

Fauquier County Department of Fire Rescue



OPERATING PROCEDURE

No. 109

Staffing Requirements and Leave Management for Operational Personnel

Effective Date: May 30, 2017
Revision Date: January 10, 2024

Page 1 of 11
Forms:

Approved By: Kalvyn W. Smith, Fire Rescue Chief

PURPOSE

This policy outlines the working hours, staffing procedures, and leave management for 48-hour operational personnel in the fire and rescue department. It ensures adherence to Fauquier County Human Resources Policies, with County policy taking precedence in case of discrepancies.

SCOPE

This procedure pertains to Fauquier County Fire Rescue System career operational members assigned to shift work.

DEFINITIONS

- **Anticipated Vacancies:** Planned absences (Annual Leave, Floating Holiday, or Sick Leave) scheduled at least 15 days in advance.
- **Assigned Reporting Time:** Start of a regular shift, set at 0600 hours; 1800 hours for mandatory duty recall.
- **Bid:** Transaction in the Telestaff system allowing personnel to choose specific days off.
- **Non-Bid Leave:** Annual Leave requests outside the formal bidding process.
- **Staffing Station:** Catlett Fire Station (FS7), responsible for managing staffing levels and reporting. The staffing station may be reached via phone at: 826-206-8566, or via email: firestaffing@fauquiercounty.gov
- **Unanticipated Vacancies:** Unplanned absences with less than 24-hour notice.
- **Minimum Daily Staffing:** Minimum staffing is defined as the essential number of qualified personnel required to be on duty at each station to meet the operational requirements of the fire and rescue system, without necessitating the use of overtime.

Staffing Requirements and Leave Management for Operational Personnel

No. 109

Effective Date: May 30, 2017

Revision Date: January 10, 2024

Page 2 of 11

- **Work Substitutions:** An alternative method of satisfying the employee scheduling and maintaining minimum staffing by substituting working shifts. This policy is FCFR OP 110.
- **Maximum Daily Allowable:** The total number of planned simultaneous absences allowed. The current Maximum Daily Allowable is 72 hours.

I. MINIMUM DAILY STAFFING

- The minimum daily staffing requirements are detailed in the chart within this section. These requirements are subject to modification at the discretion of the System Chief to address evolving operational needs.
- Specific staffing considerations:
 - FS1104 (The Plains) and FS1113 (Lois)
 - Minimum staffing: II Technicians, DPO released, one must be a released Tanker operator.
 - AA1105 (Upperville)
 - Minimum staffing: II Technicians, one must be a released Tanker operator.
 - Transport Units
 - Drivers must be released at their EMS level in order to operate as minimum staffing.
 - Each unit must have at least one qualified EMS provider meeting the indicated EMS level. For staffed transport units, this designated person will be the "EMS Provider."

C. Minimum staffing chart:

FAUQUIER COUNTY FIRE AND RESCUE SYSTEM - MINIMUM DAILY STAFFING									
Station	Unit	EMS Level	Officer	Engine Driver	Firefighter	EMS Provider	Ambulance Driver	Officers	Technicians
Station 1	E1101	EMT	1	1	1			1	2
	M1101	I/P				1	1	0	2
Station 2	E1102	I/P	1	1	1			1	2
Station 3	E1103	I/P	1	1	1			1	2
Station 4	AA1104	AEMT				1	1	0	2

Desire to Serve

Ability to Perform

Courage to Act

Staffing Requirements and Leave Management for Operational Personnel

No. 109

Effective Date: May 30, 2017

Revision Date: January 10, 2024

Page 3 of 11

Station 5	E1105	I/P	1	1	1			1	2
	AA1105	AEMT				1	1	0	2
Station 7	E1107	I/P	1	1	1			1	2
Station 8	E1108	AEMT	1	1	2			1	3
	M1108	I/P				1	1	0	2
Station 10	E1110	I/P	1	1	1			1	2
Station 11	E1111	I/P	1	1	1			1	2
Station 13	AA1113	AEMT				1	1	0	2
Command Staff	BC1101	EMT	1					1	0
	BC1102	EMT	1					1	0
	EMS1101	CCP	1					1	0
Total Daily Minimum Staffing							38	11	27

II. WORKING HOURS FOR 48-HOUR EMPLOYEES

- A. Twenty-four-hour shift shall begin at 0600 hours and continue until 0600 hours the following day unless otherwise specified.
- B. Early relief without compensation up to one hour is permitted with the approval of the on-duty station officer. Relief greater than one hour shall require Battalion Chief approval and recording.
- C. Mandatory overtime may be required as operational demands dictate.
- D. Personnel should not exceed 48 consecutive work hours in avoidable situations unless exceptional circumstances require alternative measures. Such exceptional circumstances may include, but are not limited to, natural disasters, staffing emergencies, pandemics, and severe weather conditions.

III. ANNUAL LEAVE REQUESTS

- A. Requests for annual leave shall be entered into WFTS at least fifteen (15) calendar days in advance by the requesting employee. Requests for use of Annual Leave for unanticipated circumstances with less than 15 calendar days' notice are to be requested as detailed in *Section IV. Unanticipated, Short Notice, and Sick Leave*.
- B. Leave requests with less than 15 calendar days' notice shall be requested via email to the employee's Battalion Chief and entered into WFTS. Battalion Chief's shall make every effort to have these leave requests processed within 24 hours.

Desire to Serve

Ability to Perform

Courage to Act

Staffing Requirements and Leave Management for Operational Personnel

No. 109

Effective Date: May 30, 2017

Revision Date: January 10, 2024

Page 4 of 11

- C. Leave positions will be filled following the general procedures outlined in *Section V, "Vacancies and Filling."*
- D. Annual Leave bidding takes place in January each year; prioritized based on seniority for the following calendar year.
 - 1. Seniority - bidding will award four days (96 hours) based on the seniority of time in service from the earliest start date to the most recent start date.
 - 2. Bids will have a secondary sort of alphabetical by last name, first name. On odd number years the sort will be Z-A, and on even number years the sort will be A-Z.
- E. Leave requests made during the Annual Leave bidding process will be accepted and approved into the scheduling system as guaranteed leave. Holiday dates will be available for bidding; however, they will NOT be considered guaranteed leave. These identified non-guaranteed leave dates will be subject to the cancellation process as specified in *Section III. H* of this policy.
 - 1. Holidays: Christmas Eve, Christmas Day, New Years Day, Independence Day, and Thanksgiving.
- F. A maximum of 72 hours of annual leave may be accepted in any one 24-hour day.
 - 1. Military Leave, Bereavement Leave, Work Substitution, FMLA, and Sick Leave (anticipated nor unanticipated) will not be included as part of the maximum number of leave slots permitted. Requests for additional hours shall be forwarded to the Operations Deputy Chief for approval and entry into WFTS.
- G. Cancellation of a holiday annual leave request shall be completed by the on-duty Battalion Chief if said vacancy remains by 17:00 hours on the 15th day prior to request. The on-duty Battalion Chief shall notify the affected employee of the cancellation by both telephone call and text message. Staffing station personnel will monitor the holidays outlined in *Section III. E. iii* of this policy and advise command staff personnel of necessary cancellations.

IV. UNANTICIPATED, SHORT NOTICE, AND SICK LEAVE

- A. Unplanned leave requests will be addressed individually by the on-duty Battalion Chief. These requests are to be submitted the request in WFTS. The on-duty

Desire to Serve

Ability to Perform

Courage to Act

Staffing Requirements and Leave Management for Operational Personnel

No. 109

Effective Date: May 30, 2017

Revision Date: January 10, 2024

Page 5 of 11

Battalion Chief will promptly process these requests in the most efficient manner. In instances where the Battalion Chief is unable to do so, they may delegate approval to the staffing station.

1. These leave requests are for situations involving highly unusual circumstances where Sick Leave isn't applicable. If approved, Annual Leave will be the designated type of leave used.
- B. Sick Leave will be provided to employees when an employee is unable to report for duty due to a significant illness or injury, as outlined in *Human Resources Policy Sick Leave 2-N*.
- C. Bereavement Leave may be granted as per *Human Resources Policy 2-C* Bereavement Leave. In alignment with HR Policy, 48-hour personnel will be allocated one 24-hour shift day of Bereavement Leave, ensuring a minimum of four consecutive days off. Personnel shall request the use of Bereavement Leave through their chain of command.
- D. Injury Leave is applicable when an employee sustains an injury while on duty, rendering them unable to work. The employee will be placed on Injury Leave while the injury or illness can be validated as compensable by Workers Compensation. This provision ensures financial continuity for the employee during the initial seven (7) calendar days, preventing any salary disruptions in compliance with the waiting period stipulated by Workers Compensation. This period allows for the comprehensive assessment and determination of compensability while prioritizing the well-being of the injured employee.
- E. Family Medical Leave Act (FMLA) Leave becomes applicable when an employee qualifies for FMLA under the criteria outlined in Fauquier County Human Resources Policy 2-G. Employees placed on FMLA are entitled to 96 hours (equivalent to four 24-hour shifts) of compensated leave for each eligible event. In the event that the employee does not utilize the full 96 hours, only the necessary hours will be applied.
- F. Employees are solely responsible for notifying the department when they wish to use Sick Leave, Bereavement Leave, or Annual Leave for unanticipated circumstances, or request general scheduling changes. This notification should be done in the following manner:
 1. Employees are required to log in to WFTS and enter the appropriate work code (e.g., Sick Leave, Bereavement, Annual Leave). The approval for the

Desire to Serve

Ability to Perform

Courage to Act

Staffing Requirements and Leave Management for Operational Personnel

No. 109

Effective Date: May 30, 2017

Revision Date: January 10, 2024

Page 6 of 11

work code will be granted by either the staffing station FS 7 or the on-duty Battalion Chief.

- G. Any notification other than the above specified method will be considered invalid and may result in consequences such as leave without pay and/or disciplinary action.
- H. Request for operational Sick Leave should be made as soon as possible but must be made at least one hour prior to start of shift.
 - 1. Sick Leave Notification and Duration
 - a. When a Sick Leave request is made, the employee will be considered on Sick Leave for a duration of twenty-four (24) hours.
 - b. For each additional twenty-four (24) hour sick day, a separate notification to the staffing station or the on-duty Battalion Chief is required.
 - i. If an employee needs to utilize Sick Leave for a partial shift, it should be documented as such in WFTS.
- I. Physician's Excuse Requirement
 - 1. Extended Sick Leave usage, totaling three twenty-four (24) hour shifts or seventy-two (72) consecutive hours, or for any reason as stipulated in County *HR Policy 2-N*, will necessitate a physician's excuse.
 - 2. All physician's excuses shall be documented in the employee's personnel file for record-keeping.

V. VACANCIES AND FILLING

A. Filling Vacancies

- 1. Unanticipated Vacancies
 - a. If an unanticipated vacancy is created prior to 2100hrs the evening before, staffing personnel will allow the vacancy to be out bounded by the rules for both the AM and PM vacancy. If an unanticipated vacancy is created between 1900-2100hrs the staffing personnel shall manually outbound the vacancy.

Desire to Serve

Ability to Perform

Courage to Act

Staffing Requirements and Leave Management for Operational Personnel

No. 109

Effective Date: May 30, 2017

Revision Date: January 10, 2024

Page 7 of 11

- b. If the shift is not filled by the rules or if the vacancy occurs after 2100 hours, then Mandatory Holdover/Recall shall be initiated by the on-duty Battalion Chief. The on-duty Battalion Chief shall call the respective station officer to initiate the holdover/recall.
- i. If the vacancy was created between 2100-0600, Staffing Personnel will review the sign-up list (pickup). If personnel are on the list, they should be contacted via phone to see if they are able to work. If an employee agrees to work, but cannot arrive by 0600, they shall inform the Battalion Chief.

2. Anticipated Vacancies

- a. The scheduling system will automatically fill anticipated vacancies. The system will look forward 28 days and begin filling any vacancy within those 28 days.
- b. When a vacancy is identified, the system will begin filling it based on the following:
 - i. On duty unassigned
 - ii. Individuals capable of riding up to a higher position
 - iii. The system will fill the position from sign up lists
 - iv. If the vacancy is for the entire 24-hour period, it will be automatically split into two 12-hour portions, 0600-1800 and 1800-0600.
 - v. The scheduling system will manage the Sign-Up List.
 - vi. If no one is on the Sign-up list, then the Career Offer List will be utilized.
 - vii. The vacancy will remain open until filled, or leave is cancelled (15 calendar days prior).

VI. HOLDOVER AND RECALL POLICY

- A. **ALL** personnel shall work mandatory and/or assigned overtime as required.
- B. Every effort shall be made to initiate mandatory holdover / recall prior to 0600hrs.

Desire to Serve

Ability to Perform

Courage to Act

Staffing Requirements and Leave Management for Operational Personnel

No. 109

Effective Date: May 30, 2017

Revision Date: January 10, 2024

Page 8 of 11

C. Recall for Sick Leave or any other type of unanticipated vacancies shall be initiated as follows:

1. If a vacancy exists or is created between 2100 and 0600 hours, the resulting vacancies will be handled in the following manner:
 - a. The 0600-1800 vacancy will be filled by a holdover list managed by the scheduling system. Employees with unit and position specialties will be selected from the managed list. If ride-up personnel are available, the vacancy should be filled at the lowest specialty level.
 - b. The 1800-0600 vacancy will be filled by a rotating mandatory recall list maintained by the scheduling system based on unit and position specialties. The evening recall person shall be notified by the on-duty Battalion Chief by 1300 hours if their service is not required for minimum staffing.
2. No mandatory status shall result in an individual working more than 36 consecutive hours unless extreme circumstances dictate. An employee may voluntarily work up to a maximum of 48 hours.
 - a. Mandatory holdover or recall will be made from the WFTS Mandatory List. This list is comprised of individuals eligible to fill the position based on rank and or specialties. Battalion Chiefs and EMS Supervisors will be ranked to the bottom of the list, unless it is for their specific position. Persons capable of riding up as a Battalion Chief or EMS Supervisor will be included in those respective lists.
 - b. In standard staffing scenarios, priority is given to rank over EMS certification level. This means that an officer should typically be assigned to an officer's position irrespective of their EMS certification level. However, in situations where additional ALS providers are necessary to meet minimum staffing requirements and no alternative staffing options are available, two personnel may be assigned to fill an ALS/Officer position. When staffing conditions become less flexible, an ALS Officer may be assigned to fulfill both roles. Notification of such adjustments due to staffing levels will be communicated by the Deputy Chief of Operations.

Staffing Requirements and Leave Management for Operational Personnel

No. 109

Effective Date: May 30, 2017

Revision Date: January 10, 2024

Page 9 of 11

3. Personnel who have prior approved arrangements for Department business will be exempt from inclusion on the holdover list by notifying the on-duty Battalion Chief in accordance with *Section VII* of this policy. The on-duty Battalion Chief will assess whether the staffing requirement takes precedence over other Department business in maintaining minimum staffing levels.
4. An individual shall be considered on "mandatory hold over" when they have been held a minimum of two (2) hours.
5. As an alternative to mandatory holdover or recall, if an employee cannot fulfill their duty for any reason when their turn comes, they have the option of finding their own replacement. In such cases, the employee must remain on-duty until the replacement arrives. Once the employee secures coverage for their holdover or recall, the "Hold/Recall Non-Working" code will be added to their calendar, marking it as their last hold/recall date. The replacement employee will be placed on overtime, and this will be counted as their last overtime worked date.
6. Employees recalled to duty shall be compensated for that period of time. Compensation shall begin when the individual reports for duty at the assigned work location.
7. Recall is defined as the process of summoning an employee back to work to fill a specific position for a designated duration. The purpose of recall is to ensure the availability of adequate staffing levels for fire and rescue operations.
8. In the event that an employee is recalled but subsequently found not to be required, the recall will be canceled. Every effort will be made to notify the employee via phone and text messaging prior to the recall shift to inform them of the cancellation. If the employee reports to work without receiving notice of recall cancellation and is not needed, they may earn up to four (4) hours of recall pay, provided that they work a minimum of four (4) hours.
9. Recall may be canceled if no need is present (i.e., equipment goes out of service or employee cancels leave). All efforts will be made, by phone and text message, to provide at least 24-hour notice.

Staffing Requirements and Leave Management for Operational Personnel		No. 109
Effective Date: May 30, 2017	Revision Date: January 10, 2024	Page 10 of 11

10. Employees wishing to cancel their approved leave should make every effort to do so by giving the staffing station a minimum of 24-hour notice.

VII. EXCUSAL FROM MANDATORY OVERTIME

- A. In cases where an employee has a compelling reason for being excused from mandatory overtime, they may submit a request for excusal. The approval of this request will be contingent upon the on-duty Battalion Chief's assessment of the validity of the reason provided by the employee.
 1. To request an excusal from mandatory overtime, the employee should send an email to the on-duty Battalion Chief before 1000 hours each day. Requests will be considered on a case-by-case basis. The Battalion Chief will provide a prompt response to the request, either approving or denying it.
- B. An employee who has approved leave or a Kelly Day, within three days of their current working shift will be ranked at the bottom of the mandatory overtime list.

VII. ADDITIONAL PARAMETERS

- A. The scheduling system will automatically fill positions in accordance with WFTS rules set forth by FCFR every day for the following 28 calendar days at 1300, 1600, and 1900 hours.
- B. Employees on the Sign-Up list will have one hour to either accept or reject available work opportunities. Employees on the Career Offer list will have 30 minutes to accept or reject work opportunities.
- C. If an employee rejects a work opportunity from the Sign-Up List or fails to respond within the designated time frame, a Refused Overtime (ROT) work code will be issued. Future offers will be prioritized based on the date the ROT was assigned.
- D. Personnel must ensure that they have been properly relieved before going off duty by checking-in with either the on-coming or off-going officer (i.e., minimum staffing is met).
- E. If a person agrees to work overtime but is unable to do so due to circumstances similar to those that prevent regular employees from reporting on time (such as

Staffing Requirements and Leave Management for Operational Personnel		No. 109
Effective Date: May 30, 2017	Revision Date: January 10, 2024	Page 11 of 11

illness), staffing personnel will fill the vacancy using the usual Sick Leave procedures. However, if the person simply chooses not to work the overtime, they must find a replacement who meets the staffing requirements and is approved by the on-duty Battalion Chief.

- F. All requests for schedule changes involving leave (e.g., cancellation of leave, modified times) shall be made to the staffing station via phone or email.