

**ACCREDITATION CRITERIA FOR
FIRE PREVENTION AND LIFE SAFETY DEPARTMENTS AND THIRD PARTIES
PROVIDING FIRE PREVENTION AND LIFE-SAFETY SERVICES**

AC426

**December 2021
Effective February 1, 2022**

PREFACE

The attached accreditation criteria have been issued to provide all interested parties with guidelines on implementing performance features of the applicable standards referenced herein. The criteria were developed and adopted following public hearings conducted by the International Accreditation Service, Inc. (IAS), Accreditation Committee and are effective on the date shown above. All accreditations issued or reissued on or after the effective date must comply with these criteria. If the criteria are an updated version from a previous edition, solid vertical lines (|) in the outer margin within the criteria indicate a technical change or addition from the previous edition. Deletion indicators (→) are provided in the outer margins where a paragraph or item has been deleted if the deletion resulted from a technical change. These criteria may be further revised as the need dictates.

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ACCREDITATION CRITERIA FOR FIRE PREVENTION AND LIFE SAFETY DEPARTMENTS AND THIRD PARTIES PROVIDING FIRE PREVENTION AND LIFE-SAFETY SERVICES

1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 **Scope:** These criteria set forth requirements for obtaining and maintaining International Accreditation Service, Inc. (IAS), Fire Prevention and Life Safety Department accreditation and Third Parties Providing Fire Prevention and Life-Safety Services. These criteria supplement the IAS Rules of Procedure for Fire Prevention and Life Safety Department Accreditation and Third Parties Providing Fire Prevention and Life Safety Services.
- 1.2 **References and Normative Documents:** Publications listed below refer to editions in effect at this time these criteria were approved (unless otherwise stated).
- 1.2.1 *International Fire Code*® (IFC) current edition, and related standards, or the duly adopted model code.
 - 1.2.2 *International Building Code*® (IBC), current edition, and related construction codes published by the International Code Council, or the duly adopted model code.
 - 1.2.3 IAS Rules of Procedure for Fire Prevention and Life Safety Department Accreditation and Third Parties Providing Fire Prevention and Life Safety Services.
 - 1.2.4 *NFPA 921 Guide for Fire and Explosion Investigations*. (National Fire Protection Association)
 - 1.2.5 *NFPA 1031 Standard for Professional Qualifications for Fire Inspector and Plan Examiner*. (National Fire Protection Association)
 - 1.2.6 *NFPA 1033 Standard for Professional Qualifications for Fire Investigator*. (National Fire Protection Association)
 - 1.2.7 *NFPA 1035 Standard on Fire and Life Safety Educator, Public Information Officer, Youth Firesetter Intervention Specialist, and Youth Firesetter Program Manager Professional Qualifications*. (National Fire Protection Association)
 - 1.2.8 *NFPA 1037 Standard on Fire Marshal Professional Qualifications*. (National Fire Protection Association)
 - 1.2.9 *NFPA 1300 Standard on Community Risk Assessment and Community Risk Reduction Plan Development*. (National Fire Protection Association)
 - 1.2.10 *NFPA 1730 Standard on Organization and Deployment of Fire Prevention Inspection and Code Enforcement, Plan Review, Investigation, and Public Education Operations*. (National Fire Protection Association)

2 DEFINITIONS

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- 2.1 **Accreditation:** Formal third-party recognition that an organization fulfills specified requirements and is competent to carry out specific conformity assessment and regulatory tasks.
- 2.2 **Accreditation Committee:** A committee appointed by the IAS Board of Directors to develop accreditation criteria for IAS.
- 2.3 **Accreditation Review Committee (ARC):** A committee established to render accreditation decisions on several IAS accreditation programs including the Fire Prevention and Life Safety Department Accreditation program.
- 2.4 **Alternative Materials, Design and Methods of Construction and Equipment:** A material or method of construction not prescribed in the adopted code, where the fire code official finds that the proposed design is satisfactory and complies with the intent of the provisions of the applicable code, and that the material, method, or work offered is, for the purpose intended, at least the equivalent of that prescribed in the code in quality, strength, effectiveness, fire resistance, durability and safety.
- 2.5 **Appeal:** Request for reconsideration of any administrative decision by the fire prevention department. Administrative decisions include:
 - 2.5.1 Refusal to accept an application for issuance of a permit.
 - 2.5.2 Refusal to proceed with plan review or inspections.
 - 2.5.3 Corrective action requests.
 - 2.5.4 Refusal to agree with the designer's code interpretation.
 - 2.5.5 Decisions to deny, suspend or halt construction work, if empowered to do so.
 - 2.5.6 Any other action that impedes the attainment of a permit for construction or certificate of occupancy.
 - 2.5.7 Any communication from the department indicating a requirement resulting from any code enforcement activity.
- 2.6 **Applicant:** An individual or corporation applying for a construction or operational permit within the scope of regulation of the department.
- 2.7 **Approved:** Acceptable to the fire code official.
- 2.8 **Approved Agency:** An established and recognized agency regularly engaged in conducting tests or furnishing inspection services when such agency has been approved by the fire code official. Accreditation by the International Accreditation Service as a testing laboratory, special inspection agency, or product certification agency meets the intent of this section.
- 2.9 **Building Department/Code Administration and Enforcement Agency:** Governmental body/jurisdiction which performs functions related to enforcement of laws related to construction or use of buildings.
- 2.10 **Certification:** The confirmation of certain characteristics of a project, product, person, or organization. This confirmation is often, but not always, provided by some form of external review, education, or assessment. One of the most common types of certification is professional

certification, where a person is certified as being able to competently complete a job or task, usually by the passing of an examination.

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- 2.11 **Complaint:** Expression of dissatisfaction, other than appeal, by any person or organization, concerning some matter related to the department, a contractor, work started without permits, or other matters where a response is expected.
- 2.12 **Construction Documents:** Written, graphic and pictorial documents prepared or assembled to describe the design, location and physical characteristics of a building project as set forth in the adopted code.
- 2.13 **Control:** The direction, regulation and coordination of procedures and related documents to assure consistency of operations.
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- 2.14 **Department:** The department, division, or bureau within a department in the jurisdiction or third-party firm responsible for implementation and administration of services for which accreditation is granted.
- 2.15 **Exhibits:** Documents, illustrations, records, charts, and other forms of physical evidence offered to provide proof of performance and activity by a department seeking accreditation.
- 2.16 **External/Internal Pressures and Influences:** Interferences with the due process of administration or operations of the department by persons in a position of power (such as elected officials).
- 2.17 **Fire Code Administrator/Fire Code Official:** Governmental officer or other designated authority having jurisdiction (AHJ) charged with the administration and enforcement of fire prevention and life safety codes and standards as adopted in a particular jurisdiction. At the state level these officials are designated as fire marshals, fire administrators or directors.
- 2.18 **Fire Prevention and Life Safety Department:** The unit of Federal, state, or local government, or such other regulatory body legally authorized to enforce fire prevention and life safety codes and standards.
- 2.19 **Historic Buildings:** Buildings that are listed in or are eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places, or designated as historic under appropriate national, state, or local law.
- 2.20 **Internal Audits:** An audit is a systematic, independent and documented process to obtain and evaluate objective evidence to determine the extent to which the audit criteria are fulfilled. An internal audit is an audit conducted by, or on behalf of, the organization itself for the purpose of identifying the extent to which the requirements of the quality management system are followed, as well as the effectiveness of current processes. A minimum of one internal Service Goals audit shall be conducted in each 12-month period. Service goals audit findings shall be documented in a summary report that compares audit findings to required service goals.
- 2.21 **Jurisdiction:** A governmental unit that has authority to adopt and enforce construction and/or fire codes. (Also known as the Authority Having Jurisdiction [AHJ]).

- 2.22 **Labeled/Listed:** Equipment or material to which has been attached a label, seal, symbol or other identifying mark of a nationally recognized testing laboratory, inspection agency or other organization concerned with product evaluation that maintains periodic inspection of equipment, materials or products and whose labeling indicates either that the equipment, materials, or products meet identified standards or have been tested and found suitable for a specified purpose.
- 2.23 **Life Safety Error:** Omission or flaw in design or construction that has the potential to negatively impact occupant and/or rescuer safety; or the failure to meet, in design or construction, a required minimum standard intended to minimize the effects of fire and related hazards to occupants and/or rescuers. (May include, for example, errors in the design, construction, or installation of exiting systems, fire alarms and sprinklers, smoke control systems, control systems for hazardous materials, etc.). Life-safety goals are as further defined by the department. A goal of “0” for life safety errors is required.
- 2.24 **Major Error:** Omission or flaw in design or construction, other than Life-Safety Errors, that has the potential to negatively impact the use and occupancy of buildings and structures, and other omissions or flaws of particular concern to the department/division. Major errors are as further defined by the department.
- 2.25 **Minor Error:** Minor errors are as defined by the department.
- 2.26 **Management/Operational Audits or External Studies:** Independent evaluations conducted by a qualified entity to measure the operational consistency and overall efficiency of the department.
- 2.27 **Management Reviews:** A regularly scheduled assessment of the department by management, to include the status of actions from previous reviews, changes in external and internal issues that are relevant to the quality management system, information on the performance and effectiveness of the quality management system, the adequacy of resources, the effectiveness of actions taken to address risks and opportunities, and opportunities for improvement.
- 2.28 **Permit:** An official document issued by the authority having jurisdiction which authorizes a specific construction or operational activity.
- 2.29 **Quality Assurance Plan:** Documents which set forth the policies and practices aimed at ensuring the quality of the department’s services through the observation of work in progress or sampling (audit) of completed work.
- 2.30 **Quality Assurance Program:** The department’s system for maintaining minimum quality levels of service through a collection of self-imposed standards through activities such as internal quality audits, document creation and control, management reviews, etc. (see Section 4.3.3).
- 2.31 **Quality Service Goals:** The internal error rate goal for individuals performing duties associated with services provided by the department. Quality service goals include, but are not limited to,

permitting, plan review, and inspection services. Quality service goals shall be established for Life-Safety, Major, and Minor Errors as defined herein.

- 2.32 **Registered Design Professionals:** Individuals registered or licensed to practice their respective design professions as defined by the statutory requirements of the professional registration laws of the state or jurisdiction in which the project is to be constructed.
- 2.33 **Registered/Licensed Contractor:** Any contractor who has registered with the appropriate state agency or local jurisdiction pursuant to fulfilling the competency requirements in the jurisdiction for which the registration is issued. Registered contractors may contract only in such jurisdictions.
- 2.34 **Service Goals:** Goals set for performance in each area of service offered by the fire prevention and life safety department/division. Goals are quantified (expressed as a number, rating, or grade) and established with input from users of services provided by the fire prevention department (citizens, architects, engineers, contractors, etc.), as well as elected and appointed governmental officials. A system shall be in place to regularly audit processes in meeting service goals. As part of this system, goals shall be established in three separate areas of overall service: timeliness (turnaround time); quality (internal error rate); and staff professionalism (quality of interactions, with staff [e.g., knowledge, attitude, responsiveness, and helpfulness of staff members]) as perceived by users of the department/division services. A minimum of one Service Goals audit shall be conducted in each 12-month period. Service goals audit findings shall be documented in a summary report that compares audit findings to the required service goals.
- 2.35 **Special Inspection:** Inspection required of materials, installation, fabrication, construction, erection or placement of components and connections requiring special expertise to ensure compliance with approved construction documents and referenced standards (see IBC Section 1704).
- 2.36 **Standard Operating Guidelines/Procedures:** Written documentation designed to ensure tasks are performed and services are provided in a uniform manner consistent with the department's goals.
- 2.37 **Structure:** That which is built or constructed.
- 2.38 **Third Party:** A competent, independent entity recognized to perform specified tasks subject to approval by the governmental jurisdiction/authority having jurisdiction.
- 2.39 **Top Management:** The person or group of people who direct and control the department or third-party company seeking accreditation. **Note:** If the scope of accreditation only covers a part of an organization, top management refers to the individual or group of individuals who direct and control that part of the organization.

3 ELIGIBILITY

Accreditation services are available to fire prevention and life safety departments and third parties that provide any of the following services (or any combination thereof):

- 3.1 Permitting
- 3.2 Plan review
- 3.3 Fire inspections (construction)
- 3.4 Existing occupancy inspection
- 3.5 Fire investigations.

4 REQUIRED BASIC INFORMATION

The applicant shall provide evidence of compliance with each of the following clauses:

- 4.1 **Governance and Administration:** Evidence that there is an established administrative structure and environment for achievement of the department's mission, purposes, goals, strategies, and objectives. The department shall be legally identifiable.
 - 4.1.1 There shall be a governing authority that reviews and approves programs to ensure compliance with basic governmental and department policies. Historical and political information on the jurisdictions served shall be provided, including a copy of the Charter and incorporation details.
 - 4.1.2 There shall be a method of selecting the fire prevention department head that utilizes appropriate qualifications and credentials.
 - 4.1.3 The administrative structure shall be formalized. A chart as indicated by Section 4.7.2.1 shall be maintained by the department.
 - 4.1.4 There shall be statutes, policies, and/or other adequate measures in place that provide fire code officials freedom from external/internal pressures and influences (as defined in Section 2) that could possibly impair the enforcement of codes.
 - 4.1.5 (This section intentionally left blank for future content).
 - 4.1.6 There shall be an established communication process in place between the governing body and the administrative structure of the department.
 - 4.1.7 The role and composition of various policy making, planning and special purpose bodies shall be defined.
 - 4.1.8 **Complaints and Appeals**
 - 4.1.8.1 Documented procedures shall be in place to record, investigate and resolve complaints against the department, its personnel, its contract third-party service providers, and complaints about contractors, property and business owners, life-safety violation, work without permits and other similar violations.
 - 4.1.8.2 There shall be evidence of the existence of and rules of procedure for a board of appeals as required by Section 108 of the IFC or other documented procedure for hearing and deciding appeals in accordance with other duly adopted code.

4.2 **Community Risk Assessment/Reduction:** The purpose of the risk assessment category is to evaluate the systematic hazard analysis process for describing and qualifying the risk associated with the community's potential hazards.

Where the jurisdiction has a Community Risk Reduction Plan, the department shall have goals and objectives that support the plan where applicable.

4.3 **Goals and Objectives:**

4.3.1 The department shall be guided by written goals and specific objectives that are consistent with the mission of the department and are appropriate for the jurisdiction being served.

4.3.2 The department shall have documented permitting, plan review, and inspection service goals, established with stakeholder input, for each area of service provided by the fire prevention and life safety department (as defined in Section 2). Service Goals shall be quantified (expressed as a number, rating, or grade) and established with input from users of services provided by the department (for example, architects, engineers, contractors, etc.). A system shall be in place to regularly audit progress in meeting service goals. As part of this system, service goals shall be established in three separate areas of overall service: timeliness (turnaround time); quality (error rate); and professionalism (quality of interactions with staff and with the public [e.g., knowledge, attitude, responsiveness, and helpfulness of staff members]) as perceived by users of department/division services. A minimum of one service goals audit shall be conducted in each 12-month period. Audit findings shall be documented in a summary report that compares audit findings to the required service goals.

4.3.3 The department shall establish and maintain a comprehensive quality assurance program (as defined in Section 2) which shall contain, at minimum, the following components:

4.3.3.1 The department's official quality policy and quality assurance plan.

4.3.3.2 Evidence of standard operating procedures (SOPs), including SOPs which address the following quality-related tasks:

4.3.3.2.1 Writing/revising a standard operating procedure

4.3.3.2.2 Internal audits

4.3.3.2.3 Handling of nonconformities

4.3.3.2.4 Corrective and preventive action

4.3.3.2.5 Management review

4.3.3.2.6 Document and data control

4.3.3.3 Annual (or more frequent) internal quality audits (not to be confused with financial audits).

4.3.3.4 Management reviews as defined in Section 2.

Note 1: A typical period for conducting a management review is once every 12 months.

Note 2: Results of management reviews shall feed into the department's planning system and shall include the goals, objectives, action plans, and expected outcomes for the coming year, as applicable.

4.3.3.5 Controlled policies, forms, checklists, etc.

4.3.4 A matrix of staff certifications shall be provided and must include names, job titles, required certificates, current status and expiration dates. Certifications required of staff shall be issued by a national model code promulgation organization, such as the International Code Council, the National Fire Protection Association, or other acceptable certification organization, as determined by the department, local ordinance, or state laws.

4.4 **Finance:** The department shall demonstrate the ability to fund operational priorities, effectiveness in servicing the community and department's needs. A copy of the department's current fiscal year budget shall be provided. Financial reports or records are not required to be submitted by third-party service providers.

4.5 **Program Activities:** This category is defined as the services, activities and responses provided by the department for the community or facility that are designed, organized, and operated in compliance with the department's mission, goals, and objectives.

There shall be an adequate, effective, and efficient program directed toward fire prevention; life safety; risk reduction of hazards; the detection, reporting, and control of fires and other emergencies; the provision of occupant safety and egress.

4.5.1 **Code Enforcement:** If the department is tasked with the code administration and enforcement function as part of the mission, the following apply:

4.5.1.1 The jurisdiction shall have an adopted fire prevention code. Evidence of adoption of national construction and/or fire codes or state-mandated codes based on current national model fire codes shall be provided.

Note: The accreditation certificate for accredited departments will reflect the code version effective during onsite evaluation.

4.5.1.1.1 The department shall submit a list of duly adopted fire and construction codes used as a basis for the services provided.

- 4.5.1.1.2 The department shall explain procedures followed for the fire code and related standards.
- 4.5.1.1.3 The department shall have procedures for maintaining awareness of local amendments to any technical provisions of the fire code and related standards.
- 4.5.1.1.4 Where the department is responsible for performing post-disaster damage assessments of buildings and structures, the department shall have, or plan to have, preparations coordinated with other departments/jurisdictions.
- 4.5.1.1.5 The department shall have a policy and procedures for the review of alternative materials and methods requests, and performance-based design proposals.
- 4.5.1.2 The code enforcement program shall be designed to ensure compliance with applicable fire protection laws (including mandated types and frequency of inspections) and department objectives.
- 4.5.1.3 There shall be adequate, qualified staffing to meet department objectives and service goals.
- 4.5.1.4 There shall be a plan review system in place to ensure buildings are built in accordance with adopted codes and ordinances and that all fire protection systems are designed, installed, and tested in accordance with adopted fire codes and referenced standards.
 - 4.5.1.4.1 There shall be specific policies and procedures for conducting plan reviews.
 - 4.5.1.4.2 (This section intentionally left blank for future content.)
 - 4.5.1.4.3 A description of the system used to track and coordinate plan review processes and activities shall be provided.
 - 4.5.1.4.4 Details of the process followed to conduct partial and phased plan reviews and deferred submittals, if offered, shall be provided.
 - 4.5.1.4.5 (This section intentionally left blank for future content.)
 - 4.5.1.4.6 The department shall track the most common reasons for rejections or corrections of designs and develop training/informational materials to reduce the potential for future reoccurrences of the same rejections or corrections.
 - 4.5.1.4.7 The department shall provide evidence of participation in interdepartmental/intergovernmental coordination of plan review (or inspections and occupational licensing, etc.) that are under a separate department, organization, or agency and shall describe how approvals are coordinated.

- 4.5.1.5 Evidence of establishment of standard operating procedures, details of the process in place to control uniformity of operating procedures, and procedural documents and forms shall be submitted.
- 4.5.1.5.1 The department shall submit copies of its policies, procedures, reports, and checklists in use for services subject to this Accreditation Criteria.
 - 4.5.1.5.2 (This section intentionally left blank for future content.)
 - 4.5.1.5.3 (This section intentionally left blank for future content.)
 - 4.5.1.5.4 The department shall have determined the most typical reasons for rejections and corrections of inspections.
 - 4.5.1.5.5 The department shall demonstrate its use of and requirements for special inspectors if this activity is under the fire prevention department.
 - 4.5.1.5.6 Where the department approves fabricators, the department shall have procedures for acceptance of approved fabricators.
 - 4.5.1.5.7 Where the department approves third-party inspection and testing agencies, the department shall develop and follow appropriate policy and procedures for recognition of third-party inspection and testing agencies.
 - 4.5.1.5.8 Where the department approves special inspectors, the department shall have special inspector reporting requirements.
 - 4.5.1.5.9 The department shall have procedures for clear, concise, and accurate reporting of inspection results and procedures in place to guard against the alteration of inspection report records.
 - 4.5.1.5.10 (This section intentionally left blank for future content.)
 - 4.5.1.5.11 (This section intentionally left blank for future content.)
 - 4.5.1.5.12 The method of issuance of Certificates of Occupancy (CO) or Certificates of Completion (CC) or temporary certificates of occupancy, as applicable, shall be provided. The method of reviewing Fire Protection System Commissioning reports, as applicable, shall be provided.
- 4.5.1.6 (This section intentionally left blank for future content.)
- 4.5.1.7 (This section intentionally left blank for future content.)
- 4.5.1.8 The department shall provide copies of contracts with third-party firms, or individuals, for any activities that are outsourced, if applicable.
- 4.5.1.9 There shall be a program in place to ensure existing high-occupancy, hazardous, educational, institutional, and other existing buildings and facilities as may be identified by the department or otherwise subject to periodic inspection as specified in the adopted codes, standards, or state or local laws, are used and maintained in accordance with adopted fire codes and referenced standards.

4.5.1.9.1 There shall be specific policies and procedures for conducting periodic fire code compliance inspections.

4.5.1.9.2 (This section intentionally left blank for future content.)

4.5.1.9.3 A description of the system used to track and coordinate periodic compliance inspections activities shall be provided.

4.5.1.9.4 The department shall track the violations found on periodic compliance inspections and shall have a tracking system to ensure the timely and appropriate follow up for documented non-compliance/violations.

4.5.2 **Public Education:** Where the department is tasked with the public education function as part of the mission, the following apply:

4.5.2.1 There shall be a public education or community outreach program that includes individual, business, and community participation.

4.5.2.2 The department shall have qualified staffing adequate to accomplish this component of the program's mission, goals, and objectives.

4.5.2.3 The department shall show evidence of a systematic approach to designing, implementing, and evaluating community safety education programs.

4.5.3 **Fire Investigation:** Where the department is tasked with the fire investigation function as part of its mission, the following apply:

4.5.3.1 There shall be methods and procedures in place to investigate the cause and origin of all reported fires using the scientific method.

4.5.3.2 The department shall have competence requirements for qualifying staff adequate to accomplish its stated objectives.

4.5.3.3 There shall be adequate equipment and supplies allocated to the fire cause and investigation program and a process for ensuring defective equipment is replaced.

4.5.3.4 Where required, there shall be agreements and support from other agencies to aid the department in accomplishing its goals and objectives.

4.5.3.5 There shall be an information system in place to document fire investigation activities and to provide data for analyzing program results for future public education strategies.

4.5.3.6 There shall be standard operating procedures or general operating guidelines for the fire cause and investigation program that conforms to NFPA 921 Guide for Fire and Explosion Investigations or other nationally recognized standards for fire investigation.

4.5.3.7 There shall be a periodic appraisal made on the effectiveness of the fire investigation program.

4.6 **Physical Resources:** Physical Resources addressed in this section shall be defined as the buildings, structures, mobile equipment, and other capital expenditures or outlay that make up the physical assets of the department.

4.6.1 **Facilities:** Fixed facility resources shall be designed, maintained, managed, and adequate to meet the department's goals and objectives.

4.6.2 **Vehicles and Mobile Equipment:** Vehicles, transportation equipment and tools and equipment shall be adequate to meet the department's goals and objectives.

4.6.3 **Tools and Equipment:** Tools and equipment shall be adequate and maintained to meet the department's goals and objectives (e.g., books, manuals, tools, gauges, meters, and equipment used for plan review, inspection, investigation, and other functions).

4.6.3.1 The department shall have in place a method of identification and calibration of tools and equipment used, as applicable.

4.6.3.2 Appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE) shall be provided to and utilized by employees in accordance with applicable laws.

4.7 **Human Resources:** The category of human resources addressed in this section shall be defined as all aspects of personnel administration except those of training and competency.

4.7.1 (This section intentionally left blank for future content.)

4.7.2 Fire prevention departments shall have a sufficient number of staff with the range of expertise to carry out their assigned functions.

4.7.2.1 The department shall have an organizational chart providing employee names, titles, functions, and lines of authority for all full- and part-time staff positions within the department.

4.7.2.2 The department shall have job descriptions for all full-time and part-time staff positions, including information on minimum qualifications, education, training, technical knowledge, skills, and experience, and certification/licensing requirements and shall provide detailed requirements, if applicable, for qualifications/certifications and/or licensing.

4.7.2.3 The department shall provide the number of plan reviewers currently employed.

4.7.2.4 The department shall provide the number of inspectors currently employed.

4.7.2.5 The department shall provide information on its registered design professionals (i.e., number employed, full- or part-time, by profession), if any.

4.7.3 (This section intentionally left blank for future content.)

4.7.4 (This section intentionally left blank for future content.)

- 4.7.5 There shall be a policy defining and prohibiting sexual, racial, disability, or related harassment of employees/members. The policy shall be communicated to all employees/members and enforced.
- 4.7.6 Where the organization requires period evaluation of employee performance, the evaluations shall be conducted in a manner consistent with the applicable policies and procedures.

4.8 **Training and Competency:** This category shall be defined as the specific programs, resources and capabilities within a department that exist to support the operational programs. These resources thereby contribute to the accomplishment of organizational mission goals and objectives.

- 4.8.1 Training and education programs and activities shall be identified to support the department's needs.
 - 4.8.1.1 The department shall have a process in place to identify training needs. The process shall identify tasks, activities, knowledge, skills, and abilities required to address anticipated workload and required skill sets.
 - 4.8.1.2 Information shall be provided indicating state-mandated and locally-mandated minimum continuing education requirements. Information shall also be provided regarding jurisdictional continuing education requirements which exceed minimum requirements.
 - 4.8.1.3 A list of additional qualification/certification requirements over and above the state or local requirements for staff, if any, such as certifications issued by the International Code Council, the National Fire Protection Association, a professional engineering (P.E.) license, contractor license, etc., shall be provided.
 - 4.8.1.4 Department staff members shall be encouraged to participate in code development activities.
- 4.8.2 **Verification of Professional Credentials and Licenses:** During application intake and approval processes, as applicable, there shall be a policy and procedures for verification of professional credentials and licenses.
 - 4.8.2.1 There shall be a procedure for verifying builder and contractor licenses and insurance.
 - 4.8.2.2 There shall be a procedure for verification of licenses of registered design professionals.
 - 4.8.2.3 Where the department is responsible for approval of special inspectors and/or special inspection agencies, there shall be a procedure in place to verify special inspector and special inspection agency credentials. Special inspection agencies are required to demonstrate competence, to the satisfaction of the fire code official, for inspection

of the particular type of construction or operation requiring special inspection. Special inspection agencies accredited as conforming to ISO Standard 17020 by nationally recognized accreditation bodies complying with ISO/IEC Standard 17011 shall satisfy this requirement.

4.8.3 Where the department is responsible for performing post-disaster assessments of damaged buildings and structures, the inspection staff shall have received training on the requirements for post-disaster assessments of buildings and structures, including the required posting of buildings and structures.

4.9 **Essential Resources:** Essential resources are defined in this section as those mandatory services or systems required for the department's operational programs to function. They may be given the same value of importance as a primary program. Appropriate adjustments may be necessary in the self-assessment to adapt the typical components listed below to the local situation.

4.9.1 **Administrative Support Services:** The administrative support service component of the department shall be adequate, effective, and efficient to provide the department with all appropriate support functions such as research, planning, purchasing, coordination, control, and feedback.

Fire prevention and life safety departments shall have timely access to legal counsel and prosecution support.

4.9.2 **Office Systems:** Office systems shall be adequate to meet the needs of the department. This includes clerical support, records systems, business communications, computers, and supplies.

4.9.2.1 General office resources shall be adequate to support department needs.

4.9.2.2 The management information system shall be sufficient to support the needs of the department.

4.9.2.2.1 A list of computer software and programs in use shall be provided.

4.9.2.2.2 The department shall have available information technology (IT) support.

4.9.2.2.3 The department shall provide information on the accessibility of information and records, minimum retention times for records and details on safe storage of records. Application for performance-based requirements, alternative methods or materials and the final decision of the fire code official regarding the applications shall be in writing and shall be retained in the department records.

4.9.2.2.4 Control of access to records: The department shall have proper safeguards in place to prevent unauthorized access or modifications of records. Policy

and procedures shall address the release of public information in accordance with local, state, and Federal regulations as applicable.

4.9.2.3 Public reception and public information components shall sufficiently support the customer service needs of the department.

4.9.2.4 Organizational documents, forms and manuals shall be maintained and kept current.

4.9.2.5 The department shall provide, if applicable, copies of reports or findings from internal or external audits of management or operations conducted within the past three years.

4.10 **External Systems Relations:** External systems relations are defined as the relationships with agencies that act together as an integrated system. Intergovernmental agreements, contracts, and memorandums of understanding between legally autonomous operating units are examples of these relations.

4.10.1 (This section intentionally left blank for future content.)

4.10.2 The department shall have well developed and functioning external agreements such as those for work done on contract for other jurisdictions by local agreements.

4.10.2.1 External agency agreements shall be identified, updated, and support organizational objectives. The agreements shall have been incorporated into operational practices and documentation with outcome(s) of meeting the goals and objectives of the department.

4.10.2.2 Work performed in accordance with external agency agreements shall be subject to conformance with the requirements of this Accreditation Criteria where applicable.

4.10.2.3 There shall be an established process by which these agreements are analyzed, implemented, managed, reviewed, and revised.

5 ADDITIONAL INFORMATION (AS APPLICABLE)

Any other regulatory requirements for the jurisdiction – state or national.

6 LINKS TO ADDITIONAL REFERENCES

6.1 IAS – www.iasonline.org

6.2 International Code Council – www.iccsafe.org

These criteria were previously issued May 2011, August 2012, June 2013, February 2015, November 2015, April 2017, and September 2019.