

***EDDY COUNTY
FIRE & RESCUE***



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AND PROCEDURES***

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General Rules Policies and Procedures

This section deals primarily with volunteer members and Administrative rules, policies and procedures and are either based on the authority granted the Fire Chief by the laws to promulgate such or the authority granted the Fire Chief by Eddy County and/or the State of New Mexico.

In addition, some items that are of frequent concern have also been included. An example of such would be Burn Permits. These are included due to the "Inspection of Public Records Act" as the public may request this type of information. These items are designated by an asterisk (*).

Authority/Chain of Command [\(Appendix – Organizational Chart\)](#)

The Fire Department is setup as a paramilitary organization and the Chain of Command is the line of authority along which orders are passed within the department. The Chain of Command establishes the department hierarchy. The Chain of Command is a method for organizing information flow, decision making, power and authority; assumes that each level of the organization is lower ranking to the level to which it reports.

The Chain of Command shall be as indicated on the organizational chart. In the absence of the Fire Chief, the next ranking officer shall assume the responsibilities, duties, and authority of the Fire Chief. In the absence of all District Officers, the firefighter with the greatest years of service to the department shall assume the responsibilities, duties, and authority of the District Chief.

All members of Eddy County Fire & Rescue will recognize and follow the Chain of Command.

All regulations contained in this document and adopted hereafter shall be adhered to by all members of the department.

Since these are minimum requirements, each District can propose additional, more stringent, requirements to meet their individual needs. All changes to the District's Annex shall be approved by a two-thirds (2/3) majority vote of all non-probationary District members. The Fire Chief must approve all additional requirements. All additional requirements shall be contained in an annex for each district, which will be attached to this document.

Proposed changes to the countywide regulations should be submitted to the Fire Chief for further action.

Ability Test- Academy/Cadet [\(Appendix – Cadet Academy/Cadet ability test\)](#)

The job of a firefighter is very physically and mentally demanding. It requires high levels of cardiopulmonary endurance, muscular strength, and muscular endurance.

The purpose of the Eddy County Fire & Rescue Academy/Cadet Ability Test (CAT) is to simulate actual job duties on the fire ground and test a cadet's capacity to perform these duties. This is a pass/fail event, and a passing time is required to be eligible to be enrolled in the Eddy County Fire Academy. Any volunteer member not passing the CAT will not be eligible to enroll in the fire academy; however, may retake the test as many times as necessary and may be subject to a change in status to "Support Member".

Abuse of Apparatus, Equipment and/or Property

Apparatus, equipment and/or other property shall not be intentionally abused, misused, neglected, or used in a manner they were not intended or otherwise would be considered unlawful.

Alcohol, Prescription, Over the Counter and Illegal Drugs

The use, possession, or the distribution of illegal drugs is prohibited and against the law. This will not be tolerated. Any person found guilty by admission, or where there is irrefutable evidence, will be subject to immediate removal and termination.

No illegal/illicit drugs or misuse of prescription or over-the-counter drugs is permitted for consumption by any member of Eddy County Fire & Rescue, at any time, whether it is on personal time or fire department time; nor are illicit drugs allowed on department equipment, apparatus, or facilities. Any person found guilty by admission, or where there is irrefutable evidence will be subject to immediate removal and termination.

Volunteer members shall not participate in any Eddy County Fire & Rescue function, training session, or respond to any incident or operate any fire department apparatus, emergency medical services apparatus, Eddy County equipment or any type of fire/rescue tool at any time that their judgment, dexterity, or physical function may be impaired by alcohol, non-prescription medications and/or drugs of any nature.

Alcohol is not permitted at any station at any time.

If there is a reasonable suspicion to believe that a volunteer member may be impaired by drugs or alcohol on the job, or if the volunteer member is found with drugs and/or alcohol in the workplace, immediate drug and/or alcohol testing may be ordered. Reasonable suspicion exists when one's experience and training tend to indicate that a given person is under the influence of alcohol or a controlled substance. Acceptable indicators include but are not limited to, odor of alcoholic beverage on the breath, slurred or incoherent speech, staggering walk, loss of physical coordination, bloodshot eyes, inability to successfully complete a field sobriety test, erratic behavior, unexplained or uncharacteristic irritability, excessive tardiness, poor work performance, and excessive unexplained absences.

Apparatus Accidents and Injuries

In the event of an apparatus accident the following shall be adhered to:

- Call or radio 9-1-1 for emergency assistance and/or notify District or Division Chief.
- Treat anyone that is injured. Do not move the injured unless they may risk further injury or death by remaining where they are.
- Report the location of the incident, injuries, and other pertinent information as requested by Dispatch. Stay on the phone or radio with Dispatch until released.
- As soon as possible, notify Command, District Chief or designee and on-call Division Chief.
- Take photos, if possible, of the entire incident from all angles.
- As soon as possible, document per the accident packet located in apparatus.
- Do not speak to anyone about the accident except District Chief or designee, on-call Division Chief and Law Enforcement.
- Do not admit fault.
- Fire apparatus involved in accidents shall not be moved from where they come to rest unless failing to move apparatus poses a further and greater hazard.

Post-Accident/Injury

Substance abuse testing is required immediately for any volunteer member that is the driver/operator of an apparatus that is damaged, and any volunteer member injured that requires outside medical attention, pending treatment of injuries. If injuries are handled on scene, testing is not required.

All volunteer members and/or civilians that are injured due to an accident or other medical or trauma related incident shall be immediately evaluated and provided with the appropriate medical treatment and/or transportation to the nearest appropriate medical facility.

All injuries, no matter how minor, involving any person on Eddy County property or an Eddy County Fire & Rescue sanctioned event shall be *immediately* reported to Command, District Chief or designee and on-call Division Chief.

Any incident involving Eddy County property shall be reported immediately to Command, District Chief or designee and on-call Division Chief and the proper law enforcement agency. (if applicable)

Turn all documentation in to Fire Administration within seventy-two (72) hours.

All deaths involving volunteer members shall be reported immediately to Command, District Chief or designee, on-call Division Chief, and the proper law enforcement agency.

Any on the job death involving volunteer members shall be documented on the appropriate forms provided by Fire Administration.

All equipment, apparatus, or other forms of evidence pertinent to the accident shall be secured, photographed, and documented.

Apparatus - Driving/Operation [\(Appendix – Apparatus Sign Off\)](#) [\(Appendix – Road Test Certification\)](#)

All Eddy County Fire & Rescue Volunteer personnel driving and/or operating fire department apparatus shall be 18 years of age, have a current and valid New Mexico Driver's License, and have completed approved emergency vehicle defensive driving course.

All persons driving and/or operating fire department apparatus must also be eligible under the Eddy County policies and insurance requirements regarding the driving of Eddy County vehicles.

Apparatus in excess of twenty-six thousand (26,000) lbs. GVWR require a Class E or Commercial Driver's License (CDL), engines, tankers, and ladders.

No volunteer member on probation shall drive and/or operate ANY fire apparatus unless approved to do so by the District Chief or designee¹.

Volunteer members driving fire department apparatus must be approved by the District Chief or designee. Certification comes through training, practical evaluation, and written evaluation. This must be evaluated by an approved proctor. Certification acknowledges the operator's ability to drive and operate a specific piece of fire apparatus.

Exceptions may be made under special circumstances with approval of the District Chief or designee.

¹ District Chief or designee will apply proper risk vs. benefit before allowing a probationary volunteer member to drive an apparatus and will accept some responsibility for the volunteer member's driving capability for any incident that occurs while probationary personnel are driving or operating apparatus.

All emergency vehicle operators:

- Must wear their seatbelts and ensure all passengers are also safely seat-belted at any time the apparatus is operating under normal or emergent situations. Failure to wear a seatbelt will result in disciplinary action up to termination.
- Emergency lights and sirens shall not be utilized when non-department members are in the vehicle.
- The use of emergency lights and sirens is approved for response to an emergency situation only after ECFR has been paged by dispatch to respond to that scene. Upon notification of cancellation or down grade of response by Command, the emergency vehicle operator shall disengage from emergency response by turning off all emergency lights and sirens, and slow to posted speed limit.
- Lights and sirens may be used in special events, ex. parades, processions, and other approved events. By the Fire Chief or designee. May use safest lane or designated lane per the event.
- May exceed the posted speed limit when using all emergency equipment under the following conditions:
 - When exercising extreme due caution and the safety of all persons and property are not endangered.
 - Only when the weather and the time of day permit the operator's visibility to clearly identify and avoid potential hazards within their anticipated path of travel.
 - In low visibility and during inclement weather, the emergency vehicle operator shall not exceed the posted speed limit and speed shall be reduced below the posted speed limit, as necessary.
 - In all instances extreme caution will be observed.
- In emergency response all emergency vehicles will slow and follow all traffic rules and regulations when proceeding through a school zone.
- Shall stop for all school buses displaying flashing lights and shall proceed only after the driver of the school bus signals that it is safe to do so, and all bus flashing lights are turned off.
- Shall reduce the speed of the vehicle sufficiently at all intersections to negotiate a full stop when the intersection cannot be safely entered.
- Shall yield the right-of-way to any vehicle that is already in an intersection and shall not enter an intersection until all oncoming traffic has yielded the right-of-way and the intersection can be negotiated safely.
- Upon entering the intersection, the vehicle shall be under complete control and driven at such a speed that it can be safely stopped to avoid a collision should another vehicle enter the intersection.
- Shall realize the "right-of-way" must be granted by the other driver.
- Emergency vehicles shall be driven in the left traffic lane.
- When overtaking and passing motorists, shall exercise extreme caution.
- Lights and sirens DO NOT give the driver any rights; they merely request the right-of-way; due caution must always be used.
- Any misuse or abuse as reported by police agencies, the public, or any other fire department personnel will be subject to investigation and possible disciplinary action; up to and including the revocation of above privileges, probation, and possible termination.
- These provisions will not protect the driver from the consequences of his/her reckless disregard for the safety of others. Drivers that choose to disregard provisions in this section may be held personally liable for their actions.

Apparatus Inspection and Maintenance

Apparatus and equipment will be checked at least once per month and documented in the approved format, when possible, it is preferred to check apparatus and equipment weekly. All checks will be documented in the Emergency Reporting System (ERS).

All apparatus shall be inspected at the start of each shift coverage and shall be looked over after each incident. Any discrepancies shall be immediately documented and forwarded to the District Chief or designee for reconciliation.

Apparatus and equipment used on an incident scene that may be soiled, depleted, or otherwise not in a ready state, shall be replaced, replenished, re-fueled, maintained, washed, cleaned, and/or placed back in a ready state. Every effort will be made to document the apparatus and equipment check after an incident in ERS.

EVERY member of the crew is expected to remain and assist until apparatus and equipment are back in a ready state unless released by the Officer in Charge. This equipment is for EMERGENCY USE and as such should always be ready at a moment's notice.

Any apparatus or equipment found to be defective, and which cannot be readily repaired or placed back in service shall be placed out of service.

Assignments and/or Tasks

Volunteer members given orders or assignments shall carry said order, assignment, or task out expeditiously and obediently unless the volunteer member receiving the order, assignment, or task feels that by doing so his/her life or welfare, the life or welfare of others, and/or the safety of apparatus/equipment/property is jeopardized.

The District Chief or designee may assign certain routine duties or tasks to individuals or groups as the need may arise.

Attendance/Retirement

Volunteer members shall attend meetings, training sessions, work sessions, and emergency calls.

The New Mexico Volunteer Firefighters Retirement Act (VFRA), established in 1983, applies to volunteer non-salaried firefighters who:

- Are listed as an active member on the rolls of a fire department
- Whose first year of service credit was earned during or after the year they turned 16 years old.

Service Credit:

Members will earn one year of service credit as a volunteer firefighter for each year that they:

- attend 50% of all scheduled and approved fire drills (24 fire drills per year)
- attend 50% of all scheduled business meetings (12 business meetings per year)
- participate in at least 50% of all emergency response calls you are held responsible to attend
 - ECFR holds volunteer members responsible for 20% of District emergency response calls
*EXAMPLE: District X runs 1000 calls for the year
Held responsible to attend 20% = 100 calls
To qualify for service credit 50% of 100 calls = 50 calls*

Attendance Information

By March 31st of each year, the District Chief, in coordination with Fire Administration shall submit to PERA documentation of the qualifications of each member for the previous year.

It is your responsibility to verify your PERA service credit.

Volunteer fire members can adjust prior service credit two preceding calendar years.

Vested Termination

If you cease to be a volunteer firefighter prior to meeting the age and service condition for retirement, and you have at least 10 years of service credit, you are entitled to a deferred pension payment when you meet the age and service requirements under the VFRA.

Although this information is maintained by the fire department, it is urged that all volunteer members maintain their own copies.

Awards [\(Appendix – Awards Nomination Form\)](#)

General Guidelines

The Awards Committee will be selected each year at the first Fire Chief's Association meeting.

The Awards Committee will consist of one (1) member from Fire Administration, three (3) District Chiefs, and one (1) other District Officer. There shall also be one (1) Fire Administration alternate and one (1) District alternate. Sub-committees will be established as needed by the Awards Committee.

Nominations for annual awards should be based upon actions or activities performed during the previous calendar year. The Awards Committee may select recipients through a voting process, or awards may be presented based on the previous year's achievements.

Members may submit nominations for all awards. All nominations must be on the awards nomination form. Nominations may be submitted throughout the calendar year at time of act/service.

All nominations should be kept to the space available on the nomination form. If a nomination exceeds the space provided, or if a separate page is used, Awards Committee members will edit the nomination to an appropriate length at their discretion. Use the nomination form to complete your nomination, then email, fax, or hand-deliver to Fire Administration. If you are unable to access the form or guidelines in ERS, contact Fire Administration for assistance with the nomination.

Once all nominations are received, the Awards Committee will compile all nominations for review.

The Awards Committee will select award recipients.

Annual Awards Selection Procedures

The Fire Chief or a designee solicits annual award nominations.

Awards Committee should investigate fully all information presented to them and confirm with any witnesses and District Officers.

A member of the Awards Committee collects all award nominations.

Once all “Annual Award” nominations are collected, the nominations are merged into one document for each class. Each “Annual Award” nomination document is distributed to all Committee members in advance of the award voting process.

For special awards, like the Medal of Valor Award, the Awards Committee investigates each individual nomination, and makes a recommendation to the Fire Chief or Designee regarding the award.

Annual Awards presentations are made by the Fire Chief or designee.

Criteria for Annual Awards

Firefighter of the Year

The Firefighter of the Year is awarded to Operations personnel holding the rank of Firefighter who is consistent, motivated, dependable, and dedicated to the Fire Department and community and in their actions in emergency situations.

Engineer of the Year

The Engineer of the Year is awarded to Operations personnel who have served as a District Engineer for a minimum of six (6) months who is consistent, motivated, dependable, and dedicated to the Fire Department and community and in their actions in emergency situations. (A District Engineer provides care and maintenance of apparatus as assigned by the District Chief or designee. This award could include any volunteer member that serves in the capacity of a Driver/Operator or Engineer)

Officer of the Year

The Officer of the Year award is given to Administration or personnel holding the rank of Lieutenant through District Chief who is consistent, motivated, dependable, and dedicated to the Fire Department and community and in their actions in emergency situations.

Firefighter Providing Excellence in EMS

The Firefighter Providing Excellence in EMS award is given to a volunteer member who does not have a medical license but regularly surpasses expectations on EMS calls and training.

EMR of the Year

The EMR of the Year award is given to a licensed EMR who excelled in patient care or performance of duties.

EMT of the Year

The EMT of the Year award is given to a licensed EMT or above who excelled in patient care or performance of duties.

EMS Captain/Instructor of the Year

The EMS Captain/Instructor of the Year award is given to either an EMS Captain who excelled in their duties as Captain or to an EMS Instructor who went above and beyond to teach throughout the Districts of ECFR.

Second Chance Award

The Second Chance Award is given in recognition of heroic efforts of volunteer members in the event where a person would not be alive without significant intervention from personnel giving that individual(s) a “Second Chance” at life.

Criteria for Department Awards

Medal of Valor

The Medal of Valor is awarded to a firefighter who in the performance of duty while on a call, under hazardous conditions, in which the member is confronted with imminent personal risk but had no prior knowledge of that risk performs an act of conspicuous heroism which furthers the highest traditions of the fire service. If death occurs while performing such an act, the award may be presented posthumously to the next of kin.

Exceptional Duty Medal

The Exceptional Duty Medal is awarded to a firefighter for a highly credible accomplishment bringing public acclaim to the department or fire service as a result of devotion to duty or service to the public.

Letter of Commendation

The Letter of Commendation is a special letter presented to an individual for an outstanding contribution or service to the Fire Department. The letter recommending the commendation must be sent through channels and finally signed by the Fire Chief. When awarded, a copy of the Letter of Commendation will be placed in the volunteer member's file.

Special Recognition

Special recognition will be given to citizens who performed acts characterized as outstanding. These citizens would have distinguished themselves by unselfishly attempting to save the life of others. These individuals would have been honored by the County Manager/Commission upon a recommendation made by Fire Department personnel after witnessing the act or receiving reports from other witnesses.

Presentation of Awards

All awards are presented at staff meetings, the Annual Employee Awards Banquet, or an appropriate public function. Efforts are made in advance for publicity and news coverage. A record of all Department award presentations is made a part of the recipient's department file.

Medals

Each recipient receives a medal and a certificate suitable for framing or a plaque. The certificate or plaque will include the exact citation for which the medal was awarded.

Letters of Appreciation and Commendation

Each recipient receives either a letter or a certificate from the Fire Chief.

Bay Doors

Bay doors shall be either ALL THE WAY open or ALL THE WAY closed. This procedure will minimize damage to the apparatus and bay doors.

Bay doors shall be fully opened prior to disengaging the brake and placing the transmission into drive. After the apparatus fully exits the bay, said bay door shall be closed.

When the apparatus returns, the operator of the vehicle must ensure that the bay door is fully open prior to placing the transmission in reverse. A spotter, when available, shall be utilized when backing apparatus. Failure to utilize a spotter, when available, may be cause for discipline up to termination.

In cold or wet weather conditions, the bay doors should remain closed to prevent heat loss and/or water build- up from occurring in the bays. In warm weather conditions, it is permitted to leave the bay doors open when the building is occupied.

Certification and Licensing

Volunteer members shall be responsible for maintaining certifications that pertain directly to them and may include BLS, CPR, and AED certifications, Firefighter certifications, Technical Rescue certifications, Hazardous Material certifications, Emergency Medical Responder certifications, EMT level certifications, current and valid New Mexico Driver's License; with the appropriate class and all other certifications, and/or licenses that may be required during a volunteer member's tenure on the department.

Volunteer members are responsible for ensuring that all required documents and certifications are copied and given to the District and Fire Administration. This is the responsibility of the volunteer member and not of the Fire Administration staff.

Bodily Accidents or Injuries and/or Exposures

It is the responsibility of every volunteer member to observe safe practices, take precautions to avoid potential injury, or illness to themselves or others, and utilize personal protective equipment.

Eddy County Fire & Rescue will not condone horseplay and may deny injury claims related to horseplay.

Accidents or Injuries on The Job

- Call 9-1-1 for emergency assistance and/or notify District Chief via phone.
- Seek applicable medical attention; emergent, urgent, family doctor, etc. depending on the severity of the injury.
- Notify Command, District Chief or designee, and the on-call Division Chief immediately.
- Substance abuse testing is required immediately if outside medical attention is required for treatment of injuries. If injuries are handled on scene, testing is not required.
- Injuries should be documented utilizing the Accident/Sickness Claim Report within seventy-two (72) hours.
- Have the attending physician complete an Attending Physician's Statement. (if possible)

Exposures

- An exposure incident is a specific eye, mouth, other mucous membrane, non-intact skin, or parenteral contact with blood or other potentially infectious materials, as defined in the standard that results from the performance of duties.
- In the event of an exposure, notify Command, District Chief or designee and the on-call Division Chief immediately.
- Exposures should be documented utilizing the Accident/Sickness Claim Report form within seventy-two (72) hours.

Reporting

- Turn all forms in to Fire Administration within seventy-two (72) hours; including all paperwork received from the attending healthcare provider.

Follow-Up

- Be certain to follow-up on any correspondence received from the claim administrator and/or Fire Administration. Lack of follow up may result in claim rejection.
- Return to FULL duty requires a Physician's release.

Other

- If injured outside of Eddy County Fire & Rescue activities or events, volunteer member is required to report to their District Chief or designee within seventy-two (72) hours of accident, injury, or illness.

Burn Permits

The International Fire Code (IFC); which has been adopted by Eddy County, allows open burning by the public. The IFC assigns responsibility to the authority having jurisdiction (Eddy County Fire & Rescue) as the code official for the purpose of ensuring public safety. In rare cases citations may be issued under these codes, and ordinances for failing to obtain a burn permit prior to burning or burning in hazardous or objectionable situations. If it is determined that a citation may need issued, the on-call duty officer should be contacted for further follow-up.

Open burning will not be authorized if one or more of the following conditions are present:

- Sustained wind speed exceeds or is forecasted to exceed 15 mph.
- A Red Flag Warning is in effect for the burning period.
- Sufficient suppression resources (portable extinguisher with minimum of 4-A rating, dirt, sand, water barrel, garden hose or water truck) are not readily available onsite.
- Anytime the following environmental conditions exist, Inadequate precipitation, abundant dry fuels, high winds, high temperatures, and low relative humidity.
- State or county fire restrictions have been implemented.

Recreational fires do not require a burn permit, but notification is appreciated. Recreational Fire – An outdoor fire burning materials other than rubbish where the fuel being burned is not contained in an incinerator, outdoor fireplace, barbeque grill or barbeque pit, and has a total fuel area of three (3) feet or less in diameter and two (2) feet or less in height for pleasure, religious, ceremonial, cooking, warmth, or similar purposes.

Burn permits may be issued by Fire Administration staff or Dispatch if the following conditions are met:

- Only vegetative material will be burned.
- The fire will be 50 feet away from any structure or powerline.
- Sufficient suppression resources will be readily available for immediate use.
- The fire will not be unattended.
- Wind and other weather conditions will be monitored.
- The fire should be out one hour before sunset per NM Environment Department requirements.
- Call 911 if the fire gets out of control.

Burn permits will be logged at Fire Administration. A notification will be sent to dispatch as well as the district where the burn is occurring. A notification of burn days will also be placed on the Eddy County Fire & Rescue Facebook page.

Computer, Internet, and Email Use

The County's computer equipment, software, operating systems, storage media, network accounts, electronic mail, voice mail, and internet browsing are business tools provided to assist volunteer members in the performance of their jobs. The messages sent and received, and the data stored on these systems are County property. Consequently, volunteer members should not expect privacy. All messages created, sent, or retrieved over e-mail or the internet should be considered public information. The County reserves the right to access and monitor all messages and files on the computer system as deemed necessary and appropriate. All communications, including text and images can be disclosed to law enforcement or other third parties without prior consent of the sender or the receiver.

Prohibited Activities

The following activities are strictly prohibited while utilizing Eddy County-owned resources²:

- Anything prohibited by law.
- Activities that would subject the County or the individual to criminal, civil, or administrative liability.
- Harassing, insulting, or attacking others (cyber-bullying). Harassment by e-mail and the internet is just as illegal as other forms of harassment.
- Sending or displaying intimidating, hostile, offensive, or hate-related material (including racial or sexual comments or jokes).
- Using obscene language or intentionally accessing or possessing sexually explicit or pornographic material.
- Using the County's equipment or network for non-county related purposes such as personal, religious, or commercial ventures.
- Using County resources to provide unauthorized, non-work-related services (i.e., research, map printing) to another individual or entity.
- Creating or forwarding of chain letters.
- Using the network for non-county related bandwidth-intensive activities such as network games and the downloading or streaming of music or video files or serving as a host for such activities.
- Participating in forums, chat rooms, or exchanges except to conduct official Eddy County business, or to gain technical or analytical advice.
- Installing or distributing "pirated" or other software that is not appropriately licensed for use by Eddy County.
- Using County equipment or internet service to download entertainment software, games, screen savers, coupon downloaders/sharing software, registry cleaners, system accelerator, optimizer software, or any internet toolbar that causes unnecessary bandwidth consumption.
- Downloading and installing anti-spyware or anti-virus software that is not supported by the IS Department.
- Sharing of any passwords or authorization codes.
- Use of proxy accounts is prohibited and may result in discipline up to and including termination.

² Volunteer fire fighters may utilize computers for personal use (schoolwork, training programs, certain social networks with expressed permission from the District Chief). However, no one except Fire Administration staff may download software or applications without the expressed permission of the Fire Chief.

E-mail and Internet Use

As a general rule, it is expected that all volunteer members will use common sense and sound judgment when utilizing an e-mail system and the internet. Users should respect the rights and sensitivities of recipients and *potential* recipients or viewers and should ensure that all e-mail messages and internet usage reflect the professional image that Eddy County Fire & Rescue wishes to portray.

Eddy County has software and systems in place to monitor internet usage. Users should be aware that internet usage cannot be considered private and will be monitored. Volunteer members should not visit internet sites they would not want to have seen by persons or would want to remain private.

Miscellaneous

For security purposes, volunteer members should keep passwords confidential, and log off or lock the workstation when it is left unattended.

Modification to any county computer device is strictly prohibited. Only USB devices that have been approved by the Information Systems Administrator shall be used with county equipment.

Conduct [\(Appendix – Code of Conduct\)](#)

All Eddy County Fire & Rescue members are required, at all times, to conduct themselves in a professional manner.

All members must always be cognizant of their actions and shall exercise judgment based on that of a reasonable person and shall exhibit professionalism and discretion when representing themselves as an Eddy County Fire & Rescue member; so as not to lend to public criticism of the department. This will include actions during training sessions, meetings, department functions, emergency incidents, non-emergency activities, and when wearing or displaying ANY article associated with the department: both on and off duty. Members shall not discredit the department.

Anytime members have a possibility of being within the public's view and/or earshot they shall restrain themselves from using abusive or foul language.

Members will treat all officers, firefighters, law enforcement officers, public officials, and the general public courteously and with respect.

All Eddy County Fire & Rescue members shall have a signed copy of the Code of Conduct in their personnel file maintained at Fire Administration. All prospective volunteer members shall sign the Code of Conduct at New Member Orientation.

Confidentiality

“WHAT YOU SEE HERE AND WHAT YOU HEAR HERE, STAYS HERE”

Much of the information seen, heard, discussed, or conveyed at, in or around the department or at an incident scene is of a sensitive nature and discretion must be exercised; therefore, members shall not release or repeat anything heard or seen within the department, or on the incident scene without the express permission of the Fire Chief.

Every effort should be made to protect the identity of victims or suspects.

Members shall maintain the confidentiality of patients based on the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA laws). The names of patients/victims and their conditions/injuries will not be disclosed to anyone except the receiving staff/agency/facility. This includes family members.

Request for public information which is required by law for release shall not be released without such request being submitted in writing to the County. All such requests shall be forwarded to the Fire Chief or designee. The Fire Chief or designee may consult with the County Attorney prior to honoring such request.

Core Competency Requirements/Quality Assurance & Reporting Guidelines

(Appendix – Core Competency Verification) (Appendix – EMS Equivalency Training)

The EMS Medical Director shall establish the core competencies required of all EMS providers of Eddy County Fire & Rescue that provide such care under their purview.

Such competencies shall be determined by the EMS Medical Director based on their background, training and experience and the best available evidence.

These guidelines will be reviewed by the Eddy County EMS Medical Direction Committee but will ultimately be determined by the EMS Medical Director.

Core Competency Verification check off sheets shall be completed annually by all licensed personnel. Medical Direction will not sign a provider's license renewal application without said form on file with the Eddy County EMS Coordinator. Members currently enrolled in a licensure level full course, (i.e., EMR, EMT, AEMT) Core Competency Verification check off sheets are not required for that year.

Skills can be completed in one of three ways:

- In a classroom type setting.
- On an incident, please provide the incident number on the verification check off sheet.
- Observation – another licensed individual witnesses you are performing the skill.

EMS Equivalency Training Documentation Form shall be completed annually by all non-licensed personnel and kept on file with the Eddy County EMS Division Chief. Individuals not in compliance shall not respond to EMS related calls without a licensed provider.

Any EMT or higher trained personnel may sign off on all competency forms. The Medical Officer shall review upon completion and sign. In the event an EMT is not available, an EMR, with prior approval from the EMS Division Chief, may sign off and approve the forms.

Discipline Policy and Procedures (Appendix – Disciplinary Form) (Appendix – Member Complaint Form)

Volunteer members failing to adhere to the by-laws, rules, regulations, policies, or procedures of the department are subject to disciplinary procedures as provided herein.

Management Responsibility

District Officers are expected to utilize the following prevention strategies:

- Communicate and explain the department's expected performance and behavioral standards.
- Communicate and explain the department's disciplinary system and procedures policy.
- Provide volunteer members with training, recognition, and feedback on performance standards.
- Reinforce the departments goals and commitment to serve the community and its citizens.
- Apply positive disciplinary measures.
- Apply progressive disciplinary measures.
- Provide for proactive outcomes.

Grounds for Discipline

Discipline shall be based on just cause. Just cause for disciplinary action shall include performance deficiencies.

Deficiencies in performance include but are not limited to:

- Neglect or failure to perform assigned job duties or assignments.
- Interference with other members attempting to perform their assigned job duties.
- Violation of Federal, State or Local laws or regulations.
- Violation of the provisions provided in this manual - Code of Conduct, by-laws, rules, regulations, policies, and procedures.
- Insubordination

In identifying and analyzing a performance deficiency, the severity of the deficiency will be determined by the District Chief in order to administer the appropriate disciplinary action. Fire Chief or designee may participate in analyzing the situation.

When determining the appropriate disciplinary action, the following factors should be considered, but are not limited to:

- Seriousness and consequences of the performance deficiency.
- Volunteer member's previous performance and/or conduct record.
- Previous disciplinary action for similar performance deficiencies.
- The disciplinary action that would be effective in correcting the volunteer member's performance deficiency.

Guidelines for Discipline

Minor Deficiencies

These are acts not involving any question of trust or honesty; they do not pose a threat to orderly department operations, they do not endanger the health, welfare, or safety of fire department volunteer members, county employees, elected officials, or other individuals.

Examples are:

- Isolated instances of tardiness or absenteeism.
- Improper dress or untidiness in person, clothing, or work habits.
- Minor job performance deficiencies.

Minor deficiencies should be handled through positive and preventive measures.

Serious Deficiencies

These are acts that constitute a threat to the health, welfare or safety of fire department volunteer members, County employees, elected officials, or other individuals.

Examples are:

- Minor Insubordination
 - Disrespect toward an Officer or other authority.
 - Disorderly conduct causing disruption of work unit or task.
 - Disregard, omission, or neglect of duties.
- Conduct Unbecoming of a Volunteer Member
 - Abusive attitude language or conduct toward fire department volunteer member, county employees, elected officials, or the general public.

- Abuse of authority over fire department volunteer member, county employees, or the general public.
- On or off-duty conduct that may bring discredit to fire department volunteer member, county employees, elected officials or to Eddy County.
- Violations of safety laws, regulations and/or guidelines.
- Negligence or carelessness in job performance.
- Negligence with or loss of Eddy County property and/or equipment.
- Unexcused or excessive absenteeism and repeated tardiness.
- Violations of Equal Employment Opportunity laws, policies, and regulations.
- Any involvement in harassment incidents will be thoroughly and extensively investigated and will not be tolerated.
- Participation in unauthorized county political activities, other than expressing a private opinion, signing of a petition, or voting – a volunteer member may post campaign signs on their own property, and may engage in other political activity so long as the member is not identified in any way as a member of the Fire Department.

Serious deficiencies should normally be handled through corrective actions.

Major Deficiencies

These are acts that seriously threaten the operation of Eddy County or pose a grave threat to the health, welfare, or the safety of fire department volunteer members, county employees, elected officials, or the general public.

Examples are:

- Major Insubordination
 - Disobedience or refusal to obey a reasonable order.
 - Neglect or carelessness resulting in injury or damage.
 - Promoting work unit insubordination.
 - Continued disciplinary incidents or minor insubordination.
- Willful and unauthorized removal and control of Eddy County Fire & Rescue volunteer member's or general public's property.
- Misappropriation or conversion of Eddy County, Eddy County Fire & Rescue, county employee, elected official or general public's property.
 - Including preferential treatment of individuals, organizations, or firms.
- Unauthorized possession, transfer, consumption or being under the influence of alcohol, intoxicants, illegal or illicit drugs, misuse of prescription or over-the-counter drugs while on duty.
 - Fire department volunteer members shall be considered "under the influence" if the individual's ability to perform his or her duties is to the slightest degree effected by the consumption of alcohol, intoxicants, controlled substances, or prescription drugs.
- Unauthorized physical restraint, contact, or attack upon any fire department member or other person while on duty.
- Willful falsification or omission of Eddy County documents, records, forms, or any other information required by Eddy County.
- Conduct that is a violation of public policy or trust or is corrupt. Conduct which is a conflict of interest or a conflict in the performance of duties. Also, major issues or incidents related to harassment.

- Disclosure of confidential information as is defined by law. Improper use of position, character, or confidential information for personal benefit (financial or other interests) or for the benefit of others.
- Criminal activity which jeopardizes effective or efficient business practices; or poses a threat to the safety or security of persons or property.
- Failure to report ANY pending criminal investigation(s).
 - Any volunteer member that is arrested shall be placed on suspension until the elected officers review the case and a further determination is made.
 - It is the volunteer member's responsibility to notify the District Chief within seventy-two (72) hours of any arrest.
 - Lack of notification is grounds for termination.
- Continued performance deficiencies after corrective disciplinary action.
- Acts that may result in immediate termination:
 - Any conviction of a felony.
 - Any conviction of arson.
 - Admitting to or pleading of a felony.

Major deficiencies should normally be handled through Punitive Action.

Types of Discipline

Volunteer members are urged to talk to and attempt to work out problems with each other; however, it is realized in some instances the only recourse is to take some form of action or discipline.

The following types of disciplinary actions are approved:

- Verbal Counseling
 - Explains the deficiency or problem and emphasizes expected standards.
 - This form of discipline shall be considered as Positive Disciplinary Action.
 - A written notice shall be prepared and placed in the volunteer member's file, and a copy provided to the person(s) involved.
 - Written notices may be removed from the volunteer member's file if there are sustained performance meeting expected standards after one (1) year.
- Written Reprimand
 - Explains that a performance and/or conduct deficiency exists and requires immediate improvement to meet expected standards.
 - This form of discipline shall be considered Corrective Disciplinary Action.
 - A written reprimand shall be placed in the volunteer member's file and the person involved shall receive a copy of the written reprimand and will acknowledge understanding by his/her signature. Written reprimand shall be retained for a period of two (2) years.
 - Records of written performance and/or conduct improvement have been observed for two years.
- Probationary Period
 - May be extended based on extenuating circumstances.
 - This action or form of discipline shall be considered Corrective Disciplinary Action.
 - Circumstances concerning this action shall be documented and placed in the volunteer member's file.
 - Records shall remain in the file to explain the extension of probation.

- **Disciplinary Suspension**
 - May be enacted.
 - This action or form of discipline shall be considered Corrective Disciplinary Action.
 - Disciplinary Suspension action shall not exceed seven (7) days without approval of the Fire Chief or designee.
 - The Suspension notice shall be placed in the volunteer member's file, and a copy shall be given to them and acknowledge understanding by his/her signature.
 - Records of disciplinary suspension shall be considered "dead time" (time not served) in the department toward any benefit.
- **Investigative Suspension**
 - May be used to remove a volunteer member from duty to allow for an investigation of a serious or major offense.
 - This action or form of discipline shall be considered Corrective Disciplinary Action.
 - The written suspension notice will be placed in the volunteer member's file at Fire Administration and a copy will be provided to the person involved.
 - Records of Investigative Suspension shall be immediately removed from the volunteer member's file if he/she is reinstated to the department.
 - If the volunteer member is terminated from the department, record of suspension will be made a matter of permanent record.
- **Leave of Absence Status**
 - May be granted to volunteer members unable to fulfill their obligations to the department.
 - Volunteer members wishing to be placed on Leave of Absence Status must request such in writing to the District Chief prior to any other disciplinary action being enacted.
 - Written request shall remain in the volunteer member's file.
 - Volunteer members may request to be placed back on Active Status at any time; however, granting of such shall be contingent on approval by the District Chief and a majority vote of all non-probationary members.
 - Voluntary Leave of Absence Status shall be considered "dead time" (time not served) in the department toward any benefit.
- **Involuntary Inactive Status**
 - May be taken when it is determined that the volunteer member is unwilling or unable to fulfill his/her obligations to the department.
 - This action shall be considered Punitive Disciplinary Action.
 - A written notice shall be placed in the volunteer member's file and shall remain there as a matter of permanent record.
 - The volunteer member may request to be placed back on Active Status; however, granting of such shall be contingent on the requirements set forth in this manual, as well as approval by the District Chief and department body.
 - Involuntary Inactive status shall be considered "dead time" (time not served) in the department toward any benefit.

- Involuntary Demotions
 - May be taken when it is determined that the volunteer member is unwilling or unable to perform his/her assigned duties at expected performance standards but should be able to perform the assigned duties within another classification.
 - This action shall be considered Punitive Disciplinary Action.
 - The volunteer member will be provided with notice of the action, and a copy placed in the volunteer member's file as a matter of permanent record.
 - The volunteer member involved shall acknowledge in writing the receipt of such notice.
- Termination
 - May be taken as a last resort and all other options would not be appropriate and all options weighed before coming to a conclusion of termination.
 - This action shall be considered Punitive Disciplinary Action.
 - All punitive written communications shall be filed in the volunteer member's file, and a copy provided to the person involved.
 - This notice of termination will be made a matter of permanent record.
 - Volunteer members terminated shall lose all rights, privileges, and benefits to the department other than time accrued toward state retirement.
- Impeachment
 - Impeachment of an elected Officer may be initiated by submitting a petition, signed by two-thirds (2/3rds) of all non-probationary District members to the Personnel Board Chairman or the District Chief.
 - The petition shall state the exact charges being filed against the elected officer.
 - An elected officer being charged shall have the opportunity to have their case heard by the district membership at a special impeachment meeting.
 - A two-thirds (2/3rds) majority vote of all non-probationary members shall be required to impeach an elected officer. This vote may be done by a tracking poll performed by the Fire Chief or designee within ten (10) days of the special impeachment meeting.
 - Impeachment of an elected Officer does not affect his/her membership in the Fire District.
 - Nothing herein shall preclude the termination of an elected or appointed officer for cause.
 - Appointed officers may be removed by a majority vote of the elected district officers.

Authority to Discipline

The following are granted the authority to discipline within the parameters as stated:

- Fire Chief, Deputy Fire Chiefs, Division Chiefs including Acting in Capacity (AIC), District Chief, Assistant District Chiefs, Captains and Lieutenants.
 - Dispense verbal counseling reprimands
 - Dispense written reprimands
- District Chief (primarily), Assistant District Chiefs, Fire Chief, Deputy Fire Chiefs, Division Chiefs including AIC (if necessary).
 - Dispense probationary period extensions
 - Disciplinary suspensions
 - Investigative suspensions
- District Chief (primarily), Fire Chief, Deputy Fire Chiefs
 - Involuntary inactive status
 - Involuntary demotions
 - Termination

Any disciplinary actions require immediate notification to the District Chief for concurrence unless District Chief is subject of discipline.

Notification of Disciplinary Action

A notice of disciplinary action shall be written and presented to the volunteer member within (10) days of the infraction.

This notice shall include:

- The name of volunteer member being disciplined.
- Time and date of infraction.
- Type of infraction and cause to discipline.
- List of exhibits and witnesses supporting the cause to discipline.
- Type of disciplinary action.
- Person administering the discipline.
- A notice to the volunteer member of his/her right to appeal the action by submitting a written letter to the District Chief within ten (10) days of the notice.

Prior to the imposition of any discipline which results in a loss of rank, results in deadtime, results in involuntary inactive status, or results in termination, the member shall be appraised of the charges and given the opportunity to either explain or deny the actions giving rise to discipline. The member shall be advised, in writing, of the District Chief's decision and shall still have the right to a formal appeal.

Appeal of Action

Any officer or volunteer member who has successfully completed probationary status may appeal any adverse action concerning:

- Disciplinary suspension
- Involuntary inactive status
- Termination

Such appeal shall be in writing and shall be submitted to the District Chief within (10) days after written notification of Disciplinary Action; unless Disciplinary Action is against the District Chief who shall submit a written appeal to a Deputy Fire Chief.

Any member requesting to appeal the findings of the District Chief must hand deliver a written request to both the District Chief and a Deputy Fire Chief within seven (7) days of receipt of the decision made by the District Chief.

A Deputy Fire Chief may organize an appeal hearing if deemed necessary. Within fourteen (14) days of the receipt of notice of appeal, a Deputy Fire Chief shall set the date of the hearing. This date shall be within a reasonable time from the receipt of notice of appeal and shall not exceed forty-five (45) days.

Disposition of Appeal

Following the hearing and upon review of the appeal, the Fire Chief shall make a ruling within thirty (30) days and shall provide the volunteer member making the appeal with said ruling in writing.

All rulings of the Fire Chief are final.

Membership Complaints

Any volunteer member may file a complaint against any other volunteer member by submitting a Member Complaint Form.

This complaint shall be signed by the complaining volunteer member and be submitted to the District Chief within seven (7) days of the event that caused the complaint.

All complaints shall be reviewed by the District Chief and/or district personnel board for further action.

Any investigative measures shall be initiated within fourteen (14) days from the date the complaint was filed.

Review shall take no more than thirty (30) days from the date the complaint was filed.

Every effort shall be made to resolve the membership complaint with positive procedures and provide for proactive outcomes.

Dorm Rooms (if applicable) [\(Appendix – Dorm Room Use\)](#)

Dorm rooms may be utilized by Eddy County Fire personnel provided that the proper forms are filled out and approved by the District Chief or designee. *EXCEPTION:* The Fire Chief or designee may approve the use by others.

Do not use the dorm rooms unless:

- Assigned to you
- You request permission

Guests are not permitted unless approved by District Chief or designee.

Dorm rooms shall be kept neat, clean, and sanitary. Beds shall be made presentable when out of the room. Clothes and other personal items shall be placed out of view, so it is not visible to the public.

Sleeping at the Station

The following rules must be adhered to:

- Sleeping at the station must have the prior approval of the District Chief or designee.
- No person under the age of 18 years old shall sleep over at any time without written parental consent.
- Sexual or indecent practices of any form shall not be engaged in at any station.
- Individuals are responsible for cleaning any areas accessed during stay.
- Any person staying at the station must provide their own bedding.
- All persons must be up, and the station must be made presentable by 0730 hrs. during the weekdays and by 0900 on the weekends, unless otherwise determined by the District Chief.

Elections

“Roberts Rules of Order” shall govern all meetings as a guideline.

The Annual Meeting shall be the first business meeting in January. The election of officers for the year shall be the first order of new business.

A majority of the non-probationary volunteer members of the District shall be present before voting can be held. A majority must consist of 51% of eligible voting members. The winner of an election is the nominee that receives the most votes cast by the 51% eligible voting members present.

Only non-probationary volunteer members present may vote. If a majority is not reached for elections, the Fire Chief may appoint officers.

All votes in elections shall be by written ballot unless only one (1) candidate has been nominated.

All District Chief Officers and Captains shall be elected by a majority vote of all non-probationary volunteer members of that District.

In the case of a vacancy in an office or on the Personnel Board, due to resignation or removal, an election shall be held within thirty (30) days of the vacancy.

Any officer elected in midterm shall only serve the remainder of the current term.

No volunteer member shall be nominated for an office unless that volunteer member meets all the qualifications for that office.

All elections shall be reviewed by and be subject to approval by the Fire Chief or designee.

All ballots shall be collected by the District Chief or designee and tallied at the time. The District Chief or designee shall announce the results. The District Chief or designee shall appoint a three (3) volunteer member board to review the ballots after which the ballots will be released to the Division Chief. Fire Administration shall retain ballots for a minimum of 30 days in case election is contested.

The District Chief or designee shall open the nominations, and they shall not be closed until three (3) calls for nominations have been offered.

If only one (1) candidate is nominated for an office, he/she may be elected by acclamation if moved from the floor.

A list of all District volunteer members eligible for each office shall be posted during the first week of December.

In case a majority vote is not reached for any office, the nominee with the fewest votes will be dropped from the ballot. If there are only two (2) nominees and the vote is tied, there will be one (1) re-vote. If the vote remains tied, the tie will be broken by a coin flip called by the nominee whose last name comes first alphabetically.

At no time during the balloting shall new nominations be accepted.

Officers shall be elected in the order of succession beginning with the District Chief.

In the event an elected office is left vacant due to a lack of qualified or willing persons, the elected officers may leave the position vacant with the concurrence of the Fire Chief or may recommend appointing a District volunteer member to fulfill the duties ONLY, not the rank (not "acting;"), until such time the position can be filled in compliance with these policies.

Financial Responsibility [\(Appendix – Lost or Damaged Equipment\)](#)

All volunteer members are responsible for all fire department articles and/or items issued to them or placed in their care. These items shall not be loaned to anyone for any purpose. Volunteer members may be held financially responsible and accountable for any lost, stolen, or destroyed item at the discretion of the Fire Chief or designee.

Fire Department Apparel

All fire department apparel, including but not limited to shirts, jackets, T-shirts, Identification badges, caps, license plates, door emblems, patches and any other item containing the words "Eddy County Fire & Rescue" semblance of the same shall be approved by the Fire Chief so as to be uniform in nature. Any District specific apparel or items shall also be approved by the Fire Chief or designee.

Only those volunteer members approved by the Fire Chief or designee shall be allowed to wear any article of apparel or display any article containing any department logo or containing the words “Eddy County Fire & Rescue” or semblance of the same.

No Eddy County Fire & Rescue apparel, of any kind, is to be worn to questionable establishments. Examples may include bars (if the establishment is also a restaurant member will sit at a table not at the bar), strip clubs, or other similar establishments.

All clothing shall be neat, wrinkle free, in good condition and not see through. Undergarments are not to be exposed. Sleeveless tops are not acceptable. No sandals or open toe shoes.

Fire Department Uniforms

Only active volunteer members and probationary volunteer members are permitted to wear fire department uniforms, badges, firefighting gear, and/or coveralls.

Any uniform needs must be authorized by the District Chief or designee with approval of the Fire Chief or designee.

When a uniform is worn it shall be neat and clean. Each volunteer member will be responsible for cleaning and maintenance of their uniform.

Badges shall only be displayed on proper fire department uniforms. However, this shall not prevent official fire department investigators/inspectors from discreetly displaying badges for official duties.

Firefighting operations require clothing in compliance with NFPA 1971.

Volunteer members will not be expected to wear a department uniform on a daily basis. When wearing uniforms all volunteer members will adhere to the uniform appropriate to the duties to be performed per the Fire Chief or designee.

Volunteer members must wear an appropriate uniform for ALL outside and/or formal training, unless wearing PPE as part of class participation.

UNIFORM DESCRIPTIONS

Class A (Formal)

- Dress pants
- Shirt and solid black tie
- Appropriate collar brass and shirt badge
- Black dress socks (member supplied)
- Black belt (member supplied)
- Black, polished boots or dress shoes (member supplied)

Class B (Semi-formal)

- Button up badge shirt
- Dress or BDU style pants
- Black belt (member supplied)
- Black shoes or boots (member supplied)
- Solid black tie when required

Class C

- Department polo
- Dark navy or black pants/shorts
- Black belt (member supplied)
- Black boots or shoes (member supplied)

Class D

- Eddy County Fire & Rescue or district t-shirt
- Dark navy or black pants/shorts
- Black belt (member supplied)
- Black boots or shoes (member supplied)

Self-purchased Eddy County Fire & Rescue or Fire Department logo apparel may be worn with the approval of the Fire Chief or designee. All designs must be approved by the Fire Chief so as to be uniform in nature.

HAIR STYLES

The hair will be neatly groomed. The length and/or bulk of the hair will not be excessive or present a ragged, unkempt, or extreme appearance.

In all cases the bulk or length of hair will not interfere with the normal wearing of caps, helmets, and breathing apparatus.

For all members, facial hair will be kept neatly trimmed and tidy.

Facial hair shall meet NFPA requirements for interior firefighters.

WIGS OR HAIR PIECES

Wigs or hair pieces may be worn while on duty or in uniform for cosmetic reasons to cover natural baldness or physical disfigurement. If a wig or hair piece is worn, it must conform to this standard for natural hair and must not cause a safety hazard or interfere with wearing of the uniform cap, helmet, or breathing apparatus.

JEWELRY

Members are discouraged from wearing rings or other jewelry on the fire or training ground. Jewelry that is loose or protrudes may catch in machinery or equipment and may cause injury. Members may wear earrings providing they do not extend beyond the ear lobe or interfere with safety equipment.

Fitness Program/Center ([Appendix – Fitness Center Release Form](#))

The Fitness center and department gyms are intended for active Eddy County Fire & Rescue members.

Eddy County Fire & Rescue recognizes the intense physical and mental demands of emergency responders and is committed to maintaining a professional level of personal fitness and health. Both of which are essential for the short- and long-term well-being of each member and necessary to effectively carry out the mission of the department.

All members who utilize fire department exercise equipment must receive an orientation, sign all releases, and agreements prior to use. This is only required once. You must sign in during each visit. This should include the date, time, your name, and your district.

Appropriate workout apparel shall be worn. This includes t-shirts or polo shirts, shorts, or workout pants, (no belts, buckles, snaps, or zippers), tennis, jogging, basketball, aerobic or running type shoes with soft soles are acceptable. NO hard-sole shoes of any type shall be worn. Please ensure that the soles of your shoes are clean and free of debris (gravel, sand, etc.) prior to use of facility.

All keys, pens, pencils, and tools are to be removed from your pockets. You must have a towel (member supplied) when using the fitness center. A spotter must be present when using free weights. Keep aisle and exits clear. Keep sound levels on TVs and stereos at a reasonable level.

NO infants or children shall be allowed in the fitness center. Water and electrolyte drinks ONLY are permitted. Food is not permitted. Use hand wipes to wipe down machines after use. Turn off machines and lights when through. Ensure the door is locked when leaving. Report any damages or broken equipment to Fire Administration as soon as possible for repair or replacement.

Clean up after yourself, including restrooms and abide by any rules that may be established.

Volunteer members may participate in an annual, non-punitive or competitive, confidential fitness assessment. Peer fitness advisors (PFA) will conduct the fitness assessments and provide feedback to the individual as to their current level of fitness and his or her physical capacity to safely perform assigned jobs and suggested exercise programs.

In addition to using Eddy County facilities, volunteer members are encouraged to use public recreational facilities at parks, community centers, and gyms within the county.

Harassment

All volunteer members should be able to enjoy an environment free of unlawful discrimination and harassment.

Harassment of any type is unlawful and shall not be tolerated. Any person feeling uncomfortable with such should attempt to alleviate the problem by discussing it with those responsible. If such discussion shall fail to remedy the situation, the person(s) shall report such incidents to the Fire Chief or designee.

Harassment refresher training will be held annually at the District level, and every volunteer member is required to attend.

Sexual Harassment

Sexual harassment constitutes discrimination and is illegal under federal, state, and local laws. For the purposes of this policy, sexual harassment is defined as unwelcomed sexual advances, request for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature, for example:

- Submission to such conduct is stated or implied as a term or condition of someone's volunteer or employment status.
- Submission to or rejection of such conduct by a person is used as the basis for volunteer membership or employment decisions regarding that person.
- The conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with a person's work performance or creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive working environment.

Sexual harassment may include a range of subtle and not so subtle behaviors between individuals of the same or different gender. These behaviors may include, but are not limited to:

- Unwanted sexual advances or requests for sexual favors.
- Sexual jokes and innuendo.
- Verbal abuse of a sexual nature.

- Commentary about a person's body.
- Sexual prowess or sexual deficiencies.
- Leering, catcalls, or touching.
- Insulting or obscene comments or gestures.
- Display or circulation in the workplace of sexually suggestive objects or pictures (including through e-mail).
- Other physical, verbal, or visual conduct of a sexual nature.

Sex or gender-based harassment includes conduct that does not involve sexual activity or language but is directed at a volunteer member or employee because of their sex (e.g., male Lieutenant yells only at female firefighters but not male firefighters). This may also constitute discrimination if it is severe or frequent.

Other Harassment

Harassment based on any other protected characteristics is also strictly prohibited. Under this policy, harassment is verbal or physical conduct that insults or shows dislike toward a person because of a person's race, color, religion, national origin, age, disability, sexual orientation, or any other characteristic protected by law that:

- Has the purpose or effect of creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive work environment.
- Has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with a person's work or volunteer performance.
- Otherwise negatively affects a person's employment or volunteer opportunities.

Harassing conduct includes, but is not limited to:

- Epithets, slurs, or negative stereotyping.
- Threatening, intimidating, or hostile acts.
- Demeaning jokes, display, or circulation in the workplace of written or graphic material that demeans or shows dislike toward a person or group, including through email.

These policies apply to all members, and prohibit harassment, discrimination, and retaliation by fellow volunteer members, fellow fire fighters, fellow officers, fellow fire department employees and non-fire department personnel. Conduct prohibited by these policies is unacceptable in any environment such as in or around the fire house, fire department sanctioned functions, emergency and non-emergency scenes, business trips, business meetings, and business-related social events.

Retaliation is Prohibited

Eddy County Fire & Rescue, along with Eddy County prohibits retaliation against any volunteer member or employee who reports discrimination or harassment, or one who participates in an investigation of such reports. Retaliation against a volunteer member or employee for a good faith report of harassment or discrimination, or for participating in an investigation of a claim of harassment or discrimination is a serious violation of this policy and like harassment or discrimination itself, will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

Reporting Complaints

Eddy County Fire & Rescue along with Eddy County requires that all incidents of discrimination, harassment, or retaliation be reported, regardless of the offender's identity or position.

Volunteer members who believe they have experienced harassing conduct must report complaints to the Fire Chief or designee before the conduct becomes severe or pervasive.

If you believe the Fire Chief has harassed you, report the complaint to the Human Resources Director for Eddy County. Volunteer members who have experienced conduct they believe violates this policy must also report the conduct. Early reporting and intervention are the most effective methods of resolving actual or perceived incidents of harassment. Therefore, please promptly report any complaints or concerns so that prompt and corrective action can be taken.

Investigation

Any reported allegations of harassment, discrimination, or retaliation will be investigated. The investigation may include individual interviews with the parties involved, and where necessary, others who may have observed the alleged conduct or may have other relevant knowledge.

Discipline

Discipline for conduct constituting harassment, discrimination, retaliation, or filing a knowingly false report of harassment will be handled appropriately up to and including termination.

Helmet Color Designations

Structure Helmets

WHITE - White helmets will be reserved for Chief Officers.

RED – Red helmets will be reserved for Captains and Lieutenants.

Black - Black helmets will be reserved for volunteer members that have completed all Eddy County Fire & Rescue and District probationary requirements.

YELLOW WITH AN ORANGE FRONT – Yellow helmets with an orange front will be reserved for volunteer junior members who have completed all Eddy County Fire & Rescue and District training requirements.

YELLOW WITH A GREEN FRONT – Yellow helmets with a green front will be reserved for volunteer probationary members that have *not* yet completed all Eddy County Fire & Rescue and District training requirements.

BLUE – Blue helmets may be reserved for volunteer EMS Support members who have met Eddy County Fire & Rescue and district training requirements.

ORANGE – Orange hard hats will be reserved for volunteer support members.

Wildland Helmets

WHITE – White helmets will be reserved for Chief Officers.

RED – Red helmets will be reserved for Captains and Lieutenants.

BLACK – Black helmets will be reserved for volunteer members that have completed all Eddy County Fire & Rescue and District probationary requirements.

YELLOW – Yellow helmets will be reserved for volunteer probationary members that have *not* yet completed all Eddy County Fire & Rescue and District training requirements.

Honor Guard [\(Appendix – Honor Guard Agreement/Manual\)](#)

Eligibility

Any volunteer member of Eddy County Fire & Rescue who has completed probation and is in good standing with the department may be eligible for assignment to the Honor Guard. The volunteer member may be of any rank within the department.

A uniformed member of any department may be utilized, if needed, to fill in for the Honor Guard.

The volunteer member meeting the requirements may apply for assignment to the Honor Guard by placing a request through his/her chain of command who will forward to the Honor Guard Commander and the supervising Fire Administration liaison.

New appointments to the Honor Guard will be selected by the Honor Guard Commander and supervising Fire Administration Liaison.

Upon selection to a position, the volunteer member must sign a 1-year commitment agreement.

The volunteer member will be issued a uniform after displaying a commitment to the team by participating in practices and meetings for a period of 3 months.

Deployment of Honor Guard

The Eddy County Fire & Rescue Honor Guard may be deployed for the following reasons:

- Line of Duty Death
- Active-Duty Death
- Retiree Death
- Fire Department related memorial services.
- Other civic events or requests for deployment of the Honor Guard will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis and decided upon by the Honor Guard Commander and Fire Administration Liaison.

The deployment of the Honor Guard may result in the Honor Guard volunteer member receiving a nominal fee(s).

The minimum number of volunteer members required will depend on the type and duration of the event.

A current calendar of upcoming events will be kept by the Honor Guard Commander and sent out via email to all volunteer members quarterly or as deployments are added.

It will be the responsibility of the volunteer members to find a replacement if they have been assigned to an event and cannot attend.

When an event occurs in another jurisdiction and only a certain number of volunteer members are needed, an email will be sent out or phone calls made to all volunteer members. Those who commit first will be scheduled for the event.

A county vehicle may be scheduled for all events as needed.

Ranks

The Eddy County Fire & Rescue Honor Guard will have one Commander who is responsible for overseeing all functions of the unit.

Uniforms

All Honor Guard uniforms are the property of Eddy County Fire & Rescue.

Each volunteer member is responsible to keep their uniform in a secure location; neat, pressed, and ready for an event at all times.

Each volunteer member will be responsible for cleaning and maintenance of their uniform.

Any damage that occurs due to neglect will be the financial responsibility of the volunteer member.

Any accidental damage that occurs during an event will be the responsibility of the department.

Any volunteer member that resigns or is removed from their position must turn in their uniform and badge immediately to the Honor Guard Commander or Fire Administration.

Practices

Practices will be held monthly, and all volunteer members will participate in at least one (1) practice/rehearsal every three months.

Practices will be scheduled on different days of each month if possible and volunteer members will be notified of the date, time, and location by the Honor Guard Commander.

Prospective Honor Guard candidates will be notified and expected to be at practices to be considered for eventual selection to the Honor Guard.

General Professionalism

Volunteer members are expected to arrive ahead of designated times to ensure their participation and readiness for duty. Last minute arrivals are unacceptable. Large events involving multiple Honor Guard Units will require more time for practice prior to the event.

Anytime the dress uniform or part of the dress uniform is worn it must be of professional appearance. (i.e., ties on, shirts tucked in, ironed, and badges in place)

Jackets will be kept clean, pressed, and free of threads with the ceremonial parts of the uniform in place.

Shoes will be kept shined.

All members will stay together as a unit until the event duties are completed.

Removal from Service

A volunteer member may be removed from service for immoral acts, criminal acts, or violations of Eddy County Fire & Rescue policies.

A volunteer member may be removed from service for inappropriate behavior if determined by the Honor Guard Commander and Fire Administration liaison

A volunteer member may also be removed for dereliction of duty for failure to actively participate in rehearsals of Honor Guard events.

Horseplay/Roughhousing

Horseplay and/or roughhousing may lead to injuries and damage to facilities or equipment and will not be tolerated.

Housekeeping

Good housekeeping is the responsibility of ALL volunteer members. If you made the mess, clean it up.

Perishable food left at the station may be discarded weekly.

All heat producing appliances shall be turned off prior to leaving the station. These appliances include but are not limited to coffee pots, ranges, ovens, toaster ovens, etc.

When weather permits, apparatus/equipment shall be washed outside on the apron.

Apparatus bay floors shall be washed and dried as required. Floors should be kept clean, and no floor shall be allowed to remain wet.

Trash containers shall be emptied regularly and purged of liquids, debris, and odors.

Restrooms shall be kept neat, clean, and sanitary. Clean the toilets. Re-stock toilet tissue and paper towels if needed. Wipe down sink and counters. Sweep and mop the floors. Empty trash.

This extends to the showers, if you use the shower, you are responsible for keeping the shower stalls clean. Persons using showers are responsible for their own towels, shampoo, soap, and other toiletries. Personal items shall be removed from the restrooms after using them.

Report any needed repairs to drains, toilets, etc. as soon as they are noticed to the District Chief or designee.

Kitchen/Area (if applicable)

- Shall be kept neat, clean, and sanitary.
- Do not leave dirty dishes on counter or in sink.
- Put clean glasses, dishes, utensils, pots/pans away.
- Wipe down counter tops and exterior of refrigerators as needed.
- Wipe and dry tables. Do not leave glasses/water bottles on the table.
- Do not place chairs on top of table when cleaning (mopping). Tables can be damaged.
- Mark your food with your name. Food left unmarked is fair game.
- Food intended for department events shall not be used for individual use.
- Place canned/boxed goods in pantry cabinets. Do not leave on counter tops or tops of refrigerators.
- Utensils, pots/pan, dishes, glasses, and other equipment will not leave the station.
- Sweep and mop floors as needed after you cook or use kitchen.
- Empty trash containers as needed. Use trash bag liners.
- Do not leave food cooking unattended on the top burners. If you must leave, turn them off.
- Turn on vent hood when cooking.
- Clean the stove top EACH time you use it.
- Clean out the refrigerator periodically as needed.
- Throw away any food that is spoiled or is not being eaten.
- Put food back in refrigerator or in cabinet.
- Do not take plates, cups, bowls, saucers, glasses, pots, pans, utensils... anything from the kitchen area.
- Stay in the kitchen/dining area to eat.

Patio (if applicable)

- Pick up trash, drink containers, dishes/glasses, sunflower seeds, cigarette butts, etc.
- Be cautious about getting grease on concrete; if you do, clean it up.
- Clean grills immediately after you use them.
- Put chairs back where they belong.

Laundry room (if applicable)

- Volunteer members using the laundry facility are responsible for their own detergent, Clorox and softeners and other laundry supplies.
- Lint shall be cleaned out after each use and placed in the trash.
- Laundry facilities shall not be used for firefighting or rescue gear.
- Laundry room shall be kept neat, clean, and sanitary.
- As soon as your laundry is done, please remove it from the laundry room. Do not leave it in the washer/dryer.
- Empty the trash.
- Sweep and mop the floor as needed.
- Turn off the light when you leave the laundry room, except motion sensor lighting.

Ice Machine (if applicable)

Ice machines are intended primarily for Eddy County Fire & Rescue use. Its second intent is for County use.

Other use is limited to Eddy County Fire & Rescue members. The ice machine is not intended for public use.

Ensure enough ice is left in the storage bin to facilitate emergency operations.

Identification Cards

Department photograph identification cards are issued to all volunteer members. These items allow for volunteer member access to emergency incidents and other fire department functions. Volunteer members shall not alter these identification items, nor use or attempt to use such identification for purposes other than those intended.

Proper identification shall be displayed upon demand when entering any private property unless a life-threatening situation exists and such action is impractical.

Incident Reports

Eddy County Fire & Rescue will use Emergency Reporting Software (ERS) for all incident narratives.

Incident reports are legal documents. Your narrative should prepare you for a court appearance.

All reports must be completed within five (5) calendar days.

All reports are due by the 5th of the following month to allow time to export to the National Fire Information Reporting System (NFIRS).

Narratives

BASIC INCIDENT REPORT NARRATIVES

Each basic incident report narrative should contain the following components:

- Conditions found on arrival.
- Actions taken to control the incident and by whom (including supporting activities such as ventilation, utility control, etc.).
- Strategies/plans to achieve tactical priorities.
- Conclusion statement (no opinions, only factual statements).
- NO unprofessional phrasing or statements.
- One (1) sentence narratives are not acceptable. The average narrative should be five to ten sentences in length. For significant incidents, longer narratives will be necessary.

PATIENT CARE REPORTS

Reporting requirements of ECFR are pursuant to the New Mexico Department of Health Act at NMSA 1978, Section 9-7-6 E, and the Emergency Medical Services Act at NMSA 1978, Section 24-10B-4 L. [7.27.10.3 NMAC - N, 3/15/2010] outlined in [7.27.10.12].

A computer-generated Patient Care Report (PCR) shall be completed for each patient who is provided with medical care. Each PCR shall be authored by the provider(s) responsible for the patient care and shall be completed within forty-eight (48) hours or as soon as possible after the provision of care to the patient. A PCR is not required if the providers do not have actual patient care (i.e., assist moving a patient or driving the ambulance, etc.).

The narrative section of the PCR shall be completed using the DCHARTE format. Avoid using unprofessional phrasing or statements. Do not enter applicable HIPAA information in the Basic Incident Report Narrative. Instead write "See PCR for further details."

Each District's EMS Captain or designee must review reports containing a PCR at least once a month. The purpose of the review is to ensure appropriate medical care is being provided and adequate documentation is provided.

Standards to be evaluated during QA activities are:

- Appropriate medical assessments.
- Compliance with service protocol.
- Appropriate medical control.
- Treatment within the New Mexico Scope of Practice and Eddy County EMS Guidelines.

A written report of the problem and corrective action will be provided to the EMS Division Chief with referral to the service Medical Director if appropriate. The EMS Division Chief in conjunction with the Medical Director and/or a designee will address problems and discuss any necessary training and counseling. If applicable, a written report of suggested solutions and any disciplinary action will be provided to personnel involved with the incident.

CANCELLED ENROUTE OR ON ARRIVAL NARRATIVES

If units were cancelled enroute or on arrival and performed no actions on the scene, a simple cancelled enroute or on scene may be used in place of a full FIRE or EMS narrative.

All cancelled enroute will be coded 611. All no response calls will be coded as 900, apparatus will be changed to NONE with No Personnel Available.

STAFF RESPONSE DOCUMENTATION

The first due District will keep Fire Admin Staff listed on their incident report for documentation. Other Districts assigned to the incident can delete Staff from their ERS incident report.

NM EMS Service Codes and FDID Numbers for Emergency Reporting

	<u>EMS ID #</u>	<u>FDID #</u>	<u>Zip Codes</u>
D1	Loco Hills	15055	88255
D2	Joel	15043	88220
D3	Cottonwood	15025	88210
D4	Happy Valley	15031	88220
D5	Sun Country	15070	88210
D6	La Huerta	15049	88220
D7	Riverside	15069	88210
D8	Queen	15073	88220
D9	Atoka	15013	88210
D10	Otis	15067	88220
D12	Malaga	15063	88263
	Artesia FD	15007	88210
	Carlsbad FD	15019	88220
	Eddy County Fire & Rescue	15091	88220
	Hope FD	15037	88250
	Loving FD	15061	88256

Larceny

The theft of or unnecessary use of Eddy County Fire & Rescue property or private property belonging to or issued to another volunteer member is strictly prohibited and will not be tolerated.

Loaning of or Borrowing of Equipment [\(Appendix – Tower Agreement\)](#)

All Eddy County Fire & Rescue equipment shall only be utilized for emergency response and training. Loaning or borrowing of equipment is not permitted per the anti-donation clauses set forth by the State of New Mexico. Should a request or need arise for equipment to be utilized in another unforeseen event the member shall notify their District Chief who shall contact the Fire Chief for approval of equipment usage.

Lockers (if applicable)

Active and probationary volunteer members may be issued a fire department locker.

Persons shall not enter a locker belonging to another volunteer member for any purpose.

Exceptions:

- In the event of an emergency where fire department equipment is needed, a locker may be entered and needed equipment removed at the direction of a District Officer.
- The Fire Chief and/or District Chief may enter a locker or other area if he/she has cause to believe that the locker houses stolen property, drugs, alcohol, or any other evidence of a crime.
- Access may also be granted for standard inventory checks.

Volunteer members may keep personal articles, pictures, and personally purchased items inside fire department lockers; however, items stored in said lockers shall be of good “taste” (nature) and said items would not be considered questionable items by a reasonable person. If in doubt as to what is not allowed in lockers, please refer to the Harassment Policy.

Meetings and/or Training Sessions

Business meetings and training sessions are held each month unless cancelled due to holidays or other factors that would warrant cancellation. Volunteer members will be notified of cancellation or changes of such meetings. These types of meetings are considered ALL volunteer member meetings. All active and probationary volunteer members are encouraged to attend.

Special or emergency meetings may be called by the District Chief at any time for any purpose. These meetings are considered ALL volunteer member meetings.

Meetings specific to a select group such as staff meetings, officer meetings, EMT course meetings, etc., are not considered as ALL volunteer member training sessions. Credit will be given to all in attendance. Fire Officer Training shall be held once per month at the date and time designated by the District Chief.

Meetings shall start at the time designated. District Chief will address tardiness and meeting/training session credit on a case-by-case basis.

All meetings shall follow Roberts Rules of Order. All Eddy County Fire & Rescue Districts shall hold a minimum of one (1) business meeting, one (1) two-hour Fire Training session and one (1) two-hour EMS Training session each month. Additional meetings may be held as determined by the needs of the individual districts. The regular meeting day and time shall be determined by the district. The first meeting of each month shall be designated the monthly business meeting and shall include, but not be limited to, the following:

1. Call to order
2. Reading of the previous month’s minutes
3. Reading of correspondence
4. Old business
5. New business
6. Reports
7. Adjournment

All training meetings shall be under the authority of the Training Officer and shall be conducted by the Training Officer or designee.

Misuse of Position

Members shall not use their position to misrepresent themselves for gain in any form of benefit or gratuity.

Members should neither expect nor ask for any form of benefit or gratuity.

Multi District Response Crew (if applicable) [\(Appendix – MRC Guidelines\)](#)

The Multi-District Response Crew (MRC) will operate within the set policies and guidelines of Eddy County Fire & Rescue. A guidebook comprised of specific policies and guidelines will be provided to the MRC as deemed appropriate to help them complete the department goals and carryout duties assigned to them.

Office Equipment and Materials

Office equipment and materials shall not be used for any purpose other than fire department related business unless specifically approved by the District Chief. Computers located in fire stations may be used by volunteer members in accordance with the Computer, Internet, and Email Use Policy.

Officer Requirements

The District Chief will verify when training requirements are met and will make recommendations to the Fire Chief or designee for approval.

All ranks are in succession and the requirements from each rank must be obtained prior to advancing. Personnel may skip ranks if all the prerequisites for each rank are met.

Any medical related position must meet state licensure requirements prior to election or appointment (EMR/First Responder or above).

All officer positions and prerequisites *MUST* be met; no allowance for appointing or electing any member as an “acting” officer.

Support volunteer members may only be appointed or elected to a Lieutenant position and shall operate only within assigned duties as outlined in their statement of duties.

Officer Positions and Prerequisites

Lieutenant

- One (1) year term.
- Appointed by the elected officers of the district or elected by the district membership.
- Must have been in the fire service for one (1) year, one (1) year with current Eddy County Fire Rescue District as a non-probationary volunteer member.
- One (1) Lieutenant may be assigned for every Captain position.
 - More Lieutenant positions may be allowed with approval of the Fire Chief as long as span of control justifies the additional positions.
- Must successfully complete all Eddy County Fire & Rescue training requirements for the non- probationary volunteer firefighter, including ICS 100, ICS 200, ICS 700, and ICS 800.
- Valid New Mexico driver’s license.
- CEVO, pump operations and water supply class.
- Incident Safety Officer class.
- Job duties will be assigned by the District Chief.

Captain

- Two (2) year term.
- Elected by the district membership.
- Must have been in the fire service for two (2) years, one (1) year with current Eddy County Fire District as a non- probationary volunteer member.
- Must successfully complete an Emergency Medical Responder course or above medical training and maintain a minimum New Mexico State First Responder Licensure or above.
- Must demonstrate a working knowledge of Eddy County Fire & Rescue SOPs as determined by the Fire Chief or designee.
- Fire Officer Boot Camp (if applicable).
- Fire Instructor I & Fire Officer I classes.
- Must complete a Captain expectation meeting with the Deputy Chief of Operations or designee and the District Chief after election.
- Job duties will be assigned by the District Chief.

Assistant District Chief

- Two (2) year term.
- Elected by district membership.
- Must have been in the fire service for 4 years, 2 years with current Eddy County Fire District as a non-probationary volunteer member.
- Must complete an Assistant District Chief expectation meeting with Deputy Chief – Administration or designee and the District Chief after election.
- Will serve under the direction of the District Chief.
- Job duties will be assigned by the District Chief.

District Chief

- Two (2) year term.
- Elected by District membership.
- Must have been in the fire service for 4 years, 2 years with current Eddy County Fire District as a non-probationary volunteer member.
- Must complete a District Chief expectation meeting with the Fire Chief after election.
- Will serve under the direction of the Fire Chief.
- Job duties will be assigned by the Fire Chief.

Each Fire District shall have elected officers in the following order of succession:

- District Chief
- There must be an officer for each main station.

All District Chief Officers/Captains shall serve a term of two (2) years (staggered) and shall assume their duties immediately after their election.

- District Chief
- Assistant District Chief(s)
- Captains (minimum 1 EMS Captain and 1 Fire Captain)

Examples:

2023 Districts 1, 3, 5, 7, etc. elect positions 1,3, 5 and 7 (if needed).

2023 Districts 2, 4, 6, 8 etc. elect position 2, 4, 6 and 8 (if needed).

2024 Districts 1, 3, 5, 7, etc. elect position 2, 4, 6 and 8 (if needed).

2024 Districts 2, 4, 6 etc. elect positions 1, 3, 5 and 7 (if needed).

All odd numbered districts shall have all odd numbered officer positions elected in odd numbered years and even numbered officer positions elected in even numbered years.

All even numbered districts shall have all odd numbered officer positions elected in even numbered years and even numbered officer positions elected in odd numbered years.

No more than two (2) Elected Officers may be from the same immediate family (i.e., spouse, father, mother, brother, sister, son, daughter, grandchild, grandparent, or immediate in-law) within any district.

No volunteer member shall hold more than one (1) elected officer position at the same time other than Personnel Board.

Additional officer positions and/or administrative positions may be created by each district to meet individual needs with approval from the Fire Chief.

All officers shall abide by and perform those duties outlined in the laws and statutes of the State of New Mexico, the ordinances of Eddy County and the Rules and Regulations, Policies and Procedures of Eddy County Fire & Rescue.

Offensive Material

No form of offensive material, sexual or otherwise, shall be posted or displayed at any Eddy County facility or on any Eddy County Fire & Rescue equipment. Offensive material shall include but is not limited to any material that depicts nudity, sexual suggestions, and slanderous material to any ethnic group, race, sexual preference, or creed.

Types of material may include but is not limited to photographs, digital media, video tapes, audio tapes, cartoon(s), DVD's, Blu-Ray's, emails, etc.

Volunteer members may reference the Harassment Policy for a more detailed explanation.

Pager

Volunteer members shall carry a means of being notified of calls at all times they are available for response. Pagers, handheld radios, and notification apps are considered means of being notified. Of these means the notification app is the least reliable, ECFR encourages members to carry a radio or pager whenever possible.

Junior volunteer members are not authorized to take any fire equipment with them to school nor respond to any fire calls during school hours unless they have specific written permission from a parent or guardian and the proper school authority. (**Junior Agreement – include form for school response**)

Parking

Volunteer members shall park their vehicles in an orderly manner and shall not block any fire apparatus, bay, or bay driveway. Reserved parking is not granted to any person.

Payments to Volunteers (if applicable)

Volunteer members may receive a nominal fee by either responding to an incident on a piece of District apparatus or in a POV. Volunteers, members may also respond to the station in a POV and stand by. In order to qualify, you must respond to the station in a reasonable amount of time as determined by the District Chief and shall remain at the station until excused by the Officer in Charge of the incident.

Volunteer members will only receive a nominal fee for alarms they are certified to respond to.

Volunteer members who conveniently “show up” considerably late after an alarm in order to receive such nominal fee and are found to abuse this privilege, that volunteer member shall have such privileges revoked per call on a case-by-case basis at the discretion of the District Chief or designee.

The nominal fee is determined by the Fire Chief based on available funding per approved activity as defined in the procedure below.

Per FLSA, this is NOT an hourly rate of pay. The intent of this program is simply to “value” your contribution, “recognize” your efforts, “show appreciation” and provide some reimbursement for fuel and other related expenses associated with volunteering with Eddy County Fire & Rescue. New volunteer members become eligible for nominal fees when ALL the following have been completed:

- Initially approved by Fire Administration.
- Health screening and rapid/quick screen drug test.
- Physical Academy/Cadet ability test, unless applying to be a support member only.

- Attend new member orientation.
- Approved by the applicant's district.
- Complete and submit to Fire Administration the following paperwork:
 - Volunteer PERA form
 - W-4
 - I-9 and associated copies of proof of ID
 - Completed direct deposit form or pre-pay card form
 - Personal information sheet
 - Beneficiary form
 - Support volunteer members are required to have a completed Statement of Duties that clearly outline the minimum expectations for that volunteer member, approved by the Fire Chief or designee, and on file with Fire Administration.

A nominal fee may be issued when a volunteer member responds to the scene or is present at a station for the duration of the call.

If a call is cancelled before a volunteer member arrives at the station – this is considered CANCELLED EN ROUTE – No Personnel Response = no nominal fee.

One (1) nominal fee will be paid for up to each four (4) hours of training (multiple courses/online classes completed within four (4) hours will not be authorized for multiple nominal fees).

- If Eddy County Fire & Rescue pays for an out of area course (i.e., registration, mileage, airline, hotel, meals, etc.) then nominal fees may NOT be claimed.
- Nominal fees may be paid for the classroom portion of any course but NOT for study time, preparation, or clinicals.
- ELIGIBLE ACTIVITIES (this is not a comprehensive list).
 - District business meetings.
 - Response to emergency calls.
 - Requested aid calls to neighboring districts/departments.
 - Organized, scheduled, documented, and approved training activities.
 - Public education and information activities.
 - Pre-planning activities where documented plans are developed and communicated.
 - District coverage approved by the Fire Chief or designee.
 - Documented work sessions, approved by the Fire Chief or designee.
 - Pre-planned standby's (preferably utilizing the current scheduling software).

All activity will be entered into the current reporting system and a nominal fee report will be generated monthly.

This report will be reviewed and signed by the volunteer member, the District Chief or approved designee and the Fire Chief or designee.

Once the report has been signed, the volunteer member agrees the report is accurate.

The completed report is due at Fire Administration by the tenth (10th) day of the next month, no later than 1700.

It is the sole responsibility of each volunteer member to assure that their nominal fee sheet is turned in at Fire Administration for processing by the deadline.

Late reports will not be processed unless approved by the Fire Chief or designee.

Payment is made monthly. Monthly payments are made on an approximately 2-month delayed schedule (i.e., January paid approximately at the end of March, February paid approximately at the end of April etc.).

The county is not able to make nominal fee payment for any previous months.

Should the total quarterly nominal fee payout exceed forecasted budget, the amount per activity could be adjusted (reduced) by an amount that is equal to the budgeted amount per quarter unless exempted by the Fire Chief due to funds being available.

No individual volunteer member may receive nominal fees or any other financial incentives (length of service awards) in excess of the 20 PERCENT RULE. Generally, an amount not exceeding 20 percent of the total compensation that the employer would pay to a full-time firefighter for performing comparable services would be deemed nominal. This is required to maintain volunteer status and comply with the Department of Labor's "Bright Line Test." Based on market information including:

- Compensation paid to a full-time firefighter on the fire department's payroll.
- Information from neighboring jurisdictions, the state, or the nation.

If any volunteer member appears likely to exceed the 20 PERCENT RULE annually, the last quarterly payment will be reduced to the level that ensures compliance.

The annual amount will be determined by the Fire Chief or designee.

Personal Appearance [\(Appendix – Routine Inspection Form\)](#)

Realizing that at times alarms are received when volunteer members are not neat in appearance; however, volunteer members shall nevertheless attempt to make themselves appear as neat as possible.

Volunteer members shall be dressed in appropriate clothing and footwear and adhere with the Personal Protective Equipment Policy when responding to alarms. This includes no sleeveless or see-through shirts and no open toed shoes.

Personal clothing or jewelry displaying any lewd, obscene, or vulgar wording or depiction shall not be worn.

Any lewd, obscene, or vulgar tattoos, or piercings shall be concealed in order to present a professional appearance.

Every effort will be made to assure that any piercings do not interfere with proper use of personal protective equipment.

Every effort will be made to maintain good hygiene.

All fire department issued clothing shall be maintained in a clean and appropriate manner.

Personal Protective Equipment

All issued personal protective equipment to include wildland, structural, and support volunteer member gear will be issued and returned to Fire Administration for adequate inventory comparison, storage requirements, inspection, and cleaning prior to being issued to fire department volunteer members.

Alternative gear, alterations or customizing will not be permitted without prior approval of the Fire Chief or designee.

Qualified or personnel enrolled in training may be issued structural or wildland PPE.

Support volunteer members may be issued a set of fire-resistant coveralls or PPE appropriate to their assigned job duties and an orange helmet.

All Structural Firefighting gear must meet NFPA 1971 compliance at the time of manufacture and all Wildland gear must meet NFPA 1977 at the time of manufacture.

Use

The appropriate PPE will be worn for the primary hazard(s) associated with the nature of the call when operating within the HOTZONE of an incident. This may include an SCBA.

Medical grade gloves shall be worn on all EMS alarms requiring patient contact to protect both volunteer members and the general public.

SCBA

Volunteer members will be trained, pass an annual FIT test, and must not have hair or any other condition that interferes with the face-to-face piece seal or valve function prior to using an SCBA at an incident.

- For interior firefighting, the face will be cleanly shaven. If a mustache or goatee is worn, no portion of the mustache or goatee may fall at or below the SCBA mask seal, NFPA 1500.

Examples of conditions that should warrant an SCBA include but are not limited to:

- Known or suspected hazardous atmospheres.
- Where smoke is visible in the atmosphere, including vehicle and dumpster fires.
- Where toxic products are present, suspected of being present, or could rapidly release without warning.
- Unvented confined spaces or below grade areas prior to atmospheric testing.

Inspection and Repairs

Personal protective equipment should be inspected after each use and regularly each month.

It is the responsibility of the volunteer member to inspect and keep his/her gear in safe condition.

Problems with PPE should be reported immediately to the District Chief or designee for repair or replacement.

A routine inspection should be conducted a minimum of every six months.

Advanced inspections should be conducted annually or when a problem is reported.

All repairs will be conducted by a qualified vendor.

Cleaning

Routine

It is the volunteer member's responsibility for the routine cleaning of their PPE ensemble or elements using the following process:

- When possible, initiate cleaning at the incident scene.
- Brush off any dry debris.
- Gently rinse off debris with a water hose.
- If necessary, scrub gently with a soft bristle brush and rinse again.
- Spot clean utilizing a utility sink.
- Inspect for soiling and contamination. Repeat process if necessary.

- All elements should be air dried in an area with good ventilation. Do not dry in the direct sunlight or use a machine dryer not designed to do so.
- Should routine cleaning fail to render elements sufficiently clean for service, the elements shall receive advanced cleaning.

Advanced

Advanced cleaning is performed by utilizing an approved washer/extractor.

- The structural jacket and pants shall have the inner liners removed.
- The inner liners of the jacket and pants shall be washed separately from the outer shells.
- The Nomex hood and applicable helmet elements may be washed with the inner liners.
- Structural gloves may be washed with the outer shells of the jacket and pants.
- There is no advanced cleaning for boots.
- Wildland jackets and pants may be washed together.

Specialized

PPE elements that are contaminated with hazardous materials or biological agents shall receive specialized cleaning as necessary to remove the specific contaminants.

- PPE elements that are contaminated or suspected to be contaminated shall be isolated, tagged, bagged, and removed from service until they receive specialized cleaning to remove the specific contaminate.
- All tagging shall be done by name and District.
- Universal precautions shall be observed when handling known or suspected contaminated PPE elements.
- All specialized cleanings will utilize a qualified vendor.

Service Life and Retirement

Front line gear should be replaced after 10 years of service. PPE that is retired and not contaminated may be utilized for training, placed in surplus, or disposed within current Eddy County Fire & Rescue policies.

Personal Vehicle with Emergency Lights

Emergency lights or sirens are not allowed to be used at any time on personal vehicles by Eddy County Fire & Rescue members.

Personnel Board

District

The volunteer members of the Personnel Board shall be elected by the District membership at the Annual Business meeting in January, shall serve a one (1) year term and shall assume their duties at that time. The Personnel Board shall be made up of 1 officer other than the chief and 2 volunteer members.

The Personnel Board shall serve as an advocate for the volunteer member and shall work towards the best outcome for the volunteer member. The Personnel Board is not utilized for discipline in any manner. Discipline shall be handled by the District Chief.

The Personnel Board shall have the following duties:

- New member evaluations
- Probationary evaluations
- Membership complaints
- Review compliance with attendance policies.
- Any other duties relating to personnel management, assigned by the District Chief.

The Personnel Board shall be responsible to the District Chief for the performance of their duties.

Any volunteer member of the Personnel Board shall be temporarily excused whenever conflict of interest occurs.

Any volunteer member of the Personnel Board may be permanently removed through the same procedures used to impeach an officer.

Oversight Committee

The Oversight Committee (the Committee) exists to foster close adherence to Eddy County Fire & Rescue procedural documentation in the routine operation of the District; thereby creating a more stable environment for staff and allowing for improved relations and retention among new and seasoned volunteer members alike.

Organization

The Committee will be comprised of one volunteer member of each District's Personnel Board and a Division Chief representative from Fire Administration. The Division Chief will serve as co-Chair of the Committee and liaison from Fire Administration to the Committee. The Committee will be chaired by a volunteer member of the group. Another volunteer member will serve as Secretary. The co-Chair and Secretary positions will be annually rotated positions and will be selected at random. The selection will be by district, not person in case of unexpected staffing changes. Once one district has served in the position, that district will be removed from the selection process for that position until all others have gone through. In the case the same district is selected for both, that person will serve as co-chair and another district will be selected for Secretary.

Responsibilities of Chair:

- The Chair will lead the Committee and will be responsible for ensuring member attendance. They will also serve as a tie breaker in any potential voting scenarios that end with a split decision.

Responsibilities of Co-Chair:

- Should the Chair not be able to attend the meeting, the Co-Chair will stand in their place. The Co-Chair will also be responsible for any other duties assigned by the Chair.

Responsibilities of Secretary:

- The Secretary will maintain a record of the meeting and ensure that meeting minutes are distributed to all members in a timely fashion and before the next quarterly meeting.
- If the Committee elects to leave this position vacant, then a designee from Fire Administration will fulfill the above duties.

Duties and goals:

The Committee will hold quarterly meetings, unless the decision is made to alter the time of the next meeting, which must be discussed in the meeting just prior to the affected meeting. These meetings will follow a general outline. There should be regular review and training on all Eddy County Fire & Rescue procedures, not limited to personnel. The goal of these trainings will be to familiarize the members present with proper procedure and structure to handle volunteer member issues that may arise. The Committee members will then be expected to take this information back to the Personnel Board in their home district and provide similar training on the items covered in their District monthly meeting.

The Committee will also serve as a sounding board for all District Personnel Boards, and District Chiefs where appropriate, and assist in matters such as, but not limited to:

- Interpretation of Eddy County Fire & Rescue procedure when questions arise.
- Providing feedback and suggestion as a Committee on appropriate issues.
- Review Eddy County Fire & Rescue procedures for accuracy and make suggestions to the Fire Chief for update or revision.

The Committee can also be used as an added level of appeal, where deemed appropriate by the Fire Chief, or designee, in matters of personnel issues such as probation, discipline, or termination. In these matters the Committee member from the effected District will not be permitted to attend these meetings as they were likely involved in the initial disciplinary action and the group should remain fair and impartial.

The Committee Liaison will report actions performed by the Committee back to the Fire Chief as necessary and appropriate.

Pets and Service Animals

Eddy County prohibits bringing a pet into County buildings and premises, with the exception of Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) service animals, qualified assistance animals as defined in the New Mexico Assistance Animal Act, and pets at Eddy County parks during non-working hours.

Posted Rules

From time to time, it becomes necessary to promulgate additional policies, procedures and rules as may be necessitated by circumstances. All such, although not contained in this manual shall be adhered to and shall be distributed to all volunteer members. Signs and instructions posted shall be adhered to as though a part of this manual.

Residents (if applicable) [\(Appendix – Residential Agreement\)](#)

Residents shall agree to and abide by the most current residential agreement. All residents may be required to voluntarily assist with special tasks and assignments as directed by the Fire Chief, Deputy Fire Chiefs, Division Chiefs and/or District Chief, this may include taking out trash, washing walls, sweeping, mopping, etc.

Social Media Policy

It is the policy of Eddy County Fire & Rescue to use social media to inform the public and act in good faith and professionalism, in benefit to the community.

PURPOSE

The purpose of this document is to define and regulate the use of social media by Eddy County Fire & Rescue employees and volunteer members. Nothing in this policy is intended to prohibit or infringe communication, speech, or expression that is constitutionally protected.

DEFINITIONS

Social media: forms of electronic communication through which users create online communities to share information, ideas, personal messages, and other content. The term social media includes, but is not limited to, social networking sites such as Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn, Twitter, TikTok, Snap Chat, and YouTube.

Eddy County Fire & Rescue social media site: a social media site created, maintained, and controlled by Eddy County Fire & Rescue.

Personal social media: social media content maintained and controlled by an individual employee or volunteer member of Eddy County Fire & Rescue.

SCOPE

This policy applies to the use of personal social media relating to an employee's or volunteer member's duties, and to social media on Eddy County Fire & Rescue social media sites.

Eddy County Fire & Rescue SOCIAL MEDIA SITES:

- Social media should be used for community outreach, engagement and recruiting. This may include fire prevention tips and information about fire safety or time-sensitive notification for special events, road closures, weather emergencies, etc.
- Eddy County Fire & Rescue social media sites shall not be created without the approval of the Eddy County Fire & Rescue Fire Chief or designee.
- All content posted on Eddy County Fire & Rescue social media sites shall be approved by the Fire Chief or designee.
- Social media content on Eddy County Fire & Rescue social media sites shall adhere to all applicable laws, regulations and policies including the records management and retention requirements set by law and regulation.
- All Eddy County Fire & Rescue Social Media sites shall have an administrator, or equivalent, access delegated to the Eddy County Fire & Rescue Fire Chief or designee. Likewise, if no such access is available, usernames, passwords, and any changes thereof shall be reported to Eddy County Fire & Rescue Fire Chief or designee.
- All Eddy County Fire & Rescue Social Media Sites shall employ strong passwords which adhere to Eddy County IT Policy.
- All Eddy County Fire & Rescue Social Media Sites posts shall observe and abide by trademark, copyright, and service mark usage limitations.
- All Eddy County Fire & Rescue Social Media Sites shall use known and monitored contact methods (i.e., Fire Admin Phone Number (575) 628-5450, co.eddy.nm.us, etc.) unless otherwise approved by Eddy County Fire & Rescue Fire Chief or designee.
- All personnel representing Eddy County Fire & Rescue, through a public professional profile or posting on behalf of Eddy County Fire & Rescue shall always conduct themselves professionally and in good taste.

INCIDENT-SPECIFIC POSTS

The majority of incident-specific posts shall originate with the Eddy County Fire & Rescue Social Media Sites (direct pages, i.e., Eddy County Fire & Rescue Facebook, etc.). Should an incident be responded to by a specific district or affect the area served by a district, the source post should be shared (or similar) by that district. Posts of this nature should be *shared* rather than *copied*.

Posts to Official Eddy County Fire & Rescue social media or personal social media shall not be made while a member is actively involved in an incident or while operating any apparatus or vehicle.

Posts to district-specific pages should contain information relevant to the local community served by the district. This can include events, news, information, and tasteful posts about members and how they serve their community.

County-wide events and information should be shared from the source.

NAMING CONVENTION

All official Eddy County Fire & Rescue Social Media Sites shall follow a consistent naming convention as designated by the Fire Chief or designee. Each shall be named in a consistent manner and include “Eddy County Fire” in order to show unity as a department and make it easy for the public to find and identify official social media. (EXAMPLE: Eddy County Fire District 2- Sun Country)

PROFILE PICTURE, AVATAR, COVER PHOTO, ETC.

All Official Eddy County Fire & Rescue Social Media Sites shall use the official Eddy County Fire & Rescue logo as the profile picture or avatar. The logo may include wording to differentiate the district or special team being represented. The profile photo shall be approved by Eddy County Fire & Rescue Fire Chief or designee and may include a mark or minor edit to differentiate the logo as a ‘social media only’ logo. In rare circumstances, a profile picture outside of what is defined here may be used with approval of the Eddy County Fire & Rescue Fire Chief or designee.

Cover photos should generally contain a photo, or photos of community-identifiable apparatus or stations. Deviation in cover photo shall be approved by Eddy County Fire & Rescue Fire Chief or designee.

PERSONAL SOCIAL MEDIA

Members shall not post images, video, or information obtained while responding to an incident. This may include but is not limited to identifying information specific to an incident, victim information or photos, photos, or video of incident operations.

Members shall not share confidential or proprietary information of Eddy County or Eddy County Fire & Rescue.

Speech that impairs the performance of Eddy County Fire & Rescue, undermines discipline and harmony among co-workers and members, or negatively affects the public perception of Eddy County Fire & Rescue or Eddy County is prohibited and may be sanctioned.

Social media content shall adhere to all applicable laws, regulations and Eddy County, and Eddy County Fire & Rescue policies.

Members assume personal liability, both civil and criminal, for actions taken on one’s personal social media sites.

GUIDELINES FOR USE OF PERSONAL SOCIAL MEDIA

Do not violate Eddy County Fire & Rescue or Eddy County policies and procedures.

Use good judgement if displaying Eddy County Fire & Rescue or Eddy County logos, uniforms, or similar identifying items.

Do not publish any materials that could reasonably be considered to represent the views or positions of Eddy County Fire & Rescue or Eddy County without authorization.

Members may share, in good taste, photos of district events and personnel engaged in non-incident activities.

OWNERSHIP OF DATA AND MONITORING

Eddy County owns the right to all data files in any Eddy County owned computer, network, cell phone or other information system.

Eddy County also reserves the right to monitor electronic mail messages (including text and instant messaging systems) and their content created, viewed, or accessed on Eddy County computers, networks, and cell phones.

NONCOMPLIANCE

Inappropriate use of social media may result in disciplinary actions, up to and including termination as an employee or volunteer member of Eddy County Fire & Rescue.

Eddy County Fire & Rescue employees and volunteers must comply with Eddy County Computer Use Policy in addition to the Eddy County Social Media Policy and Eddy County Fire & Rescue Social Media Policy.

Station Fire Safety

All doors to all rooms/areas should be kept closed when not occupied.

Every member is responsible for the safety of the station at all times.

Station Security

The security of the station, apparatus and equipment is vitally important and as such, only active volunteer members or those approved by the Fire Chief or designee shall be allowed to possess any key to the station or have knowledge of any combination door lock.

Members shall not loan out keys to anyone or divulge combinations to anyone.

All potential access points to include doors, bay doors, and windows shall be closed and locked whenever the station is not occupied.

Telephones

Incoming calls on all phone lines in the fire department shall be answered in a professional and courteous manner.

Messages should be forwarded to the recipient of said messages. Callers requesting emergency assistance should be instructed to hang up and to immediately dial 911. If this request is not possible or practical, then information as to the type of emergency, location of the emergency, call back phone number, name of person calling, and any other pertinent information that may be needed. Such information shall be documented and forwarded to Dispatch for proper action.

Long distance telephone calls shall not be made on any telephone line by anyone except for official department or county business. Long distance collect calls shall not be accepted by anyone unless the call is verified as official department or county business.

County issued cellular telephones shall not be used except for official fire department or county business unless such use is granted by the Fire Chief or designee.

Tobacco Use

Eddy County is a smoke free/tobacco free environment and workplace.

In compliance with state and federal laws regarding smoking in government buildings, it is against the county's policy to smoke in county buildings or county vehicles (this includes fire department buildings and apparatus). Government buildings and vehicles are considered an extension of the "office". Therefore tobacco, of any kind, of any substance, including electronic cigarettes, is not allowed in any county building or county vehicle.

The use of smokeless and non-smokeless tobacco is permitted in designated areas only. Smoking or smokeless tobacco use is not permitted by anyone under the age of 21.

The use of tobacco products is prohibited on incident scenes or during Eddy County Fire & Rescue sanctioned events.

Any volunteer member who violates this policy may be subject to disciplinary action, up to termination.

Training Requirements

In addition to the requirements set forth for probationary firefighters, all active volunteer firefighters need to maintain the following training requirements:

- Active volunteer firefighters need to keep all certifications current including medical, CPR/AED, fire, rescue (special teams), wildland and hazmat.³
- Active volunteer firefighters need to log 18 hours of training in a fire tower or LPG props annually. Training shall be in accordance with NFPA 1001, 1403 and 1410.
- Active volunteer firefighters should strive to log 16 hours Company type training per month. Training shall be in accordance with NFPA 1001.
- Annual S.C.B.A. Training with a Fit Test.
- All volunteer firefighters need to log 6 hrs. of Haz Mat training annually. Training shall be in accordance with NFPA 472.
- Volunteer Driver/Operator need to log 12 hours of driver training annually. Training shall be in accordance with NFPA 1002 and 1451.
- Approved emergency vehicle defensive driving refresher required for every volunteer operator every two (2) years. (Refresher hours may count towards the 12 hours of driver training annually)
- Fire Officers need to log 12 hours of continuing fire officer training annually. Training shall be in accordance with NFPA 1021, 1521 and/or 1561.

³An approved provider is one whose curriculum has been adopted by Eddy County Fire & Rescue. These providers may change overtime as approved and amended by the EMS Division Chief.

Most, if not all required training is provided by the Eddy County Fire & Rescue. Specialized training in certain disciplines may be acquired. These trainings may be obtained with the expressed permission of the Fire Chief based on budgetary allowances and availability.

All training evolutions will utilize the Incident Command System (ICS) of the National Incident Management System (NIMS) and the department.

Travel and Training Reimbursement [\(Appendix – Repay ECFR Form\)](#)

Eddy County requires all travel and training requests using verified, appropriate, and adequate funds to be approved by the Fire Chief or designee.

Persons requesting travel or training shall submit a completed travel and training request form signed by the volunteer member and the District Chief to Fire Administration as soon as practical but not less than two (2) weeks prior to the class if funds are going to be expended. This may be emailed, faxed, or delivered.

If a request is denied for any reason by the District Chief or Fire Administration, the volunteer member shall be promptly notified.

County vehicles may be available from Fire Administration for travel outside the area. Mileage will be paid for use of private vehicles if a county vehicle is not utilized. Call Fire Administration to request to reserve these vehicles as far in advance of the travel as possible.

After the completion of the travel, the volunteer member needs to provide actual departure and return information, all itemized receipts, and a signed travel reconciliation to Fire Administration within seventy-two (72) hours.

Volunteer members may be reimbursed consistent with Eddy County's Policies and Procedures regarding travel and training. All training must receive prior approval by the District Chief with final approval by the Fire Chief or designee.

Volunteer members may be required to reimburse Eddy County for any course, class, or other event they fail to successfully complete.

Eddy County Fire & Rescue may not pay tuition, registration fees or travel costs for any class until after completion of basic initial training (Eddy County Fire & Rescue Academy or equivalent). Volunteer members, including probationary volunteer members, may request to attend local trainings at the discretion of and with the approval of the District Chief and Fire Chief or designee.

If a volunteer member fails to attend or complete a class that the County has paid for that volunteer member may need to provide full restitution to the county at the discretion of the Fire Chief. Until restitution is made no further classes will be approved for that volunteer member.

If a volunteer member fails a course and decides to take the course or test again it shall be the responsibility of the volunteer member to pay for the class. Fees may be reimbursed upon successful completion of the course and require the approval of the District Chief and Fire Chief or designee via completed travel and training form *PRIOR* to training registration. Upon successful completion of the course, the volunteer member shall submit the appropriate paperwork to Fire Administration for reimbursement.

Volunteer members will not be reimbursed for course charges or fees associated with the course if they voluntarily leave Eddy County Fire & Rescue or are terminated.

Use of Stations

Use of stations may be permitted for other types of functions providing that the station is not previously scheduled and with prior approval of the District Chief or designee at the discretion of the Fire Chief or designee.

Visitors and Guests

Visitors and guests of volunteer members are welcome to attend meetings and training sessions provided that such guest is introduced to the District Chief prior to the start of the meeting or training session.

The intent of this is to ensure that said guest is properly introduced to the members of the department. If a situation arises where there is a need for a sensitive discussion, the District Chief or designee may ask the guest(s) to step out of the meeting or session.

Volunteer members will and shall be held accountable for the actions of their guests including their spouses, children and friends when occupying any fire department station, facility, or function.

Guest(s) including children shall not be allowed to enter in or on any fire apparatus unless supervised by an Active volunteer member.

Guest(s) including children shall not be left unattended or unsupervised.

Guest(s) including children shall not attend any emergency alarm.

Volunteer Membership

Membership Requirements [\(Appendix – Junior Volunteer Member Agreement\)](#)

Any person wishing to join Eddy County Fire & Rescue as a volunteer probationary firefighter or volunteer support member shall adhere to the following as applicable:

- Be a minimum of fourteen (14) years of age.
- Live or work in the general vicinity of the County District boundary as approved by the Fire Chief.
- Complete and submit to all required Fire Administration forms.
- Pass a medical physical examination.
- Pass a drug test.
- Pass an Academy/Cadet ability test.
- Submit to a criminal history background check.
- Complete an interview with the District Chief or designee.
- Receive a majority vote of the District membership.

Junior Volunteer Members (age 14 - 18)

- Shall have a parent/guardian present for New Member Orientation and District interview.
- Shall be attending school, be a high school graduate, have a GED or be in a GED program.
- Junior members in school cannot leave school for calls or fire department activities without prior approval of their parents and the Fire Chief or designee.
- If applicant is a junior volunteer member in school, he/she should have and maintain a minimum of a 2.5 Grade Point Average (GPA).
- At the end of every grading period (generally 9 weeks), the junior volunteer member has seven (7) days to submit a copy to the District Chief or designee and Fire Administration.

- Should a junior volunteer member's grade point average drop below a 2.5 GPA, he/she will not be allowed to respond to calls or wear Eddy County Fire & Rescue apparel until the next grade reporting period and GPA is 2.5 or above.
- Two consecutive semester report cards that fail to meet the 2.5 GPA standard, may result in disciplinary action, up to termination.
- District membership may request to not accept or limit the number of Junior volunteer members based on current District needs with the approval of the Fire Chief.

New/Prospective Member

- A prospective new volunteer member shall submit an application for district membership to Fire Administration.
- An applicant shall submit to all inquiries that the District Personnel Board or Fire Administration deem in the best interest of the Fire Department.
- An applicant shall serve a minimum six (6) months' probation, during which time the District Personnel Board will evaluate his/her progress. An applicant shall remain on probation until they have successfully completed all courses in the Fire Academy unless equivalent training is accepted to meet this requirement as determined by the Fire Chief or designee.
- The District Personnel Board shall make a recommendation to the district membership for acceptance or rejection of an applicant's membership in the district.
- An applicant who is not accepted for probation or permanent membership shall not be eligible to re-submit an application for at least six (6) months.
- An applicant shall be a minimum of sixteen (16) years of age and will be required to successfully complete a physical examination (**if applicable**) and a drug screen (**if applicable**) by the medical facility currently under contract with Eddy County and successful completion of the approved Academy/Cadet ability test. Applicants that apply directly for support membership are exempt from the Academy/Cadet ability test.
- Applicants shall understand and adhere to the Policies and Procedures of Eddy County Fire & Rescue and shall be subject to and follow the orders of the officers during all alarms, training sessions, practices, or any other departmental or district function.
- Eddy County Fire & Rescue shall not discriminate against any person due to racial, ethnic, religious groups, or to persons of a particular age, color, ancestry, national origin, sexual orientation, or gender identity.

Transfers (Appendix – Transfer Request)

- Any volunteer member of Eddy County Fire & Rescue can request to transfer from one district to another.
- Permission to transfer will be dependent on the written agreement between the two District Chiefs.
- Written agreement should include but not be limited to the volunteer members current standing within the District.
- Volunteer members wishing to transfer to another district within Eddy County Fire & Rescue will complete a transfer request.
- Probationary volunteer members may be allowed to transfer with proper procedure and approved transfer request.
- Probationary period of the transferring volunteer member will be at the discretion of the new district.
- Being a current volunteer member within one district of Eddy County Fire & Rescue is NOT a guarantee of membership within another district.
- Any Eddy County Fire & Rescue issued items are transferrable.

- In order to assure that all items are being tracked and inventoried properly, any volunteer member that transfers must bring all gear/equipment/items to Fire Administration for a comparison inventory sign off. Any district specific items will be returned to the previous district shortly after comparison inventory has been completed.

Active Volunteer Membership

- Contingent on volunteer members meeting and adhering to the requirements of the Eddy County Fire & Rescue including all eligibility requirements, policies, and procedures.
- Shall be able and willing to answer alarms, attend meetings, practices, and training sessions in accordance with the attendance/retirement policy.
- Shall follow the orders of the Officers or Command at all alarms, training sessions, practices, or any other fire department function.
- A driver's license check may be performed on current active members annually.
- A NCIC or approved background check may be performed on current active members once every five (5) years.
- Shall reside within their respective fire division boundaries or within 1.5 miles of a division boundary.
 - Exception will be granted for volunteer members living "out of district" at the discretion of the District Chief and with the approval of the Fire Chief.
 - Shall be held to the same attendance requirements for meetings & trainings.
 - Duties and accountability for these volunteer members shall be determined and documented by the District Chief or designee and a copy provided to Fire Administration.

Honorary Volunteer Membership

- Shall be a person who has rendered valuable service to the Fire Department.
- Such persons shall have been chosen by a majority vote of the district membership to be honored.
- This honor shall not confer any rights nor obligations as a firefighter.
- Shall not be allowed to vote.
- Shall hold honorary volunteer membership ONLY at the district they were voted as an honorary volunteer member.
- Shall not be eligible for PERA credit.
- Shall not be issued PPE, radios, pagers, etc.
- Shall not respond to emergency calls nor operate Eddy County Fire & Rescue apparatus.
- Shall not be eligible for nominal fees.

Inactive Volunteer Member/Leave of Absence

- Any active volunteer member that has no activity for a consecutive period of six (6) months shall be made inactive. An "inactive" volunteer member may be allowed to return to the District with approval by the District Chief and a majority vote of all non-probationary members.
 - In order to assure that all items are being tracked and inventoried properly, any "inactive" volunteer member must bring all gear/equipment/items to Fire Administration for a comparison inventory sign off. Any district specific items will be returned shortly after comparison inventory has been completed.
 - If volunteer member is inactive for no longer than six (6) months, a drug screen is required to return to active status.

- If volunteer member is inactive for longer than twelve (12) months, a drug screen & physical, Academy/Cadet ability test and background check is required to return to active status.
- Shall hold no rights or privileges to the department.
- An active volunteer member may request, in writing, a leave of absence no longer than six months within a 12-month period, subject to approval of the District Chief. An extension may be requested, in writing, prior to the end of initial leave of absence at the discretion of the District Chief with final approval by the Fire Chief or designee.
- Volunteer members may request to be placed back on active status at any time; however, granting of such shall be contingent on approval by the District Chief and a majority vote of all non-probationary members.
 - Upon return to active status from a leave of absence, shall serve a minimum of one (1) month probation not to exceed three (3) months' probation, when absence duration is longer than three (3) months.
 - The length of the probation shall be determined by the Personnel Board.
 - After a 90-day leave of absence, volunteer member will be required to complete a drug screen before returning to duty.
 - Medical leave of absence requires written full release from a physician
 - If an Officer requests a leave of absence, it will include the Officer position which may be temporarily filled for the duration of the leave of absence at the discretion of the District Chief.
 - In order to assure that all items are being tracked and inventoried properly, any "inactive" volunteer member must bring all gear/equipment/items to Fire Administration for a comparison inventory sign off. Any district specific items will be returned shortly after comparison inventory has been completed.
 - Shall hold no rights or privileges to the department.

Probationary Volunteer Members

- Shall not have the right to vote on any district decision.
- Shall not drive and/or operate ANY fire apparatus unless approved to do so by the District Chief or designee.
- Shall be required to perform all duties that non-probationary volunteer members are required to perform.
- May be dismissed for any of the following reasons:
 - Willful insubordination.
 - Conduct detrimental to the fire department.
 - Failure to follow and/or comply with the policies and procedures.
- May apply to attend conferences, trainings, etc. if the following are met:
 - Meet initial minimum training, attendance, and participation.
 - Volunteer member in good standing.
 - May be required to pay for any fees associated with attending any training.
 - These fees may be reimbursed upon completion of the probationary period and require the approval of the District Chief and Fire Chief or designee via a completed Travel and Training request *PRIOR* to training registration.
 - Upon successful completion of the course, the volunteer member shall submit the appropriate paperwork to Fire Administration for reimbursement.

- On probationary status until successful completion of the approved Eddy County Fire & Rescue Academy and majority vote district membership approval.
- Must be an active probationary volunteer member (to include meetings, trainings, and response) to be eligible to attend the approved Eddy County Fire & Rescue Academy.
 - Reasonably, a probationary member that joins the Fire Department between December – May should attend the Fall Academy and a probationary member that joins the Fire Department between June – November should attend the Spring Academy.
- Shall complete or be enrolled in approved Eddy County Fire & Rescue Academy within the first eighteen (18) months of joining the fire department.
- In all cases, volunteer members may provide verification/validation of previous training which may meet this requirement; the Training Division Chief at the direction of the Fire Chief, may approve such credentials (IFSAC or equivalent).

Support Volunteer Members [\(Appendix – Statement of Duties\)](#)

Eddy County Fire & Rescue highly encourages all volunteer members to obtain, at a minimum, the basic core requirements to become a certified IFSAC or equivalent Firefighter. Eddy County Fire & Rescue does recognize that not all volunteer members can achieve this status or may have the ability to serve in another capacity or position and has created support volunteer member positions as outlined below.

Support volunteer membership positions consist of five categories. Support volunteer members may qualify for multiple support positions however volunteer members must work within the scope of the duties outlined below and within the volunteer member’s statement of duties signed by the Fire Chief, District Chief, and the support volunteer member.

Support volunteer members are required to have a completed Statement of Duties that clearly outline the minimum expectations for that volunteer member, approved by the Fire Chief or designee, and on file with Fire Administration.

Support volunteer members will have their Statement of Duties reviewed and updated on an annual basis and on file with Fire Administration.

Duties performed in question may be subject to interpretation by the Fire Chief or designee. Support volunteer members will be eligible for nominal fees if the tasks fall within the support volunteer members statement of duties or other activities approved by the District Chief and the Fire Chief.

District membership may request to not accept or limit specific support volunteer members based on current District needs with the approval of the Fire Chief.

Support volunteer members will serve a minimum of six (6) months’ probation, must complete a drug screen and physical, new member orientation and will be subject to attendance and/or performance reviews.

SUPPORT VOLUNTEER DRIVER / OPERATOR: May drive and pump apparatus, perform vehicle and equipment checks, supply equipment to crews operating in the warm zone, provide traffic control, or other duties similar in nature. May not engage in direct firefighting suppression activities. All requirements for the new drivers training standard operating procedure and a basic pump operations class are required training prerequisites. Must meet minimum attendance requirements and may be eligible for PERA retirement.

SUPPORT VOLUNTEER WILDLAND FIREFIGHTER: May engage in wildland fire suppression. Additional prerequisites include a physical Academy/Cadet ability test, annual work capacity test and trained to a minimum of S130/190.

SUPPORT VOLUNTEER EMS PROVIDER: May respond to medical calls, operate in the warm zone of traffic accidents, provide rehab at structure fires, assist with medical trainings or other duties in nature. Must be a current licensed provider and maintain a minimum of an Emergency Medical Responder license. May not engage in firefighting activities. Must meet minimum attendance requirements and may be eligible for PERA retirement.

SUPPORT VOLUNTEER ADMINISTRATIVE MEMBER: may perform secretarial duties, station maintenance, logistical support duties in the cold zone, or other similar duties in nature. May not engage in firefighting activities.

SUPPORT VOLUNTEER TECHNICAL SPECIALIST MEMBER May serve on specialty teams to include swift water, rope, dive, fire investigations, or other specialty teams. Must be prequalified and required to maintain training requirements in the specialty area assigned without assistance. Must attend team meetings and trainings. May not engage in firefighting activities.

Restricted/Light Duty

Any volunteer member of the Fire Department may be placed on restricted/light duty when it is deemed necessary by a physician, Fire Chief, Deputy Fire Chiefs, Division Chiefs, District Chief or Officer in charge.

When an officer places a member on restricted/light duty, the officer shall provide the member, in writing, the extent of the restrictions.

The final restrictions shall be made available to all District Officers and Fire Administration.

Release from restricted/light duty will be pending a physician release where appropriate.

Volunteer member may appeal restriction following the appeal process in place or full release from a physician.

Resignation

Any volunteer member may resign from the fire department at any time.

Upon resignation a volunteer member shall immediately return all issued departmental equipment and apparel to Fire Administration for a comparison inventory sign off.

Any volunteer member who resigns and then re-submits an application for membership shall be considered a new member in that the same procedures shall apply as if he/she had never been a member.

Upon resignation, resigned volunteer member shall not represent Eddy County Fire & Rescue in any manner, including, but not limited to ID cards, apparel, uniforms, etc.

Multiple Memberships

Membership in other volunteer emergency services is permissible providing the following:

Any active volunteer member of Eddy County Fire & Rescue belonging to other such services must continue to meet the requirements of Eddy County Fire & Rescue.

Must submit a letter from the other department's current Fire Chief officer granting concurrence for dual membership.

Shall not identify themselves in any manner as members of Eddy County Fire & Rescue when responding with or acting on behalf of the other agency.

Shall not utilize any Eddy County Fire & Rescue gear or equipment when responding with or acting on behalf of the other agency.

Fire Board

All district chiefs of Eddy County Fire & Rescue shall be members of the county Fire Board as well as the Chief and/or a Deputy Chief. The board will be chaired by a member who is elected by majority vote at the first meeting of each year. In the absence of a chairperson the Fire Admin personnel present would act as the chair for the meeting.

The Fire Board must have a majority of its members present in order to have a quorum. Each member of the Fire Board shall have one vote. Only matters having the majority support of those members present will be considered a decision of the Fire Board.

The Fire Board shall conduct meetings on a quarterly basis to discuss issues relevant to the Fire Department's concerns. Special meetings may be called either by the Fire Chief or by a majority of the members at any time there is important business to be discussed.

Duties and Responsibilities

The organization and purpose of the Eddy County Fire Board is to discuss and advise on issues relating to day-to-day operations of the fire districts. Such issues include but are not limited to:

- Equipment standardization
- Fire suppression
- Budgets
- Personnel Polices
- Safety
- Retirement programs
- Advanced training
- Member retention and recruitment
- Volunteer benefits
- Specialty teams
- Technology

Assigned Units/Take Home Vehicles

If in the best interest of the fire district to facilitate incident response, vehicles may be assigned to an individual member to be stored at their residence with the approval of the Fire Chief.

When a member is assigned a vehicle, the following regulations shall be followed:

- Vehicle will not be used for personal business.
- Vehicle will not be driven unless the operator is immediately available for calls.
- Vehicle will be secured and stored in a manner to protect the equipment from theft, damage, or environmental hazards.
- Vehicle will be stored within the assigned division.
- Vehicle will not travel outside of assigned division without Fire Chief or designee approval.

Concealed Carry Weapon (Appendix – Concealed Carry by Volunteer Firefighters)

1.0 Carrying Concealed Weapons by County Volunteer Firefighters, Generally: Except as otherwise provided by this Volunteer Firefighter Concealed Carry policy (“policy”), nothing in the Eddy County Merit System Management Guide and Policy and Procedures Manual (“Personnel Ordinance O-11-73”) shall be interpreted or applied to: (a) prohibit any County Volunteer Firefighter from carrying a concealed weapon in the course of their duties if the Volunteer Firefighter holds a valid license to carry a concealed weapon (“CCW”) issued by the State of New Mexico, Department of Public Safety Concealed Handgun Carry Act of 2003 with amendments, Chapter 29 Article 19 et seq. NMSA 1978 as amended, OR (b) to prohibit the carrying of a concealed weapon in the course of their duties by a Volunteer Firefighter who is a *bona fide* resident of another state, and who holds a valid CCW from the Volunteer Firefighter’s state of residence, if the State of New Mexico, Department of Public Safety has granted reciprocity to valid CCW licensees of the Volunteer Firefighter’s state of residence.

1.1 Volunteer Firefighters who hold a valid CCW license may carry a concealed weapon while operating a vehicle owned by Eddy County.

1.2 Nothing in this policy shall be interpreted or applied as *waiving the right* of Eddy County to *prohibit* any individual Volunteer Firefighter from carrying a concealed weapon in the course of their duties, whether permanently or temporarily, whether for cause or for any non-discriminatory reason. *Eddy County reserves this right.*

1.3 No Volunteer Firefighter may carry a concealed weapon in the course of their duties unless the Volunteer Firefighter has notified the Fire Chief and County Manager in writing that the Volunteer Firefighter holds a valid CCW license and intends to carry the weapon in the course of their duties using the Eddy County form approved for that purpose. A Volunteer Firefighter whose valid CCW license is suspended, revoked, made invalid or who is otherwise prohibited by a court from carrying a weapon, shall IMMEDIATELY notify the Fire Chief and County Manager of that fact in writing. Conduct in violation of this is punishable by discipline up to and including termination.

1.4 A decision by any Volunteer Firefighter with a valid CCW license to carry a concealed weapon during the course of their duties *is solely a choice by the Volunteer Firefighter* to exercise the Volunteer Firefighter’s individual right to bear arms. Nothing in this policy shall be interpreted or applied as a directive or authorization to any Volunteer Firefighter to carry or use a weapon in the scope of the Volunteer Firefighter’s duties or agency.

1.5 Any Volunteer Firefighter that does choose to legally carry a concealed weapon during the course of their duties understands that doing so while actively involved in fighting fire is inherently unsafe, and he/she shall secure their weapon out of view, in a locked vehicle or appropriate weapons storage device prior to engaging in firefighting activities.

2.0 Carrying Concealed Weapons by County Volunteer Firefighters, Prohibited Areas: Nothing in paragraph 1.0 of this policy shall be interpreted or applied to allow a Volunteer Firefighter who holds a valid CCW license to carry a concealed weapon in any building or area where doing so is posted as

prohibited in accordance with the laws of the State of New Mexico and/or Eddy County Policy, (Courthouses, Detention Centers, Law enforcement centers prohibited specifically), whether public or private, and whether owned by the County or any person. Nothing in this policy shall be interpreted to authorize any Volunteer Firefighter to carry a concealed weapon in the course of their duties in any private vehicle or on private property owned or leased by another person over the objections of the owner or lessee. *No Volunteer Firefighter may openly carry any weapon in the course of their duties or in any County building. Law enforcement is exempt.*

3.0 Storage of Concealed Carry Weapons: It is the sole responsibility of the Volunteer Firefighter to maintain proper control of the Volunteer Firefighter's concealed weapon and ammunition (if any) at all times.

3.1 Except as provided below, a Volunteer Firefighter who chooses to carry a concealed weapon during the course of their duties shall have the weapon concealed and on the Volunteer Firefighter's person, carried in a holster or other appropriate carrying device at all times, unless lawfully using the weapon.

3.2 A Volunteer Firefighter who stores a concealed weapon in a vehicle owned by Eddy County during the course of their duties must store the weapon in a locked case and place the case out of plain view from the exterior of the vehicle.

3.3 A Volunteer Firefighter who stores a concealed weapon in a vehicle owned by the Volunteer Firefighter (or any other private vehicle, with the consent of the owner), in a parking lot owned or controlled by the County during the course of their duties must place the weapon out of plain view from the exterior of the vehicle.

4.0 Threatening or Violent Behavior in the Workplace: Nothing in the Personnel Ordinance O-11-73 shall be interpreted or applied to construe the mere carrying of a concealed weapon as a violent, threatening or intimidating act on the part of the Volunteer Firefighter. Nothing in this policy shall be construed to support or permit violent, threatening, or intimidating behaviors related to the possession of a concealed weapon. Threatening and intimidating behaviors may include, but are not limited to, intentionally displaying a concealed weapon to any person, referring to the concealed weapon, or referring to a weapon not on the Volunteer Firefighter's person, with the intent to implicitly or explicitly threaten or intimidate another person.

5.0 Penalties for Violation: No part of this Eddy County Policy on the carrying of concealed weapons is meant to be in conflict with any provisions of the New Mexico Law governing the carrying of concealed weapons as are contained in the Concealed Handgun Carry Act of 2003 with amendments, Chapter 29 Article 19 et seq. NMSA 1978 as amended. In the event any portion of this Policy is in conflict with New Mexico law, New Mexico law shall control. Conduct in violation of any part of this policy is punishable by discipline, including prohibition of carrying a weapon while in the course of their duties as a Volunteer Firefighter and up to and including dismissal from Eddy County Fire & Rescue. Violations of this policy which also constitute a criminal act *will be* referred to law enforcement. Nothing in this policy shall be construed as providing implicit or explicit authorization for the violation of any federal, state, or local statute, administrative code, or local ordinance.