

# Membership Policies

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## **Purpose**

The purpose of these policies is to provide overall guidance in how the organization functions. These policies are for internal management guidance. These policies may be changed at any time by the members and adherence to the new polices are expected. Changes or exceptions to these policies must be obtained in advanced and in writing and approved by membership.

## **Revisions**

These policies may be revised by following the vote requirements to Amend Something Previously Adpoted in Robert’s Rules of Order, Newly Revised.

## **Scope**

These policies currently apply to volunteer members within the organization. Paid employees or people who are compensated for goods or services do not fall within the scope of this document.

## **Management Procedures**

### **Record Maintenance**

Records will be maintained on each member of the organization. Information retained will include, personnel data, membership status, positions held, eligibility for offices, communications, disciplinary records, background checks, and similar documentation. These records may be digitized at the discretion of the Membership Committee.

### **Confidentiality of Records**

The records will be treated with confidentiality and will be released only as needed or as permitted by the member.

### **Social Security Numbers**

Attempts should be made to reduce the instances of storing Social Security Numbers (SSN) in personnel records. It should be the goal to keep only one instance of the SSN per member to assist in background checks.

Full or Partial Social Security Numbers (SSN) will not be permitted to be stored digitally in text format. Full SSNs will not be permitted to be stored digitally in any form including images. Existing

certificates that have the last 4 of the SSN included may be digitally stored in picture format. Those images may be redacted at member's request.

## **Medical Records**

Digitizing medical records will not be permitted.

## **Conflicts of Interest**

For any decision where a member who may personally or financially benefit themselves or their families, must recuse themselves from any discussion or action on the matter.

## **Representation of the Agency**

Prior to any action that may impact the organization, permission should be sought beforehand. This includes but is not limited to: public statements, agreements, contracts, or financial obligations. Members may represent the organization within the limits of their offices or committees. The President represents the organization as a whole. The Fire Chief represents the emergency management side of the organization. Various committees, such as Public Relations, may represent within their areas of responsibility.

## **Confidentiality**

The business of the organization should not be released to non-members or the public without express permission of the President or Chairman of the Board. Emergency management information must not be released without permission of the Fire Chief. This includes discussions, actions taken, meeting information or financial data. This policy will not supersede legal requests, such as Freedom of Information Act requests.

## **Members**

### **New Members**

#### **Application**

Prospective members must fill out an application and undergo all background, drug, and medical checks required by Membership Policy. Once the Membership Committee receives the application and completes their investigation, it shall be submitted to the next regular monthly meeting for voting.

All applicants must have:

1. Two employment and/or personal references.

2. A criminal history report issued by the Pennsylvania State Police Department prior to the completion of their probationary period.
3. A driver's status report as issued by the Pennsylvania State Police Department and/or the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation prior to completion of their probationary period.
4. All names and addresses of all prior Fire Company/Departments where he/she was a Member.

Firefighting applicants must:

1. Pass a complete drug test conducted by our contracted organization within forty-eight hours of the date of application.
2. Pass a physical examination conducted by our selected medical provider within fourteen days of the date of application.
3. Pass a physical agility test given by the Fire Chief.

## **Background and Drug Checks**

These checks may be conducted on each applicant:

1. Criminal History check
2. Child Abuse Clearance check
3. Driving History check
4. Drug test
5. Physical examination

## **Investigation**

All new Member applications shall be submitted to the Membership Committee. The committee shall interview and investigate all applicants. Any applicants having disqualifying criminal violations listed in the policies will not be accepted.

## **Probation**

Each application for new membership will be read at a regular meeting. The Membership Committee will report to the general Membership the results of its interview and investigation of each applicant. If the membership approves the application, the applicant shall be a Probationary Member for at least a six month period. All new members must pay a dues of \$10.00 to the Treasurer.

## **Induction**

The probationary member should be asked to leave the discussion. After the Membership Committee presents their report, a motion to induct, extend probation, or remove the member should be made. A ballot vote is required.

## **Points**

Members will be assigned points for attending Bingo by the Bingo Committee, and for drills by the Fire Chief or his designated person. The number of points required is listed in the bylaws. The points will be tallied on a month to month basis.

## **Delinquent Status**

Members that have failed to meet the minimum requirements of membership will be notified. If they have not caught up by the next meeting, they will be put on delinquent status for up to 3 months. If they have not caught up at the end of the 3 months, they will be removed from membership. Delinquent members lose voting privileges and will not be able to run for office.

## **Dues**

Dues shall be collected annually prior to the December meeting. Members who have not paid their dues for this period shall be notified by the Treasurer by certified mail, return receipt requested, at least 15 days prior to the next meeting. Members who fail to pay their dues by the March regular meeting shall be, upon announcement, automatically dropped from the Fire Company rolls and their Membership shall be terminated. A Member who pays his dues after receiving the Treasurer's written notice shall also pay the costs of the certified mailing.

## **Discipline**

Due to the heightened risk of firefighting and emergency services, discipline is an important part of the organization. Any issues or problems must be resolved in a timely and fair manner. The following will detail unacceptable behaviors and the consequences.

## **Charges**

Charges may be brought by submitting to the Board in writing. If valid, the board will refer the matter to the Membership Committee or select a special committee for trial. The disciplinary process outlined in Robert's Rules of Order, Newly Revised shall be the guide.

## **Fire Station or Emergency Scene**

Charges that may be brought include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Disorderly Conduct
- Countermanding Orders
- Lending Fire Company Equipment to non-members
- Damaging Fire Company Equipment
- Leaving post or assignment without permission
- Disobeying an order
- Intoxication by alcohol or drugs
- Taking articles of salvage or of others
- Removing Fire Company apparatus or materials without permission
- Interference with the Fire Chief or others in charge
- Recklessly endangering the lives of others
- Threats or acts of violence or illegal harassment

## **Social Hall and Fire Company Property**

Charges that may be brought include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Damaging or defacing anything therein
- Entering forcibly, except in an emergency
- Removing equipment or materials without proper authorization
- Being highly intoxicated and disorderly
- Interfering with persons in charge of an activity

## **Underage Consumption**

There will be no underage consumption of alcohol, drugs, or tobacco products on company property, or coming onto the premises with or while under the influence.

## **Criminal Violations**

### **Felonies**

Any member charged with a felony will be suspended from all fire hall functions and grounds pending the outcome of their case. Any member convicted of a felony will be immediately terminated from membership.

### **Sex Offenders**

Any member charged or convicted of a crime that requires them to be registered as a sex offender will be handled the same as if they were charged or convicted of a felony.

### **Misdemeanors**

Unless specifically stated otherwise, any member charged with a misdemeanor listed below will be suspended from all fire hall functions and grounds pending the outcome of their case. Unless specifically stated otherwise, any member convicted of a misdemeanor listed below will be immediately terminated from membership.

### **List of Misdemeanors**

#### ***Theft Related Crimes***

18 Pa.C.S. §3921, §3922, 3923, §3924, §3926, §3929, §3932, §3934, §4120

## **Driving Violations**

### **Suspended License**

Any member who has their operating privilege suspended is not allowed to drive any department vehicles for the duration of the suspension.

### **DUI**

75 Pa.C.S. §§3802. “Driving under influence of alcohol or controlled substance.” Members will be suspended from driving fire department vehicles immediately upon being charged. The suspension will end when the state restores the operating privileges to the member.

### **Apparatus Driving Disqualification**

Pennsylvania does not require a Commercial Drivers License (CDL) to drive emergency apparatus. However, we will still continue to follow CDL laws as guidelines for disqualification. Any driver who is disqualified from holding a CDL under 75 Pa.C.S. §§1611, whether or not they have a valid CDL, will not be permitted to drive vehicles exceeding 26,001 pounds or more.

(Refer to Pennsylvania Department of Transportation “Disqualifications and Traffic Offenses Fact Sheet” for a summary.)

## **Service Requirements**

### **Community Events**

Community events, referred to in the Bylaws, relate to various community events we provide a service or participate in. They are:

- Community day
- Memorial Day Parade and Service
- 9/11 Memorial Service
- Homecoming bonfire
- South Park High School Football lighting details
- Middle School Open House lighting detail

## **Benefits**

### **Rewards Program**

The Rewards program is a LOSAP for retirement. All Active members are eligible for this program.

## **Use of Social Hall**

Any Member, after being a Member for one year and in good standing, shall be entitled to use the Social Hall for themselves, their spouses, and/or their immediate family consisting of parents, their children, brothers, or sisters. To obtain use of the Social Hall, a Member shall submit a letter to the Board of Directors with the requested date and the intended use. Members granted personal use are solely responsible for set-up prior to use and for clean-up following use. The Member shall restore the Social Hall to its previous set-up, unless directed otherwise in writing. Any Member using the bar facilities must pay for bartenders, security, and clean-up at rates established by the Board of Directors. The Board of Directors may waive the rates if any Member volunteers to bartend, serve as security, or provide custodial services for the event.

## **Revision History**

- 20191210 – New Bylaws and Policies adopted
- 20200714 – Struck out Public Drunkenness
- 20200714 – Struck out Underage Drinking
- 20200714 – Struck out Controlled Substances
- 20200714 – Changed Driving Violations, DUI section
- 20220412 – Added points clarification