

# FIRE 0011 - LEGAL ASPECTS OF EMERGENCY SERVICES

## Catalog Description

Hours: 54 lecture

Description: This course will address the federal, state and local laws that regulate emergency services and include a review of national standards, regulations and consensus standards. (CSU)

## Course Student Learning Outcomes

- CSLO #1: Define the different types of laws.
- CSLO #2: Discuss federal, state, and local laws and liabilities applicable to emergency services.
- CSLO #3: Explain the purpose of national codes and standards.
- CSLO #4: Discuss applicable court decisions that have influenced emergency services.
- CSLO #5: Explain the legal issues and concerns affecting emergency services.

## Effective Term

Fall 2026

## Course Type

Credit - Degree-applicable

## Contact Hours

54

## Outside of Class Hours

108

## Total Student Learning Hours

162

## Course Objectives

1. Identify and differentiate between criminal, civil, administrative, and constitutional law as they apply to emergency services.
2. Describe the roles and responsibilities of federal, state, and local agencies in regulating emergency services.
3. Analyze how federal, state, and local laws impact emergency service operations and personnel.
4. Interpret key national codes and standards relevant to fire and emergency services (e.g., NFPA, OSHA).
5. Evaluate the significance of national codes and standards in promoting safety and accountability. Summarize landmark court decisions that have shaped legal practices in emergency services.
6. Assess the implications of legal precedents on emergency service policies and procedures.

7. Identify the common legal liabilities faced by emergency service professionals in various scenarios.
8. Discuss ethical and legal considerations in decision-making during emergency responses.
9. Apply legal principles to hypothetical case studies involving emergency service incidents
10. Describe the legal definitions and classifications of arson under federal, state, and local laws.
11. Analyze investigative procedures and legal considerations involved in identifying and prosecuting arson cases.

## General Education Information

- Approved College Associate Degree GE Applicability
  - AA/AS - Social Sciences
- CSU GE Applicability (Recommended-requires CSU approval)
- Cal-GETC Applicability (Recommended - Requires External Approval)
- IGETC Applicability (Recommended-requires CSU/UC approval)

## Articulation Information

- CSU Transferable

## Methods of Evaluation

- Classroom Discussions
  - Example: Following an instructor lead classroom discussion regarding Tort Law. The student will identify the three components needed to prove negligence
- Objective Examinations
  - Example: After a module introduction on labor issues and law. Students will take a multiple-choice test on employment law. Example Question: What is the definition of a legal contract? Correct Answer is B A. A verbal agreement between two people with no written proof B. A legally enforceable agreement between two or more parties with mutual obligations C. A promise made without any consideration or intent to follow through D. A document signed by one party without the other party's consent
- Projects
  - Example: Student performance on the criminal vs. civil law project will be evaluated based on two key course objectives: understanding legal distinctions and applying them to real-world scenarios from a recent FIRE or EMS event. Students must clearly identify differences in purpose, burden of proof, and outcomes. Evaluation will include accuracy of content, clarity of comparison, use of examples, and presentation format. A rubric will assess research quality, critical thinking, and the ability to communicate legal concepts effectively in a concise and organized manner.
- Reports
  - Example: Students will write a report on an assigned fire service legal topic. Students will research the given topic such as Malpractice, Harassment, and Discrimination etc. and write a 2-page report on the given topic.

## Repeatable

No

## Methods of Instruction

- Lecture/Discussion
- Distance Learning

### Lecture:

1. Instructor will lecture on the basis of the US legal system including the differences between state and federal courts. Students will be asked to identify and list circuit courts and state appellate courts and cite case law for each

### Distance Learning

1. Using the NFPA (National Fire Protection Association), IFC (International Fire Code), the instructor will guide students on the proper interpretation of fire codes relating to life safety systems and other legal requirements for target hazard occupancies.

## Typical Out of Class Assignments Reading Assignments

Following an introduction to Criminal and Civil Law and their differences, the instructor will ask the students to read a recent court case involving firefighters.. Students will discuss the details of the legal case in class. Civil Lawsuit: Ramos v. City of Rock Falls – The widow of Sterling firefighter Garrett Ramos filed a wrongful death lawsuit after he died in a 2021 structure fire. The suit alleges fire department leaders failed to follow safety protocols, leading to his death. Criminal Case: State of Florida v. Francisco Camero & Rafael Fernandez – Two former Miami-Dade firefighters were charged with manslaughter after an unauthorized training exercise led to the death of Camero’s son, who was exposed to unsafe conditions

## Writing, Problem Solving or Performance

Student will write a two-page research paper on the implications of the First Responder Invasion of Privacy Law aka "Kobe Bryant Law" to emergency responders.

## Other (Term projects, research papers, portfolios, etc.)

## Required Materials

- Legal Aspects of Emergency Services
  - Author: Gregory West,JD
  - Publisher: Jones and Barlett
  - Publication Date: 2023
  - Text Edition: 2nd
  - Classic Textbook?: No
  - OER Link:
  - OER:

## Other materials and-or supplies required of students that contribute to the cost of the course.