

EXTERNAL TRAINING AND EDUCATION

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Purpose: *Training and Education are important aspects of the fire service. This training comes in many forms such as outside training, fire schools, and technical training such as trench, collapse, confined space, hazardous-materials response training. There also are higher education opportunities through local and distance learning programs. This document sets forth the procedures for attending various types of training and education opportunities available to career and volunteer members of the fire department.*

Procedure:

General

1. All members must understand that training and education is for the betterment of the department as a whole. Being selected to attend an outside training, a seminar, special training program or higher education classes is a privilege and it is not a right.

Forms and Documentation

1. Requests for training shall be submitted using the Training/Education Request Form. This form is available on the fire department website. A Training/Education Request Form is to be submitted for any and all external training and education requests, regardless of nature.
2. Training/Education Request Forms shall have a description of the class content and relevance to current job responsibilities.
3. The Training Officer or his/her designee will review the completed Training/Education Request Form. Approved requests will be forwarded to the Fire Chief for consideration.
4. Trustee approval is necessary for college classes, outside fire schools involving lodging and any education or training where the cost will exceed \$1,000.
5. If trustee approval is necessary, completed Training/Education Request Forms must be submitted to the Training Bureau at least fifteen (15) days prior to the trustee meeting if trustee approval is necessary.
6. Approvals are made based upon available funds. School requests are based upon funding available at the time of school registration, and not at the time of request.

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Outside Fire Schools, Seminars, Conferences Selection Process

1. Class availability, staffing, financial considerations, priorities of training and the benefit of the training for the Department as a whole, are factors in determining whether a request receives approval.
2. If the desired education or training occurs on a date the member is scheduled for duty, the Training Officer will consult with the Scheduling Officer to determine the need and appropriateness of scheduling others ("Back-filling") to cover the requesting member's duty hours.
3. If several members apply for the same class, consideration is given to rank, seniority, job/task relevance, and whether the class has already been attended by any of the requesting individuals. For Career Employees, no more than 2 members per platoon may attend an approved fire school, seminar, or conference regardless of how many or few employees on other platoons have requested the same opportunity.
4. The main reason for sending members to external training and education is for the betterment of the fire department. The fire department reserves the right to select one person over another to attend a given class or school if the best interests of the fire department are served.

The Following is Applicable for Members Attending External Classes:

1. The department will pay expenses to attend approved fire schools, seminars, conferences etc. Depending on the availability of funding and the nature of the particular course, exceptions may be made and the member may be required to fund some or all of the expenses of hotel, travel, tuition, meals, etc.
2. Members will not be charged time off for duty days when attending approved outside classes.
3. Whenever an employee is required to attend outside training or education in order to achieve and/or maintain job requirements, compensation will be paid, and if outside of the employee's scheduled duty hours, compensation will be paid at one and one-half times the employee's hourly wage.
4. Employees departing for a fire school, conference, or seminar on a scheduled work day shall be relieved of their duty responsibility at least three (3) hours prior to departure to allow time for departure preparation time.
5. Career members attending schools, seminars and conferences where there is overnight lodging, and the member has been away from home for at least 72 hours will be excused from completing their scheduled duty day if that is the day they return from the school. If otherwise, the member must report for duty as soon as practical or as agreed upon by the scheduling officer.

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6. Volunteer members attending a special school that is at least ten (10) hours long, will be allowed to use that school in lieu of attending the next regularly scheduled weekly training.
7. Members may be approved to attend a fire school, conference, or seminar that may be of self interest, but not directly job/task related. When approved, the fire district will pay expenses related to the attendance such as tuition, registration, lodging and meals. However, the member will not be compensated for attendance.
8. In exchange for the Department's investment, when required by the training bureau, members attending outside classes will be required to share information and class content with their crews or with the entire department depending on the class. As most members are instructors, this will also provide them with instructor hours as well as allowing credit to crew members for training hours.
9. Members must submit training forms and proper documentation of attendance to the Training Officer or his/her designee within seven (7) days of return in order to get training credit for the class.
10. Members must submit all receipts for expenses to the secretary/administrative assistant within seven (7) days of return.
11. Probationary members are not eligible to attend outside training except for training that may be required to meet firefighter certification requirements. The Fire Chief or his/her designee may grant exceptions for special circumstances on a case-by-case basis.
12. Lodging will be paid for attending fire schools, conferences, or seminars that is 60 miles from the fire district, or the member's residence whichever is closest to the location. The Fire Chief or his/her designee may grant exceptions for special circumstances on a case-by-case basis. The distance will be determined using Internet mapping programs. Refer to Out of Town Travel Policy
13. While attending schools, conferences, or seminars, members shall room in pairs when practical, utilizing rooms with double beds to minimize lodging expenses. The Fire Chief or his/her designee may grant exceptions for special circumstances on a case-by-case basis.
14. The Fire Chief and his/her designee shall determine whether the fire department will provide back-fill staffing using overtime, or whether the member will be responsible for finding someone to cover for him/her while attending a fire school, conference or seminar. The determining factor will be the value of the attendance to the department versus the value to the member.

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Priorities for approval to attend External Training and Education:

1. The following are the priorities used to guide in the approval to attend such training. The following broad categories are comparable with the training goals of the fire department. The list is from most important to least relative importance. The Fire Chief or designee has final approval authority.
 - A. Training and education that materially improves firefighter safety and/or fire fighter survival;
 - B. Training and education that directly facilitates and materially improves victim survival (as compared to the relative propensity to use such skills);
 - C. Training and education which is mandated or required (i.e. re-certifications which are required to be held by members);
 - D. Training and education which is directed towards the attainment/improvement of essential, overall "job description" qualifications;
 - E. Train-the-trainer classes (i.e. skills and classes which facilitate the individuals' ability to train others or that impart knowledge/techniques which can be brought back and successfully and effectively taught to other members of the department at-large);
 - F. Training which enhances Firefighter skills;
 - G. Training and education that can lead to assisting others in their duties (With favorable recommendation from the member's supervisor);
 - H. Training and education that can lead to additional duties (With favorable recommendation from the member's supervisor);
 - I. Training and education for self improvement.

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Training Bureau Members

1. Training Bureau Members are encouraged to attend fire schools, conferences, or seminars that will facilitate their becoming train-the-trainers in order to provide training to other department members.

Chief Officers

1. Chief Officers are encouraged to attend upper level management classes.
2. Chief Officers are encouraged to apply for upper level management courses at the National Fire Academy. These classes should be applied for with priority given to classes pertaining to areas of responsibility.
3. Chief Officers are encouraged to seek College/University education through distance learning programs.

Meal Stipend

1. Refer to Out of Town Travel SOP.

University/College Class Requests

1. A Training/Education Request Form shall be submitted for each semester/quarter.
2. The Educational Agreement form shall accompany the Training/Education Request Form with required information. The Educational Agreement form says that the member attending a college class will remain a member of the department for not less than 2 years after completing the class otherwise the departing member will reimburse the fire department the cost of the class.
3. The member shall submit a copy of final grades to the training officer within seven (7) days of grade report receipt. A member failing to do so precludes the member from approval for additional classes. A minimum of a "C" is necessary, otherwise the member will be precluded from approval for additional classes. If the grade is "Incomplete," the member shall reimburse the fire department for the costs associated with the incomplete class.
4. The member attending University/College classes is responsible for providing back-fill staffing, if necessary while attending classes.
5. Approval to attend University/College classes is subject to funding availability.

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6. The member shall be responsible for completing all administrative/logistical needs relating to University/College class attendance, such as completing registration and securing text books. The member shall prepare any purchase orders associated with the above.

Special Rescue Team Training

1. Special Rescue Teams include Hazardous Materials, Confined Space, Rope Rescue, Collapse Rescue, Trench Rescue.
2. Training for the above listed Technical Response Team members is intended for members that are trained and certified in the particular technical response area and the training session topic relates. Members who are not currently certified in a given technical response area may submit a request to be trained in any given area when the opportunity arises, but approved may be limited to funding or the assessed number of trained responders already trained in that particular discipline.
3. Members that are certified in Technical Response Teams are required to maintain minimum recertification hours to maintain active team membership.
4. This training should be conducted while on shift as part of the normal work day routine as much as possible.
5. The district may detail one unit with team member to attend the scheduled training. This will leave 3 units in service during weekdays. On a scheduled Saturday training this will leave 2 units in the district.
6. In the event all members cannot attend training due to minimum staffing, these remaining individuals may attend on their off day and receiving overtime when approved by the Fire Chief or his/her designee.
7. If there is a special technical response training scheduled that will not accommodate all three platoons, back-fill staffing may be used to meet minimum staffing levels at the discretion of the Fire Chief or his/her designee.