

-----Fortuna Volunteer Fire Department-----

320 SO. FORTUNA BLVD. FORTUNA, CA. 95540

(707)725-5021

<http://fortunafire.com>

“Always Ready – Always Willing”



VOLUNTEER SHIFT PROGRAM

(Procedures Manual)

Program objectives and overview

The overall goal of the [Volunteer Shift Program](#) is to sustain a primarily volunteer fire department that is effective and efficient, providing a level of service that does not overserve but at the same time will provide the necessary services to assure that the mission of the Fortuna Volunteer Fire Department is achieved.

The program is intended to address two major objectives; the first focuses on providing a level of service to the community that will meet response needs for emergencies as well as day to day requests for public service without becoming a financial hardship to the citizens of the community. The second objective is to allow response opportunities to volunteer firefighters of the Fortuna Volunteer Fire Department as well as surrounding fire agencies with the intent of motivating volunteer firefighters as a means of retention with the goal of sustaining long-term volunteer fire department programs within our communities.

Volunteer shift description

The volunteer shift is designed to offer volunteer firefighters the opportunity for response on a more consistent basis within a firehouse setting. For those that are seeking a career in the fire service or emergency medical services fields, the program provides the opportunity for advanced fire service training and incident response experience.

Volunteer shifts are primarily 12 hour shifts with the “A” shift running from 06:00 to 18:00 and the “B” shift running from 18:00 to 06:00. Staffing levels for “A” shift during the weekdays are 2 firefighters that will work with daytime administration staff. The “A” shift staffing level for weekends and holidays (recognized by the fire district) are 3 firefighters. Staffing levels for “B” shift is 3 firefighters.

Application and Requirements

To insure sustainment of the program it is essential that all participants have a good understanding of the requirements and expectations of the program. Volunteers that choose to participate will be required to read and sign the “Volunteer Shift Agreement” and attend a program orientation.

The minimum requirements for participation are as follows;

- Graduate of an approved fire academy

- First responder medical certification

- Valid class C driver license

- Approval from Fire Captain (applicable to Fortuna VFD Firefighters)

- Approval from Fire Chief (applicable to outside agency firefighters)

Note; members who are in the process of obtaining their first responder medical certification and meet the remainder of the criteria above may be allowed to pull a shift as a ride-a-long member in addition to the on duty crew however they will not be entitled to any reimbursement.

Drivers of response vehicles are required to have mandated training as follows;

Class C vehicle operation requires attendance to the Eel River Valley (ERV) Driver Safety Presentation

Class B vehicle operation requires attendance to the ERV Driver/Operator Program and a Class C license with firefighter endorsement or a Class A or B license

No driver under the age of 21, regardless of vehicle class, is allowed to respond Code 3.

Outside agency participation

Members of outside agency fire departments are encouraged to participate within the following guidelines;

Must meet minimum requirements of this program as stated above

Must have written approval from Outside Agency Fire Chief confirming requirements are met and the Outside Agency will provide workman's compensation insurance for the participant

Must read and sign Volunteer Shift agreement

Volunteer shift reimbursement

Volunteers will be provided a per diem reimbursement payment at a flat rate of \$50.00 per 12-hour shift intended to cover food, station clothing/ footwear and incidental expenses (see Appendix A).

Reimbursements will be made on established district payroll dates as follows;

Shifts pulled from the 1st – 15th of the month will have a reimbursement date of the 26th of the same month.

Shifts pulled from the 16th – the last day of the month will have a reimbursement date of the 10th of the following month.

Reimbursements (payroll dates) that fall on a weekend or holiday will be distributed on the prior business day. Reimbursement requests (attendance sheets) are available in electronic format and are to be completed at the end of each shift. They are to be forwarded to the district secretary for reconciliation and processing within 72 hours of the end of the reimbursement-period (15th of the month / last day of the month). Reimbursement requests that are not turned in within the allotted time frame will not be considered for reimbursement.

No additional reimbursement will be provided for time spent on emergency response that occurs or is in process at the end of a shift where a per diem reimbursement has already been provided, as that time will be considered additional volunteer time. Participation in the Volunteer Shift Program is an optional

benefit of being a volunteer firefighter and should not be considered a replacement (time served) for normal volunteer firefighter participation within the members organization.

Shift scheduling

Scheduling of a shift by a firefighter is a commitment to the fire district and to the community we serve and must be taken very seriously. While allowances can and will be made for special circumstances, continued disregard and failure to keep scheduling commitments or follow policy will result in termination from the program.

Schedules will become available on the first Monday of the month prior to the month being scheduled and will be forwarded to all participants via e-mail from the Fire District Secretary. Scheduling is available on a first come first serve basis however; the Fire Chief will have the authority to override scheduling input in order to assure fairness to all. Scheduling inputs by program participants will be completed and submitted through e-mail. Additions and/or deletions to the upcoming week's schedule must be input prior to 17:00 hours on the Friday before. Any changes in scheduling after the Friday cut-off are the responsibility of the firefighter wanting the change. A suitable replacement **must** be found and must be approved by the District Secretary and/or Duty Chief no later than 72 hours prior to the actual shift.

In the case of sickness or a family emergency, a minimum 24 hour notice requesting a schedule change is acceptable. The District Secretary and/or Duty Chief will assist the firefighter in finding a replacement.

The preferred minimum duty crew would consist of one operator and one firefighter during weekday shifts and one operator and two firefighters during weeknight and weekend/holiday shifts. Additional positions can be and are encouraged to be scheduled however; budgetary constraints will make those additional positions non-reimbursable. It is expected that all shift personnel, regardless of reimbursement status, will contribute equally in all assignments as a member of the duty crew.

The table below shows the maximum allowable shifts per period per firefighter; (see Appendix A)

| | |
|------------------------------|-----|
| Allowable shifts per year | 165 |
| Allowable shifts per month | 18 |
| Allowable shifts in sequence | 4 |

Delegation of authority

The firefighter on any given shift with the highest rank and/or experience will be assigned as the Duty Officer for the shift and will have the responsibility to see that all shift assignments and duties are carried out. The Duty Officer is also responsible to report to the Duty Chief at the beginning of his/her shift for any additional assignments and to confirm the duty crew is on staff and available.

Shift duty assignments

The priority for duty crews is to be ready and available for response as needed. The maintaining of crew integrity is essential. In addition it is the responsibility of all members of a duty crew to participate in all daily assignments including but not limited to;

- Station duty assignments

- Training assignments

- Apparatus and equipment maintenance/cleaning assignments,

- Public education and fire prevention assignments

- Community events as scheduled

The Duty Officer will communicate the shift activities to all crew members at the beginning of each shift and will update the Duty Chief as well as the in-coming Duty Officer (next shift) of the status of assignments.

While it is reasonable to expect a lesser amount of activity in the evening hours, all duty crews are to participate in assignments as requested. At a minimum, each duty crew is required to complete one hour of training per shift. Training can be tailored to match current department training topics, EMS related topics and can be assigned as computer based training as weather dictates.

Station maintenance and cleanliness

Fire District property should be in a condition that is presentable to the public at all times. Personnel participating in the volunteer shift program are expected to take pride and ownership in the living quarters being provided as well as all fire district property. The Duty Officer is responsible for the overall daily maintenance of living quarters and will see that the following station maintenance plan is strictly adhered to;

- Ensure all kitchen areas are clean and neat

- All foods shall be purged when expired

- All shared living spaces are to be kept clean of debris, waste, garbage, clothing items and general clutter.

- Trash cans in all areas are to be emptied daily or as needed

- Bathroom areas, showers, sinks and toilets are to be kept clean at all times

- Floors in all areas of the living quarters are to be maintained as needed

Occasional repairs and or additional maintenance of the facility will be assigned as needed as part of a shift assignment by the Duty Officer or Duty Chief.

Station visitation

Station living quarters are intended to provide temporary residence for the volunteer shift program however; the facility may be used by other volunteer staff for access to the training room, visitation and special events. Shift personnel will have priority over all aspects of the living quarter's facility, a privilege which is to be recognized by all staff. Sleeping quarters are provided for on-duty personnel only, overnight guests are not welcome. At no time are "conjugal" visits allowed on District property regardless of the relationship to personnel who may be on or off duty and regardless of time of day.

Typical visiting hours are from 0900 to 2200 hours, visitors may remain until midnight with approval of the Duty Chief however; late visitations are to be limited. Personnel are to recognize that the volunteer shift program is duty oriented and abuse of visitation privileges will result in a loss of those privileges.

Personnel are to recognize that the district facility is often used for social events which may at times impose on quiet time. Respect for personnel will be of utmost priority with social functions not to be allowed to extend past midnight.

Dress code and hygiene requirements

All participants in the Volunteer Shift Program are expected to maintain a high level of personal hygiene. Clothing is required to be clean and in good condition; rips, tears and holes in clothing is unacceptable. While on duty, identifiable (Fortuna or affiliated fire department, fire academy or local fire organization -ERVTRT) t-shirts are to be worn. Uniform shirts and pants are to be worn during any community presentation or event and during fire inspection activities.

The Volunteer Shift Program offers opportunity to both male and female alike, promoting a co-ed environment. It is expected that all participants will have the utmost respect for one-another regarding appropriate dress at all times.

Response guidelines

On-duty firefighters are expected to be available at all times during their assigned shift for emergency response to all incidents with-in the Fortuna Fire District Boundaries. Response by the on-duty crew to a mutual or automatic aid request will be at the discretion of the Duty Chief. The duty crew is not to re-assign themselves to another response while on a response without a direct order to do so by the Duty Chief.

Agreement

Upon selection for the Volunteer Shift Program, each firefighter shall be required to sign an agreement (see Appendix B) with Fortuna Fire Protection District. The signed agreement will be retained by the Fire District and kept in the firefighter's personnel file.

Appendix A - Volunteer shift worksheet / allowable shifts & per diem costs

Allowable shifts for Volunteer Firefighters

Flat rate per diem reimbursement of \$50/shift cannot be greater than 20% of an average firefighter's wage pursuant to Department of Labor (DOL) guidelines under Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA).

Comparable Firefighter wages in the region:

Arcata Fire Protection District (AFPD) - \$41,033.00/year

Humboldt Bay Fire JPA (HBF) - \$41,736.00/year

Average Firefighter wage in region - \$41,385.00/year

20% of average firefighter wage (41,385.00 = \$8,277.00 per year

Maximum allowable shifts per year based on 20% rule = 165 shifts

Maximum allowable shifts per month based on FLSA standards = 18 shifts

Maximum allowable shifts in sequence = 4 shifts

References

FLSA requirements for public safety – hours allowed

reference – http://docs.oracle.com/cd/E39904_01/hcm92pbr0/eng/hcm/hpay/task_FLSARequirementsforPublicSafetyEmployees-3e3dc9.html

Hours allowed for public safety firefighter position per work period – 212 hours in 28 days

Accounting of Flat Rate Per Diem Expenses Reimbursement

Meals - \$36.00 (breakfast - \$12.00 / lunch - \$8.00 / dinner - \$16.00)

Station clothing / footwear - \$9.00

Incidentals - \$5.00

Reference - <http://www.gsa.gov/portal/content/101518>

Budgeted shift allocation

37 shifts per week @ \$50.00 per shift = \$1,850.00 @ 52 weeks = \$96,200.00 per year

Appendix B Volunteer Shift Program Agreement

It is hereby agreed between _____ (firefighter) and the Fortuna Fire Protection District ("District") as follows:

1. Acceptance

The District accepts the firefighter named above as a volunteer firefighter/EMS responder member of the District and participant in the Volunteer Shift Program subject to the terms and conditions of this agreement.

2. Status

Firefighter understands and agrees to the status of volunteer only, without expectation of compensation for services.

3. Termination

Firefighters are at will and may be terminated at any time with or without cause.

4. Rules and Procedures

Firefighter shall comply with all District rules, policies, and procedures, and with the terms and conditions of this agreement at all times. Non-compliance may subject firefighter to discipline up to and including suspension or termination. Outside agency participants are required to comply as stated above. Any disciplinary action regarding an outside agency participant will include determination from the participants' Fire Chief and/or his/her designee. The District has the right to and may alter, amend, or in any way change the rules and procedures or any aspect of District operations at any time without prior notice to the firefighter.

5. Quarters

The District shall provide the firefighter with furnished living quarters to be shared with other full time shift and resident volunteer firefighters assigned. The District will provide furnishings, all utilities, laundry facilities with washer and dryer, kitchen appliances, microwave, telephone service (local calls only), cleaning and maintenance supplies, and certain paper products. The quarters are provided pursuant to government functions essential to public safety, health, and welfare, for trained and qualified fire/EMS personnel to assure immediate response to emergencies.

6. Status of Quarters

The District shall retain custody and control of the resident quarters, which is public property subject to visitation and inspection by District personnel and shall establish rules for its condition and use which shall be complied with by the resident.

7. Performance and Duty Schedule

The firefighter understands and acknowledges that the essence of the Volunteer Shift Program is to maintain qualified firefighter/EMS personnel in the station for emergency response. Compliance with predetermined standards of training attendance, task performance abilities, alarm response, and maintenance of program participation requirements are reasonable and necessary.

Signed; _____
(Firefighter)

Date; _____

Signed; _____
(District Representative)

Date; _____