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## **SHERIFF OF ERIE COUNTY**

### **REMINDER TO ALL FIRE CHIEFS IN ERIE COUNTY**

New York State Executive Law §837 requires that applicants for membership to volunteer fire departments undergo a non-fingerprint criminal history check against the State's criminal history files maintained by the Division of Criminal Justice Services (DCJS) to determine if they stand convicted of the crime of arson or have convictions which require registration as a sex offender in New York State.

The Erie County Sheriff's Office provides this service to fire departments as required by law; **arson and sex offender registration checks conducted by local law enforcement agencies are not valid.**

This law applies to new applicants (prospective volunteer firefighters), current volunteers seeking membership in another fire company (transfers), and reinstatements to membership.

Fire Chiefs are encouraged to obtain parental permission before conducting any background investigations on minors.

Fire company officials must complete sections A and B, as well as fields 1 through 10 of the attached *DCJS –VFF Volunteer Firefighter Inquiry Form*, and 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. New York State Executive Law §837 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 or they will be rejected, resulting in 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 – Attention: Fire Investigation Unit.

Erie County Sheriff's Office  
ATTN: Fire Investigation Unit  
One Sheriffs Drive  
Orchard Park NY 14127

Fax: 662-8477

E-Mail: [fireinvestigation@erie.gov](mailto:fireinvestigation@erie.gov)

Erie County email servers will not accept the form-fillable pdf versions as they contain macros. If your agency uses email for submission you will need to scan the form-fillable form first and then email the scanned document(s).

The normal turn-around time for completed arson background checks is 5-7 business days or less.