

Subject:	REIMBURSEMENT TO VOLUNTEER FIREFIGHTERS
Section:	PPG# 2860
Chapter:	Personnel
Effective Date:	7/1/98

1.0 POLICY

1.1 Reimbursement to Volunteer Firefighters

1.2 Through regular attendance at district alarms and drills, every firefighter will encounter a certain amount of expenses, as in the use of his/ her private vehicle to and from drill or the scene of an alarm. In an effort to keep these expenses to a minimum for the department's volunteers, the Board of Fire Commissioners shall establish a reimbursement rate for the volunteer firefighters based on duty-shifts, transports and other activity. This reimbursement shall be calculated on an annual basis and issued to the firefighters upon approval by the board of fire commissioners.

1.3 The district shall reimburse any volunteer who has made an authorized purchase with his/ her personal funds. This purchase must have the authorization of a captain or chief officer and a sales receipt must be available before reimbursement can be authorized.

1.4 The district will also reimburse volunteers who have attended authorized fire or EMS related classes. Reimbursement of mileage, registration, authorized meals and lodging are available at the chief's discretion.

1.5 The Board of Fire Commissioners recognizes the proper operation of the fire protection district is dependent upon services received from its volunteer firefighters. In rendering such service, the volunteer firefighter will incur expenses in the following areas:

- a) Transportation- Automobile expenses incurred in traveling to and from emergency responses, drills, education meetings, seminars, sleeper duty, standby duty, and station visits for familiarization with the equipment and facilities. The actual expenses incurred will include vehicle depreciation, gas, oil, lubrication, licensing, insurance, maintenance, tires, batteries and traction devices.
- b) Clothing Expenses- While the district does provide protective outer clothing, helmets and boots for emergency situations, it does not provide underclothing, socks, shoes, street clothes, coats and hats that are used by the volunteer when attending classes, traveling to and from emergencies, drills, sleeper duty and standby duty. This clothing, supplied by the volunteer, is subject to additional wear and tear, damage, fire, staining, and soiling when used by the volunteer

during emergency and non-emergency service to the district and the community. The volunteer must pay for the cleaning, laundering, repair, and replacement of such clothing.

- c) Food and Meals- Volunteers, out of necessity, must buy meals and food to bring to the station while on standby or sleeper duty or to consume enroute home from and emergency. This is food that would not normally be purchased if it were not for the service to the district and is in addition to the food regularly purchased by the volunteer and his or her family.
- d) Bedding- The volunteer, when on standby duty, must furnish his/ her own bedding. This requires additional expense to the volunteer for the cost of sheets, pillowcases, pillows, and blankets, and also for laundering and cleaning such items.
- e) Haircuts- The district has a hair maintenance code that requires the volunteer keep his/ her hair to a relatively short length, thereby forcing the volunteer to obtain haircuts more frequently than might normally be the case.
- f) Home Utility Expense- When a volunteer firefighter returns to his/ her home after a drill or particularly after a response to a fire, the volunteer incurs additional home utility expense for showers, heat, lights and water. The volunteer firefighter also incurs additional home utility costs when studying, learning and reviewing fire district operating procedures and rules and regulations.

- 1.6 The board recognizes the logistics of documenting out-of-pocket expenses is difficult. To require each firefighter to record these expenses and to require the district to consolidate and compile the records would be impractical and unreasonable, if not impossible. The intent and purpose of the reimbursement method is to create a practical method of reimbursing expenses without creating an impractical records system.
- 1.7 RCW 49.46.010 provides in part that if a local government body pays its volunteers a nominal amount of compensation per unit of voluntary service, that the employer-employee relationships deemed not to exist for the purposes of the minimum wage law.
- 1.8 Unit of Voluntary Service- A unit of voluntary service shall consist of attendance at a scheduled drill, response to an emergency alarm, attendance at an educational or training session, a standby duty shift, a sleeper duty shift, or a scheduled fire district function.

1.9 Nominal Amount of Compensation- The amount of nominal compensation for volunteers shall be as follows:

- a) Firefighter \$35.00 for 12-hr shift \$70.00 for 24-hr shift
- b) Firefighter/DO \$37.50 for 12-hr shift \$75.00 for 24-hr shift
- c) EMT \$40.00 for 12-hr shift \$80.00 for 24-hr shift
- d) Firefighter/EMT \$42.50 for 12-hr shift \$85.00 for 24-hr shift
- e) Firefighter/EMT/DO \$45.00 for 12-hr shift \$90.00 for 24-hr shift
- f) Master Firefighter \$50.00 for 12-hr shift \$100.00 for 24-hr shift
- g) Lieutenants \$60.00 for 12-hr shift \$120.00 for 24-hr shift
- g) Battalion Chief \$80.00 for 12-hr shift \$160.00 for 24-hr shift
- i) Drills/Calls: Time spent – drills and calls will be compensated at 2-hours unless otherwise noted on an individual activity log. Value shall be derived as a percentage of the shift compensation rate.
- f) Transports: \$25.00 per transport. (Two EMT's per transport - \$50.00 per call max)
- g) Following three (3) years of active service, volunteer members shall be eligible for district purchased duty boots. Request for duty boots shall be made through the district quartermaster system.

1.10 No volunteer shall receive monthly nominal compensation exceeding 20% of the Career Base Firefighter Wage. Monthly total includes nominal compensation for shifts, drills, transports or any combination thereof.

1.11 Volunteer member shall be responsible for notifying the District payroll officer in writing for any change in their personnel compensation rate.

1.12 Record of Attendance- Members shall be responsible for submitting signed activity logs to the District office at the end of each month. Activity logs must be initialed by an officer to verify the activity.

1.13 Nominal Compensation for Volunteer firefighters shall be paid in accordance with the above schedule:

- a) Residents: Monthly
- b) BLS Transports: Quarterly
- c) Volunteer Reimbursements: November of each year

1.13 Volunteer members who consistently perform 72 hours of duty per month may elect to be compensated monthly upon approval of a formal written request to the District payroll officer. A three-month look back period shall be used to determine consistency.