

# LAKWOOD FIRE DEPARTMENT STANDARD OPERATING GUIDELINES

SOG NUMBER: 101.06	ADMINISTRATION
DATE IMPLEMENTED: October 26, 2017 DATE REVISED: December 14, 2020 DATE EFFECTIVE: January 1, 2021	TITLE: STATION AND APPARATUS STAFFING AND LEAVE

## **PURPOSE:**

The purpose of this guideline is to regulate the daily, routine staffing of fire stations and apparatus by career personnel while allowing for said personnel's use of leave time. This guideline was promulgated to establish procedures to provide the community with the highest quality protection service possible within the parameters of the District's budget and to minimize the health and safety risk of personnel by assembling a sufficient number of personnel at every incident to bring the incident to a safe and satisfactory conclusion.

## **SCOPE:**

All career officers and career firefighters.

## **PROCEDURE:**

When sufficient personnel are available, the desired target staffing levels for apparatus and station are at least:

- a. Apparatus – engines – four (4) personnel (officer and three (3) firefighters); or aerial units – four (4) personnel (officer and three (3) firefighters)
- b. Station/Company – four (4) personnel (officer and three (3) firefighters)

A minimum of three (3) personnel (officer and two (2) firefighters) shall be on duty at each station/company at all times. Any deviation from this standard must be approved by the Chief of Department. To ensure compliance with this guideline, the officer in charge shall be assigned with the responsibility of maintaining staffing levels at prescribed minimums. No vacation leave time will be approved that will reduce staffing below the listed minimum levels.

When manpower falls below the minimum staffing of three (3) personnel report for duty, the officer in charge shall assign a sufficient number of off-duty personnel or personnel to satisfy the minimum staffing requirements. The officer in charge of each company shall be responsible for staffing one (1) engine/truck company with a minimum of three (3) personnel (officer and two (2) firefighters) to be deployed from a station.

## **Responsibilities of Shift Officer in Charge:**

1. Be accountable for the location and duty status of all personnel assigned to his/her respective shift inclusive of personnel temporarily assigned, shift swaps, or other staffing;
2. Prepare a daily staffing report and forward same to the Chief of Department.

3. Generate a staffing roster for his/her assigned staffing shift. Staffing assignments shall be given to personnel in the following order:
  - a. The Board reserves the right to require fire personnel to work when necessary provided the request is within parameters of this guideline.
  - b. During times when additional staffing is required due to time off (Sick/Personal or Other), the on-duty officer in charge shall be responsible to schedule personnel to provide adequate minimum staffing within the guidelines as set forth in this guideline. This may include relocations from other stations/companies that have adequate staffing.
  - c. Personnel shall be selected to fill staffing needs on an equal rotating basis. Starting alphabetically then solely based on hours worked.
  - d. It shall be the responsibility of the on-duty officer in charge to verify that Payroll Forms are submitted to the Chief of Department prior to the conclusion of their tour of duty.
  - e. At the discretion of the officer in charge, on-duty personnel may be held over until such time as appropriate relief is provided.
  - f. Should an officer or firefighter be held over past his twenty-four (24) hour shift due to times of emergency, the officer in charge shall make every effort to provide the necessary relief as soon as possible.
  - g. Career firefighters shall not be permitted to work more than twenty-four (24) hours without an eight (8) hour break, except in times of emergency (major incidents, working on an emergency incident past one's assigned shift, held over waiting for relief, or, as directed by the Chief of Department or his designee).
  - h. In the event additional personnel is required to fill minimum staffing, the following guideline shall be followed:
    1. Assignments shall be either one twenty-four (24) hour shift (0700 to 0700) or they may be divided into two 12 hours shifts (0700-1900) or 3 separate 8 hour shifts 0700-1500, 1500-2300, 2300-0700.
    2. When a staffing situation results in no officer being on duty, every effort shall be made to recall an officer. In all other situations, personnel shall be replaced with a rank equal to that of the rank causing the staffing needs.
    3. Members may turn down a staffing assignment until the eligible list has been gone through completely it is at this time a member will be selected based upon hours worked and be required to report for duty.

4. Additional staffing for each respective platoon will be filled as reflected below:

- PLATOON A

- Twenty-four (24) hour Assignment – Platoon C
- Day Assignment – Platoon B (0700-1500) or (0700-1900)
- Night Assignment – Platoon D (1500-2300), (2300-0700) or (1900-0700)

- PLATOON B

- Twenty-four (24) hour Assignment – Platoon D
- Day Assignment – Platoon C (0700-1500) or (0700-1900)
- Night Assignment – Platoon A (1500-2300), (2300-0700) or (1900-0700)

- PLATOON C

- Twenty-four (24) hour Assignment – Platoon A
- Day Assignment – Platoon D (0700-1500) or (0700-1900)
- Night Assignment – Platoon B (1500-2300), (2300-0700) or (1900-0700)

- PLATOON D

- Twenty-four (24) hour Assignment – Platoon B
- Day Assignment – Platoon A (0700-1500) or (0700-1900)
- Night Assignment – Platoon C (1500-2300), (2300-0700) or (1900-0700)

4. Maintain an accurate record of each shift members attendance inclusive of hours worked and leave time used. This information should be recorded in the scheduling software

5. Approve or disapprove all types of leave requests. No request for scheduled leave will be granted if doing so would result in personnel on duty falling below minimum levels as set forth above.

### **Counting Daily Staffing:**

Personnel running errands, fueling vehicles, moving vehicles for maintenance or attending District training “in house” are considered staffing. Personnel on light duty or injured on duty will not count as available staff. Personnel on military leave or other administrative leave will not count as available staff. These types of leave days could be single or multiple days of extended or light duty leave and will impact the availability of remaining personnel to take scheduled leave time. However, the personnel on leave, extended leave or light duty will not revoke existing and approved leave of the remaining personnel.

### **Vacation and the Daily Schedule:**

If any shift on the daily schedule has staffing above the minimum personnel staffing level outlined above, a shift member may request vacation leave time to the officer in charge for his/her approval. Any approved leave time shall count against daily staffing upon approval. Any request for vacation leave time that would reduce daily staffing below the minimum level as set forth above will be denied.

### **Vacation Leave Time Procedure:**

In order to facilitate the needs of all personnel, a rotating selection schedule for vacation leave will be circulated beginning October 15<sup>th</sup> for the calendar year. This schedule will be passed to each crew officer in charge giving each person seventy-two (72) hours to select forty-eight (48) hours of vacation leave on a seniority basis. After that period, if a member fails to select his/her forty-eight (48) hours, the schedule will be passed to the next person on the seniority list until all members have had an opportunity to select forty-eight (48) hours of vacation leave. The vacation leave schedule will be posted December 1<sup>st</sup> for the following calendar year. Personnel with more than forty-eight (48) hours shall be afforded a second opportunity to select the balance of their respective vacation leave for the following calendar year again by a rotation selection schedule commencing December 1<sup>st</sup>. This schedule will be passed to all personnel with remaining vacation leave hours in seniority order, giving each person forty-eight (48) hours to select the balance of their vacation leave. The final annual selection schedule will be posted December 24<sup>th</sup> for the following calendar year. A copy will be forwarded to the Board business office.

Personnel may request to cancel their scheduled vacation providing at least fourteen (14) days prior to the leave date. Personnel shall request to do so by submitting a change request in the scheduling software. Approval or disapproval will be given within forty-eight (48) hours. All vacation leave shall be taken in twenty-four (24) hour shift days. Personnel who elect to schedule use of vacation leave after the annual selection process has concluded will be required to provide fourteen (14) days' notice by selecting a change request in the scheduling software. Approval or disapproval will be given within forty-eight (48) hours by the on duty OIC receiving the request.

### **Personal Leave Procedure:**

Personnel may utilize personal time by communicating via telephone to the on-duty officer in charge by 0500 hours on the day they are scheduled to work. Early callouts if known may be made the day before or earlier if possible. Firefighters shall call out of a scheduled shift by contacting the on-duty officer in charge. If no answer, a message or text may be left on the OIC phone. A confirmation will be sent from the OIC upon receipt. An email sent to designated Leave email address if available is also an accepted procedure. Please ensure a confirmation is received from the OIC. It is the duty of the OIC to ensure coverage for the following shift.

All use of personal leave shall be taken in 8 hour/16 hours blocks (0700-1500) (1500-2300) (2300-0700) or 24-hour (0700-0700) shifts.

### **Sick Leave Procedure:**

Personnel may utilize sick days by communicating via telephone to the on-duty officer in charge by 0500 hours on the day they are scheduled to work. Early callouts if known may be made the day before or earlier if possible. Personnel shall call out of a scheduled shift by contacting the on-duty officer in charge. If no answer, a message or text may be left on the OIC phone. A confirmation will be sent from the OIC upon receipt. An email sent to designated leave email address if available is also an accepted procedure. Please ensure a confirmation is received from the OIC. It is the duty of the OIC to ensure coverage for the following shift.

## **Leave without Pay**

Personnel may request leave without pay by utilizing the following procedure: Leave without pay is to be taken in 24 (0700-0700) or 12 (0700-1900) (1900-0700) hour increments. It is the sole discretion of the Chief of Department to grant/ deny Leave without pay. Leave without pay requests will not be unreasonably denied. In the absence of the Chief of Department or in an emergency the OIC may approve Leave without pay. A member must exhaust all Vacation and personal leave before consideration for Leave without pay. When an Officer or Firefighter is on leave without pay the position will be filled with a staffing assignment to the desired staffing level. Staffing assignments for leave without pay will be filled in in one (1) 24-hour shift (0700-0700) or two (2) separate 12-hour shifts (0700-1900) (1900-0700). It is the duty of the OIC to ensure coverage for the following shift.

## **Duty Exchanges**

1. Members shall be limited to twenty-four (24) initiated duty exchanges per year. It is understood that upon initiating a duty exchange, members will be expected to repay that exchange within one (1) year of the date of the duty exchange.
2. Duty exchanges will not result in an expenditure on the part of the Lakewood Fire District and the parties involved in a duty exchange release the Lakewood Fire District from any and all claims that may result from an exchange.
3. Members submitting duty exchanges shall, whenever possible, submit them to their respective OIC so that the OIC may give due consideration as to how the duty exchange might affect their operations. The approval for duty exchanges shall be left to the discretion of the OIC receiving the request.
4. Any member requesting a duty exchange shall make an attempt to obtain a member of equal rank to work for them. If this is not possible, special consideration will be given depending upon the nature of the exchange. For purposes of this SOG only, the ranks of Captain and Lieutenant should be considered of equal rank.
5. All duty exchanges shall be submitted at least 24-hours in advance, except in cases of emergency. Duty exchanges shall only be permitted for 8-hour blocks (0700-1500) (1500-2300) (2300- 0700) 12-hour (0700-1900) (1900-0700) 24-hour (0700-0700) shifts.
6. The following example will illustrate the procedure to be used in the unusual situation when an EXCHANGE OF DUTY RESULTS IN SICK LEAVE. Member "A" agrees to work for Member "B". Prior to reporting for duty, Member "A" reports out sick. If an overtime situation exists, an attempt will be made to contact Member "B" who will report for duty or make other arrangements to have his tour of duty covered. If Member "B" cannot be contacted, an Overtime man will be called and Member "B" will pay back the time to the department at the discretion of the Chief of Department or designee.
7. Tracking of duty exchanges will be reflected by the OIC on the Daily Staffing Report which shall be submitted as noted herein this SOG.

**Time Sheets and Leave Time Notation:**

All leave time requests shall be entered into the proper time sheets. Dispositions on leave time will be entered and recorded in the District leave program. Any changes or edits to leave time shall be made by the OIC to most accurately reflect the type and amount of leave time actually taken by the firefighter.

All leave time shall be noted on the respective firefighter time sheet and submitted by the payroll deadline. Failure to submit a time sheet by the deadline may result in disciplinary action.

**Daily Reports**

In order to properly track and record Regular Assignments (RA), Staffing Assignments (SA), Leave Without Pay (LWOP), Sick Leave (SL), Personal Leave (PL), Vacation Leave (VL), Bereavement Leave (BL), Duty Exchanges or Swap Working (SW) and Swap Off (SO) as well as Acting Officer (AO), the on-duty OIC will prepare a Daily Staffing Report and submit same as well as any payroll forms to the Chief of Department prior to the end of their respective tour.