

POLSON City/Rural FIRE DEPARTMENT Operating Guidelines

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100.08 Fire Line Officers Responsibilities

(Captain and Lieutenant)

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PURPOSES:

The purpose of this Guideline is to establish responsibilities and expectations of Fire Line Officer in the Polson City/Rural Fire Department (PFD). It is not intended to add additional layers of bureaucracy but simply to systemize the existing methods by setting forth-positive obligations.

PFD values the skill and experience of its fire officers recognizes that a quality, committed, professionally competent officer corps is the key to the PFD's success and therefore an additional purpose of this Guideline shall also be to set forth a program of Fire Line Officers educational development.

An additional purpose of this Guideline is to set policy devolving responsibility, accountability, and authority on the Fire Line Officers to achieve the building-block pattern goals set herein.

ORGANIZATION:

PFD is a volunteer department and therefore flexibility in training, readiness, and execution is critical. As a consequence this Guideline is organized into two major subject areas: Administration and Incidents. The obligations and duties of the Fire Line Officers within these two contexts are set forth under the respective heading. The common theme throughout this Guideline is the obligation in the Fire Line Officers to exercise concerned, responsible, responsive leadership.

This Guideline reflects the PFD organizational structure that PFD's ultimate obligation is the preservation of lives and property by fire suppression during actual incidents, and that during other periods PFD's obligation is training personnel and maintaining gear so as to safely and efficiently achieve its ultimate obligations.

ADMINISTRATION:

For non-incident purposes PFD is administratively organized in such manner that each Fire Line Officer is assigned personnel, equipment and apparatus, and collateral duties. Fire Line Officers may discuss allocation of these duties with the Fire Chief and the Fire Chief shall be bound to consider those recommendations and make assignments accordingly. Fire Line Officers may not independently make their own substitutions.

Fire Line Officers shall and are responsible to follow and administer the following guidelines.

Personnel Training:

Firefighters. The only difference between a citizen and a firefighter is training. A Fire Line Officer's principle obligation to PFD is to train administratively assigned persons to a high degree of individual knowledge and skill so that the ultimate obligations of the PFD will be safely and efficiently met

At a minimum all Fire Line Officers ensure that their administratively assigned firefighters know how to properly don, wear, and operate personal protective equipment.

Fire Line Officers shall oversee and/or train their administratively assigned personnel to the standards set forth for Firefighter I in the NFPA. Any assigned firefighter shall have been trained to this standard by the end of two years' service with PFD, at the latest.

Fire Line Officers shall oversee and/or train their administratively assigned personnel in any further areas of interest to the firefighter, but only after the firefighter has completed all steps necessary to achieve the Firefighter I NFPA standard.

The Training Officer shall maintain records of individual firefighter training and shall make available any training resources within the PFD, but shall not be required to arrange and conduct training unless so directed by the Fire Chief. The obligation to ensure actual training of administratively assigned personnel shall remain with the Fire Line Officers.

Fire Line Officers:

PFD Fire Line Officers are obliged to continuously improve their knowledge and skills in firefighting and related topics by training and self-education. This self-directed training and education shall begin before a Fire Line Officers may be eligible to become an officer, and shall continue through their position.

Officers are expected to have a working knowledge of PFD guidelines in the following, non-exclusive areas: leadership, technical and tactical skills, communications, team building, instructor skills, public relations, and the function of a firefighters as described in PFD Guideline 100.05, to the satisfaction of the membership, prior to becoming Fire Officers.

Fire Line Officers shall participate in the company officer development program. Ideally, formal participation in the company officer development program shall begin at the grade of Lieutenant. The Fire Line Officers shall have completed the following coursework to the applicable standards prior to the expiration of one year from the date of position, unless for good cause the Fire Chief extends the deadline.

- Self-Study - National Fire Academy: Fire Service Supervision.
- CD-ROM's - National Fire Academy: Incident Command System, Casper Hall Dorm, Ranch House Fire, Hostage/Strip Mall, Mansion Fire, and Townhouse Fire.
- The Company Officer - Delmar Publishers - Chapters 1, 2, 3, 6, 7, and 10.
- Fire Department Company Officer 3rd Edition IFSTA - Chapters 3, 4, 6, 7, 10, 15, 16, 18, 20, 21, and 22.
- Montana State Fire Training Officer I.

Requirements:

Fire Line Officers shall complete the self-study portions of the foregoing development program to the standards required on their own within the allotted time. Those portions requiring organized lecture and/or other training vectors shall be arranged for and conducted by the Fire Chief or the person to whom the Fire Chief delegates this duty.

The Training Officer shall maintain all necessary records of completion of individual training units and segments, and shall verify any and all testing necessary to demonstrate familiarity with any required standards, and shall in addition maintain, account for, and make available any and all manuals, disks, tapes, or other training aids.

Supervision Responsibility:

Fire Line Officers are obliged to supervise the training of their assigned personnel, both in formal firehouse training sessions and in the firefighter's individual efforts at self-study. Fire Line Officers shall periodically check with the records of the Training Officer as to their individual personnel's progress, shall discuss the needs and abilities with the firefighter, and ensure that a constant forward progress is made by the firefighter.

Resources for Training:

Fire Line Officers shall act as resources themselves, and shall in addition undertake all acts necessary to provide any resources necessary to enhance individual training.

Equipment:

Fire Line Officers shall supervise the execution of maintenance, readiness, and operability goals for assigned apparatus, equipment, and collateral duties.

Delegation:

Fire Line Officers are encouraged to delegate any supervisory responsibilities hereunder, together with appropriate authority, as needed, but the final responsibility for supervision of training and maintenance rests with the Fire Line Officers to whom the persons or assets are administratively assigned.

Discipline Responsibility:

Fire Line Officers are responsible to execute applicable provisions of the PFD Disciplinary Guidelines, and to that end must be familiar with the provisions thereof. It is the intent of this Guideline to empower the discretion and judgment of the Fire Line Officers.

Apparatus and Equipment Responsibility:

Each Fire Line Officers shall be assigned one or more pieces of apparatus and shall have the responsibility to oversee its maintenance, readiness and operability, together with and including all equipment thereon.

Reports:

Fire Line Officers shall report equipment failures, safety concerns, or non-operability status of any assigned apparatus or equipment to the Fire Chief immediately.

Collateral Duties Assignment:

The Fire Chief shall assign necessary collateral duties to the Fire Line Officers after consulting with the officers. Generally existing collateral duties include the following list, but other collateral duties may be identified and assigned as needed:

- Distribution of personal protective equipment and radios.
- Fire apparatus automotive maintenance.
- SCBA maintenance.
- Communications, fireground safety, and fireboat maintenance.
- Maintenance of special pieces of fire department tools and equipment.
- Firehouse plant, building, maintenance, and cleanliness.

Responsibility:

Fire Line Officers are responsible for taking charge of and executing all tasks necessary to successfully achieve assigned collateral duties and keeping track of and accounting for all necessary equipment. They shall identify needs and request resources necessary to carry out their assigned collateral duties.

INCIDENTS:

In responding to alarms the PFD does not usually have the luxury of crews and officers in their usual administrative package. Instead, in order to provide the most responsive fire suppression, the first firefighters to get to the firehouse of sufficient numbers to make up a crew take apparatus led by any officer present. Fireground activities are the subject of separate Guidelines; the intent herein is to lay out general Fire Line Officer Responsibilities in any incident response.

Personnel Safety:

The principle, no delegable obligation of any Captain at any incident is the safety of the public and the safety of the firefighters. Any and all property may be sacrificed to achieve these goals.

Areas of Particular Concern:

The specific areas of concern are set forth in the following list. All Fire Line Officers are responsible to ensure that these safety features are observed:

- A qualified driver brings apparatus to the scene in a safe manner.
- All personnel wear mandatory personal protective gear while engaged in firefighting activity.
- A qualified engineer conducts pump operations.
- No firefighter is left alone or unsupervised.
- Officers conduct fire scene reconnaissance and assessment.
- Necessary communications are established and reliable.
- Knowledgeable operators are assigned to equipment and tasks.
- Incident Command System Used.
- A Unity of Command is observed.

Delegation:

Officers are encouraged to delegate any tasks related to the safety of personnel, however, the responsibility for safe fireground operations remains with the Fire Line Officers unless the Fire Chief is present.

Equipment Manning:

Officers will ensure that only operators familiar with the operation of any firefighting tool or equipment are assigned to their use in fireground operations.

Supplementary Equipment:

Officers shall establish communications with the firehouse wherever possible in order to call up additional apparatus or equipment not already on scene.

Serviceability:

Fire Line Officers shall assure themselves that equipment being put into use on the fireground is serviceable for the task assigned to the firefighter to reduce equipment failure at critical times.

Communications:

Fire Line Officers shall gain and maintain radio or other voice contact with concerned or adjacent firefighting or emergency management agencies including, where applicable, Lake County dispatch, the firehouse, Lake County Emergency Management, DNRC, Tribal Fire, State Fire Marshall, and the like.

Cause & Origin:

It shall be the duty of the responding Fire Line Officers to determine the cause and origin of any fire. In cases where the cause is suspicious, it shall be the duty of the Fire Line Officers to render a full report of the incident and to call in appropriate fire investigation agencies.

Back in Service:

The responding Fire Line Officers shall ensure any responding vehicles or equipment are cleaned and serviced so as to be ready for instant use.

Reports:

The responding Fire Line Officers shall complete a run report and any other reports necessary in the circumstances prior to securing the evolution.