



# BEHAVIORAL HEALTH AND CANCER AWARENESS (2020) Curriculum Implementation Plan

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Issued: September 2020

## OVERVIEW

This document is intended to provide information for all State Fire Training (SFT) stakeholders on the new Behavioral Health and Cancer Awareness 1A, 2A, and 3A (2020) Fire Service Training and Education (FSTEP) curriculum. Stakeholders are encouraged to study this information carefully and seek clarification from SFT if questions arise.

**Behavioral Health and Cancer Awareness 1A: Front-Line Responder (2020)** is an 8-hour course and is the first in the series of courses intended to address the need for creating an Awareness level course (firefighter, crew member).

This course is intended for any member of the fire service. The Behavioral Health and Cancer Awareness 1A: Front-Line Responder (2020) course provides the student the opportunity for learning the basics of Behavioral Health and Cancer Awareness by describing stress and listing stressors; identifying and describing the impacts of stress; describing factors and demonstrating practices for resilience; describing types, prevalence, and causes of cancer; describing exposure to carcinogenic chemicals; and describing and demonstrating minimizing exposure and risk to cancerous contaminants.

**Behavioral Health and Cancer Awareness 2A: First-Level Supervisor (2020)** is a 24-hour course intended to provide leadership-level information and best practices for cancer mitigation and behavioral health for the aspiring Company Officer and/or fire service leader.

This course is intended for the fire service member operating in a leadership capacity. The Behavioral Health and Cancer Awareness 2A: First-Level Supervisor (2020) course provides leadership-level information on and best practices for cancer awareness, including communicating risk about and minimizing and mitigating toxic exposure and risk; creating a supportive environment, overcoming barriers, and effecting change; and laws, regulations, standards, and policies. This course also provides leadership-level information on and best practices for behavioral health, including stressors on members and leaders; stress impacts; overcoming barriers to behavioral health and resiliency, creating a supportive environment, member engagement, and effecting change; support resources and how to access them; and documentation types and requirements.

**Behavioral Health and Cancer Awareness 3A: Organizational Leader (2020)** is a 24-hour course intended to provide chief-officer-level information on the development of inclusive cancer prevention and behavioral health and wellness programs.

The Behavioral Health and Cancer Awareness 3A: Organizational Leader course provides chief-officer-level information on the science of cancer, the budgetary and policy impacts, implementing policies and procedures and overcoming challenges to mitigation and minimization of toxic exposure, and developing a cancer-prevention program. It also provides information on the prevalence of behavioral-health issues and the impacts of prevention, implementing policies and procedures and overcoming challenges to increase wellness, and developing a behavioral health and wellness program.

This new FSTEP curriculum has been developed based on the latest evidence-based research and industry best practices, and using several others references as supporting documents. Behavioral health and cancer

awareness are emerging topics where significant resources, research, and attention is being dedicated to the study of the topics. To date, NFPA standards have not yet been developed, however, stakeholders are demanding information on these subjects be addressed with the intention of educating the workforce and simultaneously influencing policy and the standards-making process.

The Course Plans are available on the SFT website.

## **BEHAVIORAL HEALTH AND CANCER AWARENESS COURSE IMPLEMENTATION**

**Behavioral Health and Cancer Awareness 1A, 2A, and 3A (2020)..... Available September 1, 2020**

<b>New Curriculum</b>	<b>Hours</b>
<b>Behavioral Health and Cancer Awareness 1A: Front-Line Responder (2020)</b>	8 Hours
<b>Behavioral Health and Cancer Awareness 2A: First-Level Supervisor (2020)</b>	24 Hours
<b>Behavioral Health and Cancer Awareness 3A: Organizational Leader (2020)</b>	24 Hours

## **INSTRUCTOR REQUIREMENTS**

**Instructor Registration ..... Available September 1, 2020**

The Behavioral Health and Cancer Awareness 1A (2019) Course may be delivered in the academy setting as part of the Fire Fighter 1: Structure Course Plan or as a stand-alone FSTEP course. Behavioral Health and Cancer Awareness 2A and 3A (2020) may be delivered independently with respect to the successive prerequisites.

Instructional staff is highly encouraging the use of subject matter experts as Guest Lecturers, in accordance with the State Fire Training Procedures Manual, due to the significant technical information presented in this course.

SFT Registered Instructors for this curriculum will be required to demonstrate cultural competency in their Registered Instructor application and supplemental Chief’s letter verifying the following:

1. A minimum of five (5) years’ full-time employment within a recognized fire agency in California **OR** a minimum ten (10) years’ volunteer or paid-call employment within recognized fire agency in California
2. A minimum of two (2) years’ experience in at least one of the following fire service behavioral health area(s)
  - a. Peer Support
  - b. Peer Instructor
    - i. International Critical Incident Stress Foundation (ICISF), International Association of Firefighters (IAFF), or AHJ
  - c. Policy Development
  - d. Agency health and wellness programs
  - e. Agency injury/illness prevention programs

3. A minimum of two (2) years' experience in at least one of the following fire service cancer mitigation and exposure reduction area(s)
  - a. Cancer mitigation and exposure reduction programs
  - b. Policy Development
  - c. Agency health and wellness programs
  - d. Agency injury/illness prevention programs
4. Authority Having Jurisdiction (AHJ) letter verifying the applicant's qualification to deliver training

#### Instructor Currency

To maintain instructor currency and relevancy, registered instructors for Behavioral Health and Cancer Awareness courses shall complete a minimum eight (8) annual continuing education hours obtained via verifiable topic-specific conferences, seminars, and/or workshops. Continuing education hours may be combined. Instructors are required to maintain documentation of continuing education hours for five (5) years. Registered Instructors shall furnish SFT documentation upon request.

### **POTENTIAL AGENCY IMPACTS**

Fire agencies desiring to utilize the course completion as a requirement for their recruitment/promotion activities should review the curriculum and certification requirements to ensure that all agency training needs are being met. After review, Fire Agencies should update their job specifications and recruitment documentation to reflect these new courses and requirements.

The Behavioral Health and Cancer Awareness 1A: Front-Line Responder (2019) course may be delivered in the Fire Fighter Academy setting as part of the 2019 FF1A Structural Course Plan or as a stand-alone FSTEP course. If delivered in a Fire Fighter Academy, the instructor-of-record is not required to be a Registered FSTEP Instructor. Instead, the Academy Instructor must comply with the Procedures Manual requirements for Academy instruction including Instructor 1 Certification and successful completion of either Ethical Leadership in the Classroom (2007) or Ethics for Instructors (2018). FSTEP course delivery requires Registered Instructor status in the SFT system.

Students attending the Academy delivery of Behavioral Health and Cancer Awareness 1A: Front-Line Responder (2019) will not receive an SFT Course Completion Diploma. Students attending the FSTEP delivery of the course will be provided an FSTEP diploma upon successful completion of the course.

Accredited Regional Training Programs (ARTP), Accredited Local Academies (ALA), community colleges, and all other local delivery venues need to review the curriculum and seek approval from their curriculum committee / program sponsor, as appropriate. ARTPs should review the new curriculum and discuss potential impacts with their advisory committees.