

Policy 102
Administrative
Attendance to Calls and Duty Crew
5/25/2001
Updated 01/01/09



Scope:

The purpose of this policy is to define and outline responsibilities for responding to calls. This also defines duty crew procedures. This policy applies to all members and employees of the fire department. This applies to full time, part time, paid on call, and volunteer members and employees of the fire department.

Background:

The fire department, because it is primarily a volunteer based department, has established a system where by a minimum number of members is available to respond to calls. This insures a basic response for both fire and medical calls. This is referred to as the duty crew system. At all times that a duty crew is on duty, members on that crew should remain available and respond to all calls that occur. Additionally, ALL members of the fire department have a responsibility to respond to calls, even if they are not on duty, that may require more resources than the on duty crew has available.

General:

Members who are considered home response per department policy shall have a run percentage rate of at least 15%. It is the member's responsibility to sign in on calls. Fire Department records are the official documentation. For purposes of incentives, the run percentage must remain above 20%, or as approved by the Chief.

Members who are considered non-resident (station stand-by) must complete an average of 6 hours of station stand-by a week. This time must be as approved by the Chief.

Every member is expected to respond to fire calls, accident calls, and other events when available. Particularly at times when staffing may be short or delayed.

Most volunteer members of the Hiawatha Fire Department are assigned to a "Duty Crew". Each Duty Crew is "On Duty" one night a week, and every fifth weekend. When on duty, the member is expected to be available for and respond to **all** calls (emergency and non-emergency) when the member is not at work, or at church worship services.

When a member is not available to respond to calls, while on duty, they must notify their officer.

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Procedure:

1. The Chief, in consultation with the other officers, shall determine the number of duty crews and the organization of those crews.
2. The Chief or his designee shall assign each volunteer member to a duty crew. Duty crews will be organized such that they are balanced for medical providers, firefighters, residents, and non residents, along with other factors.
3. Any member requesting a change in duty crew must do so in writing, to the Chief. The Chief has final right of assignment however, and not all requests may be approved if they are not in the best interest of the fire department.
4. Participation in the duty crew system is a condition of being a volunteer member of the fire department.
5. Certain members may not be assigned to duty crews. This may include:
 - a. Staff and paid employees.
 - b. Future policy may authorize reserve or associate members are exempt from participation rules.
 - c. Members who are on authorized leave of absence may be excused from duty crew.
 - d. The Command Staff may make arrangements with certain members to not place them on duty crews. For example members who agree to cover certain weekend or day shifts on a regular basis.

Week Night Coverage:

1. Each duty crew is on one day of the week starting at 0700 hours on that day and running for 24 hours.
2. Members are expected to be available for calls when not at their regular job. This is regardless of work shift. For example, a person who works "midnights" is expected to respond to daytime calls.
3. The crew is also responsible for covering both the ambulance and assisting fire unit, starting at 1700 hours on their duty day and ending at 0700 the next. Working with the Paramedic on the crew, the officer will assign crews to both the ambulance and the fire unit.
4. Seats on both units are assigned first to the duty crew staff. IF sufficient staff is not available after 5 minutes, then off duty staff may respond.
5. The crew shall work internally to determine the best method of having the fast response times. The goal is to have the ambulance on scene within five (5) minutes to all emergency calls.
6. If a person needs a substitute, they will initially contact their duty officer. The duty officer may request that they obtain a substitute, or the duty officer may assign a substitute.

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Weekend Coverage:

1. Duty crews are also on duty one (1) out of five (5) weekends, on a rotating basis. Weekends start at 1700 hours Friday, and end at 1700 hours on Sunday.
2. During the entire weekend, the duty crew is responsible for covering both the ambulance and the assisting fire unit.
3. Seats on both units are assigned first to the duty crew staff. IF sufficient staff is not available after 5 minutes, then off duty staff shall respond.
 - a. Note: Those persons riding on 289 must hold current EMS certification.
 - i. Exception: The officer in charge may authorize ONE student and ONE fire only driver
4. The Duty Crew is responsible for conducting station and apparatus maintenance. The officer assigned to the individual duty crew shall coordinate this. All apparatus and station maintenance will normally be conducted at 0900 hours on Saturday morning, or as scheduled by the Duty Crew Officer with permission of the Command Staff.
5. If a member is going to miss their duty crew assignment, they should notify their officer and get a substitute. If they are not going to get a substitute, they should complete their assignment by 0900 hours the following Monday.
6. Only in the event of a true, last minute, emergency will someone be excused from duty crew. There are no other excused absences from Duty Crew and Maintenance. Each member must complete their assigned duties.

Medical Run Coverage:

1. This policy is for coverage of all medical runs only.
2. On Auto Accidents, 284 is open for any available staff. 289 and Ambulance are still primarily the responsibility of the duty crew. Additional units are open.
3. Should a (non-duty) crew be at the station and ready to respond the ambulance, they may do so if they are qualified and believe it to be in the best interest of the patient to respond immediately. They should communicate to the remaining staff at the station to wait on the on duty crew.
4. Paid Staff who are on duty, or Paramedics doing non-resident time are not required to hold the ambulance for the on duty crew. They can work with the crew at the scene to make appropriate crew changes, once patient care is being addressed.
5. Personnel not on duty should not try to "beat" the on duty crew to the station to take a vehicle ahead of them.
6. All available members should respond to fire or other events that may require more resources than the on duty crew has available. It is all members' responsibility to cover second calls.

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Enforcement:

Members are expected to respond to calls when on duty. They must also complete their duty crew assignments each time they are on duty. It is the responsibility of the member to communicate their status to the officer in charge. The duty officer and command staff will determine excused absences, utilizing the following as guidelines.

- Regular gainful employment.
- Attendance at specific recognized church functions.
- Family or personal illness.

Within reason, a member may receive limited “excused” absences for out of town travel/vacation consistent with their full time employment. If a person is regularly unable to complete their duty crew responsibilities for any reasons, including the above, there membership may be terminated. Failure to respond to a call while on duty may be considered a violation of this policy and others.

As per SOP 105, section 9 dated 5/25/01

“Displaying insolence or indifference or evading during an emergency incident. Any member found to be guilty of this offence shall be relieved of duty immediately.”

The Command Staff may take disciplinary actions against a member who fails to adhere to this policy. Action may include, but is not limited to:

- Return to probationary status.
- Denial of incentives benefits
- Demotion.
- Suspension.
- Removal from the department.