

All-Hazards Qualifications Guide

State of Alaska

Organization: **Statewide**

Incident Complexity: **Type 3**

**Developed under the sponsorship of
the Alaska Intrastate Mutual Aid
System Credentialing Subcommittee**

April 2021



The purpose of this Guide is to support effective deployment of all-hazards disaster emergency responders in the State by establishing minimum standards for responder training, experience, and physical fitness at a Type 3 incident level.

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Record of Changes

This guide will be reviewed annually and revised as needed.

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INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this All-Hazards Qualification System Guide is to support effective deployment of all-hazard disaster emergency responders in the State of Alaska by establishing minimum standards for responder training, experience, and physical fitness for a Type 3 Incident response. This guide provides the mechanism for documenting disaster emergency responder qualifications through position specific Position Task Books (PTBs) based upon the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) National Qualification System (NQS) (fema.gov/national-qualification-system) and the Product Management System (PMS) 310-1 from the National Wildfire Coordination Group Standards for Wildland Fire Position Qualifications (nwcg.gov/sites/default/files/publications/pms310-1.pdf). The goal of this guide is to support incident management credentialing, allowing development and movement of qualified all-hazard incident personnel across jurisdictional boundaries.

All participating agencies and jurisdictions, as defined in A.S. 26.23.500, agree to accept completed Type 3 credentials under this guide as responder qualification for service during a disaster emergency. Any organization or agency providing responders to meet a resource request must state whether the resource is qualified under this system. At their discretion, local jurisdictions may accept responders for emergency service who are not qualified according to this guide.

This guide has been approved by the Qualifications Subcommittee of the Alaska Intrastate Mutual Aid System (AIMAS) committee, organized under the Alaska State Emergency Response Commission (SERC). The SERC established the standing AIMAS committee to assist in developing operational procedures and monitoring the use and progress of AIMAS pursuant to AS 26.23.071(e) (2). The Qualifications Subcommittee was established by the AIMAS committee to standardize and approve credentials across the state (mutualaid.alaska.gov/).

Integration with National and State Plans

Integration with the National Response Framework (NRF) and State Emergency Operations Plan (EOP)

The National Response Framework (NRF) and Alaska Emergency Operations Plans (EOP) are guides for response to all types of disasters and emergencies. The NRF and EOP are built upon scalable, flexible, and adaptable coordinating structures that align key roles and responsibilities in order to link all levels of government, nongovernmental organizations, and the private sector in disaster response. This Qualification System Guide supports preparedness elements of the NRF and EOP, assisting disaster emergency responders in developing, documenting, and maintaining the skills necessary for effective all-hazards incident management.

Integration with State National Incident Management System (NIMS) Requirements

This Qualification System Guide follows the State adoption of the National Incident Management System (NIMS) and qualification under this guide includes NIMS training requirements. Training meeting the NIMS standards includes courses managed, administered, or delivered by the Emergency Management Institute (EMI), U.S. Fire Administration's (USFA) National Fire Academy (NFA), National Wildfire Coordinating Group (NWCG), U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), and the U.S. Coast Guard (USCG).

Credentialing

Credentialing for the emergency management community provides a mechanism for disaster emergency managers and responders to document qualifications through standards of capability and performance. Established qualifications allows jurisdictions and agencies to plan for, request, and have confidence in resources deployed to assist them during emergencies. Credentialing allows resources to match requests for effective incident management. The process for attaining and documenting qualifications is an important component of credentialing and is the purpose of this guide. For the purpose of this guide, credentialing is defined as documentation that authenticates and verifies the qualifications of personnel, through ensuring a minimum common level of training, experience, physical and medical fitness, and capability, based on established standards, that is appropriate for a particular position.

ALL-HAZARDS QUALIFICATION SYSTEM GUIDE FOR EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT RESPONDERS

Authority Having Jurisdiction (AHJ)

The AIMAS Qualifications Subcommittee has designated each jurisdiction or organization with statutory responsibility for maintaining disaster emergency responder records as the Authority Having Jurisdiction (AHJ) for recommending qualified responders credentialed under this guide. Recognized government entities, including city governments, tribal governments, state and federal departments are designated AHJ. Non-governmental entities may apply to the Qualifications Subcommittee to become an AHJ if they meet and maintain standards established in this guide.

National Qualification System (NQS)

This guide adopts the FEMA NQS Position Task Books (PTB) and credentialing system (<https://www.fema.gov/emergency-managers/nims/components/position-task-books>) and (<https://preptoolkit.fema.gov/web/national-resource-hub/personnel-qualifications>) that lists core competencies and behaviors for Type 3 Incident Management positions and uses the FEMA OneResponder system for PTB initiation and review. PTBs identify competencies, behaviors, and tasks necessary for specific positions credentialed in Alaska. Tasks that can be performed on an exercise or planned event are distinguished from those requiring performance on an actual all-hazard incident in PTBs. PTBs are designed primarily for the evaluation of individual performance or as a checklist for credentialing and maintaining currency, but they may also be used as a basis for on-the-job training.

AHJs contact DHS&EM Training for registration on the OneResponder System (mva.dhsem.training@alaska.gov).

Type 3 Incident Positions

The Type 3 FEMA NQS PTBs adopted by Alaska are intended to apply to positions for Type 3 complexity incidents (https://www.fema.gov/sites/default/files/documents/fema_draft-incident-complexity-guide.pdf). Incident complexity is determined by size, location, threat to life and property, organizational complexity, jurisdictional boundaries, incident type, topography, agency policy, and other factors. Agencies or jurisdictions with responsibility for the incident determine the complexity rating using a standard of Type 5 for the least complex and Type 1 for the most. Qualifying training and experience incidents under this guide must be at a minimum of Type 3 complexity level. Generally, Type 3 incidents exceed initial, routine operations and require appropriate ICS Command and General Staff positions activation for management. Examples include large search and rescue operations, complex law enforcement incidents, special events with large populations, technical rescues, large structural fires, extended initial attack wildland fires, and large Hazmat incidents.

POSITION QUALIFICATIONS

Required Training

Required training includes those courses necessary to effectively perform in a position. A PTB can be initiated before required courses are completed, but cannot be signed off in the OneResponder system with a final evaluation until all required courses are successfully completed.

General and position-specific NIMS courses are required for each specific Type 3 position [training.fema.gov/IS/NIMS.aspx](https://www.fema.gov/IS/NIMS.aspx) and [fema.gov/national-qualification-system](https://www.fema.gov/national-qualification-system).

Recurrent Training

In order to maintain currency, some positions have recurrent training required at various intervals.

Required Experience

Required experience includes performance on simulations, exercises, planned events, and actual incidents of Type 3 or greater complexity. The amount and type of experience required to qualify for a specific position may vary due to the position's responsibilities. Type 3 PTBs for supervisory positions require prior successful completion of the PTB for any specified subordinate positions. Experience must include at least two actual incidents.

Physical Fitness Levels

Responders must meet the required annual physical fitness level specified for the position(s) for which they are credentialed as referenced in the PTB and FEMA NQS. Each AHJ will establish a method for evaluating and documenting the physical fitness levels of their responders.

Four levels of physical fitness are used in credentialing responders under this guide based upon the expected physical requirements of the position.

- **Arduous:** Duties involve fieldwork requiring physical performance calling for above-average endurance

and superior conditioning. These duties may include an occasional demand for extraordinarily strenuous activities in emergencies under adverse environmental conditions and over extended periods of time. Requirements include running, walking, climbing, jumping, twisting, bending, and lifting more than 50 pounds; the pace of work typically is set by the emergency situation.

- **Moderate:** Duties involve fieldwork requiring complete control of all physical faculties and may include considerable walking over irregular ground, standing for long periods of time, lifting 25 to 50 pounds, climbing, bending, stooping, squatting, twisting, and reaching. Occasional demands may be required for moderately strenuous activities in emergencies over long periods of time. Individuals usually set their own work pace.
- **Light:** Duties mainly involve office-type work with occasional field activity characterized by light physical exertion requiring basic good health. Activities may include climbing stairs, standing, operating a vehicle, and long hours of work, as well as some bending, stooping, or light lifting. Individuals can usually govern the extent and pace of their physical activity.
- **None Required:** Positions that do not require a specific physical fitness level.

Example Fitness Test from Wildland Fire Work Capacity Test

Fitness Requirement	Test	Description
Arduous	Pack Test	3-mile hike with 45-pound pack in 45 minutes
Moderate	Field Test	2-mile hike with 25-pound pack in 30 minutes
Light	Light	1-mile hike in 16 minutes no pack

Other Training Which Supports Development of Knowledge and Skills

Courses in the PTB titled as “Other training which supports development of knowledge and skills” are not required for responder certification, unless required by the responder’s AHJ. This optional training, as well as other training and experience, supports the successful completion of a PTB.

Recommending Qualification

AHJs may require additional agency specific training, experience, and performance prior to qualification. Each AHJ annually verifies the qualifications of its qualified personnel in accordance with this guide and any agency-specific requirements. One consideration for qualification is the quality of experience documented in the PTB including the variety of incident types, the size and complexity of the incident, and the number of assignments.

POSITION TASK BOOK (PTB) USE

PTBs will be initiated and tracked by AHJs using the FEMA OneResponder system. Contact DHS&EM Training for registration on the OneResponder System (mva.dhsem.training@alaska.gov).

Position Task Book (PTB) Process

The following is a typical sequence for using this guide in responder training and qualification.

1. The responder becomes a member of a response AHJ (organization, jurisdiction, etc.) with disaster emergency responsibilities.
2. The AHJ assesses responder's current experience, background, certifications and licenses.
3. The AHJ determines a training plan for the responder to meet agency requirements and NIMS standards.
4. The AHJ initiates a Type 3 PTB based upon responder's current qualifications, discipline, and agency need in the OneResponder system. The responder becomes a "trainee" in that position.
5. The responder engages in coursework required by the position and meets any prerequisites for serving on an incident.
6. The responder is assigned to an incident/event/exercise as a trainee and that experience generates a PTB evaluation record from a qualified incident supervisor serving as evaluator in the OneResponder system. The responder is designated as "trainee" in the incident organization and serves under someone fully qualified for the position. Incident Commanders approve trainee service on incidents.

7. The AHJ continues to assign the responder as a trainee to qualifying incidents/events/exercises. The responder continues required coursework. The Type 3 PTB evaluation records are completed for each incident by a qualified evaluator in the OneResponder system. The responder continues to receive evaluation records on separate incidents/events/exercises as often as needed to satisfactorily complete PTB within 5 years. **A minimum of 3 evaluation records, of which at least two are actual incidents**, are required within a five-year period for successful completion of a Type 3 PTB. If there are gaps of 3 years or more between evaluation records, the responder is required to start their credentialing process over with a new Type 3 PTB.
8. On the trainee's final qualifying incident, the evaluator will complete the Final Evaluator's Verification section in the OneResponder system.
9. AHJ will submit a nomination package to the DHS&EM Training Section recommending qualification.
10. The DHS&EM Training Section will review the nomination package to ensure it is complete and the evaluators are qualified.
 - a. Completed packages will be forwarded to the AIMAS Qualifications Subcommittee for approval.
 - b. Incomplete packages will be returned to AHJ with recommendations on how to complete the package.
11. Once the AIMAS Qualifications Subcommittee approves a completed trainee's Type 3 Position Task Book (PTB), the DHS&EM Training Section will produce a Blue Card credential for the individual showing their qualifications. Blue Card qualifications will be valid for a period of five (5) years.
12. Currency will be maintained by ongoing service in the qualified position or a subordinate position (see Maintaining Currency on page 16). It will be the responsibility of the responder and AHJ to ensure the responder maintains currency.

POSITION TASK BOOK (PTB) RESPONSIBILITIES

Agency Having Jurisdiction (AHJ)

Operating in accordance with this guide, each AHJ is responsible for managing their organization's All-Hazards Qualifications Program.

AHJ Responsibilities:

1. Manages the All-Hazards Qualification Program within their agency, including a process to initiate and maintain PTBs and training records.
2. Authorizes and designates an AHJ Training Specialist/Certifying Official and evaluators for their organization with full authority to act on the organization's behalf in the Type 3 All-Hazards credentialing process.
3. Develops an internal process for selecting and training qualified candidates for the All-Hazards Qualifications Program based on the organization's needs.
4. Submits Historical Recognition Packets for their personnel currently recognized by their AHJ as being qualified at the Type 3 level in specific positions.

5. Supports continued training and experience for those credentialed so that currency can be maintained.
6. Suggests improvements and revisions to the Qualification Subcommittee, through DHS&EM Training, as appropriate.

Trainee

Trainee Responsibilities:

1. With AHJ, determine which position to initiate for training and qualification.
2. Understand the PTB requirements for the position.
3. Complete the course requirements for the position.
4. Request initiation of a PTB from the AHJ Training Specialist/Certifying Official.
5. Provide the PTB and blank Evaluation Record to the qualified evaluators when deployed and work with the evaluators to accomplish training assignment goals.
6. Ensure evaluators complete the evaluation records and PTB entries upon completion of each training assignment.
7. For the final training assignment, ensure the final evaluator completes the final evaluation record.
Note: PTBs must be completed within five years of initiation, with no more than three years between each assignment. If there the time is exceed, a new PTB is initiated.
8. Provide the completed PTB, signed evaluation record, and record of required training to AHJ.
9. Coordinate with their organization to maintain currency.

AHJ Training Specialist/Certifying Official

The AHJ Training Specialist/Certifying Official, designated by the AHJ, provides manages the credentialing program for their organization. The AHJ Training Specialist/Certifying Official works with trainees and evaluators to provide effective training and assignments on qualifying incidents. The AHJ Training Specialist/Certifying Official maintains AHJ training records including PTBs and evaluation records for all trainees within their organization within the OneResponder system. The AHJ Training Specialist/Certifying Official submits credentialing packages to the state for consideration by the AIMAS Qualifications Subcommittee.

Responsibilities of the AHJ Training Specialist/Certifying Official:

1. Be authorized by AHJ.
2. Maintain PTBs and training records for organization staff within the OneResponder System.
3. Initiate or issue PTBs and blank evaluation records to trainees when they are deployed on an assignment in the OneResponder system.
4. Work with trainees to identify opportunities for appropriate training assignments.
5. Work with the AHJ and incident/event/exercise personnel to assign trainees to qualified evaluators.
6. Assist trainees and evaluators with completing PTB documentation and operating in the OneResponder system.
7. Provide the AHJ with feedback regarding any experience or training needed by the trainee.
8. Submit completed Nomination and Historical Recognition Packages to the DHS&EM Training Section recommending an all-hazards credential by the AIMAS Qualifications Subcommittee. Use the Credentialing Checklist in Appendix G to ensure the Nomination Package is complete.
9. Submit a report once a year to the DHS&EM Training Section detailing how individuals maintained credential currency (see page 16).

Evaluator

The evaluator is an individual qualified in the position being evaluated who has an active role in the incident from which to observe or supervise and document trainee performance in the PTB. Each event recorded in the PTB in the OneResponder system may have a different evaluator however actions within an incident must have the same evaluator.

Evaluator Responsibilities:

1. Be qualified in the position for which they are evaluating a trainee.
2. Complete an Evaluation Record for each successfully completed training assignment in the OneResponder system, using a separate evaluation record for each training assignment.
3. Accurately evaluate and record the trainee's performance by signing off each task in the PTB that is observed on the training assignment in the OneResponder system.
4. If serving as the final evaluator
 - a. Conduct a final review of the PTB once a trainee has met all the requirements to ensure it has been completed correctly.
 - b. Complete the Final Evaluator's Verification (see the last page of the assigned PTB) in the OneResponder system.
 - c. Submit the completed PTB to the AHJ Training Specialist/Certifying Official through the oneResponder system.

Approving All-Hazards Qualification

The DHS&EM Training Section:

1. Reviews nomination packages submitted by AHJs in the OneResponder system.
2. Ensures AHJ Training Specialist/Certifying Official and evaluators from the AHJ are credentialed by the AIMAS Qualifications Subcommittee.
3. Returns incomplete packages back to the AHJ with an explanation why the responder does not meet the credentialing criteria.

4. Submits completed packages to the AIMAS Qualifications Subcommittee for review and approval.
5. Issue Alaska Type 3 All-Hazards Blue Cards to the qualified responders, approved by the AIMAS Qualifications Subcommittee, listing their qualifications.

Example Type 3 All-Hazards Incident Qualification Card

Front of Card



Back of Card

Type 3 Qualification Position	Date Approved	Expiration Date
Logistics Section Chief	12/31/2015	12/31/2020

Maintaining Qualification Currency

Individuals qualified in positions through the State of Alaska all-hazards credentialing process must maintain currency to remain qualified in that (those) position(s). Currency is maintained by regular service in the position(s) they are qualified for or in an immediate subordinate position. Individuals should continue to complete Evaluation Records for each Type 3, 2, or 1 level incident or exercise they participate in and submit them in the OneResponder system as verification for maintaining currency.

Individuals failing to serve in a qualified position for three consecutive years will lose currency and be required to initiate and complete a new PTB for that qualification.

When currency is confirmed, a Blue Card will be reissued. Blue Cards are valid for three years.

The DHS&EM Training Section will submit an annual report to the AIMAS Qualifications Subcommittee documenting each individual qualified under the State of Alaska all-hazards credentialing process and their service to maintain currency.

FIVE YEAR HISTORICAL RECOGNITION WINDOW

The AIMAS Qualifications Subcommittee will historically recognize qualified individuals, incident management team (IMT) members, experienced emergency operations center (EOC) personnel, and experienced first responders currently recognized by their Authority Having Jurisdiction (AHJ), as qualified at a Type 3 level for specific positions under this guide. The AHJ will be required to submit a Type 3 All-Hazards Historical Recognition Application, listing the individual's request for the specific historically recognized position qualification(s) within the first five years following adoption of this guide by the State Emergency Response Commission (SERC). Individuals receiving historically recognized credentials will have equal authority with those who received their credentialing through the PTB process. Following that time period, all responders and evaluators will complete Type 3 PTBs to qualify in all positions. This five-year window does not preclude the ongoing recognition of qualifications received through organizations such as the NWCG or other states. Those applications may be submitted at any time and will be evaluated individually.

Five Year Historical Recognition Process

Qualified Under NWCG (Red Card)

Individuals with current Type 1, 2 or 3 NWCG qualifications (Red Cards) will automatically be credentialed under the SOA Type 3 All-Hazards (Blue Card) system.

1. The Authority Having Jurisdiction (AHJ) can submit a historical recognition application for each qualified individual with copies of their Incident Qualification Card (Red Card) or completed NWCG PTB to the DHS&EM Training Section.
2. DHS&EM will issue the SOA Type 3 credential (Blue Card) to individuals commensurate with their NWCG qualification.
3. DHS&EM will forward a list of individuals automatically credentialed to the AIMAS Qualifications Subcommittee.
4. The AHJ will be required to provide and find opportunities for the all-hazards credentialed individuals to maintain qualification currency (see page 16).

Qualification Through IMT/EOC/First Responder Experience

Agencies and jurisdictions wishing to historical recognize individuals who are already qualified by training and experience through service on incident management teams (IMTs), in emergency operations centers (EOCs), or as first responders for positions at the Type 3 all-hazards level can submit a Historical Recognition Application Packet and receive a Blue Card credential.

1. AHJ submits a Historical Recognition Packet to the DHS&EM Training Section including:
 - A Historical Recognition Application for each position for which a historically recognized credential is requested.
 - All the required training for the position or the equivalent substantiated through the submission of training certificates or records.
 - Documentation that the individual has served in the positions(s) requested on at least three incidents within the last five years, of which only one can be an exercise, with a gap in service of no more than three years. Documentation should be written and provide a listing of incident dates and names, substantiated through incident action plans or other incident documents showing applicable position service.
2. The DHS&EM Training Section will review the Historical Recognition Application to ensure it is complete.
 - Completed packets will be submitted to the AIMAS Qualifications Subcommittee for review and approval.
 - Incomplete packets will be returned to the AHJ with a detailed description why the individual does not meet the Type 3 all-hazards Qualifications criteria.
3. Once the AIMAS Qualifications Subcommittee approves a Historical Recognition Application Package, the DHS&EM Training Section will issue a Type 3 All-Hazards Blue Card listing each position the individual is qualified to perform.
4. The AHJ will be required to provide or find opportunities for the all-hazards credentialed individual to maintain qualification currency (see page 16).

Qualifications Gained through Other Entities

Personnel who move to Alaska from a state with a similar qualifications system may apply for a blue card once in Alaska. This will be approved on a case by case basis with review of the requirements within the other state to ensure standards are maintained. The process will be similar to the process for NWCG qualifications. The applicant is responsible for providing documentation of previous experience and qualification. Alaska Blue Card credentials will be issued only for permanent Alaska residents.

Individuals receiving ICS type qualifications from other agencies may submit documentation and request qualification through DHS&EM training and the Credentialing Subcommittee. Each application will be handled on a case by case basis.

GUIDE REVIEW AND UPDATE PROCESS

This guide will be reviewed by the AIMAS Qualifications Subcommittee and revised as needed.

Credentialing Checklist (Hardcopy For Guide)

The Alaska Division of Homeland Security & Emergency Management (DHS&EM) will use the following checklist to determine whether an individual meets minimum standards for responder training, experience, and physical fitness at a Type 3 incident level as defined in the All-Hazards Qualification System Guide established under A.S. 26.23.500. It is recommended that the Authority Having Jurisdiction (AHJ) use this checklist to assess whether a Nomination Package is complete before sending it to the Alaska DHS&EM for processing.

Individual Name: _____

Individual Email Address: _____

Position Code and Title: _____

Authority Having Jurisdiction (AHJ): _____

AHJ Address: _____

AHJ City, State, Zip Code: _____

Date Position Taskbook was initiated (Page 1): _____

Did the Individual complete all of the required training (see top of page 2, Yes/No)? _____

of Evaluation Records (must have a minimum of three evaluation records with at least two being actual events and one exercise): _____

Does each Evaluation Record have an incident rating of Type 3, 2, or 1 level (Yes/No)? _____

Is there a gap of more than three years between Each Evaluation Record (Yes/No)? _____

Has each competency listed in the Position Taskbook been completed at least once (Yes/No)? _____

Is the Final Evaluator's Verification section fully complete (Yes/No)? _____

Final Evaluator Name: _____

Is the Final Evaluator recognized by the All-Hazards Credentialing Program (Yes/No)? _____

Is the Agency Certification section fully complete (Yes/No)? _____

Final Evaluator Date: _____

Agency Certifying Official Name: _____

Agency Certifying Official Email Address: _____

Agency Certification Date: _____