



COLUMBIA COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE

COLUMBIA COUNTY PUBLIC SAFETY FACILITY

518 828-3344 - Law Enforcement Dispatch
518 828-3324 - Corrections/Jail Reception
518 828-0601 - Admin/Civil Enforcement

85 Industrial Tract
Hudson, New York 12534-1500
www.columbiacountysheriff.us
Emergency Call - 911

518 828-2032 - Corrections/Jail Fax
518 828-9088 - Law Enforcement Fax
518 822-8477 - Crime Tip Hotline

INSTRUCTIONS FOR SUBMITTING A REQUEST FOR ARSON AND SEX OFFENDER BACKGROUND CHECKS FOR AN APPLICANT TO A FIRE COMPANY

Effective December 2, 2014 - Executive Law §837-o requires prospective volunteer firefighters, and current volunteers seeking membership in another fire company, to undergo non-fingerprint criminal history background checks, for arson convictions and convictions which require registration as a sex offender only, against the State's criminal history files maintained by the Division of Criminal Justice Services (DCJS).

- Fire company officials should complete sections A and B and fields 1 through 10 of the DCJS VFF Volunteer Firefighter Inquiry Form.
- Fire company officials should use the applicant/transferee driver's license, and another form of identification, such as a birth certificate, passport or social security card, when completing the forms.
- Completed forms must be delivered to the Sheriff's Office via U.S. mail, fax or hand delivery. E-mail transmission is not permissible. NOTE: It is not an option to perform the background checks through OFPC in counties where there is no local law prohibiting the Sheriff's Office from conducting the checks.
- The form will be returned to the fire company as soon as the checks have been completed.
- In cases where a background check results in the return of an arson and/or registerable sex offense conviction against an applicant/transferee and the individual disputes the conviction, the fire company official should immediately refer the individual to DCJS for a personal record review.
- If the personal record review results in the determination that the individual's record does not contain an arson conviction and/or registerable sex offense conviction, a subsequent notification will be sent to the Sheriff's Office, who will forward the appropriate notification to the fire company.
- It should be noted that while an applicant/transferee who has been convicted of arson is not eligible to be elected or appointed as a volunteer member of a fire company, a registered sex offender is not automatically disqualified from membership.
- If the background check reveals that the applicant/transferee is a registered sex offender, the fire company must make a determination of eligibility in accordance with the criteria established in Correction Law §§752 and 753. The fire company must contact the Sex Offender Registry at 1-800-262-3257 (option 2) to obtain more information about the conviction.