**§ 58-a. Requirements for provisional or permanent appointment of certain fire fighters.** 1. Notwithstanding any other provision of this law or any general, special or local law to the contrary, no person shall be eligible for provisional or permanent appointment in the competitive class of the civil service as a fire fighter unless he or she shall satisfy the basic requirements for education, health and physical fitness established by the state fire administrator pursuant to section one hundred fifty-eight of the executive law.

2. Notwithstanding the provisions of subdivision one of this section, upon the request of a municipal commission having jurisdiction over a fire department and upon a showing by such municipal commission and a determination by the state commission that aggravated recruitment difficulties are causing a serious shortage of fire fighters in such fire department and that such municipal commission and all appropriate authorities are making diligent efforts, including payment of adequate compensation, to overcome such recruitment difficulties, the state commission, with the approval of the state fire administrator, may change the educational, health and physical fitness requirements for provisional and permanent appointment as a fire fighter in such fire department for a period not exceeding two years from the date of such determination. Such changes may be authorized for an additional period not exceeding two years, upon a showing and a determination similar to that required hereunder for the original authorization.

3. The provisions of this section shall not prevent the establishment of more restrictive local requirements for eligibility for fire fighters.

4. For the purposes of this section fire fighter means a member of a fire department whose duties include fire service as the phrase fire service is defined in paragraph d of subdivision eleven of section three hundred two of the retirement and social security law.

5. Any person whose name was on an eligible list for appointment in the competitive class of the civil service as a fire fighter on the date educational, health and physical fitness requirements for fire fighters

are promulgated by the state fire administrator pursuant to section one hundred fifty-eight of the executive law, shall continue to remain eligible for appointment from such list during the life of such list without satisfying such requirements provided he or she would otherwise have remained eligible for appointment from such list if this section had not been enacted.

6. The provisions of this section shall not apply to appointments made by any county, city, town, village or fire district which employs five or fewer fire fighters.

7. Notwithstanding any other provision of this law or any general, special or local law to the contrary, no person shall be eligible for provisional or permanent appointment as a fire chief other than those chiefs employed by a fire department of cities with a population of one million or more unless he or she shall:

(a) satisfy the basic requirements for education, health and physical fitness established by the state fire administrator pursuant to section one hundred fifty-eight of the executive law; and

(b) has successfully completed training and education requirements established by the state fire administrator.