

Policy Manual

102.1 PURPOSE AND SCOPE

The Policy Manual of North Whatcom Fire & Rescue is hereby established and shall be referred to as the "Policy Manual." The Policy Manual is a statement of the current policies, rules and guidelines of this district. All district members are expected to conform to the provisions of this Policy Manual. All prior and existing policies, manuals, orders and regulations which are in conflict with this Policy Manual are revoked, except to the extent that portions of the existing policies, manuals, orders and other regulations which have not been included herein shall remain in effect where they do not conflict with the provisions of this Policy Manual.

102.2 POLICY

Except where otherwise expressly stated, the provisions of this Policy Manual shall be considered as guidelines. It is recognized that fire and rescue work is not always predictable and circumstances may arise that warrant departure from these guidelines.

It is intended that the provisions of this manual be viewed using an objective standard, taking into consideration the sound discretion entrusted to the members of this district under the circumstances reasonably available at the time of any incident.

102.2.1 DISCLAIMER

The provisions contained in the Policy Manual are not intended to create an employment contract nor any employment rights or entitlements. The policies contained within this manual are for the internal use of North Whatcom Fire & Rescue and shall not be construed to create a higher standard or duty of care for civil or criminal liability against the District, its officials or members. Violations of any provision of any policy contained within this manual shall only form the basis for district administrative action, training or discipline. North Whatcom Fire & Rescue reserves the right to revise any policy content, in whole or in part.

102.2.2 SEVERABILITY

In the event that any term or provision of this Policy Manual is declared illegal, invalid or unenforceable by any court or any federal or state government agency, the remaining terms and provisions that are not affected shall remain in full force and effect. If any provision of the Policy Manual is found to be in conflict with a local, state or federal law, District policy or collective bargaining agreement, such law, District policy or collective bargaining agreement shall take precedence over that provision of the Policy Manual.

In the event that any of the terms or provisions of the Policy Manual are determined to conflict with any portion of a collective bargaining agreement, the District will seek to resolve the conflict.

102.3 RESPONSIBILITIES

The responsibility for the contents of this Policy Manual rests with the Fire Chief. Since it is not practical for the Fire Chief to prepare and maintain the Policy Manual, the following delegations have been made:

102.3.1 FIRE CHIEF

The Fire Chief shall be considered the ultimate authority for the provisions of this manual and shall continue to issue, as needed, directives which shall modify those provisions of the manual to which they pertain. Any directive so issued shall remain in effect until such time as it is permanently incorporated into the manual.

102.3.2 EXECUTIVE STAFF

Executive staff shall consist of the following:

- Fire Chief
- Deputy Fire Chief
- Human Resources

Executive staff shall review all recommendations regarding proposed changes to the manual and make recommendations to the Fire Chief on final manual changes.

102.3.3 OTHER PERSONNEL

Any member suggesting revision of the contents of the Policy Manual shall forward the suggestion through the chain of command, in writing, to their supervisor.

102.4 POLICY COMMITTEE

A Policy Committee (PC) may be assigned to provide an intermediary review. The PC may provide suggestions to clarify the goals or objectives desired by the organization. Final drafts from the PC shall be forwarded to the executive staff for final disposition.

The PC will review the district Policy Manual periodically to ensure policies are relevant and appropriate to current practices.

102.5 DEFINITIONS

The following words and terms shall have these assigned meanings, unless it is apparent from the content that they have a different meaning:

Adult - Any person 18 years of age or older.

District - The District of North Whatcom Fire & Rescue.

Non-uniformed Employee - Employees who are not engaged in fire suppression activities as part of their primary duties.

District/NWFR - North Whatcom Fire & Rescue.

Employee - Any person employed by the District.

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Fire Code - The Washington State Fire Code as adopted and modified by WAC 51-54A-003 et seq.

Firefighter - Those members, regardless of rank, who perform fire suppression activities as part of their primary duties as members of North Whatcom Fire & Rescue.

Manual - The North Whatcom Fire & Rescue Policy Manual.

May - Indicates a permissive, discretionary, or conditional action.

Member - Any person employed or appointed by North Whatcom Fire & Rescue, including:

- Full and part-time employees
- Sworn, appointed, or elected firefighters
- Non-uniformed employees
- Tender Support

On-duty - Member status during the period when they are actually engaged in the performance of their assigned duties.

Order - A written or verbal instruction issued by a superior.

Rank - The job classification title held by a firefighter.

Shall or will - Indicates a mandatory action.

Should - Indicates a generally required or expected action, absent a rational basis for failing to conform.

Supervisor - A person in a position of authority regarding hiring, transfer, suspension, promotion, discharge, assignment, reward, or discipline of other district members, directing the work of other members, or having the authority to adjust grievances.

The supervisory exercise of authority may not be merely routine or clerical in nature but requires the use of independent judgment.

A supervisor may also include any person (e.g., firefighter-in-charge, lead, or senior worker) given responsibility for directing the work of others without regard to formal job title, rank, or compensation.

102.6 POLICY MANUAL ACCEPTANCE

As a condition of employment, all members are required to read and obtain necessary clarification of this Policy Manual. All are required to sign a statement of receipt acknowledging that they have received a copy or have been provided access to the Policy Manual and understand that they are responsible to read and become familiar with its content.

102.7 DISTRIBUTION OF THE POLICY MANUAL

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An electronic version of the Policy Manual will be made available on Lexipol for access by all employees. The electronic version will be limited to viewing and printing specific chapters or sections. No changes shall be made to the electronic version without authorization from the Fire Chief or the authorized designee.

102.8 REVISIONS TO POLICIES

All members are responsible for keeping abreast of all Policy Manual revisions. All changes to the Policy Manual will be posted on Lexipol.

Human Resources will forward notice of revisions to the Policy Manual as needed to all personnel via electronic mail. Each member shall acknowledge receipt by utilizing the Lexipol acknowledgement statement at the bottom of each distributed policy, review the revisions and seek clarification as needed.

Each supervisor/manager will ensure that members under their command are aware of any Policy Manual revisions and have accomplished appropriate tasks as described in this policy.

102.9 SIGNATURE APPROVAL



Fire Chief



Date