

# **STATION ONE ORIENTATION HANDBOOK**

## **GENERAL OPERATING GUIDELINES**

The Hyattsville Volunteer Fire Department (HVFD) prides itself on self-governance and a “team concept” between our members. We work as a cohesive unit that must function as a team during station and emergency operations. All members must put personal preferences aside and work toward the same goal and mission: the benefit of our Citizens we serve, our Company and our County.

The following guidelines are designed to help promote a positive team attitude and an efficient, effective working environment:

All personnel shall conduct themselves in an orderly and respectable manner and behave in a way that brings credit to the department. Members shall treat others with respect and refrain from the use of abusive derogatory or foul language both in the station and in the public view.

Personnel shall treat all department and personal property in such a manner so as to avoid damage and prevent loss, theft, or destruction of that equipment. Any willful destruction, theft or damage or failing to make efforts to stop such damage, theft or destruction will be grounds for disciplinary action.

No food or drinks are permitted on the second floor of the station or in the computer server room.

All personnel are required to clean up after themselves and to assist other members in keeping the station clean. This includes (but isn=t limited to) throwing away trash, washing dishes, cleaning the kitchen, and bathrooms.

Station housework is completed each and every evening, typically between the hours of 2130-2300 hrs. The duty officer or his designee will call housework. All personnel in the station will cease all activities and participate in station housework. Assignments and cleaning activities will be at the discretion of the duty officer and may include but are not limited to: pulling all trash, sweeping and mopping of all floors, cleaning the kitchen, vacuuming the carpets, cleaning apparatus bays, emptying the ashtrays in the bays, cleaning the stairwells, wiping down walls and furniture, cleaning the first floor restroom.

All personnel shall make reasonable efforts to maintain building security at all times.

No horseplay is permitted in the station. No throwing of balls, wrestling, or otherwise engaging in rambunctious behavior is permitted in the station.

All members under the age of eighteen that are still in high-school are required to leave the station by 2200 hours on school nights. The only exception to this rule is if the member has responded on a call prior to 2200 hours and the call runs past the curfew.

The Property officer will assign live-in members a gear rack in the apparatus bay. A select number of non-live in members will be assigned a gear rack if space is available. Non-live in members will be assigned lockers depending upon availability. Non-live in members are encouraged to keep their gear with them when they leave the station for security reasons.

Members are not to leave personal belongings lying around the station (sleep-in bunkroom, laundry room, dayroom, apparatus bays, etc...) for extended periods of time. Personal belongings left in the station will be collected on a regular basis and bagged with a note identifying the time that the items will be donated to charity.

Members are expected to read the bulletin boards in the dayroom, emails, memos and alpha pages for notification of special events, notices, and changes in policy and/or procedures. Members are encouraged to obtain an account for our computer network and review our WebPages periodically. All policies, procedures, news and bylaws are on-line. Hard copies will not be distributed to our membership.

## **DISCIPLINARY ACTIONS**

Article IX of the Hyattsville Volunteer Fire Department, Inc. By-laws defines our standards of conduct and discipline. Copies of our By-laws are available on-line at HVFD.com under bylaws

The President, Chief, Vice President and all Line Officers have the authority to suspend any member of this department for rule violations or improper conduct. Suspensions shall be limited initially to 72 hours until reviewed by the Chief or President.

After a member has been advised of a suspension, the member shall be given sufficient time (determined by the Station Officer) to remove any personal

belongings and shall then leave the station. Any member on suspension shall not be permitted on department property or at Fire Department activities without permission of the Chief or President.

Any live-in member that is suspended and does not have a local address, i.e. an out-of-state student, will be handled on a case by case basis. Any such action will be determined first by the station officer & bunkroom proctor then followed up by the Chief or President. The member shall not be permitted on any apparatus in Prince George's County while on suspension and shall not participate in any fire department activity or attempt to engage in such activities with another PGFD member department.

Officers may assign work projects as disciplinary action in lieu of suspension when deemed appropriate. Any such details shall be assigned a specified completion time.

## **BUNKROOM GUIDELINES**

### 1. Live-in status

The sleep-in hours for live-ins are from 2300-0700 hrs. daily on weeknights. Holidays and weekends are essential staffing time for volunteers and we will need volunteer staffing from 1500 Friday B 0700 Monday and/or for the length of the holiday because we will only have either 1 or 2 career personnel.

- We must staff the station from 1500 hrs. Friday until 0700 hrs. Monday. All live-in members who are in-service must be in the station by 2300 hrs. unless they have made prior arrangements with the station officer.
- Any live-in member needing to go out of service prior to 0700 hrs. must notify the duty officer prior to 2300 hrs.
- All live-in members must be at the station and in service a minimum of four (4) nights per week. Weeks are counted from Sunday to Sunday. Any member not able to meet this requirement must contact the bunkroom proctor and provide a reason for their absence. Each instance will be handled on a case-by-case basis.
- All live-in members will be required to participate in a rotating weekend duty shift. The bunkroom proctor will develop the schedule each semester based on the status and number of our live-in members.

- Any live-in member who is unable to respond on calls due to illness or other condition shall so advise the station officer immediately. If possible, the member shall provide a time when they will be back in service. Depending on the severity of the case, a doctor=s note may be needed to return to service.
- All bunkroom members are to note that these are the MINIMUM requirements for live-in status. HVFD relies heavily on bunkroom participation for all activities. All members of the bunkroom are encouraged to assume a roll on a committee and/or participate on as many fire department functions as possible. Time management between your job, school, personal life and the firehouse are essential in maintaining an even share of the load at the station and a productive and positive stay with the HVFD.

## II. Bunkroom clean-up

- The bunkroom will be kept neat and orderly. The bunkroom and upstairs will be cleaned regularly by all personnel (live-in and non-live in) under the direction of the bunkroom proctor or officer in charge.
- Weekly clean up must be completed by Thursday of every week. A thorough weekly clean-up will consist of cleaning the following:
  - Urinals; toilets; showers; sweeping; floors; trash; the weight room; sinks.
- A list will be posted at the beginning of each semester showing the week that each member is assigned.
- Each night during housework the assigned ambulance crew will do a quick clean-up of the second floor. A quick clean up will consist of: Sinks, toilets, urinals, showers, and weight room.

## III. Calls after 2300 hrs.

The officer in charge will assign apparatus riding positions to all sleep-in personnel. Members are expected to be on their assigned apparatus for all calls. If a live-in member sleeps through a call, the following sanctions will be carried out:

- All in-service live-in members will report to the first floor and critique the call for 5-10 minutes.
- After the critique, the officer in charge will issue the member who missed the call an assignment. The assignment will be dependent upon the environmental conditions and type of call (i.e., wash

window on apparatus, fill bottles, wash tools after a working incident.)

- The goal for this procedure is to promote a team concept within the bunkroom. All members are encouraged to look out for each other and wake each other up for calls. This will enable us to provide the proper service to our citizens and safety for our own people as the other members must compensate for the loss of the person sleeping during a working incident and creating a greater potential for personal injury.
- If an individual repeatedly sleeps through calls, the bunkroom proctor will evaluate that member's live-in status. This may include moving to a different bunk or loss of live-in privileges.

#### IV. General Bunkroom Guidelines

All non-live in members planning to sleep-in must be in the station by 2300 hours and ride until 0700 hrs, unless they have made prior arrangements with the station officer.

Non-live in members are not permitted to sleep-in unless they are in service to respond on calls or approved by the duty officer due to special circumstances.

Non-live in members can sleep-in no more than three nights per week unless approved by the bunkroom proctor and only under special circumstances. Weeks are counted from Sunday to Sunday.

If a non-live-in member sleeps through a call, the officer in charge will wake that member upon return and issue an assignment to that individual. Additional incidents of sleeping through calls will result in further disciplinary action using a three-step process, which may include the loss of sleep-in privileges.

Members sleeping-in more than one night will be required to make up their beds neatly with their own linens. Members are not to use linen from the ambulance. Non-live-in members are not permitted to store personal property in the bunkroom.

No smoking, eating, or drinking is permitted on the 2nd floor at any time.

Female members and visitors are absolutely prohibited from entering the male bunkroom or sleep-in room at anytime without the specific permission of an officer and after consulting the members within the bunkroom at that time. This rule applies equally for male members entering the female bunkroom.

There will be no lights on, loud conversations, or any other activity in the bunkroom, which may disturb others who wish to sleep between the hours of **2300 and 0900** hours. Also during these hours there shall be no loud conversations or other activity in other second floor areas (i.e., TV/weight room) which would disturb those wishing to sleep in the adjacent bunkroom areas.

Use of any other member's personal property without specific permission of that member is strictly forbidden, and will result in disciplinary action and/or dismissal from the department.

Sheets and pillowcases on each bed shall be changed at least once per week.

Any member wishing to be granted live-in status must inform the bunkroom proctor in writing. The Proctor will maintain a list and establish an interview committee from bunkroom peers to make appointments to the bunkroom crew.

## **ALCOHOL & CONTROLLED SUBSTANCE ABUSE**

Consumption of, or being under the influence of alcohol on Fire Department or adjacent property (parking lot, Red Cross lot, etc.) is strictly **PROHIBITED**.

The only exception allowed would be for full-time live-in members who have no other local address. These members may **occasionally** be permitted to be in the station after consuming alcohol provided they notify the duty officer that they are out of service, that they immediately go to bed and stay there, and that they do not cause any disturbance in or around the station.

Other members riding and participating during fire department functions where alcohol consumption or controlled substance abuse is in question shall operate strictly under the guidelines set forth under General Order 5-7 & Personnel law 16-193 and Article IX of the Hyattsville VFD By-Laws.

## **VISITORS IN THE STATION**

All personnel shall treat citizens who visit the station for any purpose in a courteous manner. The duty officer shall ensure that someone greets the visitor and determines his or her business in the station.

Citizens requesting directions or information shall be provided with the requested information to the best of the member's ability.

Citizens requesting to see the station or apparatus shall have a member assigned to them to answer any questions.

Visitors are not permitted on the second floor without permission of an officer.

All visitors of members to the department are required to leave by 2200 hours unless approved by the duty officer.

Members of other fire departments and citizens who have applied for membership in this department are welcome in the station (ground floor only) as long as they abide by the department's station policies.

## **DUTY NIGHTS**

All members (live-in & non-live in) shall be assigned a duty night.

Live-in requirements are covered under the bunkroom section.

Non-live-ins are required to attend one duty night per week and one 12 hour weekend shift per month. The weekend shifts can be broken into blocks no smaller than 6 hours. Members may elect to have their duty shift solely on a weekend and be waived from the weekly requirement.

Holidays and weekends are essential staffing time for volunteers and we will need volunteer staffing from 1500 Friday B 0700 Monday and/or for the length of the holiday because we will only have either 1 or 2 career personnel.

The Chief shall appoint an administrator for the duty shift program annually. The administrator will develop and alter the details of the program to satisfy the needs of the department at that time. The program will be updated at a minimum in September of each year to coincide with our live-in program and as needed thereafter.

All members are encouraged to participate in station activities as often as possible, and are not restricted to their duty night.

Members serving a "duty night" shall have preference over other members for riding positions for which they are qualified.

The duty crew is expected to participate in all fire department activities during the duty shift.

## **PARKING OF PERSONAL VEHICLES**

Personal vehicles of members and career personnel shall be parked in the designated parking spaces provided.

Members responding to calls may leave personal vehicles in any area not blocking apparatus response. These vehicles shall be moved as soon as possible upon returning from the alarm.

No private vehicles (including motorcycles) are to be in the station unless they are actually being worked on with the permission of the officer in charge.

The department will not assume liability for damage to any private vehicle brought into the station.

Members can not store broken vehicles or abandoned vehicles for an extended period of time, which will be determined by the Chief and/or President. Such vehicles are subject to towing at the owner's expense.

## **DONATIONS RECEIVED**

Any donation received by members from any citizen shall be considered a donation to the department. Under no circumstances will any member be permitted to retain donated funds or accept any tips for service rendered.

Any donations received shall be attached to or enclosed in an envelope with a notation as to the donor, the date and time received. Donations shall then be left in the Treasurer or Chief's drawer.

## UNIFORMS/HELMET MARKINGS/ATTIRE

The Department Property Officer shall issue department uniform items. These items typically include pants, shirts, and company T-shirts.

All applicable uniform items shall have the "Hyattsville Fire Department" uniform patch applied to them. Shirts and parkas shall have this patch applied on the upper portion of the left sleeve, sweaters shall have the patch on the lower portion of the left front quadrant. The right sleeve of shirts may have EMT, MFRI, MD Pro Boards, or other training/certification patches that the member has earned the right to wear. Collar pins appropriate for the rank of office of any member may be worn. No other patches or emblems shall be worn except as authorized by the chief.

Uniform items are provided for the use in identifying the member when performing fire department duties and should be worn for that purpose whenever possible. Use at other times is left at the discretion of the member except that all members must bear in mind that their actions reflect on the department when wearing uniform items.

All members are encouraged to wear uniforms while participating in duty nights and other station activities.

Personal protective equipment can be used only if pre-approved by the PGFD General Order 5-3 or specially approved by the Safety Officer. Helmets will be marked in accordance with PGFD General Order 5-3. "Hyattsville" and a number A1≡ must be on the helmet in accordance with PGFD General Order 5-3.

Members are to wear uniform pants, long pants, sweat pants or bunker pants on ambulance calls. No shorts are allowed except for the following exceptions:

- Communications announces a Heat advisory: In that case shorts may be worn provided that they are no shorter than six inches above the knee; a fire department T-shirt must be worn; a full set of bunker gear must be on the ambulance for the crew.

## **STEREO USAGE IN DEPARTMENT APPARATUS**

- ! The use of the entertainment stereo system is prohibited while the apparatus is responding to an emergency incident.
- ! The usage of the stereo system at all other times shall be done so with discretion and sensitivity to your surroundings.
- ! The volume of the stereo system shall not be raised to a point at which the fire communications radio is not clearly heard.
- ! The stereo shall be "muted" at all times when the officer is transmitting or receiving a message over the fire communications radio.
- ! The volume of the stereo shall be at a level so it is not disruptive to individuals outside the vehicle.
- ! No recordings shall be played on the stereo systems that may be considered offensive to citizens or other personnel.
- ! The driver has the discretion to eliminate the playing of the stereo system at any time he or she feels uncomfortable driving with the stereo playing.

## **RIDING AT OTHER DEPARTMENTS**

- Members who wish to operationally participate with other departments must obtain prior permission from a Chief officer of this department for each occasion. This department is responsible for the safety and conduct of our members regardless of where they may be riding.
- Permission will be granted based on our own staffing needs, level of training achieved, overall attitude of the member, & degree to which the member is meeting obligations to this department.
- A Chief officer of the other department must approve and authorize your riding at their station.

- Members riding with another department may only engage in operational activities that this department authorizes them to do. For example, a member only cleared to ride our engine cannot ride a truck at another station.
- During periods when members may be riding (or driving) with other departments, they will be subject to all rules and regulations of that department and be governed by directions from that department's officers.

## **SMOKING POLICIES**

- Smoking is not permitted at any time in the fire station with the exception of apparatus bay areas. Smoking while standing in an open station doorway is also not permitted.
- Smoking is not permitted at any time on department apparatus or in department cars, utility truck, ambulance, etc.
- Any personnel smoking on department property shall properly dispose of cigarette butts and other smoking materials. Under no circumstances shall these items be discarded on the ground or engine room floor.