

## Participant Agreement

Updated January 1, 2014 and approved by the OK-First Advisory Committee

### 1. Eligibility

Participation in the OK-First program is limited to agencies with jurisdictional responsibility and authority in maintaining public safety. Participants must be employed by, appointed to, or an official volunteer of an eligible agency. Such agencies include, but are not limited to:

- Local, municipal, state, regional, tribal, or federal government agencies,
- Schools (K12 and university), and
- Non-profit disaster relief agencies.

Due to the nature of the funding that supports this program, for-profit entities are not eligible to participate in OK-First.

### 2. OK-First Certification Levels & Requirements

OK-First offers two certification levels: **OK-First Certification** and **OK-First Assistant Certification**.

OK-First participants classified as “Full Participants” and “4-day Assistants” prior to January 1, 2014 are now classified as “OK-First Certified.” OK-First participants classified as “Assistants” prior to January 1, 2014 are now classified as “OK-First Assistant Certified.” See **Section 3** or **Section 4** to find the requirements and policies that apply to your certification level.

#### **2.1. Agency Requirements**

Each agency participating in OK-First is required to have at least one member who is OK-First Certified. This establishes at least one person per agency with a thorough background in OK-First software, tools, and weather/radar training topics. There is no limit to the number of individuals that can become OK-First Certified at a given agency. Once an agency has met this requirement, additional staff at the agency may attend training to become OK-First Assistant Certified.

For larger agencies with multiple, large departments (e.g., The City of Oklahoma City), individual departments (e.g., OKC Emergency Management, OKC Fire, OKC Police, OKC Public Works, etc.) can be treated as their own agencies when appropriate. This ensures that departments of large agencies have at least one member who is OK-First Certified.

#### **2.2. Loss of the Only OK-First Certified Participant at an Agency**

When an agency loses its only OK-First Certified participant, it is the agency’s responsibility to get a new staff member trained at the OK-First Certification level. Agencies have a 6-month grace period to get a new staff member OK-First Certified. Failure to do so will result in loss of data access for the remaining OK-First Assistant Certified members at the agency. Having more than one agency staff member at the OK-First Certification level can help safeguard against this issue.

#### **2.3. Individual Requirements**

It is the sole responsibility of each individual OK-First participant to comply with the requirements and policies that apply to their certification level. This information is detailed in **Sections 3** and **4**.

### **3. OK-First Certification Requirements and Policies**

This section details the requirements and policies that apply to all OK-First Certified participants. **OK-First Certified participants who fail to comply with any of the following requirements and policies will lose their OK-First Certification and data access.**

#### **3.1. Eligibility Requirements**

- Candidates for OK-First Certification must be employed by, appointed to, or an official volunteer of an eligible agency
- Candidates for OK-First Certification must be approved by an agency supervisor. The agency supervisor must complete the “Agency Supervisor” section found on page 6.
- Candidates for OK-First Certification must submit a completed OK-First Participant Agreement Signature Page found on page 6. The candidate will not be permitted to enroll in OK-First courses until the completed Signature Page is received and reviewed by OK-First.

#### **3.2. Training Requirements**

1. Complete the OK-First Certification Course
  - Training topics include: Radar, Basic Meteorology, Weather Maps, NWS Products, Severe Storms, Heavy Precipitation, and Winter Weather
2. Pass the OK-First Certification test with a 70% or higher
  - If unsuccessful: re-take test and achieve 70% or higher to become certified
  - If unsuccessful again: re-take Certification Course
  - Note: Current OK-First Certified Participants as of Jan 1, 2014 have until Dec 31, 2015 to pass an OK-First Certification test under this new Participant Agreement
3. **To maintain OK-First Certification, OK-First Certified participants must attend an OK-First Re-certification course no less than once every 18 months.**

#### **3.3. Access Privileges and Accounts**

- OK-First Certified participants are granted full access to password-protected OK-First content on a personal OK-First account. Accounts are **NOT** to be shared.

#### **3.4. Annual Participant Agreement Filing Requirement**

- OK-First Certified participants are required to submit a completed OK-First Participant Agreement Signature Page **every year by the 15<sup>th</sup> of February**. Annual filing ensures that participants are still eligible to participate.

#### **3.5. Losing OK-First Certification**

- Failure to comply with the requirements and policies outlined in Section 3 will result in revocation of certification and loss of data access for the **individual** in violation.

#### **3.6. Re-establishing OK-First Certification**

- Following a loss of OK-First Certification, the participant can re-establish certification by:
  1. Submitting a newly completed OK-First Participant Agreement Signature Page,
  2. Passing an OK-First Certification test with a 70% or higher, and
    - If unsuccessful, skip Step 3 below and instead complete the steps in **Section 3.2. Training Requirements**
  3. Attending an OK-First Re-certification course.

## **4. OK-First Assistant Certification Requirements and Policies**

This section details the requirements and policies that apply to all OK-First Assistant Certified participants. **OK-First Assistant Certified participants who fail to comply with any of the following requirements and policies will lose their OK-First Assistant Certification and data access.**

### **4.1. Eligibility Requirements**

- Candidates for OK-First Assistant Certification must be employed by, appointed to, or an official volunteer of an eligible agency
- Candidates for OK-First Assistant Certification must be approved by an active OK-First Certified participant within the agency; this individual will serve as their OK-First mentor. The Certified participant must complete the “Agency Supervisor” section found on page 6.
- Candidates for OK-First Assistant Certification must submit a completed OK-First Participant Agreement Signature Page found on page 6. The candidate will not be permitted to enroll in OK-First courses until the completed Signature Page is received and reviewed by OK-First.

### **4.2. Training Requirements**

1. Complete the OK-First Assistant Certification Course
  - Training topics include: Radar, Basic Meteorology, Weather Maps, and Severe Storms
2. Pass the OK-First Assistant Certification test with a 70% or higher
  - If unsuccessful: re-take test and achieve 70% or higher to become certified
  - If unsuccessful again: re-take OK-First Assistant Certification course
  - **Note:** Current OK-First Assistants as of Jan 1, 2014 have until Dec 31, 2015 to pass an OK-First Assistant Certification test under this new Participant Agreement
3. **To maintain OK-First Assistant Certification, OK-First Assistant Certified participants must attend an OK-First Re-certification course no less than once every 24 months** (current OK-First Assistants as of Jan 1, 2014 have until Dec 31, 2015 to attend a Re-certification course)

### **4.3. Access Privileges and Accounts**

- OK-First Assistant Certified participants are granted full access to password-protected OK-First content on a personal OK-First account. Accounts are **NOT** to be shared.

### **4.4. Annual Participant Agreement Filing Requirement**

- OK-First Assistant Certified participants are required to submit a completed OK-First Participant Agreement Signature Page **every year by the 15<sup>th</sup> of February**. Annual filing ensures all participants are still eligible to participate.

### **4.5. Losing OK-First Assistant Certification**

- Failure to comply with the requirements and policies outlined in Section 4 will result in revocation of certification and loss of data access for the **individual** in violation.

### **4.6. Re-establishing OK-First Assistant Certification**

- Following a loss of Assistant Certification, the participant can re-establish certification by:
  1. Submitting a newly completed OK-First Participant Agreement Signature Page,
  2. Passing an OK-First Assistant Certification test with a 70% or higher, and
    - If unsuccessful, skip Step 3 below and instead complete the steps in **Section 4.2. Training Requirements**
  3. Attending an OK-First Re-certification course.

## **5. Online OK-First Courses**

OK-First now offers online OK-First courses for credit. Online courses are offered in the Mesonet Learning Center and are delivered in an “asynchronous” format. The following details the policies relating to online OK-First courses.

### ***5.1. Asynchronous Learning and Course Participation***

Asynchronous learning is a common online format that allows multiple students to take a course concurrently, yet participate at times that are convenient for them. Similar to a live course, asynchronous courses have defined start and end dates (i.e., March 1-15). As such, it is the responsibility of the student to participate in the course and complete graded components while the course is in session. **Graded assignments submitted after the end of a course will not be accepted.**

### ***5.2. Logging in Within 48 Hours of Course Start***

Students enrolled in online OK-First courses are responsible for logging in to the course within the first 48 hours of the start of class in order to review the work they will need to complete

### ***5.3. Getting Credit for Online OK-First Courses***

OK-First participants will receive credit for successfully completing an online OK-First course when achieving a final grade of **70% or higher**. The final grade is made up of several graded course components such as Classroom Discussions, Quizzes, and Lab/Software Assignments. Details on grading percentages can be found within the specific online course in the Mesonet Learning Center.

### ***5.4. Failing an Online OK-First Course***

A final grade below 70% in an online OK-First course is considered failing and results in the student not receiving credit for the course. A student who fails an online course is given an opportunity to take the course again by enrolling in another offering of the same course. Should the same course be failed a second time, the student is required to enroll in and attend an in-person course.

### ***5.5. Un-enrolling and Extensions***

OK-First participants can un-enroll from an online OK-First course at any time prior to the course start date. However, once a course has started, un-enrolling is not permitted. **Course extensions are not allowed in online OK-First courses.**

## **6. OK-First Account Policy**

With the implementation of the OK-First personal log-in system, OK-First accounts are now the sole possession of each individual user and are **NOT TO BE SHARED**. Failure to comply with this policy will result in revocation of certification and loss of data access for the **individual(s)** in violation.

### ***6.1. Usernames***

OK-First usernames are now email based. When creating a personal OK-First account participants are strongly urged to utilize a personal email (e.g., gmail), which will become the username of your OK-First account. Work email addresses should not to be used as you may change agencies in the future.

### ***6.2. Passwords***

Should you happen to forget your OK-First password, follow the instructions listed under “Forget your password?” located at: [https://www.mesonet.org/index.php/okfirst/sign\\_in](https://www.mesonet.org/index.php/okfirst/sign_in) to change your

password. OK-First staff members are no longer able to provide forgotten passwords due to increased security (password encryption) of the new log-in system.

## **7. Oklahoma Mesonet Data Policy**

In accordance with the Oklahoma Mesonet Data Access Policy available at [http://www.mesonet.org/index.php/site/about/data\\_access\\_and\\_pricing](http://www.mesonet.org/index.php/site/about/data_access_and_pricing), Mesonet data fees are waived for Public Safety Agencies in Oklahoma. Although not described in the Data Access Policy, the Oklahoma Mesonet grants special permission to Certified OK-First Participants in neighboring states to receive Oklahoma Mesonet data free of charge. Oklahoma Mesonet data and products provided on the server are proprietary to the Oklahoma Mesonet. Although Oklahoma Mesonet data or files may be re-distributed to public officials in your jurisdiction, they should not be distributed to media and commercial/business users without the prior written consent of the Oklahoma Mesonet.

## **8. Data and Image Policy**

Data and images obtained from OK-First/Oklahoma Mesonet websites and software can be used by certified OK-First participants in his/her official capacity. Certified OK-First participants are granted permission to post images from the OK-First/Oklahoma Mesonet websites and software to social media and agency-maintained websites to communicate an impending weather risk.

## **9. Computer Policy**

Any computer equipment provided to Certified OK-First participants by the Oklahoma Mesonet on extended loan remains the property of the Oklahoma Mesonet. The Oklahoma Mesonet staff shall be notified if this equipment is relocated, lost, or stolen. The Oklahoma Mesonet retains the right to retrieve the equipment at any time as deemed necessary.

## **10. Statement of Cooperation**

Local National Weather Service (NWS) offices have the authority to produce warnings for hazardous weather conditions. Local officials have the authority to implement policies to protect the public, including local implementation of NWS warnings. The legislative mandate of the Oklahoma Climatological Survey (the Oklahoma Mesonet's operational home) includes the dissemination of weather and climate data of benefit to decision makers, including both the NWS and local officials. In order to fulfill these respective missions to protect the public, a philosophy to maintain cooperation and communication between the NWS, the Oklahoma Mesonet, and local officials is necessary. Oklahoma Mesonet staff reserve the right to intervene in situations when cooperation between NWS and local officials is violated, including, but not limited to, revocation of OK-First certification and data access.

## **11. Termination of Negligent OK-First Participants**

Should an OK-First participant be found to be jeopardizing public safety operations, exhibiting unruly behavior that compromises the integrity of the OK-First program and its participants, or violating any of the terms within this Participant Agreement, the Oklahoma Mesonet reserves the right to immediately revoke the OK-First certification and data access of the individual.

## Participant Agreement Signature Page

### OK-First Participant

I agree to the conditions listed in the OK-First Participant Agreement. By signing below I affirm my employment with, appointment to, or official volunteering status with an agency responsible for maintaining public safety.

#### Certification Level (check one)

- OK-First Certified  
 OK-First Assistant Certified

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Printed Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Agency Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address (Street): \_\_\_\_\_

Address (City, State, ZIP): \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_



### Agency Supervisor

I approve of this individual participating in OK-First and can affirm their employment with, appointment to, or official volunteering status with this agency.

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Printed Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Agency Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address (Street): \_\_\_\_\_

Address (City, State, ZIP): \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Please submit your completed OK-First Participant Agreement Signature Page to OK-First using **one** of the following methods:

**Fax:**  
405-325-2550

**Scan & Email:**  
okfirst@mesonet.org

**Mail:**  
Oklahoma Climatological Survey  
ATTN: OK-First  
120 David L. Boren Blvd., Suite 2900  
Norman, OK 73072