



LAKE COUNTRY
Life. The Okanagan Way.

Regular Staff Becoming Paid-on-Call Volunteer Fire Fighters Policy No. 08.101

District of Lake Country
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Date

The following was approved as an Administrative Policy and amended on **August 31, 2011**.

Purpose

To promote volunteerism with the District of Lake Country Fire Department and to clarify hours and remuneration for doing so

Policy

Callouts

District staff may leave their workplace to attend to emergency callouts for the Lake Country Fire Department subject to the following:

- Staff must first advise their manager when they join the department to ensure their manager is aware and can arrange coverage during callouts;
- Staff must never leave their position under the following circumstances:
 - They are the only person on duty at the facility or department;
 - They are required for a different urgent matter –including but not limited to a water, sewer, or police emergency;
 - They would be leaving the District short-staffed to the point of not being able to provide proper service to customers;
 - If the callout is received while they are working overtime hours they may leave for the callout, but will only receive their paid on-call rate;
 - To limit excessive absence from work, their manager has the authority to limit future emergency callout attendance if they determine that lost time from regular duties has been excessive and has had a negative impact on department operations or the employee's duties and job performance.

Remuneration

- Normal shift includes the additional scheduled time that is worked under the flex program (ie: normal shift is 7 ½ hours for a 35 hour week employee who participates in the flex program);
- Staff will continue to receive their regular pay during their normal hours and/or scheduled shifts when responding to an emergency callout;
- Staff will only receive fire fighter emergency callout pay for hours outside of their normal hours and/or scheduled shifts;
- There shall be no pyramiding or being paid fire pay when being paid as a regular employee;
- Staff will not receive double time for their first emergency callout hour if the callout begins during their scheduled shift;

- Flex-time (earned days off) and vacation days will be unaffected by emergency callouts. Staff will receive standard fire fighter emergency callout pay for responding to a call during their earned time-off;
- Staff attending a call during or running into their lunch break will receive their regular staff pay throughout the call and take the remainder of their lunch break after the call;
- Staff will receive the two hour minimum for a callout if the callout is more than ½ an hour before their scheduled shift, or if the callout is within ½ an hour of their scheduled shift and staff are still able to start their shift as scheduled.
- Staff responding to a callout within ½ an hour of the start of their scheduled shift that continues into their shift will receive their regular staff pay and flex the remainder of their day so as not to incur overtime as a result of starting their work day earlier than scheduled. Overtime for the hours at the end of the shift will only be paid if pre-approved by their department head. No fire pay shall be received;
- Anytime that staff are attempting to flex their day due to a callout, they must liaise with their department head to ensure appropriate coverage;
- Staff will not be permitted to carry a primary medical pager during their scheduled shift;
- Staff will only be permitted to carry a secondary medical pager with the approval of their department head;
- Staff will use their own time for practices, courses, seminars and other firefighting training opportunities, but will be compensated in accordance with fire department policy as a paid on-call, volunteer fire fighter;
- Staff will use their own time for community events, fire prevention tasks and other similar fire department functions;
- Staff will not be paid their regular employee rate for any fire department training, and if it coincides with regular shift hours they will be required to use their overtime bank, flex bank, or vacation time;
- To ensure correct payroll, staff must identify their fire department callouts on their timecard and fax or email it to the Fire Chief for approval as well as their department head before submission to payroll;
- Unique situations or clarification of the policy will be determined by the Director of HR.

Background

Compensating staff with their regular pay for emergency callouts during their normal hours and/or scheduled shifts ensures that it does not negatively impact them to be a volunteer with the fire department and it preserves their seniority and benefits.

The District benefits from employing paid on-call volunteer fire fighters by helping to ensure sufficient attendance at emergencies, especially during the more challenging time period of Monday to Friday during business hours.

Many volunteers work outside of the community and are unable to attend callouts during work hours due to their distance from the fire halls. Many other employers will either continue to pay volunteer fire fighters when they leave for emergencies or allow their staff to make up the lost hours. Most of these employers will, to some extent, restrict the number of lost hours/callouts their employees can attend. Many volunteers are self-employed, so are not receiving wages from any other source while attending a callout.

Original signed by Alberto De Feo

Alberto De Feo,
Chief Administrative Officer

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