

Gilmer County Fire & Rescue Standard Operating Procedures

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Gilmer County Fire & Rescue

TERMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

Effective date: _____

Implementation date: _____

Revision date: _____

The following terms are commonly used or may be used by the Gilmer County Fire Rescue in both written and oral communications:

1. Academy: A facility used to train recruits to be firefighters. May also refer to a facility or complex where in-service training is conducted.

2. Aid station: A designated location at an incident where EMS personnel treat the sick and injured. The person in charge of an aid station will normally be a paramedic and will coordinate activities with the command post. The aid station may also be divided into sectors such as Triage, Treatment, and Transportation.

3. Alarm: An incident or event that requires a response by one or more fire companies or medical units. There are several types of alarms:

(a) Automatic alarm: A request for emergency service from an alarm company or security office, on activation of a smoke or heat detector or of a fixed extinguishing system. The flow of water within a fixed system, the closure or opening of a valve, or the activation of a fire pump may also result in the transmission of an alarm signal.

(b) General alarms: An incident that requires the response of all of the department's personnel and apparatus.

(c) Multiple alarms: A request for additional assistance at an incident to which a normal response assignment has been previously dispatched. Multiple alarms are designated as greater alarms.

4. All clear: A phrase used on completion of the primary search of a fire building indicating to all personnel that the search has been completed and that no victims were found.

5. Assignment: A predetermined designation of the units to respond to a given type of incident; the entire complement of apparatus assigned to any given incident; the assignment of any given unit.

6. Automatic aid: A programmed plan that responds the closest available company to an incident even though the closest company may be from a different political jurisdiction.

7. Back in: A term used to indicate that a company is back in quarters.
8. Base station: A fixed two-way radio station located either in the Dispatch center or the watch office of a fire station.
9. Call: An alarm for a fire or emergency.
10. Call back:
 - (a) The recall of off duty personnel back to duty for an incident or event.
 - (b) A telephone number provided by 911 to contact a person who reports a fire.
11. Can handle or "We can handle": A message from a unit at the scene of an incident indicating that no further assistance will be required.
12. Catch a hydrant: An order to a responding engine company to perform a forward lay of a supply line.
13. Charge: To turn on the water and fill a hose with water and pressure.
14. Command: The radio identifier for the officer in charge of an incident. Also known as the incident commander or IC.
15. Command Post: A designated location at an incident where the primary command functions are executed. The command post will be staffed by the incident commander, support personnel, and representatives from other agencies as required.
16. Controlled burn: Planned burning, allowed only by permit, conducted to remove fuel, abate a hazard, or clear a building site prior to construction.
17. Critique: A formal process following an incident and conducted by the personnel who responded so as to analyze their actions, correct deficiencies, and identify those tasks that were performed correctly.
18. Detail: The assignment of one or more personnel to temporary duty with another company or work group.
19. Detection: The act or system of discovering or locating fires.
20. Dispatch:
 - (a) To order a fire company or medic unit to respond to a certain location, incident or event.
 - (b) The radio identifier for the department's emergency communications center.
21. Disregard: An order to one or more responding units that their services are not needed and that they should return to service.

22. District: A designated geographic area of service delivery normally covered by a single fire station. It may also refer to the entire area covered by a single fire department regardless of the number of stations.
23. Drill: A training session.
24. Drill tower: A multistory training structure.
25. Elapsed time: The time used to complete any assignment.
26. Emergency: A radio term used to clear the radio of all radio traffic. The term emergency should be followed by a specific message or set of instructions.
27. Emergency traffic: The act of clearing a radio channel of all nonessential communications.
28. En route: Indicates that an apparatus or other unit is responding to an incident.
29. Exposure: A building, vehicle or other property that is endangered by fire in an adjacent building, a vehicle, or property.
30. False alarm: An alarm for which no fire or emergency existed or for which fire department response was unnecessary.
31. Fill in: The dispatch of another apparatus or medic unit to replace companies not available to answer their regular assignments.
32. Fire Alarm: Dispatch (2).
33. Fire danger: A term indicating the risk of a wildland fire due to such weather conditions as prolonged drought, high winds, low humidity etc.
34. Fireground: The operational area at a fire.
35. Fire school: An accredited university offering regular programs in fire science. May also refer to a recruit school or training academy.
36. First due: The first company listed on an alarm assignment for a given location that is nearest in response time and travel distance.
37. First in: The first company or unit to arrive at an incident.
38. Forest Service:
- (a) An agency with fire control responsibility for wildland fire suppression.
 - (b) U.S. Forest Service. An agency with fire control responsibility for wildland fire suppression in national parks, national forests, and other land owned by the federal government.

39. Front line: Apparatus and medic units normally staffed at all times.
40. Fully involved: A size-up report that indicates that the entire area of a building is so involved with heat, smoke, and flame that immediate access to the interior isn't possible until some measure of control has been achieved with hose streams.
41. Hazard: Any condition that poses a threat to property or that might result in injury or death.
42. House lights: Lights that may be controlled from the watch office or by Dispatch to illuminate a fire station when it is to respond to an alarm.
43. Incident: A fire, medical call, or other emergency that requires one or more fire companies or medical units to be dispatched to render aid. See also Alarm.
44. Incident command system: A systematic plan for conducting operations during an incident. See SOP _____, Incident Command System.
45. Incendiary: A fire believed to have been deliberately set.
46. Incipient: a fire of minor consequence or in initial stages.
47. Initial alarm: The first notification received by the department indicating that a fire or emergency exists.
48. In service:
- (a) A report indicating that an apparatus or ambulance is fully functional and available to respond to an assignment.
 - (b) A radio message indicating that an apparatus or ambulance has completed its previous assignment and is available for the next call.
 - (c) A radio message indicating that a company or medic unit has left its quarters and will be monitoring the radio for any assignments.
49. Investigation:
- (a) Sending an individual, company or unit to check for smoke, heat, steam, or other indication of fire.
 - (b) The act of determining the cause and origin of a fire.
 - (c) The act of determining whether or not a complaint received by the department concerning the actions of one or more of its employees was proper and within the scope of his duty.
50. Log Book: A day book or record book maintained by a captain of all activities, alarms, visitors, etc.

52. Location: A specifically designated place to which fire apparatus or medical units are dispatched in answer to an alarm or request for assistance.
53. Log: A chronological record of events, such as the Dispatch log or Incident log.
54. Malicious false alarm: A false alarm of fire deliberately sounded to inconvenience the fire department and to cause a disturbance or excitement rather than one sounded by accident or error.
55. Message: A radio communication consisting of a contact call, response, text, and acknowledgment.
56. Move up: The movement of fire companies from their assigned stations to cover vacated stations so as to give coverage to districts stripped of normal protection.
57. Mutual aid: Two-way assistance by fire departments of two or more communities freely given under prearranged plans or contracts so that each will aid the other in time of emergency and also provide for joint or cooperative response to alarms near jurisdictional boundaries.
58. Nothing showing: A report given by the first-arriving unit at an incident indicating to Dispatch and other responding companies that no smoke, fire, or other emergency situation is apparent.
59. Out of service: A report indicating that an apparatus or ambulance is not available to respond to an alarm. This report should be accompanied by a message indicating the estimated length of time that the unit will be unavailable.
61. Over the air: Via radio transmission.
62. Overcome: The state of a person being incapacitated by heat, smoke, or toxic gases so as to be rendered helpless and possibly unconscious.
63. Patient: Someone who is sick or injured and requires the assistance of the department. A patient may also be referred to as a victim, citizen, customer, individual, person, man, woman, or child. A patient should never be referred to as a subject, perpetrator, or suspect!
64. Permit: Official permission given in writing to allow a special activity.
65. Bail Out: Rapid exit from a window or door from a hostile environment.
66. Crew: An organized group of firefighters who are assigned to work the same tour of duty. Also known as a "shift".
67. Progress report: A periodic radio report required from an incident commander to update Dispatch on the status of an incident.

68. Quarters: The fire station to which a given company unit is assigned.
69. Rear: The side of a building or incident directly opposite the main street front or command position.
70. Recall: To call off-duty personnel back to their stations or to a major incident.
71. Receiver: A mobile or base radio unit that allows a person to hear a radio message on a specific channel or frequency.
72. Recruit:
- (a) A new employee during the first 12 months of his employment. Also known as rookie, probie, etc.
 - (b) The act of encouraging people to apply for employment with the department.
73. Recruit school: A formal training curriculum in which new employees are provided with at least the minimum number of training hours and subjects as required. Also known as an academy.
74. Rehab: This term can refer either to the actual rehab vehicle or to a designated location at an incident. The purpose of rehab is to provide rest, refreshments, and medical evaluation to working personnel.
75. Rekindle: An instance where, due to re-ignition, the department is called back to a location where the fire was thought to have been extinguished.
76. Relieved:
- (a) Used to describe a fire company that is dismissed from further duty at the scene of an emergency.
 - (b) Used to describe the routine act of changing shifts.
 - (c) Used to describe the temporary dismissal of an individual by a supervisor due to a pending disciplinary action.
77. Repeater: A radio that receives a signal from another radio and rebroadcasts the signal with greater signal strength. For example, a five-watt handheld radio does not have the strength to transmit to all portions of a response area. However, a repeater can receive this weaker signal and rebroadcast it with a strength of 100 watts, sufficient to cover the entire district.
78. Reserve: Apparatus or ambulance units not on frontline duty but available in case a frontline unit is undergoing repairs. It is also available to be staffed by off duty personnel when necessary.

79. Respond: To answer an alarm in accordance with a prearranged assignment or on the instruction of the Dispatcher. To proceed to the scene of an incident or other event.
80. Responding: A term indicating that orders to proceed to an alarm have been received and the apparatus or medical unit is on its way.
81. Response: The act of responding to an alarm. Also, the entire complement of personnel and apparatus assigned to an alarm.
82. Response time: An interval of time measured from the receipt of a request for emergency service until the first unit or apparatus arrives at the scene of an incident.
83. Rig: A fire apparatus.
84. Riser: A vertical water pipe used to carry water for fire protection to elevations above grade, such as a standpipe or sprinkler riser.
85. Roster: A list of fire department personnel and their duty assignments. Also, a list of apparatus motor vehicles owned by the department.
86. Run: A fire or medical alarm.
87. Run number: The number filled out by Dispatch for each incident dispatch
88. Sector: A specific task assignment (e.g., Staging), a geographic area (e.g., north sector), or an operational area (e.g. interior sector) of an incident that is designated and assigned by the incident commander. This is a command and control function. Sector commanders should coordinate their activities with the incident commander and use their assignment as their radio identifier. During high-rise operations, the sector designation corresponds to the floor of the building.
89. Shift: A working tour---e.g. 24 hours on, 48 hours off. Also refers to a group of workers on a given shift. See also "Crew".
90. Shop: The department motor vehicle repair facility.
91. Signal: A radio message referring to the strength of a radio transmission and the listener's ability to hear and understand the message.
92. Staging: A designated location(s) at an incident where apparatus, equipment, and personnel are assembled for deployment. The person in charge of a staging sector will coordinate his activities with the incident commander and will use the term Staging as his radio identifier. When more than one staging area or sector is used at an incident, a geographic identifier will be used, such as Forward Staging.
93. Station: A building or quarters that houses on-duty personnel and apparatus.
94. Street Index: A complete listing of all streets, roads, and highways located within the department's response district. The Street Index is organized alphabetically and

numerically by block number. In addition, the index lists cross streets and major landmarks and the box number and hydrants for each intersection. The Master Street Index is housed in the dispatcher's office and is periodically updated by a fire officer assigned that responsibility.

95. Support: In incident command, those logistical functions that aid the resolution of the incident.

96. Suppression: The total work of extinguishing a fire, beginning with its discovery

97. Territory: A geographic area served by a single fire station or the entire area served by a department. See also District.

98. Tied up: A fire company engaged for a period of time and unable to respond to incidents.

99. Time of arrival: The time as indicated on the radio log that the first unit arrived at an incident. Also, the time that other responding companies arrived. (10-23)

100. Tour of duty: Any given on-duty period worked by an individual or group of employees.

101. Transmitter: A mobile or base radio that allows voice messages to be sent by way of a given frequency.

102. Turn-out time: The interval of time as measured from the receipt of an alarm until a fire company reports en route or notifies Dispatch that it is responding.

103. Two-way radio: A mobile or base radio unit that allows both the transmission and receipt of audio messages.

104. Under control: A fire is sufficiently surrounded and quenched so that it no longer threatens destruction of additional property.

105. Wash down: The cleansing or removal of gasoline, diesel fuel, or other petroleum products from a roadway following a motor vehicle accident. Originally meant to wash the product down into a ditch or storm sewer. Now the product has to be collected due to environmental regulations.

106. Watch: An interval of time during which a person is assigned to a specific duty. In some jurisdictions, this duty is served at the watch desk in the watch office.

107. Duty Desk: The desk in a fire station at which the various communications equipment is placed and alarms are received and recorded.

108. Watch Office: An office in which the watch desk is placed.

109. Water supply: In incident command, the officer assigned to provide an adequate supply of water to meet the fire flow demand at a given incident.

110. Wildland fire: A fire involving natural groundcover such as grass, brush, and trees.
111. Working fire: A fire that requires firefighting activity on the part of most or all of the personnel assigned to the alarm.

000 GENERAL ADMINISTRATION

As an employee of the Gilmer County Fire and Rescue Department each employee shall acknowledge and agree to not only the Gilmer County Fire and Rescue Standard Operating Procedures, but to the Gilmer County Human Resource Policies as well.

001 Organization

001.1 Mission Statement: As a department of public service, our fundamental duty is to protect or save lives and safeguard property in the

service of our community. We will strive to provide the highest level of service expected by the citizens and maintain a positive image at all times.

001.2 Policy on S.O.P.'S: Our department has established S.O.P.'S and S.O.G.'S that have been reviewed and approved by the Board of Commissioners to clearly inform department members as to the expectations of the operation and its public image. These procedures and guidelines shall be adhered to at all times. Many of the procedures and guidelines are established to prevent injury, life safety hazards, assist in mitigating incident decisions; therefore failure to comply could have a negative result. Individuals not adhering to department guidelines or following procedure shall be counseled and/or disciplined, up to and including termination.

001.3 Chain of Command: The department establishes a chain of command for a more effective and functional mode of operation. Individuals shall relay all information and questions through the established chain of command as outlined in the department's organizational chart. If resolution is not achieved at the initial level of an individual's chain of command, the individual may request that the issue be elevated to the next level of command. It is highly recommended that the proper chain of command be used to resolve personnel issues. Please see Gilmer County Human Resources Policy # 304 (Complaint Procedure) for further information.

001.4 Code of Ethics:

To be used in conjunction with the Gilmer County Standards of Conduct Policy. Please refer to the Gilmer County Human Resources Policy Manual.

- No member shall participate in any function or activity that may bring negative image to themselves, the department, or county.
- No member shall receive any monetary gain for rendering services that is part of their duty as an emergency services member.
- No individual shall receive gifts over the amount of \$25.00.
- No member shall consume alcoholic beverages while on duty for the department.
- No member shall use their position as an emergency services member for personal gain.
- No member shall use foul or abusive language in the presence of the public.

- No member shall cast negative comments, rumors, or untruthful statements against any other member, county employee, and administration.
- Personnel shall be courteous and respectful to everyone at all times.
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001.5 Drug Free Workplace: Please refer to the Gilmer County Employee Policy Manual.

001.6 Inter-department Communication:

The proper method of communication between departments is an individual of the same level of the chain of command. Information deemed official must be approved by the Chief prior to dissemination.

002 Facilities

In order to project the desired professional image the following regulations shall be observed:

- (a) No furniture shall be allowed in front of any fire station or at any outside location that is easily viewed by the public. Exceptions shall be permanent approved furnishings around stations.
- (b) Lounging in front of any fire station or at any outside location that is easily viewed by the public is prohibited.
- (c) At no time shall any member sleep in an area that is accessible to the public. Sleeping prior to 1700 hours is prohibited unless approved by shift or chief officers.
- (d) Recreational sports and physical Activities shall be conducted outdoors.
- (e) The playing of games (cards, dominos, etc.) shall be restricted to locations outside the view of the public. Playing games prior to 1700 hours is prohibited.
- (f) Physical training clothing shall be worn during physical training or as sleep wear. Any exceptions must be approved by the Chief or shift officer.
- (g) Personnel will at all times remain professional when visitors are present in stations.
- (h) Televisions will remain off unless viewing weather or news prior to 1700 hours. Exceptions are weekends and holiday routines.

- (i) All personnel assigned to GCFR stations will adhere to these regulations, policies and guidelines set forth and not limited to department SOP's and SOG's while at GCFR stations.

002.1 Non Smoking Areas:

Smoking in vehicles is strictly prohibited.

002.2 Telephone and Computer/Internet Usage:

Telephones, Computers and Internet systems are in place for business use only. Personal phone calls shall only be for family or emergency related matters that should be kept to a minimum and not to interfere with an individuals duties or the operation of the department. Phone usage may be regulated and controlled as deemed necessary by the shift officer in charge. For further Computer/Internet Use information please see Gilmer County Human Resources Policy #310.

002.3 Sleeping Facilities:

The department provides sleeping facilities as a privilege to individuals working during the nighttime hours. This privilege shall not be abused. Individuals shall be respectful and considerate to other's in adjacent sleeping facilities, or others using the same facility during the on-coming shift, by refraining from indecency, obsessive noise, and clutter. The facility must be kept orderly and clean at all times. The shift officer in charge shall inspect the sleeping facilities when coming on their tour of duty, as well as before leaving from their tour of duty. No individual shall be found sleeping or lounging in sleeping facilities during the hours between 8 a.m. and 5 p.m., unless otherwise approved by a chief officer. No one other than fire personnel shall be allowed in sleeping quarters.

002.4 Apparatus Bay Doors:

The bay doors shall be cleaned during weekly house day and painted as needed. The windows shall be cleaned and kept streak free at all times. Doors shall be closed while apparatus is on calls or while climate control utilities are functioning.

002.5 Portable Fire Extinguishers:

All portable fire extinguishers shall be inspected and in compliance with NFPA. Extinguishers shall remain filled and clean of debris. All areas requiring fire extinguishers shall have fire extinguishers at all times. Personnel shall insure that fire extinguishers are in their proper location and secured as required.

002.6 Smoke and Carbon Monoxide Detectors:

All smoke and carbon monoxide detectors shall be properly functioning and shall be inspected and tested weekly during house day. If equipment is found to be defective, personnel shall promptly report the defect/need to the Officer in Charge.

002.7 Storage and Use of Fuels:

All fuels and containers shall be maintained and stored safely and secured as specified by their manufacturer and NFPA. All containers shall be filled up to a safe level and returned to full after use. All containers shall be part of the daily equipment check off.

002.8 Facility Maintenance and Repairs:

All facilities shall be maintained and necessary repairs shall take place as soon as possible. Any preventive maintenance shall be done on a regular basis. If repairs or maintenance matters have an associated cost, a request shall be submitted through the proper chain of command and the proper documentation (equipment/repair request form) shall be completed and approved by the Fire Chief for proper Purchase Order (P.O.) submittal. The Shift Officer shall coordinate maintenance and repair on house days or as needed. Personnel shall keep apparatus and station floors free of slippery substances and obstructions. Water, oil, hydraulic fluid, etc. should be mopped up when accumulations appear. Traffic route areas, hallways, stair, etc. shall be clear of unnecessary obstacles and obstructions. Failure to maintain facilities or make necessary repairs will result in disciplinary action if negligence is obvious by personnel.

002.9 Facility Security:

All facilities shall remain secured at all times. Buildings should not be accessed by general public except through marked public entry ways. While buildings are vacated, all entry points shall be closed and properly locked. All documentation shall be stored away and secured as not to be accessed by anyone outside of the department or other personnel not authorized to view such documentation. Regular inspections will be made by Chief Officers to assure security of facilities. Personnel knowingly allowing access to unauthorized areas and/or information will be subject to disciplinary action.

002.10 Employee Parking

All fire stations have a designated area for employee parking. The company officer on duty shall ensure that all employees park within this area. Employees shall not park personal vehicles, including motorcycles, in the apparatus room, visitor's parking, or on any ramp leading into the apparatus room. Trailers of any

description shall not be permitted on fire station property without the permission of the appropriate shift officer.

"For Sale" signs on personal vehicles, trailers, etc., are prohibited on County Property.

002.11 Policy of Public Access:

The public is welcome within departmental facilities in approved areas of the buildings. The approved areas shall be apparatus bays, public reception areas, day room, kitchen, offices for business purposes, and public restrooms. Areas not approved for public access shall be the crew private quarters such as crew bathrooms, bunk areas, or any other room deemed inappropriate by the shift or chief officers. Public access to fire station facilities during business hours (8 a.m. to 5 p.m.) shall only be allowed long enough to conduct necessary business. Individuals or family members wishing to visit shall be allowed during allotted visitation hours and should not interfere with regular business and shift responsibilities. Shift or Chief Officers have the right to deny public access or visitation at anytime. Individuals not wishing to comply with departmental public access policy shall be escorted off premises by law enforcement.

Fire & Rescue personnel shall greet visitors, introduce themselves, and determine the visitor's needs, assist them if possible, or direct them to the Company Officer. It is also the duty of station personnel to notify the Company Officer when a Chief Officer, other department member, or county/city official enters the station on official business. Visits from friends or family members shall be arranged so that they shall not interfere with normal station routines.

Public groups that want to schedule a tour shall be advised to contact the Administrative Assistant to set up an appointment. Groups or individual's are always welcome to visit if the company's schedule allows.

The Company Officer shall relay safety rules to visitors at the beginning of the tour to make sure the visit is accident free. The Company Officer shall appoint a guide to show the visitors through the station. The guide will explain the department's operation and equipment functions and make every effort to answer all questions in an informative and professional manner. Groups of children must be accompanied by an adult supervisor. At no time shall unsupervised children be allowed to wander through the fire station or fire department property.

If a group or individual child cannot be controlled in a safe and responsible manner, after all reasonable efforts have failed; the tour must be terminated in a tactful and professional manner.

002.12 Workplace Violence:

All personnel shall abide by the Gilmer County Human Resources Policy - Standards of Conduct Policy. The department will not tolerate any type of workplace violence (fighting). Employees participating in such activities shall be subject to disciplinary action up to and including termination.

003 Emergency Vehicles and Special Apparatus

003.1 Fueling of Vehicles:

Vehicles requiring fuel shall be filled promptly and safely at approved pumps. Personnel shall use proper means of fueling accountability and maintain proper records. Vehicles shall be left with no less than $\frac{3}{4}$ tank of fuel at shift change or when swapping vehicles with other personnel.

003.2 Inspection of Vehicles:

Vehicles shall be inspected daily and the vehicle inspection/check-off sheet shall be utilized. Personnel shall insure that all equipment is accounted for, properly functioning, clean and in the appropriate place. Apparatus inspections should be completed immediately upon reporting for duty and personnel shall report any missing or damaged equipment immediately through the proper chain of command. Equipment checks shall be thorough and consistent as not to miss any important details.

003.3 Out of Service Vehicles:

Vehicles deemed to be unworthy of service shall be officially—released from service immediately. All responsible parties shall be notified promptly and informed as to the issues with the vehicle. Chief Officers shall be notified immediately. Necessary purchases should be relayed through the chain of command with the proper documentation submitted to the Fire Chief for approval and for Purchase Order processing. Arrangements shall be made to immediately replace the vehicle with the necessary apparatus.

003.4 Non Departmental Riders:

Individuals wishing to ride on apparatus who are not members of the department must compete and return a "citizen observer waiver document".

Such document must be approved by the Fire Chief and maintained on file. Individuals who have not been approved shall not, (for any reason), be allowed on any departmental apparatus.

003.5 Care and Maintenance of Vehicles and Apparatus:

All vehicles shall be maintained and cared for in compliance with county policy and departmental policy. Routine maintenance, as recommended by the manufacturer, should be regularly scheduled and completed. Repairs are to be made immediately upon identification and all proper paperwork should be completed. Necessary communications should be made through the proper chain of command for the Purchase Request processing.

003.6 Repairs of Vehicles and Apparatus:

If the maintenance officer determines that a vehicle needs repair work and requires maintenance outside the facility, the Maintenance Officer will make arrangements to have these repairs completed as soon as possible. If the officer determines that a vehicle is not able to perform as required it shall be placed out of service. Once the determination has been made to place a vehicle out of service:

- (a) Place the reserve unit in-service.
- (b) The Shift Officer will notify all personnel as to the status of the vehicle.
- (c) The Shift Officer will notify dispatch as to the status of the vehicle.
- (d) The Shift Officer will notify the Maintenance Officer of the decision to place a vehicle out of service. This will be done in one of the following ways:
 - Direct phone contact
 - The Shift Officer will make an entry in the daily log as to the vehicle's out of service status.
- (e) The Shift Officer will notify Chief Officers, District Chiefs, and OIC at Ellijay Fire of our placing a vehicle out of service. The notification to OIC/Ellijay fire is necessary if compromises any automatic or mutual aid agreements that are in effect.
- (f) After repairs have been made and the vehicle has been placed in service, the shift officer will notify the shift personnel at station.

004 Equipment and Supplies

004.1 Personnel Protective Equipment:

Personnel are required to wear all necessary PPE in compliance with O.S.H.A, NFPA and or any establish law or guideline that dictates use for any type of

incident that the department responds to. PPE shall be regularly inspected monthly as to insure quality and effectiveness.

004.2 Small Tools, Power Tools and Equipment:

All tools and equipment shall be maintained, stored and repaired as necessary, and only used by individuals qualified to use such equipment. Personnel shall ensure prompt repair when needed. Tools and equipment shall be inspected and cleaned on a regular weekly schedule. Equipment shall remain full of required fuels and fluids. All equipment shall be used and maintained as to manufacturer's specifications. Negligence on behalf of personnel causing equipment to fail will result in disciplinary action up to and including termination if the responsible individual(s) are identified by the Shift or Chief Officers.

004.3 Self Contained Breathing Apparatus Maintenance:

S.C.B.A maintenance shall take place as required by NFPA and the department. Daily inspections as to proper functionality, as well as, monthly in-depth inspections shall be completed. Daily inspection shall include checking air level of the cylinder, gauge inspection, cleanliness of all components, proper functioning of all components of the mask and air pack and proper functioning of adjustable straps. Monthly Inspection shall be in-depth and check every single aspect of the S.C.B.A to include o-rings, hoses, and all rubber seals. As the above listed details provide an outline of inspection points that personnel shall perform, it also provides inspection which are outlined by the product manufacturer and NFPA. As with all other departmental equipment, personnel shall report any damaged or malfunctioning equipment through their chain of command for the prompt repair and attention.

004.4 Hose Testing and Maintenance:

The department shall test hoses annually and perform the test as dictated by NFPA. Personnel shall test every aspect of the fire hose to ensure safety and proper use. All necessary supplies for hose testing shall be requested through the chain of command prior to the task so the P.O. process can be obtained to purchase materials.

004.5 Inventory Control Procedures:

All inventory shall be monitored by Shift Officers or individuals appointed to supply and inventory responsibility. Inventory shall be taken on a regular weekly schedule. Necessary supplies and materials shall be documented and requested through the proper channels for prompt purchase and replenishment. Enough supply should be ordered to insure plentiful, but not wasteful, supply so as not to have to make repetitive small orders. Each station shall be given its own supply of materials so as not to require constant trips to headquarters for

replenishment. House day should be when general station supplies are inventoried and replenished from the headquarters.

004.6 Ropes and Harnesses:

Ropes and Harnesses shall be stored, maintained and cared for as to the manufacturer's specifications. This equipment shall be used only by personnel certified to use it. No individual shall use any rope, harness or associated equipment without being fully qualified to do so. All requirements by NFPA will be followed that pertain to any rope equipment. The rope equipment shall be kept in area of easy access when it is needed and shall be ready for quick deployment at any time.

004.7 Communications Equipment:

Communications equipment for the department will be issued based on an as-needed basis by the Fire Chief. Communications equipment will be made readily available to all personnel requiring use during emergency operations. All personnel shall use communications equipment to communicate with necessary personnel on scene. All equipment will be inventoried by the appropriate appointed individual. Each individual possessing issued communications equipment will be held responsible for any loss or damage to the equipment. Personnel shall ensure that all equipment is maintained as per the manufacturer specifications. In the event an individual is no longer a member of the department, all issued equipment shall be returned promptly and accounted for. Personnel shall be professional and courteous when using communication equipment and will refrain from yelling, using foul language, and sarcasm. Individuals shall not play music, make obscene noises, or have any other unnecessary use over two-way radios.

004.8 Public Use Requests:

Any public request to use departmental equipment must be submitted through ~~to~~ the Fire Chief to seek approval from the Commissioner's Office. Any such use without approval is not acceptable and individuals involved in such use are subject to disciplinary action.

005 Finance

Guidelines for Budgeting, Procurement/Purchasing, Out of-Town Travel, Expense Reimbursement shall be addressed in the following:

005.1 Budgeting:

It shall be the policy of the Gilmer County Fire Department for the Fire Chief to have the budgetary responsibilities and to submit the annual budget to the Board of Commissioners for approval.

005.2 Procurement and Purchasing:

It shall be the policy of the Gilmer County Fire Department to follow proper procedure when requesting funds for the purchase of supplies and/or equipment. Personnel shall submit in legible writing what supplies/equipment they are requesting, justify the need for them and document the cost. No supplies/equipment shall be purchased without a Purchase Order number unless it is an emergency and approved by the Fire Chief.

Purchase Orders shall be submitted to the Administrative Assistant for processing and approval from the Fire Chief. They will then be submitted to the purchasing department. Once a purchase order number has been obtained it will then be given to the Shift Captain or other appropriate personnel for the purchase of the supplies/equipment. Receipts shall be turned in to the office on the day of the purchase.

005.3 Out-of-Town Travel and Expense Reimbursement:

Refer to the Gilmer County Human Resource Policy #400 entitled Travel for additional information. In Addition, it shall be the policy of the Gilmer County Fire Department for personnel to obtain approval, in advance, from the Fire Chief for any out-of-town travel. Personnel incurring an expense shall complete an expense report for any travel or expense with complete and accurate information. Reimbursement for travel will be for gas or mileage, not both. Reimbursement forms will be turned in to the Administrative Assistant for processing and then forwarded to the purchasing department. Original receipts shall be turned in with the completed forms.

It shall be department policy that any over night lodging will be at campus facilities unless these facilities are unavailable. No reimbursement for over night lodging shall be paid to any personnel unless approved, in advance, by the Fire Chief. Approval from the Fire Chief shall be obtained before reservations are made.

006 Fundraising

006.1 Income Producing Activities:

Any activity producing income shall be approved by the Fire Chief and shall be done in compliance with any and all federal or state law. Income derived from such activities must be deposited into a legal account designated for an

approved organization affiliation that is in compliance with all federal and state law. During fundraising activities, the name of the legal organization receiving the funds shall be used and at no time will the fundraising be attributed to Gilmer County Government.

006.2 Grant Applications:

Grants for an alternate source of funding are encouraged by the department. Grants applications for Gilmer County Fire must be reviewed and approved by the Fire Chief. All information supplied for grant applications must be completely factual.

006.3 Special Activities:

As the fire department works closely with the fire fighters auxiliary there are sometimes special events and occasions that the department may participate in. In the event of such participation all activities must be coordinated and approved by the Fire Chief.

007 Training, Education and Exercises

007.1 In-service Training:

All members are required to participate in the in-service training activities. This training is crucial to obtaining yearly core competency certification as required for state certified members on an annual basis. In-service training should be related to core competency or other specialty curriculum. All in-service training shall be instructed by a qualified member competent to deliver such material. All training must be approved by the Training Officer/Chief before accepted as certifiable training hours. All in-service training must be instructed by a current member in good standing with the department.

007.2 Live Fire Training Exercises:

All live fire training exercises shall be reviewed and approved by the Fire Chief. Exercises must be in line with fire curriculum set-forth by Georgia Fire Academy and shall be safe in all aspects. Live fire training structures must be in compliance with all NFPA requirements. Any training fires must have a minimum

of one 1000 gallon engine and two 2000 gallon tankers on scene with lines on the ground charged and ready to function. Qualified instructors must be in command of such exercises and establish the proper amount of personnel for safety as well as exposure control. Additionally, Dispatch must be advised of all live fire training exercises before ignition.

007.3 Training Evaluation:

Training to be authorized for certification must be signed off by a state certified NPQ evaluator for submission. It is recommended that an approved individual for this certification shall monitor all in-service training. Training to be accepted by the department must be evaluated by an approved evaluator who is a current member in good standing with the department.

007.4 Certification:

Individuals wishing to seek certification in any field must attend national or state academy courses and be certified through that agency. Courses to be instructed in our department that are approved for state certification must be instructed by an academy approved instructor and must be approved by the Fire Chief. Shift or Chief Officers have the right to deny individuals certain training classes if not within the requesting individual's career ladder or career path.

007.5 Requests for Training:

Requests for training must be made through the chain of command and proper documentation (student authorization form) must be completed and submitted to the Training Officer/Chief. The individual requesting training will be notified as to the acceptance status of their application as soon as information is available to the Training Officer. Requests may be denied if classes do not correspond to the individual's career ladder or path. An individual may appeal this decision to the Fire Chief through the chain of command. Requests to initiate a training class are outlined in the chart that states process for training class initiation.

007.6 Training Records:

Training records shall be maintained by the administrative assistant, Training Officer, or Fire Chief. Anyone wishing to view training files outside of the above mentioned persons must file a request in writing. An individual requesting to view their own file will not require a written request. Any training certificate

received by an individual must be submitted to the departments Administrative Assistant to be copied and entered into the training file.

007.7 Inter-organizational /community exercises:

Training will be coordinated in compliance with NFPA and recommended training for maximum credit through ISO. Inter organization training shall be approved by the heads of all involved organizations. This training is to be safe, thoroughly planned, coordinated and deemed beneficial.

008 Information Management

008.1 Incident Reporting System:

Any and all incidents occurring in the fire, rescue, and EMS department shall be reported in the department's incident reporting system. Reports will be completed within the same shift in which the incident occurred and by the individual who was part of the incident. Reports shall be thorough, factual, grammatically correct, and accurate. All details of the incident shall be listed in the narrative. Regular monitoring by the Administrative Assistant and Chief Officers will occur to assure the quality of the reports. Personnel not fulfilling the requirement of this policy will be subject to disciplinary action. Reports will be submitted annually or as required by the State of Georgia and the Federal Government.

008.2 Record Keeping System:

Records will be kept pertaining to fire hydrants, pre-plans, hose testing, apparatus maintenance, and training as required by State and Federal laws as well as ISO. Most all of the above-listed can be recorded through the fire incident reporting system. The subjects that cannot be kept in the reporting system will be maintained separately in locked filing cabinets by the Administrative Assistant or the Fire Chief. All disciplinary action documentation or information related to an individual will be filed promptly in an individual's personnel file, both within the department and within the Counties Human Resources department.

008.3 Confidentiality and Access to Information:

All personnel information is to remain completely confidential and accessed only by authorized personnel. All files are to remain locked safely in filing cabinets inside a locked office when no one is in that office. Requests for access to such information must be submitted to the Fire Chief in writing and will be submitted to Human Resources for proper dissemination.

008.4 Use of Computer Equipment:

Please see the Gilmer County Human Resources Policy Manual – Policy #310.

009 Uniform Policies

009.1 Purpose:

The purpose of this policy is to promote the safety, professional appearance, and uniformity of the Gilmer Fire & Rescue Department personnel.

009.2 Class "A" Uniforms:

The class "A" uniform will consist of the black pants with the black leather belt, the light blue shirt (tucked into the pants at the waistline) with the current GCFR patch, and applicable EMT patch, badge, name tag, appropriate collar insignia; and black shoes/boots with black or navy socks. Officers will wear the white shirt as their class "A" uniform shirt. Black ties will be worn on appropriate occasions. Dress coats/Blazers will be worn when deemed appropriate by the Chief or Shift Officers. The class "A" uniform will be worn to special presentations, memorials, award ceremonies, special assignments, etc.

009.3 Class "B" Uniforms:

The class "B" uniform will consist of the navy blue Nomex pants with the black leather belt and silver or gold buckle (as appropriate to rank); the navy blue Nomex shirt (tucked into the pants at the waistline) with the current GCFR patch and applicable EMT patch; and Department-approved black safety boots. Department approved job shirt may be substituted for the Nomex shirt. The name will be embroidered on the sewn-on cloth patches. It shall be the individual's responsibility to contact Management to have rank identification changed on the shirt when necessary.

The class "B" uniform will be the primary station uniform and will be required for wear when in public (fire code inspections, public education presentations, grocery shopping, etc.) and during most routine station activities. Uniform clothing shall not be worn when off duty except for official GCFR approved functions.

Exceptions:

- The wearing of the T-shirt will be allowed while performing lawn maintenance, hydrant maintenance and physical training.
- The wearing of the T-shirt will be allowed in lieu of the Nomex uniform shirt during emergency fire responses, while in rehab, or during post-fire incident work details.
- Wearing of the GCFR Nomex uniform shirt, T-shirt or sweat shirt will be required on all EMS calls with the exception of those calls necessitating turnout gear (i.e., MVAs and extrications).
- The T-shirt will be allowed for station wear in lieu of the Nomex uniform shirt after 1700 hours (all emergency responses included).

009.4 GCFR T-Shirt

The GCFR T-shirt shall be a navy blue, cotton shirt with a stencil of the GCFR patch on the front and the words **Gilmer Fire** on the back. The T-shirt shall be worn during physical training, as night sleepwear, as an undergarment for the class "B" uniform shirt, and during work details that could damage the class "B" shirt, i.e., apparatus degreasing. When worn as an undergarment, the T-shirt shall only be visible at the neckline. The T-shirt shall not be worn as the standard uniform and may not normally be worn while out in public other than as listed under the "exceptions" section. When worn as outlined under the "exceptions" section, the T-shirts must be tucked into the Nomex uniform pants at the waistline.

009.5 Optional Wear

Approved navy blue cotton, long-sleeve T-shirts bearing the words GILMER FIRE on the back and the stencil of the GCFR patch on the front may be substituted for the GCFR-issue T-shirt. Long-sleeve T-shirts or long-sleeve sweatshirts will not be worn with the Nomex **short-sleeve** uniform shirt.

009.6 Fire Department Caps

The official cap of the GCFR will be the approved ball cap.

Exception:

Solid navy blue or black watch caps with GCFR logos may be worn during cold weather.

009.7 PT Uniform:

- PT uniform shall consist of navy blue or gray workout shorts of medium length; navy blue, 9 cotton T-shirt with patch on the front and Gilmer Fire on the back; white socks and a good quality athletic shoe. Gray sweatshirt and/or gray/navy blue sweatpants may be worn during cold weather.
- The PT uniform shall be acceptable ONLY during physical fitness training and as night sleepwear.
- PT uniform shall not be worn as outerwear during emergency responses.

009.8 Department Jacket

Only the approved Departmental jacket shall be worn. The approved jackets will be the jackets available for order through the official department uniform provider.

009.9 Footware

Department-issued leather boots shall be worn with the class "B" uniform. Chiefs may approve an optional boot (not to be worn on fire responses) that meets the following criteria: The optional station footwear must be a polished or leather/cordura boot or shoe, and have a plain black color, and a non-marking, slip-resistant sole.

Care of Duty Boots

1. Wash any contaminants off the leather, using soap, water and a soft-bristle brush. Be sure to clean the sole and between the lugs with soap, water and a stiff-bristle brush. After cleaning, towel dry the outside. When dry, apply Kiwi black shoe polish. Do not apply Neatsfoot or mink oil as this will soften the leather and degrade abrasion resistance.
2. Regularly polish and clean the boots in order to nourish the leather and maintain their water resistance. Silicone-based water repellent may also be applied periodically.

3. Above all, read and follow the manufacturer's recommendations on the care and maintenance of the leather boots.
4. To prevent contamination from incident to incident, the boots will have to be cleaned after each incident in which they become contaminated.

009.10 Hair Codes:

Uniformed members must comply with the following grooming standards:

1. Males will be clean shaven, except that a moustache may be permitted. Under no circumstances will a beard be permitted. If a moustache is worn, the following rules must be adhered to:

- (a). Moustaches must be kept neatly trimmed at all times and not hinder a good SCBA face-piece seal.

2. Males are permitted sideburns, provided they meet the following criteria:

- (a). Sideburns must not extend downward below the bottom of the earlobe and will end in a clean shaven horizontal line.

- (b). Sideburns must be kept neatly trimmed and will not be bushy or flared (not any wider at the bottom than their natural width at the top).

3. As long as the hair style does not lessen the protection of required safety equipment or expose the member to added personal injury, the acceptability of the style will be judged by the following criteria:

- (a). Uniformed male personnel:

- Hair must be neat, well-trimmed, and appropriately groomed (combed) at all times. Exceptions naturally would occur at emergency scenes and while riding open cab apparatus.
- Hair must not extend past the bottom of the ear.
- When standing with the head erect, hair must not extend below the bottom edge of the collar at the back of the neck.

- Hair in front will be groomed so that it does not fall below the band of properly worn head gear. In no case will the bulk or length of the hair interfere with the proper wear of any authorized head gear.
- Hair must not be dyed an unusual or unnatural color.
- Hair must not be worn in an extreme of fad style such as a Mohawk, ducktail, braids, or in a way that exceeds length standards.

(b). Uniformed female personnel:

- Hair must be neat, well-trimmed, and appropriately groomed (combed) at all times. Exceptions naturally would occur at emergency scenes and while riding open cab apparatus.
- Hair must not extend in length more than six inches below the top collar unless it is worn up.
- Hair in front and any hair worn up will be groomed so that it does not fall below the band of properly worn head gear. In no case will the bulk or length of the hair interfere with the proper wear of any authorized headgear.
- Hair must not be dyed an unusual or unnatural color.
- Hair must not be worn in an extreme of fad style such as a Mohawk, ducktail, braids, or in a way that exceeds length standards.
- Items used by female personnel to hold the hair in place must be concealed as much as possible and must be of a color and style that blends with the hair.

009.11 Jewelry

Insignia may not be worn, except that which is issued by the GCFR and intended to be worn as part of the department uniform, or other items specifically approved by the Chief.

Earrings are not permitted. Neck chains may be worn, but must remain concealed from view beneath the uniform shirt. All bracelets, watches, rings, and other jewelry must fit snugly.

010 PERSONNEL AND PROMOTION POLICIES

010.1 Promotion Policies:

As positions and opportunities become necessary and/or available, promotions will occur as deemed necessary by the Fire Chief. In instances when testing is required to assure fair and equal opportunity for advancement, a thorough, effective, and pertinent testing process will be implemented. The Fire Chief shall appoint a qualified individual or individuals to coordinate the process, the Chief shall appoint a qualified oral interview board. This board shall consist of no less than 3 individuals and no more than 5. The individual(s) appointed shall acquire or form a written test that shall be pertinent to the tested position. The appointed individual(s) shall form a scenario or scenarios to present to the candidates as to assess the ability to mitigate issues and or make decisions. A scoring system shall be developed for each test and approved by the Fire Chief and reviewed with the candidates before any portion of the test begins. Each candidate shall sign a form stating that the scoring process has been explained to them and that they fully understand. The results of this testing process are to give a recommendation to for the most qualified candidate. However the final decision shall be made by the Fire Chief. All information shall be kept confidential and only viewed by pertinent personnel.

In situations of immediate need, the Fire Chief shall have the authority to make appointments and promotions, (temporary and or permanent) without a testing process.

All promotions shall be followed by a letter of promotion and appointment which shall be signed and presented by the Fire Chief and forwarded to the Human Resources Department for processing.

010.2 Personnel and Payroll Substitution:

Substitution is the exchange of duty time mutually agreed upon between department personnel. These substitutions are voluntary and are strictly for the benefit of the employees. All substitutions for duty time must be approved in advance by the Fire Chief to assure no accumulation of overtime.

Each individual is responsible for adhering to this policy. Abuse may result in disqualification for substitutions. The Gilmer County Fire and Rescue department is not responsible for ensuring paybacks. Personnel who substitute must be qualified to fill the other employee's position. Probationary personnel are not authorized to substitute for employees'. Second drivers will ensure that any substitution hold seconds drivers' status. The Assistant Chief of Operations must approve substitutions in excess of 12 occasions per year. Before approving substitution for a specialized position the supervisor must check both the activity schedule and vacation book to ensure that no lapse in coverage will be created by the substitution.

Both parties involved in the substitution must complete the substitution form. Both employees' supervisors must approve and sign the form before the substitution is made. Either officer may refuse to allow the substitution. After the second company officer signs the form, he/she will retain one copy and return the original document to the Administrative Assistant. These forms shall be filed in the employees' personnel folder at the station office.

010-2.1 Failure to Report for Duty (Payroll Substitutions, cont.):

If the substitution is to occur at shift change and neither party reports for duty, the substitute employee who will be absent is responsible for notifying the company supervisor on duty, per departmental requirements. If the substitute employee fails to report for duty, the scheduled employee will be charged with leave without pay. Acceptable reasons for the substitute employee not reporting for duty are the same as for regularly assigned employees, i.e., substantiated illness, substantiated family illness, or a substantiated emergency.

The substitute employee who fails to report for duty must send a copy of the Substitution Request Form, a Leave Substantiation Form, and documentation to substantiate the absence to the appropriate Shift Officer.

010.3 Scheduled Leave (24-Hour Personnel):

Personnel must complete a vacation/ sick leave request form and forward it to the shift captain. Scheduled leave days may be classified as vacation leave. Scheduled leave will be taken in complete shifts when possible, but no less than 12-hour increments. 12 hour increments must be taken in the first 12 or second 12 increments of a 24 hour shift only. Annual/vacation/ leave scheduling will be completed no less than 7 days prior to the leave commencing and no earlier than 60 days. Shift officers are responsible for leave scheduling.

If conflict occurs between individuals requesting Leave time the Leave will be scheduled by seniority, (based on years of continuous county employment).

Vacation scheduling will be conducted on a shift-wide basis. Company/station assignments will be a factor when it pertains to scheduling. The maximum number of personnel, excluding Chief Officers, allowed "on leave" per shift shall generally be no more than two.

The Division Chief of Operations may (for special purposes) approve more than the maximum allowed number of personnel to be "on Leave" after considering operational readiness.

010.4 Scheduled Leave (Part time employees):

Part time employees do not accrue vacation leave, per County Policy. Part time personnel must arrange time off 24 hours before their shift is to begin.

Due to the nature of our department's responsibilities and consideration for the County's health and welfare more than 3 shifts per month or 10 shifts taken per year shall be considered excessive and shall be considered cause for disciplinary action.

010.5 Scheduled Leave (8 Hour Personnel):

The proper scheduling of vacation time is necessary to maintain adequate staffing. Employees must contact a shift officer for time off or shift trades. The shift officers will schedule time off for the shifts. A maximum of four (4) shifts consecutive time off may be approved by a shift officer. A request for more time than this must be approved by the Assistant Chief.

010.6 Unscheduled Leave, Reporting Absence:

When a 24-hour member is unable to report for scheduled duty, that member must call his/her shift officer at the earliest opportunity. It is preferred that 12 hour notice is given at a minimum. For unexpected absences 2 hours before shift shall be considered the minimum notice.

Unscheduled leave will require the submission of documentation to verify the reason for the absence. It is the employee's responsibility to insure that their reasons for unscheduled leave are correctly recorded and are viable. Unscheduled leave time is generally not acceptable and must be kept to a very strict minimum. Please see the Gilmer County Human Resources Manual – Sick Leave Policy #202-1 for further information. Obvious abuse of unscheduled leave time shall be reason for disciplinary action. Documentation to substantiate the

absence must be provided on the first worked day following the absence for personnel on sick leave (including members leaving work due to illness).

010.7 Time off Without Pay:

Time off without pay is considered a Leave of Absence and should be requested in advance. Depending on the length of the requested time additional paperwork may be necessary for the Human Resources Department. More than 3 shifts per month or 10 shifts taken per year of time-off without pay shall be considered excessive and be considered cause for disciplinary action.

010.8 Waiting Lists for Closed Shifts:

When a shift is closed due to the number of personnel scheduled off, a maximum of two people may place their names on a waiting list for that day. Personnel can only place their names on two waiting lists at one time.

Personnel may cancel scheduled days off provided that their shift officers are notified 24 hours on their shift before the scheduled time off. Proper notification will consist of a telephone call to a company officer. The responsibility for proper documentation will rest with the individual who is canceling his/her off day. Failure for proper cancellation will result in the required use of scheduled time off.

It will be the responsibility of members on the "Waiting List" to call their shift officer to see if a scheduled time-off slot has become available for the next shift.

010.9 Transfers and Trades:

When a Department-initiated transfer occurs, scheduled leave will be honored at the new duty assignment, if at all possible and based upon operational needs.

When two people voluntarily trade assignments, scheduled leave may be disallowed if the maximum number of personnel is scheduled off.

Personnel will be allowed to trade scheduled days off, provided there is no waiting list for that shift.

010.10 Record Keeping:

It is essential that all scheduled leave is coordinated between shift officers to ensure staffing needs are met. The administrative office will keep the official vacation records. Changes in the vacation schedule should go through the shift captain. Do not contact the Chiefs Administrative Assistant for this information.

011 COMPENSATORY TIME AND OVERTIME

011.1 Compensatory Time:

Departmental Compensatory Time is allowable and may be accrued with prior approval only.

Any and all compensatory time must be **pre approved** by the Fire Chief. Compensatory time can only be accrued and taken on an hour for hour basis. Example: Hours of time accrued while within the limits of normal hourly rate, may be taken during an approved shift by using the exact number of hours previously accrued. Hours accrued during overtime shall be accrued and used at overtime (time and one half) rate. Compensatory time cannot exceed a bank of 48 hours. Compensatory time must be used within the next 2 consecutive pay periods after accrual, at which time it shall forfeit unless otherwise approved for an extension. If staffing arrangements cannot be made during this time, the Fire Chief shall have the authority to grant an appropriate extension for use. All compensatory time when earned and/or used must be completely and fully documented with the signature of the Fire Chief. Records for compensatory time accrual and use shall be maintained in the Fire/Rescue Department for audit purposes.

011.2 Overtime:

Gilmer County applies all compensation to the Fair Labor Standards Act and shall process payroll accordingly. Additionally, a certain pre-planned amount of overtime is built in the budget for the department due to the type of schedule worked by this profession. Any and all overtime hours outside of the normal scheduled over time must be pre-approved by the Shift Captain and submitted for approval to the Fire Chief. Overtime shall be calculated on a defined work week of Monday through Sunday, with the exception of Shift Captains who shall have their defined work schedule as a two week period.

011.3 Additional Straight time:

Certain extra tasks, or necessary "fill- in" for persons who are absent may require extra hours. These hours should be within normal scheduling limits and not be eligible for overtime rates. Additional straight time must be approved by the Shift Captain and submitted to the Fire Chief for approval.

100 PREVENTION AND SPECIAL PROGRAMS

101 Public Information and Education:

It is the goal and responsibility of all members of this department to educate the public in matters of life safety. This would include all ages from youth to adult. This policy shall not exclude any group of people regardless of race, nationality, language or religion.

102 Press Releases and Media:

It is the goal of the department to assure that all information released to the media is accurate and timely. All information shall be approved by the Chief prior to release and will be released by the representative approved by the Chief of the Department.

103 Emergency Public Information:

All emergency information shall be disseminated by either the Chief, the designated PIO, or a specific member designated by the Chief of the Department.

104 Public Relations:

It is the duty of all members regardless of their division or rank to uphold the positive public image of the Department. At all times members should be courteous to the public, neat in appearance and above all conduct themselves in a professional manner.

The public impression of the department is critical to the mission and goal of the department.

All public education programs are to be approved by the Chief and will be the responsibility of all members.

105 Building Inspection and Code Enforcement:

Gilmer County Fire and Rescue will conduct periodic inspections on all commercial buildings within the jurisdictional boundaries of the department. It is the purpose of the department to comply and enforce the Life Safety codes as adopted by the State of Georgia and the City of East Ellijay.

It is the mission of the department to conduct plan reviews of all new commercial buildings. Requirements for commercial buildings are: Three sets of full size complete stamped blueprints, a fee of \$100.00 for the approval process, and approval of all subsequent Fire Alarm, Sprinkler, and Special services submittals. It is the responsibility of the Fire Marshals Office to enforce the previously mentioned codes and conduct annual inspections of all commercial buildings of more than 5000 square feet in size. All members will participate in Company level inspections of those buildings of less than 5000 square feet at the time of pre-planning for the building.

It is the goal of the department to conduct annual pre-incident planning of all commercial buildings; this is to include a data base of hazards, emergency contacts, water supply, and any special considerations for the building. The pre-planning is the responsibility of the on duty Officer and all members.

106 Special Programs:

It is the goal of the department to inspect and test all hydrants within the jurisdiction, to map, flow, maintain and test same annually and keep a record of this activity. This will be done in cooperation with the Ellijay-Gilmer County Water Authority.

200 GENERAL EMERGENCY OPERATIONS

The Company Officer must carefully consider the use of emergency apparatus during non-emergencies in order to keep apparatus ready for quick, effective response. All personnel positions on emergency apparatus are considered essential as they are available 24 hours daily unless the apparatus is placed out of service. Essential personnel are paid based on the 24 hour availability. Any diversion of time for non-related activities by personnel on emergency apparatus may be grounds for disciplinary action. Utilizing emergency apparatus for any other reason diverts essential equipment and time of all personnel involved and is in violation of County policy. Personnel may use emergency apparatus to obtain food, other grocery type items, or equipment for the fire station to which they are assigned.

201 En-route time and Call Response

Personnel shall have (two) 2 minutes to be en-route to calls between the hours of 10 p.m. and 7 a.m. During the hours of 7 a.m. to 10 p.m. personnel shall be en-route to calls within (one) 1 minute and 30 seconds. This time shall be measured from the time the station tones have cleared the radio until the unit goes en route.

201.1 Driving Emergency Vehicles:

Vehicles shall be operated at all times with the following priorities in mind:

- The safety of the occupants; and
- The objective of the travel (emergency, non-emergency, etc.).

All passengers of vehicles must be seated, utilizing safety restraint devices, prior to the vehicle being placed in motion. The operator shall confirm that passengers

are in a proper seat and safety restraints are in place before placing the vehicle in motion. Drivers of vehicles are responsible for the operation of the vehicle at all times while the vehicle is in motion. Members operating vehicles in a non-emergency mode are responsible for following all traffic regulations. Members operating vehicles in an emergency mode are responsible for proceeding with due caution at all times.

All vehicles operators shall obey all state laws, local traffic regulations, County and Departmental Standard Operating Procedures. Operators of emergency apparatus are authorized to exceed posted speed limits **only** when responding to an emergency incident under favorable conditions. Favorable conditions means there is light traffic, good roads, good visibility and dry pavement. Under these conditions, a maximum of ten (10) mph over the speed limit is authorized according to Georgia state law. Under less than favorable conditions, the posted speed limit is the maximum speed permissible.

201.2 Road Operations:

When responding to non-emergency calls the above privileges do not apply. Audible and/or visual warning devices will not be used. The operator will be subject to all normal driving laws.

When approaching and crossing an intersection with the right-of-way, under no circumstances shall operators exceed the posted speed limit. When approaching a restricted right-of-way intersection (red light, stop sign) the vehicle shall come to a complete stop and proceed only when the driver can account for oncoming traffic in lanes yielding the right-of-way.

Every effort should be made to pass traffic only on the left. It is extremely dangerous to pass traffic on the right.

Whenever practical, operators will maintain a minimum of 100 feet of separation between vehicles to allow for sufficient reaction time. This distance may need to be increased to allow for adverse weather and driving conditions.

Passing another emergency vehicle responding to an emergency is not recommended. Should passing become necessary, permission must be obtained from the vehicle being passed via radio communications.

Emergency vehicles will not pass a school bus displaying its stop sign until the driver of the school bus has withdrawn the stop sign.

Safe arrival shall always have priority over unnecessary speed and reckless driving en-route to an emergency incident.

Unless designated to do so, apparatus shall not be taken "off road".

201.3 Backing Apparatus:

Whenever possible, backing of fire apparatus should be avoided. Where backing is unavoidable, spotters shall be used. When an apparatus is backed, all company members (except the driver/tiller person) will dismount the apparatus and act as spotters, including the Company Officer.

Spotters shall be positioned at as many corners of the apparatus as possible with at least one spotter (primary spotter) at the left rear corner. Spotters shall be used when vehicles must negotiate forward turns with restrictive side clearances and where height clearances are uncertain.

Spotters shall not be permitted to ride tailboard positions. Spotters will discuss the backing plan with the operator before proceeding. Spotter shall be in position and communicate their approval to start movement, prior to the vehicle moving. Spotter shall remain visible to the operator. Any time the driver loses sight of the primary spotter, the apparatus shall be stopped immediately until the spotter is visible and the communication to continue has been re-established.

When vehicles must be backed where other traffic exists, the vehicles visual warning devices (if so equipped) shall be operating.

The following privileges, as set forth by Georgia law, apply to all department vehicles responding to emergency incidents. The privileges will only apply if the vehicle is using audible and/or visual devices, as applicable:

SIGNALS:

- **Straight Back:** One hand above the head with palm toward face, motioning back. Other hand at your side. (Left or right hand optional)
- **Turn:** Both arms pointing in the same direction with fingers extended.
- **Stop:** Both arms crossed with hands in fists. Yell the stop order loud enough that the operator can hear the warning.
- **Night Backing:** A flashlight may be carried; however, at no time will it be directed toward the mirror.

202 Riding Emergency Vehicles:

The purpose for this regulation is to insure that all employees understand who is permitted to ride in emergency vehicles. This procedure is set in place to limit any unnecessary liability in the event of an accident.

It shall be the responsibility of the operator of the apparatus to insure that the occupants in his/her apparatus are eligible to ride in the apparatus.

It is recommended that only personnel of the Gilmer County Fire & Rescue department be allowed to ride in county owned apparatus. However, on occasion a person who has requested, completed and gained approval by the Fire Chief may also be permitted to ride in the vehicle. Additionally, a person accompanying an injured person may be permitted to ride in the vehicle.

All occupants shall be required to wear seat belts at all times when riding in county vehicles. All occupants shall be required to act responsibly and professionally when riding in county vehicles.

Under no circumstance shall any personnel ride in a county owned vehicle while under the influence of drugs or alcohol.

203 Operating Special Apparatus

The department maintains vehicles that may be classified as special apparatus. Examples of this includes, ATV'S, boats, etc.. Before operating equipment of this type, personnel shall be properly trained and approved by Chief Officers. Personnel shall use care and regard to insure safe and proper operation.

204 Vehicle Accident Reporting and Investigation:

The purpose for this regulation is to insure that all employees understand the proper steps to take if involved in an accident while operating an emergency vehicle.

It shall be the responsibility of the driver or the senior ranking employee to report an accident involving emergency vehicles. If there are any injuries dispatch must first be notified requesting EMS to the scene of the accident.

If an emergency vehicle is involved in an accident the following steps must be taken:

- Notify dispatch of location and any injuries; and
- Notify the immediate supervisor of the accident.

The supervisor shall be responsible for gathering information from all involved parties that occupied the apparatus. All employees occupying the apparatus will be required to give the GSP Officer a statement of events which caused or contributed to the accident. After the GSP Officer releases the driver from the scene of the accident, the Supervisor shall be responsible for transporting the driver to the hospital for the mandatory drug screen test. All employees involved in the accident shall be required to submit a written statement to their supervisor prior to the end of their shift.

205 Use of Personal Vehicles

The use of a personal vehicle is permissible. It is the responsibility of personnel to obey all traffic laws when responding to an emergency. A personal vehicle should not be driven erratically to any emergency call. Personnel responding in personal vehicles are not permitted to run lights and sirens under any circumstances. Any personnel responding in their personal vehicle shall pull over and stop when emergency vehicles are approaching from the rear. Under no circumstance shall any personnel tuck in behind an emergency vehicle and follow.

206 Safety at Emergency Incidents

General procedures for safety considerations while operating at emergency scenes are detailed below.

206.1 Safety at Emergency Incidents

The Safety Officer's primary function is to develop and recommend measures for assuring personnel safety, and to monitor and/or anticipate hazardous and unsafe situations. A Safety Officer shall be put in place at any incident where there are (ten) 10 or more personnel involved and on ALL structure fires.

The Safety Officer (SO) works as a support officer for the Incident Commander. The SO may perform the following functions:

- Identify and cause correction of occupational safety and health hazards
- Continuously monitor workers for exposure to safety or health hazardous conditions
- Alter, suspend, evacuate or terminate activities that may pose imminent safety or health danger to the workers
- Take appropriate action to mitigate or eliminate unsafe condition, operation, or hazard
- Provide training on safety and health information
- Comply with OSHA standards
- Document both safe and unsafe acts, corrective actions taken on the scene, accidents or injuries, and ways to improve safety on future incidents
- Participate in planning meetings
- Identify hazardous situations associated with the incident
- On large incidents review the Incident Action Plan for safety implications
- Exercise emergency authority to stop and prevent unsafe acts

Common Responsibilities of the SO

- Upon arrival at the incident check in with the Incident Commander
- Receive briefing from immediate supervisor
- Acquire work materials
- Complete forms and reports required of the assigned position

206.2 Protective Clothing and Equipment

This standard applies to all members required to work in hazardous environments. It is to establish guidelines for the use of protective clothing and equipment to reduce the risk of illness, injury, or death that might result from a member's exposure to a hazardous environment.

Each member shall wear protective clothing and use equipment appropriate for the hazards to which they are exposed.

Each member shall properly maintain the protective clothing and equipment that have been issued to them and that are carried on the apparatus.

Any equipment or protective clothing that is found to be unsafe or inoperable shall be removed from service immediately and reported to the Captain on duty.

206.3 Structural Firefighting (Gear)

Each member shall be issued protective clothing and equipment that comply with all applicable NFPA standards and local requirements. These items shall include:

- Helmet (NFPA 1972)
- Boots (NFPA 1974)
- Gloves (NFPA 1973)
- Coat (NFPA 1971)
- Pants with suspenders (NFPA 1971)
- Hood (NFPA 1971)

Each member operating within a perimeter designated as hazardous (hot zone) by the Incident Safety Officer shall wear their full protective clothing in the prescribed manner. The SO shall determine when and if it is safe to remove some or all of the PPE.

To assist members with identifying rank at an incident scene, helmets are color-coded as follows:

- White- Chief officers
- Red- Company officers and District Chiefs
- Black- Firefighter
- Yellow- Support firefighter

206.4 SCBA- Self Contained Breathing Apparatus

All SCBA used by the department shall comply with NFPA 1981. Unless the safety of the atmosphere can be determined by testing and continuous monitoring all personnel shall use SCBA while working in areas where:

- The atmosphere is hazardous
- The atmosphere is suspected of being hazardous
- The atmosphere may rapidly become hazardous

Members wearing SCBA shall always work in teams of at least two (2) members.

SCBA and spare cylinders shall be kept on each apparatus and be available for immediate use.

SCBA shall not be removed until the SO has determined by testing that the atmosphere is no longer hazardous and that CO levels are less than 50ppm.

206.5 Wild land Firefighting Gear

Members who are issued wild land gear shall be issued wild land pants and jacket. The member will also be issued leather gloves which shall be kept as part of the wild land gear. When wearing the wild land gear during suppression the firefighter shall wear the pants, jacket, gloves, all leather steel toe boots, helmet, and eye protection. The boots may be bunker boots issued by the department or other steel toe boots approved by the Chief. Wild land gear shall be worn for the following:

- Brush Fires
- Woodland Fires
- Prescribed Burns/Wild land Training

If wild land gear is unavailable the incident safety officer shall determine the level of protection that is required. At a minimum protection shall include pants, shirt, gloves, helmet, eye protection, and footwear.

206.6 Motor Vehicle Accidents (Traffic Vests)

While operating at motor vehicle accidents (MVA) all personnel will be required to wear ANSI approved traffic vest.

Motor vehicle accidents with entrapments, potential hazards, and any situation when fire personnel are inside a vehicle with patient, personnel will be required to be in full turn out gear including the ANSI approved traffic vest.

207 Incident Command/Incident Management System

207.1 Command and Control

The one function that will always be filled at every emergency incident, regardless of size, type, or jurisdiction that the incident occurs in, is the Incident Commander (IC) position. The IC has the responsibility for overall management of the incident.

Incident command procedures are designed to accomplish the following:

- Fix responsibility of command with a designated member through a standardized identification system, based on arrival sequence and other variables.
- Insure that visible, direct, effective command be established as early as possible upon arrival at the incident scene.
- C. Establish an effective framework within which the activities and responsibilities assigned to the Incident Commander can be properly addressed.
- D. Provide a system for accomplishing the orderly transfer of command from the initial Incident Commander to later arriving officers.

207.2 Initial Command

It **shall be mandatory** that the officer or other fire department member arriving first on the scene of an emergency incident shall initiate the basic incident command function, establish a command post, and assume all related command responsibilities. This shall be performed regardless of jurisdictional boundaries. The initial Incident Commander shall retain these responsibilities until one of the following occurs:

- Command is passed to the next arriving officer (only once per incident).
- Command is officially transferred. (See Transfer of Command Procedures)
- The incident is terminated.

Passing command is not to be confused with Transferring command. Command is passed only when the situation requires the immediate active participation of the first member or officer on the scene which prohibits them from establishing a fixed command position. When this occurs, the next arriving officer or member shall be notified and will assume command of the incident. **Command can be passed only once!**

207.3 Command Responsibilities

Within the broad structure of the basic incident command function, certain command options are available to the Incident Commander. These options or "command modes" will be explained in detail below. However, it must be understood that regardless of the command option chosen, the initial Incident

Commander retains responsibility for all command functions until relieved of them according to the standardized methods detailed in this guideline.

The person assuming command is responsible for the following:

- Assuming an effective command location when the fixed command mode is chosen.
- Calling on the scene and transmitting the initial radio report and size-
- Assessing the incident priorities.
- Determining the incident's strategic goals and tactical objectives.
- Developing and implementing the incident action plan.
- Developing an incident command structure appropriate for the incident.
- Assessing resource needs and orders, deploying needed resources.
- Coordinating overall emergency activities.
- Serving as ultimate incident safety officer; responsible for preventing firefighter injuries and/or deaths.
- Coordinating activities of outside agencies.
- Authorizing information release to the media
- Returning companies to service.

207.4 Command Modes

The first arriving officer or fire department member must decide on an appropriate commitment for each assigned company, including his/her own. This decision will usually result in command being exercised according to the provisions of one of two (2) general modes. They are:

- **Fixed Command Mode**

The fixed command mode is defined as a command structure that maintains a fixed command location which is usually outside of a structure and in which the Incident Commander devotes all of his/her energies to command. The fixed command mode is desirable and should be used unless conditions dictate otherwise.

NOTE: the location of the fixed Command Post should be easily identifiable. If the Incident Commander chooses to leave the interior of his/her vehicle, then he/she should be easily identifiable.

- **Mobile Command Mode**

Included are incidents requiring immediate action in order to stabilize the situation, and where due to manning and/or experience factors, the Company Officer feels that it is necessary for him/her to accompany his/her crew in their initial efforts. This may include situations where there is "nothing showing" and the Company Officer assuming command accompanies his/her crew in order to investigate the situation.

WHENEVER THE MOBILE COMMAND MODE IS CHOSEN, IT SHOULD BE CONCLUDED VERY RAPIDLY, WITH ONE OF THE FOLLOWING OUTCOMES:

- The situation is quickly stabilized by the initial offensive attack or the preliminary investigation reveals no problem requiring the Incident Commander's active participation. In either case, the Company Officer should then return to a fixed command location and continue to discharge his/her command responsibilities.
- The situation is not likely to be quickly stabilized, or initial investigations indicate possible long term involvement. The Company Officer should recognize these situations and assign command of his/her company to a company member or another Company Officer, return to a fixed command location and continue to function as the Incident Commander until relieved of this responsibility.
- Command is passed to the next arriving company officer.

NOTE: the "Passing of Command" can occur only once during any given incident, and may be initiated only by the first arriving officer or fire department member, and should be confined to "Mobile Command Mode" operations. When the first arriving member determines the need to "pass" command, the initial radio report will include an announcement that command should be assumed by the next arriving company

207.5 Establishing Command and Initial Size Up

The person establishing command should use the standard procedures outlined below. If the person assuming command is not an officer or is not normally assigned to a company then this transmission should be adjusted accordingly. When command is established and initial radio report and size up should be given:

- Identify transmission by giving company, radio number, the location of the Command Post (if other than the front of the occupancy/incident), and the name assigned to the incident. For example:
- "Engine 1 on the scene, 910 will have Orchard Road Command"
- The apparent extent of the emergency (nothing showing, working fire, fully involved, etc...)

NOTE: If the first arriving member gives no information as to smoke showing or working fire, etc., it will be assumed by incoming companies that nothing is showing.

IF THE INCIDENT COMMANDER DETERMINES THAT A WORKING FIRE IS IN PROGRESS, THE INITIAL RADIO REPORT SHALL INCLUDE;

- General size of the structure (one story, two story, multi story, high rise, etc)
- Type of construction (ordinary, wood frame, brick, etc)
- Occupancy (single family, multi family, commercial, etc)
- Action being taken (laying attack lines, connecting to FDC, attempting rescue, etc)
- Apparatus in use (Engine 1, Tanker 1, Med 2, etc)
- Additional assignment (need extra man power, stage, stand by, lay in, etc)

NOTE: Decide early if there is a necessity to call for additional assistance. Additional help should be standing by at the scene, prepared to go into action if there is a possibility the incident may exceed the capabilities of the companies working on the incident.

207.6 Transfer of Command

When circumstances allow, the Incident Commander who is to be relieved will brief the officer assuming command. This briefing may include, but is not limited to, the following:

- Incident priorities and strategic goals

- Tactical objectives that have been assigned and that need to be assigned
- Tactical objectives that have been achieved

After the transfer of command has actually taken place, the officer assuming command shall announce such transfer over the radio, stating the radio identification of the new Incident Commander.

NOTE: If preceded to the scene by the companies of another department, the officer responding from the department having jurisdiction shall report to the Incident Commander. Regardless of rank, this officer is legally responsible for the incident and shall have the option of assuming command, or allowing the original Incident Commander to remain in-charge of the incident

208 Mutual Automatic Aid:

The county fire department has established mutual aid as well as certain automatic aid agreements in place with adjacent departments to insure additional resources can be obtained if the need arises. In situations in which it is felt necessary, mutual aid may be requested. In situations or incidents that occur nearer to another department or county, fire personnel shall request mutual aid to assure the quickest possible response.

Areas lying within 5 miles of the City of Ellijay fire station are considered to be automatic aid areas for the City of Ellijay fire department to respond into the county, as agreed upon by both governments. The entire City of Ellijay is the county fire departments automatic aid obligation. The automatic aid agreement outlines response for structure fires. However, if deemed necessary by chief of shift officers by either department, county fire units may automatically respond to:

- Fires of any type
- Potentially severe vehicle accidents or accidents occurring closer to the other departments first due territory.
- Any and all hazards deemed necessary for additional assistance

209 Incident Scene Management:

209.1 Staging Procedures:

Staging--Basic Operational Approach

The objective of staging procedures is to provide a standard system of initial placement for responding apparatus, personnel, and equipment prior to assignment at tactical incidents.

Effective utilization of these procedures will:

- Prevent excessive apparatus congestion at the scene.
- Allow time for Command to evaluate conditions prior to assigning companies.
- Place apparatus in an uncommitted location close to the immediate scene to facilitate more effective assignment by Command.
- Reduces radio traffic during the critical initial stages of the incident.
- Allow Command to formulate and implement a plan without undue confusion and pressure.
- Provides a resource pool from which Command may assign units and resources at his/her leisure.

209.2 Staging Levels: LEVEL I and LEVEL II

Level I Staging

Level I Staging is automatically in effect for all incidents with three or more companies responding. During any multi-company response, companies should continue responding to the scene until a company reports on the scene. In situations where the simultaneous arrival of first due companies is possible, the affected officers shall utilize radio communications to coordinate activities and eliminate confusion. It will be the ongoing responsibility of Dispatch to confirm the arrival of the first on-scene unit.

Once a company announces arrival on the scene, Level I Staging will be implemented in the following manner:

For Fires, Hazardous Materials, & Special Operations Incidents

The first arriving engine company will respond directly to the scene and initiate appropriate operations.

The first arriving ladder company will respond directly to the scene. They shall announce their approach to the scene so that Command may commit them to an assignment.

The first chief officer will go directly to the scene and assume Command, all other Chief Officers should report to Command.

Squads/Med units (full-time/part-time) will stage in direction of travel, uncommitted approximately one block from the scene until assigned by Command. When responding from quarters, Rescues shall wait and allow engine and ladder companies to exit first. In the event a squad/med unit arrive first on the scene, they will make an on-scene report and assume Command until an engine, ladder, or chief officer arrives and Command is transferred.

All other units will stage in their direction of travel, uncommitted, approximately one block from the scene until assigned by Command. A position providing a maximum of possible tactical options regarding access, direction of travel, water supply, etc., should be selected. At no time should units self-assign.

For Multi-Company Response to Medical Emergencies

For multi-company response to medical incidents, in addition to the above, the first arriving ALS unit will ALSO go directly to the scene and place their apparatus in a location that will provide maximum access for Medical/Rescue support and not impede the movement of other units and indicate their action by radio.

The first arriving Squad/Rescue will ALSO go directly to the scene and park their vehicle in a manner that will allow quick and unobstructed exit for patient transportation.

All other companies will stage in their direction of travel, approximately one block from the incident.

Staged companies or units will announce their arrival and report their company designation and their staged location/direction ("Engine One, South").

An acknowledgment is not necessary from either the Dispatch Center or Command. Staged companies will stay off the air until orders are received from Command. If it becomes apparent Command has forgotten the company is in a staged position, the company officer shall contact Command and advise him/her of their staged status.

These staging procedures attempt to reduce unnecessary radio traffic, but in no way should reduce effective communications or the initiative of officers to communicate. If staged companies observe critical tactical needs, they will advise Command of such critical conditions and their actions.

Level II - Staging

Level II Staging is utilized when Command desires to maintain a reserve of resources on-scene, and when the need to centralize resources is required. Level II Staging places all reserve resources in a central location and automatically requires the implementation of a Staging Sector Officer.

Level II Staging will be implemented for all greater alarm incidents. Level II Staging should be considered for first alarm medical or hazardous materials incidents, or other incidents in which Command desires to centralize resources, or simply to park apparatus in a central, unobstructed location.

Companies which are already staged (Level I) or en-route to Level I Staging, will stay in Level I unless otherwise directed by Command. All other responding units will proceed to the Level II Staging Area. When activating Level II Staging, Command will give an approximate location for the Staging Area and request a separate radio channel for the Staging Sector.

The Staging Area should be some distance away from the Command Post and the emergency scene to reduce site congestion, but close enough for prompt response to the incident site.

Command should consider Level II Staging when calling for additional resources and request a separate radio channel. This is more functional than calling for Level II Staging while units are en route. The additional units will be dispatched to the Staging Area. Responding units should monitor both the tactical and staging channels.

Command may designate a Staging Area and Staging Officer who will be responsible for the activities outlined in this procedure. In the absence of such an assignment, the first fire department officer to arrive at the Staging Area will automatically become the Staging Officer and will notify Command on arrival. The arrival notification will be made to Command on the assigned tactical channel.

Due to the limited number of ladder companies, a ladder officer will transfer responsibility for Staging to the first arriving engine company officer. Staging Officers will assign their company members as needed to assist with Staging operations, or assign them to another company.

All responding companies will stay off the air, respond directly to the designated Staging Area, and the Company Officer will report in person to the Staging

Officer. The crews will standby their unit with crew intact and warning lights turned off until assigned incident site duties, or released from the scene.

When assigned to on-site duties, companies leaving staging will communicate directly with Command or their assigned sector officer for instructions.

Once Level II staging is implemented, all communications involving staging will be between Staging and Command or Logistics.

209.3 Staff Chief Officers and Captains:

Arrival on scene of the staff Chief Officers and Captains can enhance the Command organization and provide good incident management. Unless arriving staff officers have predetermined responsibilities (i.e., Safety Sector, Haz Mat Sector), these officers should assume a Level I staging posture and announce their arrival on the tactical channel. If the Staging Sector has been assigned a separate radio channel, notification should be on the designated channel.

Vehicle parking at the site can be limited. Staff officers should leave their vehicles in the Staging Sector, or park well off the road (i.e., parking lots) so as not to restrict on-site access by fire apparatus.

210 Transferring Command:

210.1 Transfer of Command

When circumstances allow, the Incident Commander being relieved will brief the officer assuming command. This brief may include, but is not limited to, the following:

- Incident priorities and strategic goals
- Tactical objectives that have been assigned and that need to be assigned
- Tactical objectives that have been achieved

After the transfer of command has actually taken place, the officer assuming command shall announce such transfer over the radio, stating the radio identification of the new Incident Commander.

NOTE: If preceded to the scene by the companies of another department, the officer responding from the department having jurisdiction shall report to the

Incident Commander. Regardless of rank, this officer is legally responsible for the incident and shall have the option of assuming command, or allowing the original Incident Commander to remain in –charge of the incident

211 Public Information:

It is the policy of Gilmer County Fire and Rescue to establish and maintain a positive working relationship with the media.

This directive will establish a standard operating procedure to provide the media with information normally requested from the Fire Department on emergency incidents, to monitor the movements of media personnel for safety reasons, and to establish an operating framework for an Information Sector that will effectively integrate into the overall incident management system.

Standard Operating Procedure for Public Information:

Command will be responsible for the assignment of an Information Sector on the fire ground or any significant incident. As soon as practical, after basic rescue and fire operations are extended, Command will establish an Information Sector. The establishment of this sector will relieve Command of the responsibility of dealing directly with the media during critical Command stages and provide standard information the media will require to accurately report the emergency.

The Public Information Officer (PIO) will report to Command, upon arrival, and establish an Information Sector if not already established.

NOTE: If a fire company or other fire department member has been assigned Information Sector responsibilities the PIO will report to the sector location, receive a briefing from the sector officer, and assist as needed. The PIO may assume sector responsibilities at his/her discretion.

Radio designation shall be "Public Information Sector."

Individuals assigned to perform this sector function should consider the following general guidelines:

Basic Information:

- Timely response
- Number of units and personnel on-scene
- Human Interest or Safety Information

If possible, add anything to the basic information that will enhance the story; such information may include:

- Highly skilled and trained professionals (high rise, technical rescue, etc.)
- An extremely hazardous situation
- A person or company that did an outstanding job on or off duty fire fighter involvement
- A rescue scenario
- Projected duration of incident

This information will assist the reporters in their coverage of the incident and enhance the quality and accuracy of their stories. When possible, an interview with the company officer or crewmember is encouraged. Don't be afraid to talk to reporters. They will report the facts you give them. Every effort should be made to provide accurate information.

Usually, while gathering information, you will have inquiries from reporters. Provide the information you have at that point and emphasize that this information is preliminary. If it gets to the point that questions from reporters are keeping you from gathering information, use the following alternatives:

- Tell the reporters to gather in one place and that you will return shortly with more information.
- Request additional manpower from Command to assist in gathering information and remain with the reporters.
- Tell the reporters to go ahead and get pictures and film footage without interfering with incident operations while you are gathering information. Certified Fire Journalists (CFJ), identified by their green helmets and fire journalist identification, may be assigned to sectors. Journalists without green helmets or the proper CFJ identification will not be assigned to a sector and will be required to remain outside the incident perimeter. Make sure to point out the hazard zone. Arrange to meet with them shortly and give them any additional or updated information.
- If they have deadlines to meet, get a phone number(s) where they can be reached and phone them as soon as possible.
- **BEFORE RELEASING NAMES OF PERSONS SERIOUSLY INJURED OR DECEASED CONFIRM THAT THE NEXT OF KIN HAS BEEN NOTIFIED.** Notifications are usually handled by police and/or hospitals. Ask the Dispatch supervisor to check with PD or hospital to confirm that next of kin has been notified. **DO NOT USE THE NAMES OF DECEASED OR SERIOUSLY INJURED PERSONS IN YOUR INTERVIEW OR**

OVER THE RADIO UNTIL NOTIFICATION OF NEXT OF KIN HAS BEEN CONFIRMED. Ask for assistance from the PIO office.

- Do not speculate as to the cause of a fire or car accident.
- The individual or company assigned to the Information Sector may be required to escort the media on a tour of the fire damage area following knockdown. This must be cleared with Command and coordinated with operating sectors prior to entering the area.
- The Information Sector will be responsible for insuring that all media personnel wear proper protective clothing on the fire ground or any other area when needed.
- Each Sector Officer is responsible for the safety of media personnel in the area. If media personnel create a safety problem, or hinder operations, they will be requested to move. AVOID CONFRONTATIONS! The policy of the Department is to cooperate with the media.

212 Record Keeping:

Daily Log: It is the responsibility of each shift Captain or on duty Supervisor to enter into the daily log, all events of the shift. All runs, personnel assignments, details, visitors, and any, and all other activities. (If it is not in the log it did not happen)

NFIFR's: It is the responsibility of each shift Captain or on duty Supervisor to enter all runs into the NIFR's reporting system, and to insure their accuracy and completion. This is to be done before leaving their tour of duty.

Patient Care Reports: It is the responsibility of each shift Captain or on duty Supervisor to insure that all EMS calls have a completed Patient Care Report, and to insure their accuracy and completion. This is to be done before leaving their tour of duty.

213 Airport Emergencies:

The Gilmer County Airport has one runway. The runway has white or amber lights and a white center stripe. Taxiways have blue lights or reflectors and a yellow center stripe. At all times, exercise extreme caution when traveling in aircraft operating areas. Aircraft always have the right of way over ground vehicles. If the aircraft is stopped and disabled on the runway, verify airport personnel will issue radio notice of the incident to all aircraft.

NOTE: BE AWARE THAT GILMER COUNTY AIRPORT IS NOT A CONTROLLED AIRPORT AND THEREFORE CANNOT BE "CLOSED" TO TRAFFIC. AIRCRAFT MAY LAND AS LONG AS THE PILOT DETERMINES IT IS SAFE TO DO SO. IN ADDITION, AIRCRAFT SOMETIMES LAND WITH LIMITED RADIO CONTACT. IN OTHER WORDS, ANYTIME YOU ARE ON OR NEAR THE RUNWAY, BE CAUTIOUS OF INCOMING AIRCRAFT.

There are several considerations that are helpful for operating at airports:

- Be aware of your surroundings [runway, taxiway, and aircraft parked or moving.]
- In fighting an aircraft fire, attack from upwind high ground. The main priority in an aircraft fire is protecting the means of access/egress for the aircraft occupants.
- Use AFFF when necessary. Depending on the aircraft type, the amount of fuel on board may range from as little as 50 gallons to several thousand gallons.
- When responding to a "wheel fire" or "hot brakes," approach the landing gear from the front or rear, not the side. DO NOT spray water onto a hot wheel/brake assembly. Utilize a dry powder extinguisher to extinguish any visible flames and then allow the assembly to cool down.
- If you must cross a runway to get to an incident on the east side of the airport property, only cross at the extreme north or south ends of the runway.
- It is the responsibility of the owner/operator of an aircraft to make any required notifications or reports regarding accidents or incidents to the FAA or NTSB.
- If the incident involves Military aircraft, DO NOT approach the aircraft unless an extreme hazard to the aircrew exists (i.e. rescue attempt). Military personnel will be on the scene very quickly to take control of the incident and render the aircraft safe to approach.

The following classifications of aircraft emergencies are used by the Gilmer County Fire & Rescue Department to describe an unsafe condition or situation involving an aircraft:

Ground Emergency: Fuel spill, hot brakes, plane on fire, etc.

In-flight Emergency: Engine out, oil leak, warning light on, hydraulic failure, landing gear malfunction, fire on board, etc.

Plane Crash: Classified as small plane or large plane, passenger or cargo if known. Station #1 is the staging area for aircraft emergencies. Fire Department stand-by positions for incoming aircraft will be on the ramp due east of the control building. After touch down, Fire Department units should follow the aircraft at a distance of no closer than 300 feet until it comes to a complete stop. Fire Department units should utilize taxiways whenever possible.

Only use runways when necessary (i.e., aircraft is stopped and disabled on the runway). Use extreme caution and watch for aircraft landing.

300 FIRE SUPPRESSION

301 Required Use of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE):

Refer to policy 206 PPE

302 Incident Size-Up

The initial arriving unit shall give a “size up” report on the fire. The report should include but not be limited to the following:

- Unit arrived on scene at (given location)
- A brief description of the building
- A description of the fire conditions observed
- Any urgent needs or instructions to incoming units
- A brief statement of the initial arriving crews intended actions
- Accountability location
- Who is in command and name command
- Assign a tac channel

Example: Engine 1 on scene 123 Main Street, one story single family swelling, fire showing on the “D” side, pulling a skid load of an offensive attack, accountability at pump panel, Engine 1 will have Main Street command, all incoming units go to channel 4 for assignment.

303 Automatic Alarm

303.1 Commercial Alarm Activation

First due Engine shall respond emergency. Automatic aid units will respond non-emergency until first arriving unit gives initial size up. Automatic aid response from the City of Ellijay shall be Quint 15. At the discretion of the first arriving officer either a full alarm, or a scaled back response can then be ordered.

303.2 Commercial Alarm with Water Flow

A full alarm shall respond emergency until first arriving unit arrives and completes a thorough size up for hazards and extent of the emergency.

303.3 Residential Alarm

A full alarm shall respond emergency until first arriving unit arrives and completes a thorough size up for hazards, water supply issues and extent of the emergency.

303.4 Cancellation of responding units

No secondary responding units shall be cancelled without a thorough investigation of the hazards and appropriate mitigation efforts are underway. This is the responsibility of Incident Command on scene.

304 Offensive and Defensive Operations

The first arriving officer will make the decision on the mode of attack after a "walk around" has been performed. An offensive interior attack should be considered when immediate action is needed to stabilize a working interior fire in a residence, apartment or small commercial occupancy. Incident command must be established on arrival by the first arriving unit. The first arriving officer should always take into consideration **TIME, VALUE, and SIZE** prior to committing to an interior attack. Consider if you have adequate resources en route to support an interior attack.

TIME: The officer should minimally assess the following: How long the fire had been burning, the building's construction type and whether the fire is burning in the concealed spaces of a lightweight structure. For example, crews have more time to mount an interior attack on a room and contents fire than a fire burning in the concealed spaces of a lightweight building.

VALUE: The assessment should minimally include; whether the fire has progressed to the point of non survivability for occupants; the value of the structure; and what can be saved. If there is no value to life or property an interior attack is not an appropriate tactic.

SIZE: The officer should assess whether, for instance, the fire is small enough that the initial crew can apply an effective fire stream to control and extinguish it. Size is determined by the area of fire involvement divided by three ($L \times W / 3$). This equals the approximate gallons per minute (GPM) needed to control the fire. For example; a room and contents in a bedroom 12' x 15' would require 60 GPM flow for the initial crew. However, the smallest line to be deployed on an interior attack is a 1 $\frac{3}{4}$ inch hose line.

305 Apparatus Placement

Effective apparatus placement must begin with the arrival of the first units. The placement of the first arriving engine, tanker, or ladder should be based upon initial size up and general conditions upon arrival. First arriving apparatus should

place themselves in a manner that builds on the initial plan and allows for expansion of the operation.

Avoid nose to tailboard placement on the fire ground. Do not drive all apparatus directly to the fire. Later arriving units should hold positions, stage a minimum of 500 yards of the immediate fire area, and remain uncommitted until ordered into action by command. Drivers/Engineers should select standby positions that maximize tactical options.

In some large, complex, and lengthy fire ground operations Mutual Aid companies should be staged together in one location under the command of a Staging Officer consistent with "Level 2" staging procedures. Under these procedures, Command communicates directly with the Staging Officer for the additional resources required on the fire ground.

Be aware of putting fire apparatus in places where it can be repositioned easily and quickly particularly operating positions with only one way in and out; i.e., yards, driveways, etc., whenever possible.

Be aware of overhead power lines when positioning apparatus. Do not park where lines may fall.

If apparatus becomes endangered, operate lines between it and the fire while you reposition it. When you do move it, move it to a position that is safe. It is dysfunctional to move an apparatus several times throughout the progress of the fire.

Take maximum advantage of good operating positions and "build" the capability of units assigned to specific tasks. Subsequent arriving personnel can operate the hose lines from the initial arriving engine or pumper/tanker. Place these "key" units first so they are not "buried" by later arriving units.

Med units should be placed in a safe position that will provide the most effective treatment of fire victims and firefighting personnel, while not blocking movement of other apparatus or interfering with firefighting operations.

Personnel responding in POV shall park away from the immediate fire scene as not to interfere with water shuttle operations and block any incoming apparatus.

306 Fire Cause and Origin:

It is the goal of the department to determine the cause and origin of all fires that have a property loss; this is the responsibility of all members in regards to evidence preservation and is under the direct control of the Chief or his designated investigator.

400 EMERGENCY MEDICAL RESPONSE:

401 Emergency Medical Response Risk Management

401.1 Infection Control Policy

PLACE HOLDER

401.2 Protective Clothing and Equipment

PLACE HOLDER

401.3 Lifting/Moving Patients

PLACE HOLDER

401.4 Hostile Situations

All personnel need to be aware of potentially hostile situations and follow best practice for ensuring the safety of all involved. If advised to stage for law enforcement, be sure to obtain the physical address of the call so you can stage a minimum of 0.5 mile (out of visual contact) from the scene. If a hostile situation occurs after arriving on scene, ensure the safety of responders using cover, concealment and/or retreat depending on the situation. Notify and wait for law enforcement to clear scene.

402 Pre-Hospital EMS First Response

402.1 Ambulance Response Priority

PLACE HOLDER

402.2 Emergency Response

Emergency response is defined as lights and siren using due regard to reach the scene. All personnel shall abide by State of Georgia statute 40-6-6 at all times.

402.3 Non-emergency Response

Non-emergency response is defined as no use of lights and siren obeying all traffic laws.

402.4 Altered Responses

A crew may at any time deemed necessary down grade response due to poor or deteriorating road/weather conditions as needed for safety by notifying dispatch of time and reason.

403 Patient Dispositions and Transportation

Refer to current Gilmer County Fire & Rescue Medical Protocols.

403.1 Patient Determination

403.2 Definition of a "Patient"

Cancelled: Cancelled In-route, no contact made, no patients.

Patient: Any 911 caller or person on scene with any chief complaint, sign of injury or illness, or mechanism suspected of causing injury or illness.

Patient Assist: Patient called for assistance only, without injury or complaint.

No Patient: Patient did not personally call, has no chief complaint, sign of injury or illness, or mechanism suspected of causing injury or illness.

403.3 Death Determination Definitions

DNR: "Do not resuscitate", Legally disposed documents that provide for the natural act of dying to take place **without** the intervention of life sustaining skills such as, but not limited to:

- Chest compressions
- Artificial ventilation assistance
- Treatment of asystole, ventricular fibrillation, agonal heart rhythm or pulseless electrical activity

Obvious Death: Definite signs to an examining medical person operating a tan EMT through Paramedic level that the patient in question is:

Pulseless and apneic with signs of rigor mortis(in the absence of hypothermia), profound lividity, decomposition, mummification or putrification.

DOA: A patient that is found, upon arrival of medical person operating at an EMT through Paramedic level to be showing signs of obvious death.

In giving the highest quality of patient care available from this service, all patients found pulseless and apneic will have life support measures initiated on their behalf as soon as possible unless they show signs of biological death. These life support measures must be continued until such time as one of the following occurs:

- Spontaneous circulation and ventilation are effectively restored to the patient.
- Efforts to resuscitate the patient have been given over to other persons of an equal or greater skill level.
- All rescuers are exhausted and physically unable to continue.
- A physician that is licensed in the State of Georgia takes control of patient care in person or through medical control advises to discontinue life support and signs the Patient Care Report.

NOTE: The confirmation of the presence of obvious death in a patient shall **not** be considered as a pronouncement of the patient's death. The pronouncement of a patient's death may only be made by an individual that is authorized by the State of Georgia to do so. There are no employees of this agency so authorized.

Patients that are encountered during the operations of this department that are confirmed, after an appropriate and complete medical assessment survey, to display complete signs of biological death, shall be reported to dispatch for dispatch of law enforcement and coroner. Responding crew will **not** leave the incident scene until law enforcement has assumed responsibility for the scene. A target time of twenty (20) minutes should be considered when deciding whether the EMS unit should remain on scene or leave the incident scene. The responding crew should coordinate with the law enforcement commander on scene for information on stand-by status or return to service. In the event that

the crew returns to service, they should be prepared to return to the incident at a later time to provide patient transport if called upon to do so.

403.4 DNR/Living Will Procedures

“Do Not Resuscitate” orders are addressed in the State of Georgia statute 31-32-2.

“Living Wills” are addressed in the State of Georgia statute 31-32-3.

DNR or Living Wills should be presented in a complete form to employees of this department prior to the initiation of life support measures by a patient, patient surrogate, clergy, or physician if such measures are not requested. In the event that the DNR or Living Will is presented during resuscitation measures, Medical Control shall be contacted immediately while resuscitation continues and direction obtained from Medical Control as to the measures that shall proceed.

A copy of the document should be attached to the completed patient care report and should be noted in the narrative. Georgia State statute 31-32-7(a) provides immunity to medical care givers that act in good faith of the wishes of the patient with a DNR or Living Will.

DNR/Living Wills may be revoked at the incident scene by:

- The physician that signed the order.
- The patient in question.
- The patient’s surrogate that prepared the order and is physically present at the incident scene.
- Any immediate family member present at the incident scene who requests initiation of life support measures.

In the event that two (2) or more immediate family members are present at the incident scene where a DNR/Living Will order is in question for a patient, personnel of this agency shall initiate ACLS protocols and transport the patient to the nearest emergency room.

Medical Control shall be notified in the event that:

- An apparent DNR order is valid and efforts by personnel of this agency to follow those valid orders are being hampered.

- Resuscitative efforts by personnel of this agency are being hampered where an apparent non-valid DNR is presented.

403.5 Handling “No Patient” calls

Responses that contact is made with an individual on scene that are deemed **not** to be a patient a GCFR refusal of service form must be completed, including demographic information on person contacted.

403.6 Patient Refusals

Responses where patient contact is made, but not transported, must have a GCFR refusal of service form completed. In addition to the form, a patient care report must be completed. All patient refusals must follow the guidelines set forth in the GCFR Medical Protocols.

403.7 Destination Guidelines

The purpose of the destination guidelines standard operating procedure is to give the Paramedic on scene a guideline to go by in determining the most appropriate medical facility for patient transports, guidelines are set forth in the current GCFR Medical Protocols.

403.8 Method/Mode of Transportation

The decision for the method/mode of transportation needed will be the responsibility of the Paramedic on scene utilizing the current GCFR Medical Protocols.

403.9 Ambulance Operations

Vehicle Check

Refer to protocol under apparatus.

Checking stock and equipment

Ambulances will be checked off utilizing the approved ambulance check off sheet at the beginning of every shift. Inventory maintained on the vehicles will be kept

as stocked and no additional stock added, discrepancies and any equipment issues should be brought to the shift captain's attention. At no time should any equipment be unsecured, no items should be left open in the patient compartment to prevent disease transmission.

Reporting ambulance/equipment problems

All problems with equipment shall be reported immediately to the shift captain.

Safety Equipment

- **Use of 5 point harness for patient**

In accordance with the State of Georgia DHR, all patients will be secured using the shoulder harness and two sets of straps.

- **Securing Long Back Boarded patients**

Patients immobilized on a long spine board that impedes the use of the shoulder straps safely, shall be immobilized to the stretcher and the strap at the feet utilized to prevent forward excursion.

Essential Equipment

- **ALS**

In accordance with the State of Georgia DHR, R-E-01-A Required Equipment for Licensed EMS Providers-Ambulance, all essential ALS equipment will be stocked when the ambulance is staffed with ALS personnel.

- **BLS**

In accordance with the State of Georgia DHR, R-E-01-A Required Equipment for Licensed EMS Providers-Ambulance, all essential BLS equipment will be stocked when the ambulance is staffed with BLS personnel.

Availability

Upon transfer of patient care to receiving facility, unit shall be made available to run calls, unless restocking of necessary equipment is required; any delays should be reported to the shift captain. If the unit transported out of town, a timely return to county should occur.

403.10 Personnel Certification Requirements

First Responder: **PLACE HOLDER**

Emergency Medical Technician – PLACE HOLDER

Emergency Medical Technician – Intermediate: All personnel trained to the EMT-I level shall maintain a minimum of current Georgia State EMT-I certification and AHA BLS certification in accordance with the guidelines set forth by the State of Georgia Department of Human Resources.

Training shall be maintained in accordance with the guidelines set-forth by the State of Georgia Department of Human Resources and as set forth in the current GCFR Medical Protocols. All training must be approved in accordance with T-05 Course Approval – Continuing Education as set forth by the State of Georgia Department of Human Resources.

Cardiac Technician: All personnel trained to the Cardiac Technician level shall maintain a minimum of current Georgia State Cardiac Technician certification, AHA ACLS certification and AHA BLS certification in accordance with the guidelines set forth by the State of Georgia Department of Human Resources.

Training shall be maintained in accordance with the guidelines set forth by the State of Georgia Department of Human Resources and as set forth in the current GCFR Medical Protocols. All training must be approved in accordance with T-05 Course Approval – Continuing Education as set forth by the State of Georgia Department of Human Resources.

Paramedic: All personnel trained to the Paramedic level shall maintain a minimum of current Georgia State Paramedic certification, AHA ACLS certification and AHA BLS certification in accordance with the guidelines set forth by the State of Georgia Department of Human Resources.

Training shall be maintained in accordance with the guidelines set forth by the State of Georgia Department of Human Resources and as set forth in the current GCFR Medical Protocols. All training must be approved in accordance with T-05 Course Approval – Continuing Education as set forth by the State of Georgia Department of Human Resources.

403.11 Air Transport Operations

Guidelines for air transport decisions should reflect the current GCFR Medical Protocols.

404 Management of EMS Operations

404.1 Procurement of Supplies – PLACE HOLDER

404.2 Equipment replacement – PLACE HOLDER

404.3 Medication replacement – PLACE HOLDER

404.4 Inventory and Ordering – PLACE HOLDER

404.5 Required Documentation Procedures

All personnel shall complete the patient care report in accordance with the guidelines set forth by the State of Georgia Department of Human Resources and the Gilmer County Fire and Rescue Medical Director, refer to the current GCFR Medical Protocols on the following reports:

- **Patient Refusal Paperwork:**
- **Patient Care Report:**
- **HIPAA Procedures:**
- **Billing Requirements:**
- **Quality Improvement System:**

404.6 Standard of Care PLACE HOLDER

404.7 Level of certification with patient PLACE HOLDER

**404.8 Minimum equipment for patient response PLACE
HOLDER**

404.9 Treatment Protocols PLACE HOLDER

All personnel are responsible to understand and apply the current approved Gilmer County Fire and Rescue Medical Treatment Protocols relevant to certification level.

405 Special EMS Operations

405.1 Mass Gatherings **PLACE HOLDER**

405.2 Fire Rehabilitation Sector

PURPOSE: It is the policy of this department to follow an established rehabilitation guideline while operating at the scene of an emergency or a training exercise. The intent is to ensure that the physical and mental condition of each member does not deteriorate to a point that affects the overall safety of each member or the overall integrity of the incident or training operation.

SCOPE: This guideline applies at all emergency scenes and training operations where strenuous physical activity or exposure to adverse weather conditions exists.

BACKGROUND: To ensure maximum safety, this guideline is enacted to encourage that the physical and mental condition of our employees are monitored and evaluated during and after completion of emergency incidents and training activities and that adequate hydration and nutrition be provided at each incident. The rehabilitation unit should be able to expand when incidents escalate to the point they cannot be handled by the resources normally available. This expansion consists of two levels:

- **Level I** covers all normal incidents that are anticipated to last up to three hours and can be accomplished with on scene staffing. Level I should, when possible, include the appointment of a Rehab Officer (BLS) who is responsible for establishing a rehab site and gathering necessary equipment. Formal documentation is not required for Level I Rehab.
- **Level II** covers incidents or events outside the scope of our normal response capabilities or which last over 3 hours. In this case the Medical Operations vehicle, if available, should be requested. The Rehab Officer will have the same responsibilities as previously stated, but with ALS capabilities, and formal documentation.

GUIDELINES: The Rehabilitation Unit (Rehab) should be established by the IC on the emergency incident or the officer in charge of the training activity to monitor and evaluate personnel during operations. Medical treatment should be provided immediately upon the existence of the need by preplanning a BLS or ALS response during the planning phase of the incident when Rehab is first anticipated.

A. Responsibilities

1. Incident Commander

The IC should consider the circumstances of each incident and anticipate the need early on for adequate provisions for the rest and rehabilitation for all members operating at the scene. These provisions should include: medical evaluation; treatment and monitoring; food and fluid replenishment; mental rest; and relief from extreme climatic conditions and other environmental parameters of the incident. The rehabilitation should include the provision of EMS at the Basic Life Support (BLS) level or higher.

2. Supervisors

All officers or acting officers should maintain an awareness of the condition of each member operating within their span of control and ensure that adequate steps are taken to provide for each member's safety and health. The supervisor should also monitor the behavior of his or her crew members while in Rehab.

3. Personnel

It is the personal responsibility of each employee to maintain a level of fitness appropriate for the job. It is also the personal responsibility of each employee to report to work in a condition that is conducive to adequately operating on the emergency scene. During periods of hot weather, members should be encouraged to drink water and/or a 50/50 water-Gatorade mix throughout the workday. During any emergency incident or training activity, all members should advise their officer or acting officer when they believe that their level of fatigue or exposure to heat or cold is approaching a level that could affect themselves, their crew, or the operation in which they are involved. Members should also remain aware of the health and safety of other members of their crew.

B. Establishment of Rehab

1. Responsibility

The IC should establish a Level I or Level II Rehab Unit when conditions indicate that rest and rehabilitation are needed for personnel operating at an emergency incident or training exercise. When possible, a member should be placed in charge of the unit and should have the radio designation of Rehab. If staffing doesn't permit a permanent rehab officer, the company officers of crews in rehab will assume the responsibility of rehab officer. The Rehab Officer should report to the IC on small incidents or to Logistics, if established. The responsibility to monitor redeployment of crews to Staging, reassignment, or return to service should also be monitored by the Incident Safety Officer.

2. Location

The location for the rehabilitation area will normally be designated by the IC. If the area has not been designated by the IC, the Rehab Officer should select a location based on the site characteristics and designations below.

3. Site Characteristics

- It should be in a location that will provide physical rest by allowing the body to recuperate from the demands and hazards of the emergency operation or training activity.
- It should be far enough away from the scene that members may safely remove their gear and SCBA and be afforded mental rest from the stress and pressure of the emergency operation or training activity.
- It should provide suitable protection from the prevailing environmental conditions. During hot weather, it should be in a cool, shaded area. During cold weather, it should be in a warm dry area.
- It should enable members to be free of exhaust fumes from apparatus, vehicles, or equipment.
- It should be large enough to accommodate multiple crews, based on the size of the incident.
- It should be easily accessible by EMS units.
- It should allow prompt re-entry back into the incident upon recuperation.

4. Site Designations

- A nearby garage, building lobby, or other structure.
- Several floors below a fire in a high rise building.
- A school bus, municipal bus, or special unit.
- Fire apparatus, ambulance, or other emergency vehicles at the scene or called to the scene.
- An open area in which a Rehab Area can be created using tarps, fans, etc.

5. Resources

The Rehab Officer should secure all necessary resources required to adequately staff and supply the rehabilitation area. The supplies should include the items listed below:

- Fluids - water, activity beverage, oral electrolyte solutions, and ice.
- Food— soup, broth, or stew in hot/cold cups; balance bars.
- Medical—blood pressure cuffs, stethoscopes, oxygen administration devices, cardiac monitors, intravenous solutions and thermometers.
- Other—awnings, fans, tarps, smoke ejectors, heaters, dry clothing, extra equipment, floodlights, blankets and towels, traffic cones and fire line tape (to identify the entrance and exit of the rehabilitation area).

C. Rehabilitation Unit Establishment

1. Officers should consider rehabilitation during the initial planning stages of an emergency response. However, the climatic or environmental conditions of the emergency scene should not be the sole justification for establishing a Rehabilitation Unit. Any activity/incident that is large in size, long in duration, and/or labor intensive will rapidly deplete the energy and strength of personnel; and therefore merits consideration for rehabilitation.

2. Climatic or environmental conditions that include the need to establish a Rehabilitation Area are a heat stress index above 90° F (see table 1-1) or wind-chill index below 10° F (see table 1-2).

D. Hydration

A critical factor in the prevention of heat injury is the maintenance of water and electrolytes. Water must be replaced during exercise periods and at emergency incidents. During heat stress, the member should consume at least one quart per hour. The rehydration solution should be a 50/50 mixture of water and a commercially prepared activity beverage and administered at about 40° F. Rehydration is important even during cold weather operations where, despite the outside temperature, heat stress may occur during firefighting or other strenuous activity when protective equipment is worn. Alcohol and caffeine beverages should be avoided before and during heat

stress because both interfere with the body's water conservation mechanisms. Carbonated beverages should also be avoided.

E. Nourishment.

The department should provide food at the scene of an extended incident when units are engaged for three or more hours. A cup of soup, broth, or stew is highly recommended because it is digested much faster than sandwiches and fast-food products. In addition, foods such as apples, oranges, and bananas provide supplemental forms of energy replacement. Fatty and /or salty foods should be avoided. It is also recommended that a nutritional type power bar with a 30/30/40 balance of protein/fat/carbohydrate be used for normal nourishment needs. Long-term incidents require more substance like those listed above.

F. Rest

The "two air bottle rule," or 45 minutes of work time, is recommended as an acceptable level prior to rehabilitation. However, there are times when this may be excessive. Allow for adjustments to this "rule of thumb". Members should rehydrate (at least 8ozs.) while SCBA cylinders are being changed. Firefighters having worked for two full cylinders should be placed in the rehab area for rest and evaluation. In all cases the objective evaluation of member's fatigue level should be the criteria for rehab time. Rehabilitation should not be less than ten minutes and may exceed an hour as determined by the Rehab Officer. Fresh crews released from the Rehab Unit should be made available through the Staging Area, if established.

G. Recovery

Members in the Rehabilitation Area should maintain a high level of hydration. Members should not be moved from a hot environment directly into air conditioned areas because the body's cooling system can shut down in response to the external cooling. An air-conditioned environment is acceptable after a cool down period at ambient temperature with sufficient air movement. Certain drugs impair the body's ability to sweat and extreme caution must be exercised if the member has taken antihistamines, such as Actifed or Benadryl, or has taken diuretics or stimulants.

H. Medical Evaluation

1. Emergency Medical Services – EMS should be provided and staffed at a minimum of BLS level. They should evaluate vital signs, examine members, and make proper disposition (return to duty, continued rehab,

or medical treatment and transport to medical facility). Continued rehab should consist of additional monitoring of vital signs, providing rest, and providing fluids for rehydration. Medical treatment for members, whose signs and/or symptoms indicate potential problems, should be provided in accordance with local medical control procedures. EMS personnel should be assertive in an effort to find potential problems early. The administration of oxygen, cardiac monitor, or IV must be accompanied by a Patient Care Report.

2. Heart Rate and Temperature - The heart rate should be measured for 30 seconds as early as possible in the rest period. If a member's heart rate exceeds 110 beats per minute, an oral temperature should be taken. If the member's temperature exceeds 100.6° F, he/she should not be permitted to wear protective equipment. If it is below 100.6° F and the heart rate remains above 110 beats per minute, rehabilitation time should be increased. If the heart rate is less than 110 beats per minute, the chance of heat stress is negligible.
3. Documentation for Level II Rehab - All medical evaluations should be recorded on the individual evaluation form provided with these guidelines, along with the member's name and complaints and should be signed, dated, and timed by the Rehab Officer.

I. Accountability

Members assigned to the Rehabilitation Unit should enter and exit the rehabilitation area as a crew. The crew designation, number of crew members, and the times of entry to and exit from the Unit should be documented on the crew sign-in form provided (Company Check In/Out Sheet). Crews should not leave the rehab area until authorized to do so by the Rehab Officer.

500 HAZARDOUS MATERIALS RESPONSE

Hazardous Materials incidents encompass a wide variety of potential situations including fires, spills, transportation accidents, chemicals reactions, explosions and similar events. Hazards involved may include toxicity, flammability, radiological exposure, corrosives, explosives, health and chemical reactions, or a combination of factors. This plan provides a general framework for handling a hazardous materials incident, but does not address the specific tactics or control measures for particular incidents.

Every incident presents the potential for exposure to hazardous materials; even the products of combustion of an ordinary fire may present severe hazards to personnel safety.

This procedure is specifically applicable to known hazardous materials incidents, but it does not reduce the need for appropriate safety precautions at every incident. The use of full protective clothing and SCBA and the use of all Standard Operating Procedures on a continuing basis are foundational for this plan.

501 Dispatch

The 911 center will attempt to obtain any and all information from the person reporting a hazardous materials incident. The information should, if possible, include material name and/or type, amount and size of container(s), problem (leak, spill, fire, etc.) and dangerous properties of the materials as well as the number of persons injured or exposed. The 911 operator should remain on the telephone with the caller to gain additional information after entering the call for the dispatch.

Any additional information shall be relayed to responding units after dispatch. **THIS SHOULD INCLUDE THE SAFEST APPROACH OR BEST ACCESS TO THE INCIDENT IF AVAILABLE.**

If the call comes from a person with particular knowledge of the hazardous situation, that person should be instructed to meet and direct the arriving units. Dispatch shall relay that person's location and level of knowledge to responding units.

Dispatch will inform units as to the prevailing wind speed and direction from the monitoring station and advise responding units.

502 First Arriving Unit

The first arriving officer will establish Command and begin a size-up. The first unit must consciously avoid committing itself to a dangerous situation. When approaching, slow down or stop to assess any visible activity taking place. Evaluate effects of wind, topography and location of the situation. Route any other responding companies away from any hazards.

Command should consider ESTABLISHING LEVEL II STAGING WHENEVER POSSIBLE FOR OTHER RESPONDING UNITS. Staged companies must be in a safe location, taking into account wind, spill flow, explosion potential and similar factors in any situation. THE DOT GUIDEBOOK, NFPA REFERENCE MATERIALS, THE NIOSH POCKET GUIDE, OR ANY OTHER MATERIAL SUCH AS MSDS OR SHIPPING PAPERS AVAILABLE TO THEM SHOULD BE USED TO ESTABLISH A SAFE DISTANCE FOR STAGING.

503 Size-Up

Command must make a careful size-up before making a commitment. It may be necessary to take immediate action to make a rescue or evacuate an area. This should be attempted only after a risk/benefit analysis is completed. Personnel must take advantage of available personal protective equipment in these situations.

The objective of the size-up is to identify the nature and severity of the immediate problem and to gather sufficient information to formulate a valid action plan. Hazardous materials incidents require a cautious and deliberate size-up.

Avoid premature commitment of companies and personnel to potentially hazardous locations. Proceed with caution in evaluating risks before formulating a plan and keep uncommitted companies at a safe distance.

Identify a hazardous area based on potential danger, taking into account materials involved, time of day, wind and weather conditions, location of the incident, and degree of risk to unprotected personnel. Take immediate action to evacuate and/or rescue persons in critical danger, if possible, providing for safety of rescuers FIRST.

The primary objective is to identify the type of materials involved in a situation, and the hazards presented, before formulating a plan of action. Look for labels, markers, DOT IDENTIFICATION NUMBERS, NFPA DIAMOND or shipping papers, etc. Refer to pre-fire plans and ask personnel at the scene for additional information (plant management, responsible party, truck drivers, Emergency Management). Use reference materials carried on apparatus and have 911 contact other sources for assistance in sizing up the problem (state agencies, fire department specialists, manufacturers of materials, etc).

504 Action Plan

Based on the initial size-up and any information available, Command will formulate an action plan to deal with the situation.

THE ACTION PLAN MUST PROVIDE FOR:

- Safety of all fire personnel
- Evacuation of endangered area, if necessary
- Control of situation
- Stabilization of hazardous materials, and/or
- Disposal or removal of hazardous material

Most hazardous materials are intended to be maintained in a safe condition for handling and use through confinement in a container or protective system. The emergency is usually related to the material escaping from the protective container or system and

creating a hazard on the exterior. The strategic plan may include a method to control the flow or release, get the hazardous material back into a safe container, neutralize it, allow it to dissipate safely, or coordinate proper disposal.

The specific action plan must identify the method of hazard control and identify the resources necessary to accomplish this goal. It may be necessary to select one method over another due to the unavailability of a particular resource or to adopt a “holding action” to wait for needed equipment or supplies.

Avoid committing personnel and equipment prematurely or “experimenting” with techniques and tactics. Many times it is necessary to evacuate and wait for special equipment or technical help.

505 Control of Hazardous Area

A hazardous material incident has two initial zones associated with the scene, similar to a fire. There are the LIMITED ACCESS ZONE and the EVACUATION ZONE.

506 Limited Access Zone (LAZ)

The LAZ is the area in which personnel are potentially in immediate danger from the hazardous condition. This is established by Command and controlled by the fire department. Access to this area will be rigidly controlled and only personnel with proper protective equipment and an assigned activity will enter. All companies will remain in tact in designated staging areas until assigned. Personnel will be assigned to monitor entry and exit of all personnel from the LAZ. The LAZ should be geographically described to all responding units, if possible and identified by yellow fireline tape. (A Safety Officer will be established to control access to the LAZ and maintain an awareness of which personnel are working in the area.)

- Establish a safe perimeter around hazardous area and identify with tape.
- Request adequate assistance to maintain the perimeter.
- Identify an entrance/exit point and inform Command of its location.
- Coordinate with Safety Officer or “RECON CREW” to identify required level of protection for personnel operating in the Hazard Zone.

- Collect/return accountability tags of all firefighters entering/leaving the controlled area.

Restriction of personnel access into the LAZ includes not only fire department personnel, but any others who may wish to enter the LAZ (Police, press, employees, tow truck drivers, ambulance personnel, etc.). Command is responsible for everyone's safety.

507 Evacuation Zone (EZ)

The EZ is the larger area surrounding the LAZ in which a lesser degree of risk to personnel exists. All civilians would be removed from this area. The limits of this zone will be enforced by Police, Sheriff's Deputies or Highway Patrol based on distances and directions established in consultation with Command. The area to be evacuated depends on the nature and amount of the material and type of risk it presents to unprotected personnel (toxic, explosive, etc.).

In some cases, it is necessary to completely evacuate a radius around a site for a certain distance (i.e., potential explosion).

In other cases, it may be advisable to evacuate a path downwind where toxic or flammable vapors may be carried (and control ignition sources in case of flammable vapors).

In all cases, the responsibility for safety of all potentially endangered citizens rests with Command. Once the Hazardous Materials Sector has been established, HAZ MAT personnel will define and establish a hot, warm, and cold zone. These zones will remain in effect for the remainder of the incident.

508 Use of Non-Fire Department Personnel

In some cases, it may be advantageous to use non-fire department personnel to evaluate hazards and perform certain functions within their area of expertise. Credentials must be verified through the Incident Commander. No other persons shall be allowed into the hazard area under no circumstances.

600 TECHNICAL RESCUE

Pending

700 DISASTER OPERATIONS

Pending

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT STATEMENT GILMER COUNTY FIRE/RESCUE SOP HANDBOOK

I _____, acknowledge that I have been provided with the Gilmer County Fire/Rescue Department SOP Handbook. I am also aware that the SOP Handbook resides on the Gilmer County Fire/Rescue Department website and is available for reference at anytime.

I also acknowledge that it is my duty to read and follow the rules and regulations provided within the handbook.

Name

Date

(Signed acknowledgment statement shall reside in the personnel file of the Gilmer County Fire/Rescue department employee).