

Fauquier County Department of Fire Rescue

OPERATING PROCEDURE

No. 109



Staffing, Leave, and Recall

Effective Date: May 30, 2017
Revision Date: January 11, 2021

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Forms:

Approved By: Darren L. Stevens, Fire Rescue Chief

PURPOSE

To establish a procedure for the maintenance of daily operational staffing requirements.

SCOPE

This procedure pertains to Fauquier County Department of Fire, Rescue and Emergency Management (DFREM) career operational members assigned to shift work.

PROCEDURE

I. MINIMUM STAFFING

- A. Minimum staffing is defined as the minimum number of qualified persons on duty at each station that are there to meet the operational needs of the department, without causing overtime. Below is the minimum staffing outline, formatted as “Unit/Station – Number of Officers; Number of Technicians; Combined Requirements”. The Chief of Department, or their designee, has the authority to change this at any given time to meet operational needs.

Unit	EMS Level	Officer	Technicians	Combined Requirements
M1101	I/P	0	2	AMB/EMT/M
FS1102	I/P	1	2	AMB/M/DO
FS1103	I/P	1	2	AMB/M/DO/KO
FS1104	AEMT	0	2	AMB/A/DO/KO
E1105	I/P	1	3	FO/DO/M
M1105	I/P	0	2	AMB/M/KO/EMT
FS1107	I/P	1	2	FO/DO/M/EMT
FS1108	I/P	0	2	DO/KO/M/EMT
FS1110	I/P	1	2	FO/DO/M/EMT
FS1111	I/P	1	2	FO/DO/M/EMT
FS1113	AEMT	0	2	AMB/A/DO/KO

Desire to Serve

Ability to Perform

Courage to Act

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BC1101	EMT	1	0	CO
EMS1101	Paramedic	1	0	EMS

II. ANNUAL LEAVE REQUESTS

- A. Requests for annual leave shall be entered into Work Force Telestaff (WFTS) at least ten (10) days in advance by the requesting employee. Leave requests with less than ten (10) days notices shall be requested via voice message on the DFREM Leave Line, 540- 422-8814. The on-duty Battalion Chief shall process such requests as soon as possible. Leave positions will be filled utilizing general procedure as prescribed in Section IV of this policy. The scheduling system will auto-approve up to the 72 hour annual leave maximum. If the maximum amount of hours is already being utilized, your request will be saved in the system as a pending request for future consideration.
- B. Annual Leave usage will be considered in two different categories for prioritization purposes. The categories will be **“peak leave usage”** and **“non-peak leave usage”**.
- C. Peak leave usage is defined as the months of June, July, August, September, October, November, December and January 1 of the following year. All leave requests entered into the scheduling system per II.D, for the peak usage periods prior to January 2 will be considered equal and prioritized based on the following criteria:
 - **Seniority (time in service). (72 Hours)**
- D. Bidding – Employees will utilize WFTS’s bidding function to impartially prioritize employee peak leave requests. Bidding application will open during the first week of January and all employees will be given a specific date and time to enter up to 192 hours or eight 24 hour days, of peak leave into the scheduling system based on seniority (special date). Any peak leave requests that exceed 192 hours will be removed during prioritization process starting with the most distance entry and working backward until the individuals’ requested peak leave hours equals 192. Leave requests that exceed the allowable maximum hours per day will be kept in que by the Department’s leave manager for future consideration.
- E. Leave priority will be based on the date and time of entry into the scheduling system for non-peak time periods and for peak usages times after January 2.
- F. The on duty Battalion chief shall handle all emergency leave requests on a case-by-case basis. All emergency leave requests shall be made via the DFREM Leave

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Line, so the on duty battalion chief can process the request in the most efficient manner. Emergency leave requests are considered requests for leave situations where extremely unusual circumstances have arisen. Annual leave shall be the type leave used when and if approved.

- G. Leave requests should be considered accepted when entered into the scheduling system without a pending approval. By general practice, the first 72 hours of annual leave entered in the scheduling system (after January 2 for peak usage periods) should be approved pending appropriate coverage. Leave is confirmed approved when the requesting employee's position is filled with a qualified employee replacement (Cover). The Department's leave manager shall inform an employee 7 days in advance if an accepted leave request will not be approved for any extenuating circumstance (e.g. no cover position, cancellation of leave). The Assistant Chief, or their designee, shall have the authority to approve request that exceed the 72 hour limit.
- H. A maximum of 72 hours of annual leave shall be acceptable in any one 24-hour day (0600-0600) for both 24 hour shift employees and day (D1/D2) shift employees.
 - 1. Any employee desiring to be off and leave requests exceed the 72 hour limit will need to use work substitution to be off or work their regularly
 - 2. Military leave, injury leave, details, emergency annual leave, educational leave, bereavement leave, anticipated and unanticipated sick leave will not be included as part of the maximum number of leave slots permitted. Requests for details shall be forwarded to the Department's leave manager through the assistant chief for approval and entry into the system.
 - 3. Work substitution (shift swaps) is not defined as leave usage.
- I. **ALL** personnel shall work mandatory and/or assigned overtime as required.
- J. In all cases, no more than 48 consecutive hours should be worked by an individual unless extreme circumstances dictate other measures. Extreme circumstances include but are not limited to natural disasters, unavailability of personnel, and severe weather situations.
- K. All requests for schedule changes involving leave requests (e.g. cancellation of leave, modified times) shall be done on the DFREM Leave Line voicemail at 540-422-8814.
- L. Personnel must ensure that they have been properly relieved prior to going off duty.

III. UNANTICIPATED, SHORT NOTICE AND SICK LEAVE POLICY

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- A. The Department shall grant sick leave to employees for illness or injury of sufficient seriousness to prevent the employee's attendance for duty; or for required physical, optical or dental examination and treatments in accordance with the applicable Human Resources policy.
- B. The illness of a spouse, children, or other immediate family members or the need to accompany children receiving preventative medical, optical or dental treatment, may warrant the use of sick leave if approved by the Battalion Chief who shall consider the needs of the Department and the seriousness of the medical situation.
- C. Bereavement Leave may be granted in accordance with the applicable Human Resources policy.
- D. Sick leave usage not specified in this operating procedure and the applicable Human Resources policy shall not be granted. Emergency use of annual leave may be requested through the on duty Battalion Chief by as described in section II.F of this procedure.
- E. Notification of the request to use of sick leave, emergency leave or general scheduling changes shall be solely the responsibility of the employee in the following manner:
 - 1. Notify the DFREM Leave Line voicemail at 540-422-8814. Leave a message indicating the following:
 - a. Name and Rank.
 - b. Date of absence or schedule change.
 - c. Nature of request (Self-illness, family illness, cancellation of leave request) or any leave issue arising.
 - d. Expected length of absence.
- F. Any notification other than the DFREM Leave Line voicemail at 540-422-8814, will be considered invalid and may result in leave without pay and/or disciplinary actions.
- G. Request for sick leave should be made as soon as possible, but must be made at least one hour prior to start of shift (0500).
- H. Once the sick leave request has been made the employee shall be considered off on sick leave for duration of twenty-four (24) hours. Each additional twenty-four (24) hour sick day requires an additional notification to Battalion Chief and the sick leave voicemail.

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- I. If the employee is sick for a partial shift the on-duty Battalion Chief must be notified as soon as possible but no later than 1200 hours via the DFREM Leave Line voicemail at 540-422-8814, with information regarding when the employee will return to work.
- J. A physician’s excuse shall be required for extended sick leave usage amounting to three twenty-four (24) hours shifts, seventy-two (72) consecutive hours or questionable sick leave usage. All physician excuses will be placed in the employee’s personnel file.

IV. VACANCIES AND FILLING

A. Types of Vacancies

- 1. There will be two types of schedule vacancies, anticipated and unanticipated. Unanticipated vacancies are within 24 hours. Anticipated vacancies are greater than 24 hours away.

B. Filling Vacancies

1. Unanticipated Vacancies

- A. If an unanticipated vacancy is created prior to 1900hrs the evening before, the on-duty Battalion Chief will allow the vacancy to be outbounded by the rules for both the AM and PM vacancy.
- B. If the shift is not filled by the rules are run or if the vacancy occurs after 2000 hours, then Mandatory Holdover/Recall shall be initiated by the on-duty Battalion Chief.
- C. Mandatory holdover / recall shall be initiated prior to 0600hrs

2. Anticipated Vacancies

- a. Anticipated vacancies will be automatically filled by the scheduling system. The scheduling system will look forward 14 days and begin the process of filling any vacancy occurring within those 14 days.
- b. When a vacancy is identified the system will begin the filling based on the following:
 - i. On duty unassigned
 - ii. Individuals capable of riding up to a higher position

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- 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.

C. Overtime Lists

1. Three types of overtime lists will be managed by the scheduling system.
 - A. Sign up (AM/PM) List - An employee managed list for indicating the desire to work overtime for a designated work periods. Typically utilized for AM or PM signup. Individuals shall utilize the appropriate sign-up work code to identify dates that they are available to work overtime for minimum staffing.
 - B. Career Offer List - Offers vacant roster positions to personnel not assigned to work on the date of the vacancy who meet the certification requirements of the position and voluntarily request to be placed on this list. This list is not associated with any sign-up. This list is to be used when the sign-up lists have been depleted and the vacancy is unfilled.
 - C. Mandatory Overtime List – Defined as holdover or recall for a period of no less than two hours.
 1. Holdover 0600-1800 vacancy
 2. Recall 1800-0600 vacancy
2. Ranking of Overtime Lists (Sign Up/Career Offer)
 - A. Employees that meet the specialty requirement(s) for the unit and position.
 - B. Off Duty
 - C. Sign up work code
 - D. Position for position
3. Officers eligible if no other Technicians are signed up
 - A. Last Date Overtime Offered
 - B. Seniority Date
 - C. Alphabetical by name

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4. Ranking of Mandatory Overtime

- A. Employees that meet the specialty requirement(s) for the position
- B. Off duty
- C. Last Mandatory Date
- D. Seniority in descending order
- E. Alphabetical by name

D. Additional Parameters

1. The scheduling system will auto-hire by department rules every day for the following 14 calendar days at 1300, 1600 and 1900 hours.
2. Employees on the Sign Up and Career Offer list will be given one (1) hour to either accept or reject the work opportunity for an anticipated vacancy. For an unanticipated vacancy, this time will be shortened to 30 minutes.
3. If an employee rejects the work opportunity from the Sign Up List, or employee fails to respond within the designated time frame, a Refused Overtime (ROT) work code will be issued, and future offers will be prioritize based on the date the Refused Overtime was assigned.
4. Once the scheduling system assigns the vacancy in sequence it is considered filled and that person should not be cancelled unless indicated by situations listed below.

V. RECALL POLICY

A. Recall for sick leave or any other type of unanticipated vacancies shall be initiated as follows:

1. If the vacancy occurs between 2000 and 0600, the resulting vacancies will be handle in the following manner:
 - a. The 0600-1800 vacancy will be filled by a holdover list managed by the scheduling system. Employees that have 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. If the selected individual cannot be held over for work related reasons (e.g. overworked, scheduled to work), the next person on the holdover list shall be utilized.
 - 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

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battalion chief by 1300 hours if their service is not required for minimum staffing.

2. No mandatory recall shall result in an individual working in excess of 36 consecutive hours, unless extreme circumstances dictate. An employee may voluntarily elect to work up to a maximum of 48 hours.
3. Recall for ALS personnel and BLS personnel will be made from a WFTS list of all personnel. In the event that an officer is required to cover the recall position then recalls shall be battalion chiefs for battalion chiefs and company officers for company officers. Individuals capable of moving up to the battalion chief position will be included on the battalion chief mandatory recall list.
4. Personnel with approved prior arrangements to be detailed on department business shall be passed over on the holdover list if the holdover and detail assignment are in conflict. There may exist however, extenuating circumstances that may require holding over individuals with conflicting department business in an effort to maintain minimum staffing. Individuals who find themselves in a position of conflict between a holdover and approved department business shall immediately inform the on-duty battalion chief of the conflict. Department business that may be considered approved includes but is not limited to physicals, mandatory training, approved outside training and/or other approved work details.
5. An individual shall be considered on "mandatory hold over" when they have been held a minimum of two (2) hours.
6. As an option to being mandatorily held, as one's turn comes and he/she cannot work for some reason, he/she has the option of trying to find their own replacement with permission of the battalion chief. He/she must remain on duty until the replacement arrives and neither individual will be recorded as being mandatorily held over unless the individual on mandatory hold over is on duty two (2) hours or more.
7. Employees recalled back to duty shall be compensated for that period of time. Compensation shall begin when the individual reports for duty at the assigned work location.
8. Recall shall be construed to mean an employee called back to work to cover a position for a specific time. Recall will be used to maintain sufficient staffing for fire and rescue operations.

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9. When an employee is recalled and it is determined that he/she will not be needed, the recall shall be canceled. All efforts will be made to contact the employee, by phone and text messaging, prior to the recall shift to advise them of the cancellation. If the employee reports to work without notice of recall cancellation and is not needed, up to four (4) hours recall pay may be earned provided the employee works four (4) hours.

10. Recall may be canceled if no need is present (i.e., equipment goes out of service, or employee cancels leave, etc.). All efforts will be made, by phone and email, to provide at least 24- hours' notice. Employees canceling leave must do so by providing the on duty battalion chief a minimum of 24 hours' notice.

11. The use of temporary and over "minimum" strength personnel to alleviate recall will be used whenever feasible.

12. If an individual accepts overtime and cannot work the accepted time frame for reasons similar to those preventing regular scheduled employees from reporting on time (e.g. illness), the re- opened vacancy shall be filled by the on duty battalion chief using normal sick leave procedures. If the individual simply does not want to work accepted overtime, that employee shall find a replacement to work in their place, provided they meet the staffing requirements and is approved by the on duty battalion chief.