



## Administration & Finance Division

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**To:** Mayor & Council

**From:** Jordan Forbes, Human Resources Coordinator

**Date:** March 21, 2018

**Subject:** Volunteer Firefighter Employment Policy

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The proposed changes to the policy include:

1. Newly hired volunteer firefighters who are certified to the NFPA 1001 Firefighter Level 1 standard would automatically become Level 2 volunteers.
2. Newly hired volunteer firefighters who are certified to the NFPA 1001 Firefighter Level 2 standard would automatically become Level 3 volunteers.
3. In the event that a volunteer firefighter who works for the Town of Fort Frances is pulled away from their regularly scheduled work hours to respond to an emergency incident, they shall be compensated at their usual rate, unless that rate is lower than their volunteer firefighter rate, in which case, they will receive their volunteer firefighter rate. Their time will be billed to the Fort Frances Fire and Rescue Service.
  - It should be noted that these events are rare.
  - This item was added to the policy to ensure that no employees suffer a loss in compensation or negative implications with their pensions.
  - This policy statement ensures that there is no disincentive for Town employees to provide assistance in the case of an emergency during work hours.

Council approval of this report will agree to the recommendation of the Administration & Finance Executive Committee to approve the Volunteer Firefighter Employment Policy.
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# THE TOWN OF FORT FRANCES

## Section: Human Resources

### Policy: Volunteer Firefighter Employment

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<b>Creation Date:</b>	April 2017
<b>Review Date:</b>	August 2017
<b>Resolution Number:</b>	245 (consent)
<b>Supersedes Resolution Number:</b>	783 (consent)
<b>Policy Number:</b>	3.14

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#### 1. Intent

To govern the employment of volunteer firefighters employed by the Fire and Rescue Service.

#### 2. Scope

This policy applies to all volunteer firefighters.

#### 3. Compensation

**Probationary Volunteers** would be paid \$17.55 per hour until further notice. This is the entry-level class for volunteer positions. Once 70% of the 5th Class Firefighter rate has surpassed this amount, the rate would no longer be red-circled and all future rate increases would be linked to those of the MNU employee group.

**Level 1 Volunteers** would be paid \$20.06 per hour until further notice. This class of volunteer has successfully completed a minimum of one year of service and 100 hours of documented training during that time. Once 80% of the of the 5th Class Firefighter rate has surpassed the Level 1 rate, said rate would no longer be red-circled and all future rate increases would be linked to those of the MNU employee group.

**Level 2 Volunteers** would be paid \$22.56 per hour until further notice. This class of volunteer has successfully completed a minimum of one year of service as a Level 1 volunteer and 100 hours of documented training during that time. The volunteer must also be certified as per the NFPA 1001 Firefighter Level 1 standard. **Volunteer Firefighters who are newly hired, and currently certified to the NFPA 1001 Firefighter Level 1 Standard, would be paid the Level 2 Volunteers wage of \$22.56 per hour.** Once 90% of the 5th Class Firefighter rate

has surpassed the Level 2 rate, said rate would no longer be red-circled and all future rate increases would be linked to those of the MNU employee group.

**Level 3 Volunteers** would be paid \$25.07 per hour until further notice. This class of volunteer has successfully completed a minimum of one year of service as a Level 2 Volunteer and 100 hours of documented training during that time. The volunteer must also be certified as per the NFPA 1001 Firefighter Level 2 standard. *Volunteer Firefighters who are newly hired, and currently certified to the NFPA 1001 Firefighter Level 2 Standard, would be paid the Level 3 Volunteers wage of \$25.07 per hour.* Once 100% of the 5th Class Firefighter rate has surpassed the Level 3 rate, said rate would no longer be red-circled and all future rate increases would be linked to those of the MNU employee group.

*Volunteer Firefighters who are employed by the Town of Fort Frances in another department, shall not lose any compensation, entitlement or benefit as a result of being called to attend an emergency incident during their scheduled work hours.*

*Therefore, employees shall receive their usual compensation for time spent on an emergency incident during scheduled work hours.*

*In the event that a Town employee's regular wage is lower than their applicable Volunteer Firefighter wage, the employee shall receive their volunteer firefighter wage.*

*Time for employees who are called to emergency incidents shall be billed to the Fort Frances Fire and Rescue Service.*

#### **4. WSIB Coverage**

Volunteer firefighters are workers under the *Workplace Safety and Insurance Act*, and the WSIB considers the employers of these workers to be a municipal corporation. Volunteer firefighters are covered to the full extent of the WSIB Maximum Insurable Earnings Ceiling for each year.

##### **Rules for coverage**

Volunteer firefighters are also covered under this policy and considered to be in the course of employment when responding to an emergency call or alarm from their home, or from their regular employment, whether they are:

- travelling to the emergency or to the local emergency centre;
- carrying out their duties at the emergency;
- returning to the emergency centre or home after the emergency call or alarm, using the most direct or uninterrupted route.

##### **Additional coverage rules for volunteer firefighters:**

Volunteer firefighters are also covered while

- carrying out fire protection services as defined in the FPPA

- attending training programs required as a condition of employment, and/or
- participating in fire department training activities.

If required to travel away from the deemed employer's premises, volunteer firefighters may be covered if the criteria in WSIB Operational Policy 15-03-05 (Travelling) are met.

### **Determining Average Earnings (WSIB Operational Policy 18-02-05)**

Where a worker is concurrently employed at the time of injury, the average earnings are the earnings from all employment at the time of injury.

## **5. Accident & Sickness Program – AIG Insurance Company of Canada & VFIS**

All Fort Frances Fire & Rescue Volunteer Firefighters are enrolled in the Accident & Sickness Program offered by the AIG Insurance Company of Canada & VFIS.

All volunteer firefighters are required to complete a VFIS Beneficiary Designation For Accident & Sickness Policy Form, and submit the completed form to the Fire Chief/CEMC. As well, it is the responsibility of all volunteer members to inform the Fire Chief/CEMC of any changes to their insurance details.

## **6. Vehicle & Insurance Requirements**

All volunteer firefighters must possess and maintain a minimum of a Valid G Ontario Driver's License (or equivalent), as well as have access to a vehicle; a copy of both the front and back of a volunteer firefighter's driver license must be submitted to the Fire Chief/CEMC for the purpose of record keeping.

As well, all volunteer firefighters must have valid insurance on any vehicle they utilize to respond to an emergency incident and/or other fire and rescue related activity/event.

It is the responsibilities of all volunteer firefighters to inform their insurer that they utilize their personal vehicle periodically to respond to emergency response calls as a member of the Fort Frances Fire & Rescue Service.

All volunteer firefighters must read and sign the Volunteer Firefighter Driver Pledge Form.

## **7. Orientation Policies and Online Training**

All volunteer firefighters must attend and complete the Town of Fort Frances Orientation on the Town's policy manual, which includes the Employee Health and Safety Orientation Checklist. As well, all volunteer firefighters must complete any required online training as required by the Town of Fort Frances.

## **8. 40 Hour New Recruit Training Program**

All volunteer firefighters must attend and complete the 40 Hour New Recruit Training Program before being issued a fire pager and put into the Fire & Rescue Service Division System.

## **9. Attendance for Training and Emergency Response Calls**

In order to ensure an optimal level of safety for all personnel whether attending training or responding to an emergency response call, all volunteer firefighters shall be required to maintain an annual response level as follows:

### **Training:**

Attend a minimum of 60% of the regular scheduled training per year. If a volunteer firefighter is absent/unavailable during a regular scheduled training session due to work, illness, out of town etc. it is their responsibility to contact the Captain of Training and arrange to get caught up on what training was missed.

**Emergency Response Calls:**

Respond to a minimum of 60% of the annual emergency response calls when requested.

Attendance records will be reviewed following each calendar year, with those members having attendance below the noted minimum levels being addressed on an individual basis by the Fire Chief/CEMC.

Personnel having annual attendance in either category which is below 60% will receive a letter from the Fire Chief/CEMC outlining options and requesting a meeting with the individual.

It is fully understandable that there may be instances where extenuating circumstances contribute to reduced levels of attendance and such instances can also be discussed on an individual basis to determine alternate arrangements.



# Fort Frances Fire & Rescue Service

## Appendix A: Volunteer Firefighter Driver Pledge Form & Waiver

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I pledge that if I drive a personal vehicle to report to work as a member of the Town of Fort Frances Fire & Rescue Service, that adequate insurance will always be in force, and that I have made my insurer aware that I will be using my personal vehicle for said purpose.

I understand that as a Volunteer Firefighter with the Town of Fort Frances, the limits and coverage provided by my personal automobile insurance are applicable to any accidents or incidents that involve my personal vehicle, including those that occur while I am serving as a volunteer firefighter for the Town of Fort Frances.

I agree to release and discharge the Corporation of the Town of Fort Frances from all manners of action and claims due to any damage, loss or injury to person or property which may be sustained from using my personal vehicle in the course of my duties as a Volunteer Firefighter. This includes any claims (or portions thereof) not covered by my insurance policy and any applicable insurance deductibles.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_