

# NEW JERSEY STATE EXEMPT FIREMEN'S ASSOCIATION, INC.

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## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS ABOUT EXEMPT FIREMEN AND THE STATE EXEMPT FIREMEN'S ASSOCIATION

### What is the New Jersey State Exempt Firemen's Association?

The local exempt firemen's associations organized the New Jersey State Exempt Firemen's Association in 1879. It was formed to "establish harmony of action, insure prosperity and success, promote the best interest of its members, and to cultivate and perpetuate a fraternal friendship among its members." The Association provides camaraderie on a statewide scale.

### What is a local exempt firemen's association?

A local exempt firemen's association is formed by 10 or more firefighters who have been issued an exempt fireman's certificate by a municipal clerk. That person may be referred to as an Exempt Fireman even if he or she is still an active firefighter.

### What does a local exempt firemen's association do?

In a local association, veteran firefighters have the ability to share their experiences. They can associate with their peers and maintain an interest in the fire department. They can concentrate on activities other than fire suppression, if they desire.

Where there is a local firemen's relief association, the local exempt firemen's association elects three representatives to the local firemen's relief association. This strengthens the local relief. The Association also elects a delegate (and an alternate, only one to attend) to the State Firemen's Convention in Wildwood. The delegate's expenses are paid by the local firemen's relief association.

When the local exempt firemen's association joins the State Exempt Firemen's Association, it is entitled to elect five delegates and five alternates to attend the State Exempt Firemen's Convention.

The local exempt firemen's association can help retired members get their benefits from the local firemen's relief association and/or the municipality.

### How does one become an Exempt Fireman?

A person between the ages of 18 and 45 who joins a municipal fire department and attends 60% of the fires and drills for seven years, as shown on records filed by the Fire Chief with the Municipal Clerk, is entitled to receive an Exempt Fireman's Certificate.

### Do Exempt firemen get exemption from jury duty?

No. The law has been changed and exempt firemen are no longer eligible for exemption from jury duty. Active Firefighters are still entitled to jury duty exemption. An exempt fireman who is still an active firefighter can claim exemption because of his active firefighting service.

Are there other benefits that Exempt Firemen have?

There are two major benefits provided by law to Exempt Firemen; Tenure in Office and a Hawker's License.

Tenure in office applies to positions in government that are not for a fixed term and not protected otherwise, such as by Civil Service. There are also other qualifications. There are other conditions that have been set by virtue of recent court decisions. However, many towns are not familiar with the law and the State Exempt Firemen's Association can provide information so the requirements are understood.

The hawker's license is not as popular today as during the Depression. However, the law exists and was of concern in a case in New Jersey only a few years ago.

What does the State Exempt Firemen's Association do for me?

Several experienced members, from throughout the State, form a body of knowledge that can be called upon to educate firefighters about their rights.

A Legislative Committee keeps you informed of bills and regulations that can affect members in a positive or negative way. By virtue of the number of exempt firemen who are members of local associations that comprise the State Association, support or opposition to legislation can be meaningful. Numbers are important.

Although the State Association does not provide financial assistance to individual exempt firemen in "tenure in office" cases, assistance as a "friend of the court" can be provided if an issue has statewide implications.

What other things does the State Exempt Firemen's Association do?

Memorial flags and grave markers are sold by the State Association as a service to its members. These items honor a deceased exempt fireman.

A memorial service is held once a year at various locations in the State based on invitations from local associations.

A one-day convention is held annually. Normally, the host also sponsors a parade.

The Association regularly sponsors entertainment for the guests at the Firemen's Home in Boonton.

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