

SECTION: Human Resources		GUIDELINE # HR-024
Date Approved: July 7, 2020		Employees as Volunteer Firefighters
Revision Date: August 24, 2022	Review Date: August 23, 2022	
Authority: Human Resources, Hanover Fire Department		

1.0 PURPOSE

To establish procedures for Town of Hanover staff members who wish to serve as Volunteer Firefighters (VFF) for the Town of Hanover (the Town).

2.0 SCOPE

This guideline applies to:

- Town of Hanover employees
- Hanover Public Library employees
- Launch Pad Youth Activity & Technology Centre
- Members of Council

3.0 GENERAL GUIDELINES

It is essential that the Town maintains an adequate complement of qualified volunteer firefighters who are available at any time of day to respond to fires and other emergencies in order to protect the community and to provide for the public. As such, Town employees shall be permitted and encouraged to serve as volunteer firefighters.

In order to ensure that sufficient volunteer firefighters are available during normal working hours, and to set a positive example for all local businesses, the Town will support and encourage employees who desire to serve as volunteer firefighters in order to preserve and maintain the volunteer model of fire protection service delivery. This includes ability to respond to emergencies during working hours, as long as the employee's departure from the workplace does not compromise safety, interrupt critical Town operations, or unreasonably disrupt Town business.

4.0 PROCESS

1. Any employee who wishes to serve as a volunteer firefighter is subject to regular recruitment processes and requirements of the Hanover Fire Department (HFD).
2. Any employee selected to serve as a volunteer firefighter, and who wishes to respond to calls for service during scheduled work hours, must first seek the approval of his or her Supervisor. Such approval will not be reasonably withheld.
3. While performing after-hours "on-call" duties in the course of their regular employment for the Town, employees will not be available to also respond to emergency calls as volunteer firefighters.
4. Employees who are approved to serve as a volunteer firefighter may not leave the workplace to answer an emergency call if by doing so an unsafe condition is created or a critical Town operation is disrupted.
5. If summoned to respond to an emergency call as a volunteer firefighter, the employee must notify their supervisor that they wish to leave the workplace. The supervisor reserves the right to deny permission for the employee to respond to the emergency call, but such permission will not be unreasonably withheld.

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6. The employee must return to the workplace as soon as reasonably possible to resume their regular work duties upon conclusion of the emergency call.
7. In the event that an employee attends an emergency call that extends past their scheduled work start time, the employee must advise the Town that they will not be reporting for work at the normal start time in accordance with established Town policies.
8. If an employee cannot report to work at their scheduled work start time due to attendance at a fire or other emergency, or is called away from the workplace to respond to an emergency, they will not suffer a loss of pay or benefits resulting from their volunteer firefighting duties.
9. While attending a fire or emergency during their scheduled work hours, the employee will receive their regular Town wages for the time served as a volunteer firefighter.
10. The employee will not be entitled to overtime pay by the Town as the result of serving as a volunteer firefighter or responding to a fire or other emergency.
11. Employees cannot receive concurrent volunteer firefighter compensation while attending emergency calls and being remunerated their normal Town wages (commonly referred to as “double dipping”).
12. The Fire Chief will, upon request, provide verification to supervisors that an employee’s absence from the workplace was due to volunteer firefighter duties.
13. Should an employee require time off after a fire or other emergency to recuperate, they must request approval of vacation, lieu time or unpaid leave from their supervisor, approval of which will not be unreasonably denied.
14. Employees are responsible for their own personal transportation to and from the workplace for emergency calls. Town vehicles cannot not be used without prior authorization from the supervisor.
15. Employees who wish to be absent from the workplace during scheduled work hours for non-emergency volunteer firefighter duties, (e.g., firefighter training, public education duties, etc.) must seek prior approval of their supervisor. Time off from regularly scheduled work may be taken as vacation time, banked time, or unpaid leave of absence, approval of which will not be unreasonably denied.
16. Employees and Supervisors will consult Appendix A: Whether or Not an Employee May Leave the Workplace During Work Hours to Respond to a Fire Call

REVIEW FREQUENCY

This procedure will be reviewed every 4 years, at minimum, or more frequently as needed to maintain an effective and compliant process.

RELATED DOCUMENTS

HR-001 Personnel Policy
On-Call Procedures
Hanover Fire Department operating guidelines

Whether or Not an Employee Can Leave the Workplace During Work Hours to Respond to a Fire Call

