
Primal Scream--IAFF Contract with City of Vallejoâ€”Section 16: Educational Incentive Pay--7/17/08

IAFF Contract with City of Vallejo—Section 16: Educational Incentive Pay

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After reading this section of the contract (see below) it is obvious that the specific criteria for receiving an educational incentive was included. Criteria includes recognized institutions, and courses must be from accredited schools. An Evaluation Board establishes standards and must accept/approve ones degree in an approved field.

Taking a course from a paper mill such as Alameda Univ does not meet these criteria. No grades or GPA (requirements of the contracts) were issued and no classes were required. Those who used paper mill degrees were well aware that the institutions would not meet the conditions required for an educational incentive.

BOTTOM LINE :

Those who submitted these types of credentials knew that they were misrepresenting their credentials and thus committing fraud.

Below is a summary of Section 16

1- Purpose …….”for the acquisition and maintenance of higher levels of educational achievement.

3- Requirements

i) Completion of 300 hours of Basic Training (in service) and a combination of Fire Science and College course and 4 or 8 years of approved experience (depending whether first or second award)

OR

ii) Nine approved Fire Officer Certificate courses plus 4 or 8 yrs of approved experience

OR

iv) AA or Bachelors degree in an approved field

4-General Provisions

A Fire Education and Training Evaluation Board …will be established for the purpose of determining standards of acceptance for studying and training and acceptance of AA Degree or Bachelor’s Degree in an approved field.

b) Acceptability of each course of study or training must be determined by the Board……

NOTE: In section 5 (below) the requirements for courses taken are very specific.

5-Education and Training Qualifications

a) Qualifications determined by a combination of education, training and experience.

b) Members may take courses in accredited public or private schools, certified programs, colleges or universities which are undertaken for the purpose of improving their efficiency, knowledge or competency in the performance of their duties. Courses leading to a degree in the following fields will qualify towards meeting the requirements outlined in sub paragraph 3 [Requirements]

COURSES

Fire Science, Fire Administration, Chemistry, Public Administration, Political Science

OR any other major deemed beneficial to the fire Dept. by the Board.

c) Members attending outside schools…..will be required to complete the selected course of study with a passing grade of C or better (GPA equivalent to a 2.0 on a 4 point scale)

FINAL COMMENTS—to get a AA or Bachelors degree accredited courses must be taken and one must obtain a C average.

IN NO WAY DO PAPER MILL DIPOLMA SCHOOLS MEET THE ABOVE.

ANYONE SUBMITTING A DIPOLMA FROM ONE OF THESE INSTITUTIONS KNEW THEY WERE MISREPRESENTING THEIR CREDENTIALS AND THUS WERE COMMITTING FRAUD.

Post Note—since writing my comments I learned that the number of FFs using paper mill diplomas may be limited. Since 2000 most of them are Paramedics. To get their certification, these individuals typically get a real 4 year degree as part of the process.

Unanswered questions include:

a) Are there any retirees who abused the use of educational incentives—the City should go back to 1990?

What role did the IAFF have in encouraging the use of unaccredited schools?

Who signed off on Alameda Univ.?

Since 85% of the FFs get educational incentives I question why they are even allowed. In this day and age I would hope that the minimum requirement for the job would be an AA in Fire Suppression etc.

The police model is more realistic. If you get advanced training you are then rewarded.

Finally, someone mentioned that a FF can ask for time off to get Paramedic Training (at least 6 weeks) and the City pays for all of the costs even if the person doesn't complete the course. One possible modification might be that the City pays 50% of the course and travel costs if the person remains with the Dept for one year after receiving their Certification.