

Policy Title:
Volunteer Firefighter Program for the Ukiah Valley Fire Authority

Policy Number 3010

Policy

Provide the residents and visitors of the Ukiah Valley Fire Authority with a well-trained, professional firefighting team, which responds to all public safety needs.

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Objectives

To provide a well-rounded and flexible training program that will meet the standards set forth by Ukiah Valley Fire Authority.

To provide the highest level of training and safety equipment that will ensure the safety of all Ukiah Valley Fire Authority personnel.

To prepare individuals for future career positions within the Ukiah Valley Fire Authority.

To provide a positive public image of the Ukiah Valley Fire Authority at all times.

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Definitions

Volunteer:

According to the US Department of Labor, a volunteer is an individual who:

1. Serves as a volunteer for civic, charitable, or humanitarian reasons without promise, expectation, or receipt of compensation, although expenses, reasonable benefits, or a nominal fee may be provided.
2. Offers service freely and without coercion, direct or implied, from the agency.
3. Is not otherwise employed by the same public agency to provide the same services for which he or she volunteers.

Volunteer Firefighter Program

A Fire Authority Division Chief shall manage the Volunteer Firefighter Program. The Division Chief may assign a Program Supervisor and/or Coordinator to assist with the management of the program, schedule weekly training and publish an annual training calendar.

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Position Descriptions

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Volunteer Officers (Engineers and above)

Volunteer Officers have responsibility in the following areas:

- (1) To provide supervision to all personnel that are assigned to them.
- (2) Assist with new recruit training assigned to his or her company.
- (3) Assist in weekly training as assigned.
- (4) Maintain records and equipment status.
- (5) Periodic evaluation of volunteers assigned to his or her company. Annual statistics for responses and training will be recorded in the volunteer's personnel file.

Volunteer Firefighters

This topic applies to all volunteer positions of the Ukiah Valley Fire District.

- (1) All volunteer Firefighters will be responsible to respond to 25% of all "Shift Call" or greater assignments. Support Personnel will be responsible to respond to 25% of all "All Call" or greater assignments.
On canceled calls, volunteers may phone in for response credit for statistical purposes. These phone calls will not be eligible for reimbursement.
- (2) All volunteers will be responsible to attend all scheduled training topics. The Division Chief, Supervisor or Coordinator will audit attendance. At the discretion of the Division Chief, those who do not meet the above standard may be subject to probation.
- (3) All volunteers are required to maintain certification in the following areas: C.P.R., First Aid, Fit Test, SIDS, Confined Space Awareness, Bloodborne Pathogens, Fire Shelters, Hazardous Materials Training, AB 1825 Sexual Harassment Prevention Training, and RT-130 Wildland training.
- (4) Volunteers who are unable to meet the minimum standards for response and/or training attendance shall be afforded the opportunity to make up the missed training topics. Fill shifts may be utilized to make up for response statistics. Those still unable to meet the attendance requirements may apply for a leave of absence or face possible termination.
- (5) Firefighting is an inherently arduous duty, therefore, all volunteers, excluding support staff, must meet and maintain the minimum Physical Performance Standards.
- (6) It shall be a requirement for all volunteers hired after May 31, 2015, to live within 15 minutes of one of the Ukiah Valley Fire Authority stations.
- (7) All volunteers hired after March 10, 1992 shall be non-smokers.
- (8) All volunteers must maintain a valid California Driver License.
- (9) All volunteers must maintain a reliable and consistent form of transportation. If responding in a motor vehicle, vehicle must carry at least the state minimum insurance coverage.

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- (10) Volunteers must procure and maintain uniforms by the end of their probationary period to include (1) complete class B uniform. Uniform Specifications and Regulations are documented as an Ukiah Valley Fire Authority Standard Operating Procedure. Uniforms shall be worn during all planned public events. The preferred uniform for drills is a UVFA t-shirt, uniform pants, and uniform safety boots. The Volunteer Firefighter Association may assist probationary volunteers in the procurement of the required uniform elements.

Support Personnel

Support personnel are volunteers that want to participate in Fire Authority activities but will not be subject to any environment that is Immediately Dangerous to Life or Health (IDLH) as defined by the US National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH). Some examples of approved functions are public education, traffic control, Incident Support Unit operations, equipment repair, logistical support, photography, social media and Emergency Medical Response.

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Response to Emergencies

Volunteer personnel shall be called to assist in fire suppression and other emergency operations and shall be notified by radio pager. The proper function of the assigned radio pager is the responsibility of the volunteer. All personnel must wear full protective clothing in accordance with adopted standards. Due to safety concerns, volunteers are not allowed to respond in their privately owned vehicles to incidents on US101.

Responding volunteers shall respond to the Central Station if they must pass it to get to the scene.

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Medical Evaluations

This section applies to all volunteer ranks. All personnel shall have a medical examination according to the following schedule (NFPA 1582):

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Ages 39 and under- every 3 years

Ages 40 through 49- every 2 years

Ages 50 and above- yearly with every other year to include a stress treadmill test.

DMV physicals for Driver/Operators or above shall be provided by the Fire Authority, as required.

Volunteers shall be subject to random drug testing at the discretion of the Fire Chief.

Volunteer members of REHIT will be offered a Haz-mat physical on an annual basis.

All volunteers, other than Support Personnel, shall pass an annual physical agility test. The annual physical agility test shall be the same test conducted during the recruitment process. Volunteers who do not pass the annual physical agility test will be re-classified to Support Personnel status until they are able to pass the agility test.

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Training Program

The Volunteer Training Program shall focus on three areas:

- (1) Recruit training
- (2) Skills Maintenance
- (3) Career Advancement

The Fire Authority will provide weekly training topics. With prior arrangements, make-up training for those unable to attend Thursday nights will be offered Saturdays from 1000-1200 hours. Training will not be regularly scheduled for any 5th Thursday of the month to allow the Volunteer Association to meet.

The Fire Authority encourages skills maintenance and personal development. Volunteers can request that the Authority sponsor them for classes offered throughout the local area per the UVFA training request.

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Benefits

An Employee Assistance Program is offered to all volunteers. The program provides counseling services for emotional health, family, and work issues.

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Out of Pocket Expense/Reimbursement

All volunteers shall receive 1 call credit per “Shift Call” or greater assignments and 1 training credit for scheduled training. To receive a call credit, the volunteer must check in at the scene or must respond to the station no more than 15 minutes after the call. Phone calls are not acceptable for reimbursement. Each call credit and training credit shall be reimbursed at \$8.00.

There will be Volunteer attendance sign-in sheets at the scene and at all stations. Reimbursements will be made semi-annually, in June, and December. Volunteers providing Day/Night Fill Shifts may request additional reimbursements in March and September. Volunteers can respond to any call. Call credits will only be given for “Shift call” or greater assignments.

Special functions for UVFA shall equal 1 call credit. These functions will be noticed and authorized by the Fire Chief.

Workers Compensation /Disability Insurance

All volunteers shall be covered by Workers Compensation for all medical costs that occur in the line of duty. All volunteers will be entitled to the maximum Total Temporary Disability weekly rate at time of injury. The Fire Authority will reimburse a volunteer for lost wages during the three-day waiting period if not covered by District’s Workers Compensation Insurance Program.

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Day Fill Shifts

Volunteers are encouraged to augment the on duty staff by covering Day Fill Shifts. Day Fill Shifts begin after 0715 hours. Volunteers must sign up in advance with a Station Captain. A maximum of one Day Fill Shift, per staffed station, per day. Volunteers will earn 5 call credits for each Day Fill Shift. A maximum of four combined Day/Night Fill Shifts are authorized within any seven-day period.

Night Fill Shifts

Volunteers are encouraged to augment the on duty staff by covering Night Fill Shifts. Night Fill Shifts begin after 1915 hours. Volunteers must sign up in advance with a Station Captain. A maximum of one Night Fill Shift, per staffed station, per day. Volunteers will

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earn 5 call credits for each Night Fill Shift. A maximum of four combined Day/Night Fill Shifts are authorized within any seven-day period.

Limited Term/Emergency Hire Program

The Limited Term/Emergency Hire Program allows for Fire District Volunteers to be employed, on a limited term/part-time basis, by the City of Ukiah. The Fire Chief, with City Manager approval, may hire qualified individuals for limited term/part-time work including strike team assignments, extended emergency conditions and declared disasters. A fully executed City of Ukiah Personnel Action Form (PAF) is required to participate in this program. The PAF will specify the job classification and pay rate. Timecards and Payroll will be processed through the City of Ukiah. Hiring preference will be given to those volunteers meeting all requirements of this Volunteer Firefighter Program.

Not all Fire District Volunteers are eligible for the Limited Term/Emergency Hire Program (City of Ukiah Seasonal/Temporary Hire).

Those volunteers not eligible are current CalPERS Members. A current CalPERS member is defined as individuals who:

- 1) Actively contributes to CalPERS
- 2) Have funds on deposit with CalPERS
- 3) Have service credit with CalPERS

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Safety Equipment

The following list of safety equipment shall be provided by the Fire Authority to all Volunteer Firefighters.

Structural Turnouts:

- (1) Helmet
- (2) Flash Hood
- (3) Turnout Coat
- (4) Turnout pants and suspenders
- (5) Turnout boots (leather boots for all Driver/Operators and above.)
- (6) Gloves
- (7) Flashlight

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- (8) Pocket mask (CPR)
- (9) Pager and charger
- (10) Passport system name plate
- (11) Shroud*
- (12) SCBA mask*
- (13) EMS Bag (*fanny pack*)
- (14) Gear Bag
- (15) All PPE will meet NFPA guidelines

Wildland Turnouts:

- (1) Helmet with shroud, hot shield, and goggles
- (2) NFPA certified wildland coat
- (3) NFPA certified wildland pants
- (4) Web gear, including fire shelter *
- (5) Gloves
- (6) Headlamp
- (7) Passport system nameplate

* These items will not be issued to support personnel.

Miscellaneous Equipment issued after completion of probationary period.

- (1) Name patch (structural coat)
- (2) Badge
- (3) Identification card
- (4) Uniform name plate
- (5) UVFA hat- annually **
- (6) UVFA t-shirt- annually **

**or commensurate with volunteer activity

All equipment issued by the Fire Authority will be documented. A loan slip shall be signed by the volunteer for items received. Upon termination, all items must be returned to the Fire Authority within 4 days unless extended by the Division Chief.

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Recruitment Process

Testing and screening of applicants shall be conducted by the Ukiah Valley Fire Authority and shall include:

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- (1) Written Aptitude Test
- (2) Physical Agility Testing (same as career)
- (3) Medical Screening, including drug screen
- (4) Oral Examination
- (5) Employment Application
- (6) DMV Printout
- (7) Background Check including Live Scan

Recruits must complete the entry-level candidate testing within 3 months or face termination from the process, at the discretion of the Division Chief.

Non-Discrimination

The Ukiah Valley Fire District, Ukiah Valley Fire Authority, and the City of Ukiah have a zero tolerance policy for discrimination based upon race, national origin, religion, gender, physical impairment, veteran's status, or age in any personnel action, including recruitment, appointment, performance evaluation, promotion, the granting of leaves, and any disciplinary or grievance action.

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Program Review

It is important to provide a system for formal review of the Volunteer Firefighter Program. In order to accomplish this, during odd number years, the Division Chief, with input from personnel, shall be charged with evaluating the Volunteer Firefighter Program (Board policy 3010) and with forwarding its recommendations to the Fire Chief who will present the proposed revisions to the Board of Directors.