



In Service Since 1948

To: Maine Fire Service
Professionals
From: Maine Fire Service
Institute in collaboration with
partners from Maine BLS
RE: EVOC Programs
Date: February 12, 2021

We are sending this informational letter out to the fire service community in collaboration with Maine Bureau of Labor Standards (BLS) in an attempt to stop the spread of misinformation, and make our EVOC candidates more successful in our programs. We also hope to assist the Fire Chief or their designee in training their personnel and ensuring they can safely and effectively operate emergency apparatus. The ultimate goal is the safety of all students.

The issue that has arisen over the past few years, based on feedback from both MFSI State Fire Instructors and students, has been that students have never driven a fire apparatus or anything larger than a passenger vehicle prior to attending an EVOC program. Thus, these folks have been set up for failure from the start. We here at MFSI will do all we can to address this and bring about positive outcomes. The EVOC class is not intended to be an all-inclusive driver training, nor to be the first apparatus driver training that a candidate receives. Students should come to the class with a minimum ability to operate and safely navigate the apparatus.

Our administration has identified the following steps to help mitigate this issue:

- Edit our MFSI setup forms and train our MFSI State Fire Instructors to better communicate the expectations and requirements for an EVOC program
- Edit our MFSI Chiefs Permission Form to reflect pertinent information
- Increase communication from MFSI State Fire Instructors to our customers (i.e. Fire Chiefs requesting EVOC) to help students succeed

Per communication with Maine BLS, it is permissible for the fire chief or their designee to observe some driving experience on department apparatus prior to members attending an EVOC program. We have heard the statement that “students cannot drive an apparatus before taking EVOC” out in the field - the truth is more nuanced.

Maine motor vehicle law *Title 29-a §1252* allows someone to drive fire apparatus with a class C license.

Maine Department of Labor *Compliance Directive 24-11* spells out the minimum training requirements. It is not prudent to have a student taking a piece of fire equipment to another location to attend an EVOC course without first having some time in the seat of the apparatus they will be allowed to drive. It is our recommendation that students are given some documented seat time with their own apparatus in their own area before attending an EVOC class. This could include driving to get fuel, moving the apparatus in and out of the station, and other activities that do not involve an emergency response to an incident. All this must take place with a qualified driver there to observe and assist the novice driver if needed.





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Please note: We have included a few documents to assist in these efforts.

- Sample SOG/SAP from the Town of Brunswick
- Sample SOG/SAP from the Town of Windham
- VFIS Checklist to support apparatus non-emergency driving
- Maine Bureau of Labor Compliance Directive 24-11

