

Board of County Commissioners

Escambia County, Florida

Title: Standard Operating Guidelines for the Administration of the Volunteer Firefighter Stipend Program, Section IV, A.3

Date Adopted: December 11, 2008

Effective Date: October 1, 2024

Policy Amended: September 5, 2024

A. **Purpose**

To promulgate policy and guidelines for payment of a stipend to volunteers who provide more than minimal services to our local citizens and, in so doing, incur personal expenses. While it is beyond the scope of the relationship to maintain detailed expense and reimbursement records, this Stipend will in some measure help to cover those personal expenses.

B. **Required Qualifications and Payment Schedule**

1. Firefighter Trainee: Will receive \$200 per month for up to 12 months if:
 - a. Has completed the orientation process, as required by Escambia County Fire Administration.
 - b. Obtains certification as Florida Firefighter I within one (1) year of joining Escambia County Fire-Rescue. Firefighter Trainees who have not obtained Florida Firefighter I certification within the first year of service will not be eligible for additional stipend payments unless or until qualifying for a stipend payment as provided below.
 - c. Attends 2 training meetings and responds to not less than 25% of the assigned fire station's dispatched incidents for the month.
2. Firefighter I or Firefighter II: Will receive \$400 per month if:
 - a. Has completed the orientation process, as required by Escambia County Fire Administration.
 - b. Certified as Florida Firefighter I or Firefighter II.
 - c. Attends 2 training meetings and responds to not less than 25% of the assigned fire station's dispatched incidents for the month.
3. Lieutenant Rank: Will receive \$450 per month if:
 - a. Certified as Florida Firefighter I or Firefighter II.
 - b. Has met all rank education and training requirements.

- c. Has successfully completed applicable promotional process.
 - d. Attends 2 training meetings and responds to not less than 25% of the assigned fire station's dispatched incidents for the month.
4. Captain Rank: Will receive \$500 per month if:
 - a. Certified as Florida Firefighter I or Firefighter II.
 - b. Has met all rank education and training requirements.
 - c. Has successfully completed applicable promotional process.
 - d. Attends 2 training meetings and responds to not less than 25% of the assigned fire station's dispatched incidents for the month.
5. Assistant District Chief Rank: Will receive \$550 per month if:
 - a. Certified as Florida Firefighter I or Firefighter II.
 - b. Has met all rank education and training requirements.
 - c. Has successfully completed applicable promotional process.
 - d. Attends 2 training meetings and responds to not less than 25% of the assigned fire station's dispatched incidents for the month.
6. District Chief Rank: Will receive \$650 per month if:
 - a. Certified as Florida Firefighter I or Firefighter II.
 - b. Has met all rank education and training requirements.
 - c. Has successfully completed applicable promotional process.
 - d. Attends 2 training meetings and responds to not less than 25% of the assigned fire station's dispatched incidents for the month.
7. Captain of Training Rank: Will receive \$800 per month:
 - a. Certified as Florida Firefighter I or Firefighter II.
 - b. Has met all rank educational and training requirements.
 - c. Has successfully completed the applicable promotional process.
 - d. Successfully performs the duties of Captain of Training- Volunteer, subject to the approval of the Division Chief of Training.
8. Logistics Technician Position: Will receive \$650 per month if:
 - a. Has completed the orientation process, as required by Escambia County Fire Administration.
 - b. Has met all job educational and training requirements.
 - c. Successfully performs the duties of Logistics Technician- Volunteer, subject to the approval of the Warehouse Supervisor.
9. Recruitment and Retention Officer Rank: Will receive \$1,000 per month if:

- a. Certified as Florida Firefighter I or Firefighter II.
- b. Has met all rank educational and training requirements.
- c. Has successfully completed applicable promotion process.
- d. Successfully performs the duties of Recruitment and Retention Officer, subject to the approval of the Deputy Chief.

C. **Disaster Payment**

In the event of a declared local, state, or national state of emergency disaster, volunteer personnel who are called to maintain full-time emergency staffing by the Fire Chief or their designee, for a period not less than 72 hours may receive a one-time disaster stipend payment not to exceed \$500. This payment is contingent upon available funding and must be approved by the Board of County Commissioners.

D. **Procedures**

1. An incident report and/or activity log shall be generated and completed in ECFRs Record Management Software "First Due" for all incidents, training events, meetings, and special details. If possible, an officer will be responsible for completing this report or activity. If an officer is not available, the most senior Firefighter will be responsible for completing the report. The District Chief is ultimately responsible to ensure that all reports are completed accurately, timely, and in accordance to all applicable Standard Operating Guidelines and this policy.
2. All attendees' names will be added to the report or activity. Attendance will only be counted if the reported status is defined as "completed" in all modules used for tabulating the stipend.
3. The District Chief or designee will be the only person permitted to add any additional attendees to the incident report or activity.
4. The District Chief will prepare a Monthly Stipend Report at the end of each month that will include, but not be limited to, the following information: number of incidents the assigned fire station was dispatched to; number of members, by rank, who met the qualifications to be eligible to receive the stipend, the total number of members in the department, and number of incidents, drills, training meetings, and special detail each member participated in. Monthly stipend reports will only be created using the "First Due" software, which will be the official record management software when compiling data for stipend eligibility. The submitted report will be initialed by each member who qualifies for the monthly stipend and signed by the appropriate District Chief, command staff, and or responsible supervisor. The Monthly Stipend Report will be submitted to the Public Safety Business Operations Division Manager, no later than the 10th of the following month, for processing and payment by the Clerk's Finance Department.
5. The appropriate District Chief, command staff, and or responsible supervisor shall be responsible for maintaining personnel files and training records which accurately reflect each member's qualifications for the applicable stipend level. These records shall be available for audit. In addition, District Chiefs, command staff, and or responsible supervisors shall be responsible for ensuring that a copy of everyone's Firefighter I & II certificates are on file in the training division at the Fire Administration Office.

E. **Special Detail**

Credit may be given for Special Detail. This credit will not account for more than 50% of the dispatched incident attendance required for an individual in any given month. Each special detail may be credited towards attendance for one dispatched incident.

F. **Retention Incentive**

In order to receive the Retention Incentive, Volunteer Firefighters must complete 96 hours of documented training and education relating to services that are provided by Escambia County Fire-Rescue per calendar year and participate in 25% dispatched incidents for the preceding calendar year (to include credit for special detail). Members assigned to an administrative function (B7, 8, & 9) will qualify for the retention incentive based on the recommendation of the immediate supervisor in addition to qualifying for a stipend 9 of the 12 months in the current fiscal year. Members meeting these requirements will be paid annually in the first quarter of the fiscal year. It will be the responsibility of the District Chief, command staff, and or responsible supervisor to submit the required documents for payment to the Public Safety Business Operations Manager in a timely manner to meet this schedule.

The Retention Incentive schedule is as follows:

<u>Years of Service:</u>	<u>Payment during First Quarter of Fiscal Year:</u>
5	\$ 200.00
10	\$ 400.00
15	\$ 600.00
20	\$ 900.00
25+	\$1200.00

G. **Annual Review**

This policy shall be reviewed annually by the Fire Chief or his designee to determine if any amendments to the stipend program are warranted.

