

SAN JUAN COUNTY FIRE EMERGENCY SERVICES

BY-LAWS OF VOLUNTEER FIRE DEPARTMENTS

ARTICLE 1 – *Name*

This organization shall be known as the "_____ Fire Department" (referred to herein as the Department or);

- A. The Fire Department operates as an agency of San Juan County Fire/Emergency Services in the State of Utah;
- B. The San Juan County Fire/Emergency Services Department operating under the San Juan County Commission shall be the governing body of this organization;
- C. The terms "HE" and "HIS as used herein shall be considered to be gender neutral.

ARTICLE 2 – *Purpose/Mission*

The objective of the _____ Volunteer Fire Department is to save lives and property in the community of _____, Utah and its environs, by fire suppression and prevention, and by the provision of first response emergency medical care and response to other hazardous and emergency incidents;

- A. To prevent or suppress natural cover, vehicular and structural fires and any other emergency situation which threatens the loss of life or property;
- B. To promote cooperation between neighboring departments so that the economy and force of mutual aid can be effective;
- C. To stimulate interest in fire protection and prevention;
- D. To assist and advise the County Department of Fire/Emergency Services in the means and ways to fulfill their responsibility under Laws of the State of Utah concerning the saving of lives and property of its citizens;
- E. To assist other Public Safety Agencies in the performance of their duties in situations compatible with other missions of the Department;
- F. To raise funds to purchase equipment and provide operational funds apart from those funds provided by the county and other sources.

ARTICLE 3 – *Membership ()*

Membership in the Department is open to any resident of the area served and those others who qualify under Article 4, Sections B and C. Residency requirements may be waived on a case-by-case basis by a majority vote of the Membership. No applicant will be refused membership due to race, color, sex or creed;

- A. Application for membership must be made in writing on the proper forms;
- B. Applicants wishing to transfer from another fire department should furnish a letter from their prior fire chief;
- C. Application review will include a background check for all applicants and a drivers license check for firefighter and first responder applicants and may (at the discretion of the Fire Chief or Assistant Fire Chief and/or the County) require a physical exam for firefighter applicants;
- D. Applications for new members will be considered effective the regularly scheduled business meeting immediately following submission of all required application forms. In the case that forms are submitted at a regularly scheduled meeting, the application will be considered effective as of that meeting. A new member shall not vote at business meetings and shall be placed on six month probationary period from the effective application date;
- E. At any time during the probationary period, the Chief may at his sole discretion and at the request of any officer call a special meeting of the officers in order to review any Probationary Member with regard to performance, aptitude, attendance, attitude, demeanor and/or general fitness for duty as a firefighter or first responder. Based on the results of the special meeting the Chief may discipline, extend the probation period an additional three months, disqualify the Probationary Member or take no action;
- F. Prior to the last business meeting before the probationary period ends, the Chief shall call a special meeting of the officers in order to assess the Probationary Member with regard to performance, aptitude, attendance, attitude, demeanor and/or general fitness for duty as a firefighter and/or first responder. The officers will include (but not be limited to) a review of the new member's attendance to training, business meetings, and fire/emergency calls, and their performance at such meetings and calls. The officers will formulate a recommendation regarding the new member. At the first business meeting after the probationary period is over, the Chief shall present the officers' recommendation to the voting members regarding the new member. The new member shall become a voting member once approved by two-thirds of the voting members in attendance at the business meeting. A vote abstention will count as a "No" vote. New members will not be present for the Chiefs recommendation or during the vote;
- G. Any member charged with or convicted of driving while intoxicated (or any equivalent conviction) shall notify the Chief immediately in writing of the same. These members will not be allowed to drive department vehicles on any occasion and may be subject to removal from the department
- H. Revocation of membership may be made at any time by a vote of the Department officers including the Chief, Assistant Chief, Medical First Responder Coordinator and appointed line officers. A member may be voted out by simple majority of the officers. Membership may be revoked if a member fails to attend at least two meetings in a six month period. A member may be dismissed for cause for engaging in conduct detrimental to the welfare of the department. Members subject to dismissal will be notified at least 30 days prior to membership revocation either by mail or in person by a Department officer;

- I. All resignations or leaves of absences will be voted on the night of the business meeting received. If a former member who had resigned wishes to regain membership, they will be considered a new member and will be subject to membership application as described in this Article.

ARTICLE 4 – *Classifications of Membership*

The organization shall be composed of active members, associate members and probationary members;

- A. **PROBATIONARY MEMBER:** A new member, subject to a six month probationary period after which they will be voted on as described in Article 3, Section F;
- B. **ACTIVE FIREFIGHTERS:** Shall attend a minimum of six departmental or company training meetings per calendar year and a minimum of two meetings in any six month period. Only those living or permanently working within our service area or within approved "reasonable" response time and location to LSVFD stations can be active firefighters;
- C. **ACTIVE MEDICAL FIRST RESPONDERS:** Shall attend a minimum of six departmental or company training meetings per calendar year and a minimum of two meetings in any six month period. Only those living or permanently working within our service area or within approved "reasonable" response time and location to fire stations can be active first responders; the medical first responders for the purposes of these by-laws are non-EMTs and are part of the fire department. County EMTs are governed by different by-laws and organizational structure.
- D. **ASSOCIATE:** Shall work for the Department in a capacity other than firefighter or first responder and shall attend a minimum of four of the business meetings per calendar year and a minimum of one meeting in any six month period;
- E. **OTHER:** The Officers may, upon evidence of valid reasons (work, illness, other duties), exempt from the attendance requirement for membership in B and C above, any person who has for the past two or more years been an active member of the Department.

ARTICLE 5 – *Department Officers*

The fire chief shall be elected annually by the members at large in secret ballot. Elections will be held in December. Officers shall serve for one calendar year.

Fire Chief: shall establish all operational policies and procedures. It shall be the duty of the Fire Chief to provide effective leadership in planning, development, setting goals and managing the Department which will provide fire suppression, fire prevention and emergency medical service to the communities it serves. He shall assume full charge of all members, apparatus and equipment, at fires or other occasions requiring the services of the Department. He shall have the authority to call out any and all members and apparatus for any purpose incidental to his office. He shall have the authority to see that proper disciplinary procedures are maintained in the Department. The Chief shall have authority to establish and define line officer positions and to appoint line officers from within the Membership as he deems appropriate for the efficient operation of the Department however, these positions and associated appointments are at the discretion of the Chief The Chief

shall have the responsibility of dealing directly with the County Department of Fire/Emergency Services unless he is absent which duties shall shift to the Assistant Fire Chief

- A. **Assistant Fire Chief:** shall assist the Fire Chief in the normal performance of all duties related to fire suppression as directed by the Chief The Assistant Fire Chief shall report directly to the Fire Chief and shall perform all duties of the Fire Chief when he is not available or is unable to perform his duties;
- B. **Medical First Responder Coordinator:** If applicable, the EMS Coordinator shall assist the Fire Chief in the normal performance of all duties related to first response emergency medical services as directed by the Chief The EMS Coordinator shall report directly to the Fire Chief The EMS Coordinator shall report to the Assistant Fire Chief when the Fire Chief is not available or is unable to perform his duties.
- C. **Other Officers:** The fire chief may appoint other officers as he deems necessary for the operation of the department and these officers serve at his pleasure.

ARTICLE 6 - Meetings

Active members shall attend a majority of all meetings and training sessions to remain in good standing. Active membership in the Department assumes an obligation to attend emergency incidents. If a member is unable to attend a meeting, they must notify the Chief, Assistant Chief or a line officer with an explanation for their absence prior to the meeting. Failure to properly notify regarding an absence will be considered an unexcused absence. Failure to comply with attendance standards or failure to meet the obligation to duty shall subject any active member to disciplinary action up to and including dismissal from the Department. Following Membership at-large assessment, members unable to attend meetings or emergencies, or others, may be designated as Associate or Other members;

- A. The Department shall meet a month. These meetings shall be for the purpose of training and to conduct the business of the Department;
- B. Meetings shall be conducted on regular days and times as selected by the members;
- C. To conduct business, a quorum of one fourth (1/4) of the active members is required; D. Officer and special meetings may be called by the Fire Chief

ARTICLE 7 - Election of Officers

A nominating committee consisting of three people from the membership shall be appointed by the Chief no later than the first regular business meeting in December. This committee shall be responsible to present candidates for the elected office of the Fire Chief. The committee shall post their slated candidate on the "Official" bulletin board in the fire department training room on the 15th of November in the year of the election. Nominations are in order from the floor at the November business meeting and the December election meeting for the Fire Chief.

- A. Votes will be accepted from any individual who meets the eligibility requirements for voting;

- B. Any voting member with a written excuse for not being able to attend the election meeting will be allowed to cast an absentee ballot by turning in a sealed, signed envelope containing their vote(s) to the Chief prior to the start of the election meeting;
- C. Results of the election votes cast shall be announced immediately following the election;
- D. An individual shall not hold but one of the elected offices at a time;
- E. The term of office for each elected position shall be one year with the exception of the fire chief which shall be two years;
- F. If a vote is cast for a member who refuses nomination or has already been elected to another office, that vote becomes null and void.

The election of the fire chief shall be subject to the approval of the Director of the County Department of the Fire/Emergency Services.

ARTICLE 8 - *Amendments*

Amendments to these by-laws can be provided by the Director of the Department of San Juan County Fire/Emergency Services at any time. Additional amendments to these by-laws particular to the specific department can be approved by the individual department as long as the amendments to do impact the by-laws. Amendments by the individual departments may be approved at any regular Department business meeting by a three quarter (3/4) majority of the Active Members.

ARTICLE 9 - *Finance*

- A. This organization (being the volunteer fire department) shall be financed by voluntary contributions and any other means approved by the Chief;
- B. Line officers are authorized to approve expenditures under \$100.00 without prior approval by the Chief;
- C. All expenditures of Department money in excess of \$100.00 shall require prior approval by the Chief or the Assistant Chief;
- D. All expenditures of Department money in excess of \$1000.00 shall require prior approval by a simple majority vote of the Membership;
- E. A fund raising raffle shall be conducted annually by the department in conjunction with the annual community event;
- F. All financial records shall be available for audit in accordance with San Juan County and/or State of Utah requirements.

ARTICLE 10 – *Duties of the Fire Chief*

- A. The Chief shall assign duties and responsibilities to the various members, give directions for use and care of all firefighting and emergency medical equipment, arrange for and/or

direct instructions and drills, and be in command at emergency incidents at which he is present;

- B. The Chief shall make a reasonable effort to attend all emergency incidents and to direct the officers and members in the performance of their duties;
- C. The Chief shall have the authority to delegate responsibility and authority to various members of the Department. The Chief shall have the authority to appoint members to any line officer position of his choosing to assist in the performance of his duties. The Chief shall be the personnel officer of the Department;
- D. The Chief shall appoint one member to act as Department secretary. This position may at the Chiefs sole option be combined with the role of a designated line officer;
- E. The Chief shall have the authority to disqualify, discipline or suspend any member. A member so disqualified, disciplined or suspended shall have the right of presenting his case to the Membership for review;
- F. The Chief shall establish Standard Operating Procedures in relation to the operation of the Department and in connection with the Standard Operating Procedures of the County. The Chief shall enforce all said policies approved by the Membership;
- G. The Chief shall be responsible to hold a at least 12 training session during the calendar year consisting of a minimum of 24 training hours. The Chief shall ensure appropriate training attendance reports are prepared and submitted to the appropriate agencies;
- H. The Chief shall direct proper preparation of incident reports and ensure such reports are provided to the appropriate agencies in a timely manner.

ARTICLE 11 – *Duties of the Assistant Fire Chief*

- A. The Assistant Chief shall assist the Chief in the performance of his/her duties;
- B. In the absence of, or the inability of the Chief to act, the Asst. Chief, shall assume all duties and responsibilities of the Chief.

ARTICLE 12 – *Duties of the Medical First Coordinator, if applicable to the department*

- A. The Medical First Coordinator shall assist the Chief in the performance of his/her duties related to first response emergency medical services;
- B. The Medical First Coordinator shall report to the Assistant Chief in the absence of, or inability of the Chief to act;
- C. The Medical First Coordinator shall, as directed and approved by the Chief, provide administration and management of Department first response medical services including incident response management, apparatus and equipment setup and other duties required for the safe, timely, efficient and authorized rendering of first response medical care.

ARTICLE 18 – *Standing Rules*

- A. No member shall willfully and without proper authority remove or conceal property used in any way by the Department;
- B. No member shall temporarily or permanently take from, hide or conceal any property owned by Fire Department for personal use;
- C. Alcoholic beverages and/or illegal substances are not to be consumed or made visible on fire department property. Violation could result in immediate dismissal from the Department;
- D. Any member under the influence of alcohol or drugs will not be permitted to make emergency dispatches or participate in emergency incidents. The commanding officer will rule on such situations;
- E. Reportable Vehicle Accident -A member involved in a reportable vehicle accident shall voluntarily submit to a portable intoxilyzer field test administered by a police officer if so requested. Any accident shall be immediately reported to the fire chief or in his absence the assistant fire chief or other available officer. The fire officer shall report the accident to the County Department of Fire/Emergency Services. The member involved in a reportable vehicle may be required to report before the County's Accident Review Board.
- F. Driving of vehicles, attending training or emergency operations while under the influence of drugs/alcohol -In the event that a Fire Department Officer has just cause to believe that a firefighter is operating any apparatus or motor vehicle on an emergency response while under the influence of drugs/alcohol the officer may require that member submit to portable blood alcohol breath test conducted by a Sheriff Deputy/Police Officer or a drug screen at an approved medical facility. (Just cause examples: Personal observation, slurred speech, difficult walking, and erratic behavior.)

ARTICLE 14 – Code of Conduct

All members shall sign a copy of the Code of Conduct which copy shall be placed in their membership file;

- A. The Volunteer Fire Department (the Department) is an organization of adult members dedicated to the safety and well being of our community and the surrounding area. As firefighters and medical first responders all members will conduct themselves as responsible adults. Personal differences between members will be left outside the department.
- B. While at department meetings, training, fires or other emergencies, all members will work together and conduct themselves as responsible public servants. Any personal verbal or physical altercations between members while representing the Department will be cause for removal from the scene, official reprimand and possible expulsion from the Department.
- C. Medical emergencies, fires other incidents require teamwork and cooperation. Personal grandstanding, arrogance and/or refusal to work safely under the direction of elected and

appointed officers will not be tolerated. Members will work together and keep individual egos in check.

- D. Every individual member is a valuable asset to the Department and to the community. Each of us brings knowledge, experience, ability to learn, dedication and a willingness to risk ourselves for the benefit of others. The Department and the community appreciate the time and effort we have donated.

ARTICLE 15 – *Fireground SOP's*

- A. General Policy
- B. Structure Fire Response Policy
- C. Vehicle Collision/Fires Policy
- D. Natural Gas/Propane Leaks Policy
- E. Dumpster/trash Fire Policy
- F. Grass/Brush Fire Policy

ARTICLE 16 – *Medical First Response SOP's*

- G. General Policy