

# NFPA® 1033

## Standard for Professional Qualifications for Fire Investigator

2022 Edition



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An International Codes and Standards Organization

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## NFPA® 1033

### Standard for

## Professional Qualifications for Fire Investigator

### 2022 Edition

This edition of NFPA 1033, *Standard for Professional Qualifications for Fire Investigator*, was prepared by the Technical Committee on Fire Investigator Professional Qualifications and released by the Correlating Committee on Professional Qualifications. It was issued by the Standards Council on May 24, 2021, with an effective date of June 13, 2021, and supersedes all previous editions.

This edition of NFPA 1033 was approved as an American National Standard on June 13, 2021.

### Origin and Development of NFPA 1033

In 1972, the Joint Council of National Fire Service Organizations (JCNFSO) created the National Professional Qualifications Board (NPQB) for the fire service to facilitate the development of nationally applicable performance standards for uniformed fire service personnel. On December 14, 1972, the board established four technical committees to develop those standards using the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) standards-making system. The initial committees addressed the following career areas: fire fighter, fire officer, fire service instructor, and fire inspector and investigator.

The original concept of the professional qualification standards as directed by the JCNFSO and the NPQB was to develop an interrelated set of performance standards specifically for the uniformed fire service. The various levels of achievement in the standards were to build upon each other within a strictly defined career ladder. In the late 1980s, revisions of the standards recognized that the documents should stand on their own merit in terms of job performance requirements for a given field. Accordingly, the strict career ladder concept was revised, except for the progression from fire fighter to fire officer, in order to allow civilian entry into many of the fields. These revisions facilitated the use of the documents by other than the uniformed fire services. The Committee on Fire Inspector and Investigator Professional Qualifications met and produced the first edition of NFPA 1031, *Professional Qualifications for Fire Inspector, Fire Investigator, and Fire Prevention Education Officer*. This document was adopted by the NFPA in May of 1977.

In 1986, the joint council directed the committee to develop separate documents for each of the job functions the original document addressed. This direction was coupled with the decision to remove the job of fire investigator from the strict career path previously followed and allow for civilian entry. The first edition of this new document, NFPA 1033, *Standard for Professional Qualifications for Fire Investigator*, was adopted by the NFPA in June of 1987.

In 1990, responsibility for the appointment of professional qualifications committees and the development of the professional qualifications standards was assumed by the NFPA. The Professional Qualifications Correlating Committee was appointed by the NFPA Standards Council and assumed the responsibility for coordinating the requirements of all of the documents in the professional qualifications system.

The NFPA Standards Council established the Technical Committee on Fire Investigator Professional Qualifications in 1990 to address the need for specific expertise in the area of fire investigation to review and revise the existing document. This committee completed a job task analysis and developed specific job performance requirements for the job of fire investigator.

The intent of the Technical Committee on Fire Investigator Professional Qualifications was to develop clear and concise job performance requirements that can be used to determine that an individual, when measured to the standard, possesses the skills and knowledge to perform as a fire investigator. These job performance requirements are applicable to fire investigators both public and private.



In the 2003 edition of the document, the Technical Committee made changes to bring it into conformance with the new *Manual of Style for NFPA Technical Committee Documents*.

In the 2009 edition of the document, the Technical Committee added an explanatory annex item to the Scope statement. The committee's intent was to clarify that the standard applies to all fire investigation, including outside, vehicle, and other fires that are not structural. The committee added a skills maintenance requirement to Chapter 1 and included more specific Requisite Knowledge statements to various JPRs.

For the 2014 edition, the fire investigator was expected to remain current on the topics listed in the general requirements section of the document by attending formal education courses, workshops, and seminars, and through professional publications and journals. While the technical committee viewed a high-school level education as a minimum, the fire investigator was expected to maintain up-to-date basic knowledge of topics already projected in the document, as well as knowledge of fire protection systems; evidence documentation, collection, and preservation; and electricity and electric systems. Definitions for *fire analysis*, *fire dynamics*, *fire investigation technology*, and *fire science* were added. The technical committee also made clarifications under the evidence collection and preservation section of the document.

For the 2022 edition, the committee made several updates and changes throughout the document to align it more closely with NFPA 921, since it is common practice for fire investigators meeting NFPA 1033 to also use NFPA 921. The committee also updated and simplified requirements that had been a source of confusion for end users to make them easier to understand.