HAWAI'I FIRE DEPARTMENT VOLUNTEER DIVISION
STANDARD OPERATING GUIDELINES (SOG's)

VOLUNTEER DIVISION OVERVIEW

The Hawai'i Fire Department's Volunteer Division was formed in the early 1960's, in response to a need for additional firefighting resources on the Big Island. At present, Hawai'i is the only Island in the state with a Volunteer Fire Fighter Division.

With respect to the role of the Volunteers, each geographic area has its own unique situation and demands but, in general, the Volunteer Fire Department (VFD) is an additional source of firefighting manpower and equipment that the HFD can call into action when deemed necessary. In this regard, the Volunteer's primary goal is to be adequately trained, equipped, and ready to safely respond when called. **SAFETY**, without exception, is the first and highest priority.

As a component of the HFD, it's important to keep in mind that the Volunteer Division is comprised of residents with diverse backgrounds, individual schedules and obligations, and are on-call 24 hours a day, seven (7) days a week. In this regard, members may not always be available to respond when called. However, by accepting the distinction of being a Hawai'i Volunteer Fire Fighter they commit to accepting responsibility to respond whenever possible; to comply with the Volunteer Division guidelines, policies and procedures set forth by the HFD; and to represent the organization well and honorably.

The service that Volunteer Fire Fighters unselfishly provide is a tremendous benefit to the County, the Hawai'i Fire Department, and the communities they serve.

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I. COMPANY ORGANIZATION AND STRUCTURE

Four (4) Volunteer Company personnel positions are recognized by the HFD and its Volunteer Division.

They are:

1. **Volunteer Company Officer (Captain)**
   There is only one Company Officer per Company, with the possible exception of "grandfathered" situations. This individual is the leader and has overall responsibility for the Company.

2. **Volunteer Fire Equipment Operator (FEO)**
   There may be one or more FEOs per company. These individuals operate and maintain the vehicles and equipment, and have the solemn responsibility to get personnel and equipment to the training or incident scene in a safe and efficient manner.

3. **Volunteer Fire Fighter**
   The number of Fire Fighters per company may vary with the number of active FEOs. A maximum total of company personnel shall be 12. The Fire Chief has the authority to close a Volunteer Station if there are inadequate personnel.

4. **Probationary Volunteer Fire Fighter**
   All new volunteer Fire Fighters shall be on a minimum three (3) month probationary period. They shall be deemed qualified as a Volunteer Fire Fighter by their respective Volunteer Company Officer and the HFD Training Officer.

These are the only positions officially recognized within the Volunteer Division. Due to manpower resources varying significantly from one Volunteer Company to the next, personnel may perform the duties of one or more of these positions.

Volunteer Fire Fighter Applicants are those individuals interested in becoming a member of the Hawai'i Fire Department Volunteer Division, who meet the listed minimum requirements, and who have begun the application process.

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II. COMPANY POSITION MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS

Following are the minimum requirements for each of the three recognized positions, and of the APPLICANTS. Please note that each position is cumulative, in that it builds upon the previous position. For example, a Volunteer Fire Fighter must meet not only the requirements listed for that position but also those listed under Volunteer Fire Fighter Applicant as well. FEO's must meet the requirements of both the Applicant and Fire Fighter positions.

VOLUNTEER FIRE FIGHTER APPLICANT

1. Must be eighteen (18) years of age or older.
2. Must be a United States citizen.
3. Must possess a valid Hawai'i Driver's License.
4. Must complete the required HAWAI'I COUNTY FIRE DEPARTMENT VOLUNTEER FIRE SERVICE application.
5. Applicants must meet the suitability guidelines for hire as established by the Hawai'i Fire Department.
6. Must submit to and pass a County required background check (notarized waiver required) and physical examination (PUC) by the County's physician.
7. Must be willing to comply with the HFD approved guidelines (SOG's) for Volunteer Fire Fighters.
8. Must be willing to follow the "Chain of Command" and follow, without prejudice, the instructions and orders of the person in charge of his/her company during a training or response event.
9. Must be willing to submit to possible drug/alcohol testing. No individual will be permitted to respond to training or a "tone-out" if their physical and/or mental abilities are impaired (ie. illness, injury, alcohol, or drugs of any kind). **Reporting for duty while under the influence of drugs or alcohol are grounds for immediate termination.**

10. Must be willing to publically represent the Hawai'i Fire Department Volunteer Division honorably and responsibly, acting with pride and compassion.

11. Shall attend three (3) consecutive HFD conducted training sessions as an orientation before application is considered. This gives the applicant the opportunity to confirm their commitment to the training requirements. Applicant will attend all training wearing appropriate clothing (t-shirt, heavy long cotton pants, work shoes), and may only observe physical training, not participate.

12. Shall reside in Volunteer district to which they are applying unless approved by the Fire Chief.

After passing the required background check and PUC physical an Applicant may be added as a probationary Volunteer Fire Fighter to a Volunteer Company's ACTIVE personnel roster. Uniform items, personal protective equipment (PPE), Volunteer Fire Fighter ID, and miscellaneous gear may then be issued. A member's advancement from the probationary period, generally a minimum of three (3) months, will be at the discretion of both the Company Officer and the HFD Training Officer.

VOLUNTEER FIRE FIGHTER/PROBATIONARY VOLUNTEER FIRE FIGHTER

1. **Must keep "SAFETY" in the forefront at all times – Personal; Colleagues; Public; Property and Livestock; etc.**

2. Must have in their possession, while training or responding, a valid PUC certificate and Volunteer ID.

3. Must dress appropriately (uniform, PPE, etc.) while representing the Hawai'i Fire Department Volunteer Division. Personnel shall use PPE issued by HFD.

4. In order to maintain ACTIVE status, personnel shall attend six (6) HFD conducted training sessions per year, missing no more than three (3) consecutive sessions. INACTIVE status may be assigned to personnel failing to meet this guideline, or who consistently fail to respond to call outs.

5. If available, should be willing to attend additional Fire Fighter training when the opportunity arises.

6. Shall attend Fire Fighter I training and successfully pass the course, as available by the HFD Training Staff.