

Chapter 3-1

1. Purpose

This SOP details the prerequisites and ongoing requirements for volunteer firefighter membership in the PVFD.

2. Scope

This SOP applies to all PVFD volunteer members or prospective members.

3. Introduction

PVFD utilizes volunteer staffing to accomplish its mission of fire protection. The personnel who are allowed to participate as members of PVFD must show they are of sound mental, physical, and ethical aptitude. This is due to the fact that the PVFD's mission of fire protection requires its members to have a high degree of public trust.

4. Prerequisites for Membership

All prospective members to the PVFD must fill out an application that lists pertinent background information. The information contained in this application is solely for the use of PVFD, and shall not be distributed or displayed to any party outside the administration of the PVFD. The only exception is that the information shall be forwarded to a local police agency, which will perform a background check on the prospective member. If the prospective member's background check reveals evidence of felony conviction or an obvious falsification on the application, the person shall be denied membership.

The following are the prerequisites for membership as a volunteer firefighter:

1. Be at least 18 years of age.
2. Completed, or in process of completing high school degree or GED.
3. No felony convictions or pending felony court action
4. No excessive traffic violations or misdemeanor convictions for theft
5. Must hold and maintain a valid KY driver's license
6. Must not be retired due to a Worker's Comp related injury
7. Must pass PVFD basic health physical
8. Must not have a known personality conflict that would interfere with completion of PVFD duties
9. Must not hold any other position that would pose an ethical conflict with completion of PVFD duties
10. Must live within the PVFD district, or close enough to respond to the station in a reasonable time.
11. As an alternate to #10, may work within the PVFD district if employer will grant leave to make fire runs.
12. As an alternate to #10, may agree to spend at least 24 hours per week within the PVFD district available for fire runs.

5. Acceptance to the PVFD

Once a member is accepted into the PVFD, they shall serve a one-year probationary period. During this time, the member is expected to learn about the organization through training and interaction with other members. If at any time during the probationary period the Chief or his officer staff determines that the new member is not interacting or participating well, the new member may be asked to improve or leave the organization.

At the completion of the probationary period, the Chief and his staff shall evaluate the new member according to how he has performed and interacted. If the new member is found to be acceptable, his membership will become official. If not, the member may be asked to show improvement, and the probationary period will be extended as the officers see fit. The new member may also be asked to leave the organization if the officers do not see hope for improvement. The rejected member may reapply for membership only after waiting for at least six months. He shall then repeat the application process from the beginning.

6. Transfer Firefighters

If a firefighter with previous experience on another department wants to join PVFD, he may do so according to the following guidelines. The transfer firefighter must meet the requirements for a new member and be able to document his previous training and experience. The transfer firefighter must be previously certified as a KY State or IFSAC level 1 or 2 firefighter. He must also have at least 2 years experience with the previous agency. If these requirements are not met, the transfer firefighter must meet the requirements of a new PVFD firefighter.

If the transfer firefighter remains active with another volunteer fire department near PVFD, the firefighter may be asked to cease such activity if it creates a conflict of time or interest with the PVFD. Failure to do so may cause the PVFD to ask the firefighter to resign, or may also be grounds to withhold promotion in the PVFD.

A transfer firefighter will serve a probationary period the same as a new member, except the probation shall only last six months. During this time, the firefighter must learn the specific details of PVFD's organization and operations. If the probation is completed successfully, the transfer firefighter shall become an official member, with credit awarded for all documented previous training.

7. Continuation of Membership with PVFD

Membership with PVFD is considered ongoing for a member in good standing provided the member meets the following requirements:

1. Attend at least the minimum of trainings and incidents as detailed in the PVFD attendance policy.
2. Show progress in achieving higher status in the KY State training system.
3. Do not suffer any disciplinary action that would warrant termination.
4. Do not fail to meet any of the prerequisites for membership.

The PVFD reserves the right to repeat law enforcement background checks throughout the member's tenure with PVFD. If the background check reveals felony convictions or excessive traffic violations that were not reported to PVFD by the member, the member shall be subject to discipline and/or expulsion.

8. Instructions for New Members

New members shall be issued a copy of the SOP and SOG manual, a building key, pager, and issued turnout gear after the Chief accepts their application. The issued equipment may be withheld until the new member has attended enough training sessions to warrant their issue. New members shall not be permitted to respond to emergency calls until they have reviewed the policies, guidelines, and apparatus with the Line Officers, and have been given permission by the Chief.

9. Obligations of All Members

The following are the basic obligations for all members to achieve satisfactory service with the PVFD:

1. Read, learn, and practice PVFD policies and guidelines.
2. Recognize that safety is the primary obligation of all members.
3. Become familiar with the PVFD organizational structure and how it relates to the community and government.
4. Recognize and obey the chain of command, both in Line functions and Administrative functions.
5. Understand personal responsibilities of a firefighter such as conduct; ethics; attendance at training, incidents, and other functions; care, use, and maintenance of personal protective equipment and department apparatus.
6. Recognize the importance of responding to any emergency call.
7. Understand the Incident Management System used by the PVFD.
8. Recognize the importance of each member's role in promoting fire and life safety.
9. Represent and promote the interests of the PVFD in a positive manner.

10. Termination of Membership

If a member is terminated it will be done with a written notice from the Chief or the Board of Trustees. The terminated member must return all issued PVFD property within 1 week. The member must also return all items purchased by the member that have the PVFD name, patch or logo on them. The member may ask for reimbursement for the cost of these items.

Termination of membership shall be done in compliance with the provisions of KRS Chapter 75. This action shall only be done after an investigation of an offense committed by the member shows that this action is necessary.

11. Resignation of Membership

If a member in good standing resigns from the department, they must do so with a written notice delivered to the Chief or the Board of Trustees. The member will then make arrangements with the Chief for the return of all issued PVFD property. The Chief may allow the member to keep certain items that bear the PVFD name, patch, or logo. If the member wishes to return items that were purchased that bear the PVFD name, patch, or logo, they may do so and be reimbursed for their cost.