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## SHERIFF OF ERIE COUNTY

### VOLUNTEER FIREFIGHTER ARSON & SEX OFFENSE REGISTRY CHECKS APPLICANTS LESS THAN 18 YEARS OF AGE

March 15, 2023

Attention: Fire Chiefs

Effective immediately, parental consent is required for all arson conviction and sex offense registry check requests when the applicant is less than 18 years of age on the date listed in Section A of the *Volunteer Firefighter Inquiry Form*. This includes background check requests submitted prior to the applicant's 18th birthday, junior firefighters and fire explorers, and any other membership applicant under the age of 18. Applications received without consent will be rejected.

Fire Chiefs are asked to use the modified *Volunteer Firefighter Inquiry Form*; it is attached to this memo for your reference and use. The modified form includes parental consent, adds the applicant phone number, and minor changes to the layout.

As a reminder, New York State Executive Law §837 requires that applicants for membership undergo an arson conviction and sex offense registry checks; this includes new applicants (prospective volunteer firefighters), current volunteers seeking membership in another fire company (transfers), and reinstatements to membership. The Erie County Sheriff's Office provides this service to fire companies as required by law; those conducted by local law enforcement agencies are not valid.

Fire company officials must complete sections A and B, as well as fields 1-11 of the *Volunteer Firefighter Inquiry Form* and should use the applicant/transferee driver's license and another form of identification (ie: birth certificate, passport or social security card) when completing the form. NYS law requires these forms be submitted within ten business days of receipt from the applicant.

It is imperative that forms be typed or completed legibly by hand to avoid delay. The Fire Chief must sign the form and then fax, mail, hand-deliver or e-mail it to the Erie County Sheriff's Office Fire Investigation Unit.

Fax: (716) 662-8477

Mailing Address: Erie County Sheriff's Office, 45 Elm Street,  
Buffalo, NY 14203 – Attention: Fire Investigation Unit

Email: [fireinvestigation@erie.gov](mailto:fireinvestigation@erie.gov)

Once our Office completes the background checks we will return the form to the fire chief or other fire company official designated by him/her. *If you prefer to receive the form via email, our Office will only send it to an official fire company email address, personal email addresses are not permitted.*

Please direct any questions to the ECSO Fire Investigation Unit at (716) 667-5213.