

## PROBLEMS AND COMPLAINTS

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**Purpose:** *In every organization there are bound to be problems and complaints to occur. The key to the successful resolution of the problems is an effective procedure for their handling. If not handled properly, problems or complaints can grow and large problems can result from small, easily handled situations. This procedure is to be followed by all members of the fire district when they experience a problem, or have a complaint.*

**Procedure:**

1. Each member will be assigned a primary officer. The officer will be assigned to a chief officer.
2. If a member has a problem of an administrative nature, he/she is to contact his officer.
3. The officer will make every attempt to solve the member's problem, however, if the officer is unsuccessful, the officer shall present the problem to his superior for assistance. If this does not produce a result, the matter will be carried further up the chain of command until it is resolved.
4. If the problem is not handled in a manner satisfactory to the member, he/she shall contact his/her chief officer.
5. While most problems are best handled on the officer level, the fire chief shall maintain an "Open Door Policy" where the member may feel free to contact the chief with problems of a nature where he would feel uncomfortable with bringing them to his officer. The chief then shall assume responsibility for resolving the problem.
6. All problems and complaints shall be presented in a timely manner. If a considerable amount of time lapses between the time the problem occurs and its presentation, no further action need be taken.
7. Complaints or problems associated with fire run or training attendance credit must be presented within one (1) week of posting the attendance report.
8. All problems and complaints shall be handled in accordance with this procedure. In no case shall a member make a complaint about the fire department to the general public.
9. In the case of a complaint originating about the handling of, or the conduct of a member on a fire run, the problem shall be promptly brought to the attention of the officer of the truck the member was riding, or the incident commander.
10. The officer who receives the complaint shall investigate it and take action as appropriate.
11. Whenever a problem or complaint is made, the person who handles it shall notify the affected member as soon as it has been resolved and how it was resolved.
12. If the problem has reached the level of the fire chief, and the complaining member is not satisfied with the outcome, he/she may have his problem presented to the board of trustees. If the member desires his/her concern be presented to the board of trustees, the member must contact one of the two firefighter representatives and inform the trustee of the problem in writing.

*Standard Operating Procedures are meant only to be guidelines. Actual conditions may warrant alternative actions.*

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12. Any complaint regarding the operation of the fire prevention bureau are to be handled through the fire prevention bureaus chain of command. If the matter is not adequately resolved, it shall be presented to the fire chief.
13. Any complaints involving fire code violations are to be handled in accordance with the fire prevention code violation complaint procedure.

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