling in an online program, including but not limited to, hardware, software, and internet connection speed;
 - (c) Technological support, that will be provided by the chartered program to the students enrolled in the online program, to include at a minimum the hours of support and the method or methods in which the support will be provided. A written policy establishing availability of schedule identifying weekly access to the program's fire instructors while the program is in session to allow for direct communication between fire instructor and students. This should include, but is not limited to, telephone number, email, and if available, office hours;

- (d) Security parameters protecting the students financial and personal information in accordance with state and federal laws;
 - (e) Online procedures for course administration and completion;
 - (f) Method or methods to transition from online education and distance learning to the classroom version of the same program in order to complete the required training. This policy shall include a reasonable time frame in which the transition process must be completed.
- (7) Develops and maintains the following for all online education and distance learning programs:
- (a) A technology infrastructure that facilitates sound security, including user authentication and authorization procedures and technologies;
 - (b) Access control procedures and technology that supports the online program;
 - (c) Technological support to meet student needs;
 - (d) An appropriate security solution to ensure course and systems integrity, especially financial and personal information;
 - (e) A risk management plan to include identification of foreseen risks, continuity, disaster recovery, and incidence response;
 - (f) Assurance that course data is readily, securely and reliably available by electronic or printed means to the division and the division's authorized recipients;
 - (g) A means to facilitate state audit, compliance, and verification requirements. The division may request and review supporting documentation to include access to computer logs, related to the audit reports and the reviews undertaken. If the technical support, application server host, or data storage facilities are located outside of the state of Ohio, the chartered program shall submit, upon request of the division, a report encompassing the rules of this chapter to meet the audit requirements in lieu of a state conducted audit. The chartered program shall provide the division with an audit amendment describing any significant system changes within thirty days of enabling those changes. An enterprise shall make student records available to the division online, in a password protected environment upon request.
- (8) Creates and maintains a complete student course data file to demonstrate student activity and ensure that the following information, at a minimum, is

collected and retained:

(a) Student's name;

(b) Dates and times of student activity in the fire training program and verification of the amount of total time spent in the online portion of the program;

(c) An identifier of the reason a student was suspended or failed to complete the online fire training program;

(d) Name or identity number of a chartered program staff member accessing or entering student records.

(9) Ensures that the classroom and online portion of the course will include administration and scoring of the final exam, and that the final exam shall not be included in an initial fire service training program offered through online education and/or distance learning.

(10) Ensures that initial fire service training program taught through an online education or distance learning system meets all of the following:

(a) Obtains prior written approval of course content from the program director;

(b) Possesses written documentation of clear objectives, course content and method of delivery;

(c) Obtains prior approval from the program director in order to utilize the online education or distance learning for instruction;

(d) Is developed and facilitated by a fire instructor;

(e) Ensures that the lecture portions of each fire training program curriculum may be taught utilizing the online education and/or distance learning;

(f) Ensures that the practical skills portion of each fire training program curriculum shall not be provided through the online education or distance learning;

(g) Ensures that the traditional classroom and/or laboratory at a chartered program must be utilized for instruction in, and practice of skills;

(11) Requires written evaluations, completed by each student, of each fire training program offered through online or distance learning. The evaluation shall include, but is not limited to, the following:

- (a) Clarity of written policies associated with the chartered program;
 - (b) Course content;
 - (c) Means of delivery and systems availability;
 - (d) Availability of fire instructors.
- (B) A chartered program approved to utilize the online education or distance learning may do so in conjunction with traditional classroom-based instruction.
- (C) In addition to the requirements set forth in chapter 4765-11 of the Administrative Code the chartered program shall provide information, statistics and data specific to the fire training programs offered through online and/or distance learning.
- (D) A chartered program approved by the executive director to utilize online training or distance learning, that subsequently receives classification for a higher level of fire training, shall teach at least one fire training program in the traditional classroom setting at that level before becoming eligible to request to teach such program through online or distance learning. The chartered program must meet all requirements in paragraph (A) of this rule in order to conduct online and/or distance learning at the higher level.
- (E) Approval to conduct training utilizing online and/or distance learning is specific to the fire training program level and type of delivery system.
- (F) The chartered program shall maintain documentation to show how the online or distance learning covers the hours stipulated in the curricula and learning objectives, set forth in rules 4765-11-14 and 4765-11-15 of the Administrative Code, and how the hours correspond from a traditional classroom environment into the online or distance learning.