

NORTH WHATCOM FIRE AND RESCUE

FIRE DISTRICT POLICY

Number: 0400.0601.01

Date: 1/9/06

Area: Personnel

Page: 1 of 7

Subject: Volunteer Firefighter Membership

Approved:

Policy 0400.0601.00

1. **General:**

Citizens served by North Whatcom Fire and Rescue expect, and should receive, qualified and well-trained fire department personnel when they request emergency assistance. Realizing this, the fire district must ensure that all volunteer personnel who respond to emergencies are trained, equipped and prepared to mitigate any emergency that may arise. To achieve the level of expertise and professionalism necessary, fire district volunteer personnel must train regularly, and must respond to emergency incidents as often as possible to ensure they maintain a level of experience commensurate with the tasks they are asked to perform. This is a condition of membership.

2. **Purpose:**

It is the purpose of this policy to identify the minimum requirements for maintaining “active” volunteer membership, and to identify “inactive” volunteer membership status. In addition, it is the purpose of this policy to identify minimum fire district training and response requirements, and to identify volunteer firefighter’s benefits.

3. **Scope:**

This policy applies to all personnel classified as volunteer firefighters and/or volunteer emergency response personnel.

4. **Policy:**

4.1. **Definitions:**

<i>Employ:</i>	To suffer or permit to work.
<i>Employee:</i>	Any individual employed by an employer.
<i>Employer:</i>	Any individual, partnership, association, corporation acting directly or indirectly in the interest of an employer in relation to an employee and includes a public agency.
<i>Required (Mandatory) Training:</i>	Training sessions identified as being required by Part 296-305 of the Washington State Administrative Code,

Cancels:

Revised: 12/17/09

Reviewed:

NORTH WHATCOM FIRE AND RESCUE

FIRE DISTRICT POLICY

Number:	0400.0601.01	Date:	1/9/06
Area:	Personnel	Page:	2 of 7
Subject:	Volunteer Firefighter Membership	Approved:	

required by the districts training program, or mandated by the District Training Officer.

Regular Scheduled Training:

Weekly training topics, events, and/or sessions identified by the District Training Officer and published in the fire district annual training schedule.

Volunteer:

Any individual engaged in the activities of a state or local government body or agency where an employer-employee relationship does not in fact exist, or where the services or activities of the individual are rendered gratuitously.

Volunteer Firefighter:

An individual who performs hours of service for North Whatcom Fire and Rescue for civic, charitable, or humanitarian reasons; without promise, expectations, or receipt of compensation for services rendered; where their services are offered freely and without pressure or coercion, direct or implied from the fire district.

4.2. Volunteer Membership Status - Policy Statement:

4.2.1 North Whatcom Fire and Rescue Volunteer Firefighter membership will be separated into two classifications dependent on the level of activity of the volunteer firefighter

4.2.2 Volunteer firefighters will be classified as “Active Volunteer Firefighters” or “Inactive Volunteer Firefighters”.

4.2.2.1 Active Volunteer Firefighters is any volunteer firefighter who:

- Actively participates in seventy-five (75) percent of all “regularly scheduled” training topics, events, and/or sessions identified by the fire district training officer and published in the fire district annual training schedule.
- Participates in one-hundred (100) percent of “required” training sessions as required by Part 296-305 of the Washington Administrative Code, and/or fire district training officer, and those sessions published in the fire district annual training schedule. (Ref. Appendix A)

Cancels:

Revised: 12/17/09

Reviewed:

NORTH WHATCOM FIRE AND RESCUE

FIRE DISTRICT POLICY

Number:	0400.0601.01	Date:	1/9/06
Area:	Personnel	Page:	3 of 7
Subject:	Volunteer Firefighter Membership	Approved:	

- Satisfies all fire districts standards for critical skills such as SCBA certification, live fire training, CPR and other critical emergency medical skills (OTEP), and other skills associated with Firefighter 1 skills, knowledge, and abilities.
- Responds to emergency incidents when requested, on a regular basis, but in no case shall be less than twenty five (25) percent of the total applicable incidents.

4.2.2.2 Inactive Volunteer Firefighter is any volunteer firefighter who does not satisfy the requirements of 4.2.2.1

4.3 Initial Training Requirements – Policy Statement:

4.3.1 Individuals applying for volunteer firefighter membership will satisfy the following training requirements within the time specified unless specifically waived by the District Fire Chief.

- Successful completion of an approved Firefighter Recruit Academy.
- Successful completion of First Responder Training
- Successful completion of the fire districts volunteer firefighter recruit training manual.
- Successful completion of Emergency Vehicle Accident Prevention Training

4.3.3 All fire district personnel will successfully complete driver training to include pump/operator training requirements for all apparatus assigned to their specific stations within two years of their initial date of membership approval.

4.4 Exemption from Active Volunteer Status Requirements – Policy Statement:

4.4.1 Volunteer firefighters who are full paid firefighters in another fire department, fire district, or fire brigade, may receive “equivalent credit for training” to satisfy the training participation requirements identified in 4.2.2.1, provided that the equivalent training is applicable and appropriate for North Whatcom Fire and Rescue operations, and that the training is similar in content and standard.

Cancels:

Revised: 12/17/09

Reviewed:

NORTH WHATCOM FIRE AND RESCUE

FIRE DISTRICT POLICY

Number:	0400.0601.01	Date:	1/9/06
Area:	Personnel	Page:	4 of 7
Subject:	Volunteer Firefighter Membership	Approved:	

- 4.4.2 Volunteer firefighters who desire to receive “equivalent training” credit shall provide full documentation from the providing agency of the training acquired in order to be eligible to receive such credit. An approved instructor of the providing agency must sign and date all documentation.
- 4.4.3 Volunteer Firefighters who are full paid firefighters in another fire department, fire district, or fire brigade shall participate in fire district regularly scheduled training, at a minimum, of one training period each month.
- 4.4.4 Volunteer firefighters who participate in fire district sponsored special training such as EMT or First Responder, and/or a Recruit Academy, where such training requires an exceptional amount of time, may be granted equivalent credit for training towards the seventy-five (75) percent attendance requirements. Such equivalent training can not replace district firefighter training that maintains the required and necessary skills to safely function as a firefighter during an emergency incident.

4.5 Involuntary Changes to Inactive Volunteer Firefighter Status – Policy Statement:

- 4.5.1 At the direction of the District Fire Chief, the membership status of volunteer firefighter personnel who fail to satisfy the requirements of 4.2.2.1 of this policy shall be changed to Inactive Volunteer Firefighter.
- 4.5.2 Station Lieutenants shall be responsible for the monthly review of training attendance and call response records for all active volunteer firefighters assigned to their station to ensure that the requirements of Active Volunteer Status are being satisfied.
- 4.5.3 Station Lieutenants shall report active volunteer firefighter training and response activities to the appropriate Chief of Operations at the end of each quarter. The District Chief of Operations will report any/all concerns or recommendations regarding a member’s performance to the District Fire Chief.
- 4.5.4 Active volunteer firefighters who have failed to fulfill the requirements to remain an Active Volunteer Firefighter will be placed on probation for the next successive quarter. During that probationary period the firefighter shall make-up all training missed, if appropriate, shall attend training regularly during that probationary quarter, and/or shall demonstrate improved emergency incident response activity.

Cancels:

Revised: 12/17/09

Reviewed:

NORTH WHATCOM FIRE AND RESCUE

FIRE DISTRICT POLICY

Number:	0400.0601.01	Date:	1/9/06
Area:	Personnel	Page:	5 of 7
Subject:	Volunteer Firefighter Membership	Approved:	

- 4.5.5 Volunteer firefighter personnel who fail to satisfy the requirements for Active Firefighter status during the successive probationary quarter shall be placed on Inactive Volunteer Firefighter status.
- 4.5.6 Volunteer firefighters whose status becomes “Inactive Volunteer Firefighter” shall return all fire district issued equipment within (5) working days of the status change.
- 4.5.7 Volunteer firefighters whose status is “Inactive Volunteer Firefighter” shall not participate in fire district training activities or in emergency incident response, or other activities that could place that individual at risk. This is not to preclude volunteer firefighters of this status from participating in fire district social events, association meetings, open houses, and/or other activities that are not associated with emergency response.
- 4.5.8 Firefighters who participate in future fire district sleeper shift programs, and who are involuntary placed on Inactive Volunteer Firefighter Status shall forfeit all shifts that have been assigned, and will not participate in that sleeper shift program until reinstatement as an Active Volunteer Firefighter has occurred.
- 4.5.9 Firefighters who are involuntary placed on Inactive Volunteer Firefighter status two or more times within twelve (12) calendar months may, at the discretion of the District Fire Chief, be terminated as a member of the fire district.

4.6 Voluntary Changes to Inactive Firefighter Status – Policy Statement:

- 4.6.1 Volunteer firefighters, who recognize that they may not be able to satisfy the requirements for Active Volunteer Firefighter status, may request to be placed on Inactive Volunteer Firefighter status.
- 4.6.2 Individuals who request to be placed on Inactive Volunteer Firefighter status must notify the District Fire Chief in writing, using the appropriate chain of command of such a request and may be granted a membership status change.
- 4.6.3 Volunteer firefighters whose status becomes “Inactive Volunteer Firefighter” due to a request for status change, shall return all fire district issued equipment within five working days after receipt of approval of the notification of status change of the status change.

Cancels:

Revised: 12/17/09

Reviewed:

NORTH WHATCOM FIRE AND RESCUE

FIRE DISTRICT POLICY

Number:	0400.0601.01	Date:	1/9/06
Area:	Personnel	Page:	6 of 7
Subject:	Volunteer Firefighter Membership	Approved:	

- 4.6.4 Volunteer firefighters who choose to change their status to Inactive Volunteer Firefighter may remain at this status for a period not to exceed twelve (12) months from the date the status is granted by the District Fire Chief.
- 4.6.5 Volunteer Firefighters whose status remains inactive for a period of more than twelve (12) calendar months may, at the discretion of the District Fire Chief, be recommended for termination as a member of the fire district.
- 4.6.6 Volunteer firefighters who choose to be re-instated, as an “Active Volunteer Firefighter” shall notify the District Fire Chief in writing as to their desire to be re-instated as an active member.
- 4.6.7 Before a volunteer firefighter can be re-instated to “active” status, he/she must complete remedial training and successfully complete, to the satisfaction of the District Training Officer, an evaluation of skills, knowledge, and abilities. Such evaluation shall include both written and manipulative testing

4.7 Firefighter Benefits – Policy Statement:

- 4.7.1 Active volunteer firefighters shall be eligible to receive the following fire district sponsored / paid benefits:
- Membership in the Washington State Volunteer Pension and Relief Fund to include “line of duty” medical and disability coverage, and the volunteer retirement plan.
 - *\$25,000 Non-“Line of Duty” Group Term Life Insurance. (Pending)*
 - *“Line of Duty” \$30,000 Accidental Death and Dismemberment Insurance. (Pending)*
 - Employee Assistance Program (Appendix D)
- 4.7.2 Volunteer firefighters whose status is “inactive Volunteer Firefighter” are not eligible to receive any of the benefits provided to “Active Volunteer Firefighter” by the fire district.
- 4.7.3 Any changes in benefits provided to volunteer firefighters would be made as soon as the status of the firefighter changes.

Cancels:

Revised: 12/17/09

Reviewed:

NORTH WHATCOM FIRE AND RESCUE

FIRE DISTRICT POLICY

Number:	0400.0601.01	Date:	1/9/06
Area:	Personnel	Page:	7 of 7
Subject:	Volunteer Firefighter Membership	Approved:	

4.7.4 The Fire District reserves the right to change any volunteer firefighter benefits at any time and the contents of the benefit section of this policy do not in any way constitute any form of contractual obligation of the fire district.

Approved: _____
Chairman, Board of Fire Commissioners
North Whatcom Fire and Rescue

Date: _____

Cancels:

Revised: 12/17/09

Reviewed: