

Prince George Fire and EMS Rules and Regulations



2015

**Prince George Fire and EMS
Rules and Regulations**

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Prince George Fire and EMS

Rules and Regulations

Firefighting and Emergency Medical Service is a profession which demands a state of readiness, discipline, and a measure of obedience and valor not expected in ordinary callings. We are members of a force organized to prevent fires, loss of lives, loss of property, and to provide emergency medical care of the citizens and visitors of Prince George County.

This manual contains the rules and regulations which will govern the administration and operation of Prince George Fire and EMS under the Director, the Company Chiefs, and its membership. These rules and regulations have been developed to ensure the prompt and efficient exercise of the functions, duties and responsibilities of the Fire and EMS Department and its personnel. They will be amended as required. All orders or rules, which are in conflict with these regulations, are rescinded as of the effective date of this manual.

This manual of Rules and Regulations applies to all members of the Prince George Fire and EMS. The acts of each member of the Department will reflect credit or discredit upon the entire organization and the County. These rules and regulations are intended for the general guidance of the department and do not cover every specific act of duty.

Certain areas not discussed in this manual are covered in the County Personnel Manual, County Fire and EMS Standard Operations Procedures and other prescribed manuals.

All members of the Department are responsible for enforcing these rules and regulations.

Violations will be treated in accordance with the provisions of Article XII of this manual.

The officers of the individual Fire and EMS Companies are expected to set an example for their personnel. Kindness, courtesy, and uniformly fair dealings elicit loyalty.

As we all know, there cannot be a rule and regulation for every situation. Therefore, using common sense will make the rules and regulations clearer, and much easier to interpret.

Remember, if you think it is wrong it probably is!

Article I. Director of Fire, EMS, and Emergency Management

- Section 1.** The Director is the administrative head of the fire and EMS department and oversees all activities, including fire suppression, fire prevention and education, fire investigation, rescue services, patient care, EMS incidents, and emergency management and services relating to hazardous materials and other hazards posing a threat to life and property. He is responsible for the proper management, discipline, and training of all personnel.
- Section 2.** The Director shall organize, manage, and control the various divisions, boards, committees, etc., which in his judgment are in the best interest of the Prince George Coordinated Fire and EMS system and County.
- Section 3.** The Director shall establish suitable measures to implement the policies, rules, regulations, practices and procedures necessary for the efficient operation of the Prince George Coordinated Fire and EMS system.
- Section 4.** The Director shall, from time to time, recommend to the County the purchase of new apparatus, hose, equipment, etc. and the disposal of the same not necessary for use in the operation and maintenance of the Department. He will furnish annually, to the County Administrator, a proposed budget for the next fiscal year.
- Section 5.** The Director shall ensure that an accurate record of all pertinent business transacted by the Department is maintained.
- Section 6.** The Director may reprimand, or recommend the demotion, suspension, or termination of any member of the Prince George Coordinated Fire and EMS system as provided by these rules and regulations and by-laws.
- Section 7.** The Director will ensure that all undesired fires are extinguished with the least possible danger to life and property and prevent unnecessary damage at fires by the use of water or other extinguishing agents and equipment.
- Section 8.** The Director shall ensure that subordinates take proper precautionary measures so those premises on which fires occur are left in such condition that they will not rekindle and further endanger life or property.
- Section 9.** The Director may, at his discretion, call meetings of the PGFEMS Advisory Board Members and all PGFEMS Advisory Board Members should make every effort to attend unless excused by the Director.
- Section 10.** The Director will regulate the manner and time of wearing the uniform and protective clothing or equipment of the Department.
- Section 11.** Nothing in these rules and regulations shall be misinterpreted to limit the power, discretion and authority granted the Director. The Director is the General Manager by County ordinance or other applicable statutes (state and federal laws) in the operation of fire service, fire prevention, emergency medical services and administration of all affairs of the Department.

Article II. Company Chief

- Section 1.** The Chief of a Fire and/or EMS Company is the administrative head and manages all activities of the individual Company, including fire extinguishment, fire protection, fire prevention, patient care and/or EMS incidents. He is responsible for the proper management, discipline, and training of assigned company personnel.
- Section 2.** The Company Chief shall to organize, manage, and control the various divisions, boards, committees, etc., which in his judgment are in the best interest of the company.
- Section 3.** The Company Chief shall establish suitable measures to implement the policy, rules and regulations, practices and procedures necessary for the efficient operation of his company as long as they are more restrictive than those of Prince George Fire and EMS.
- Section 4.** The Company Chief will, from time to time, recommend to the Director of Fire and EMS the purchase of new apparatus, hose, equipment, etc. and the disposal of the same not necessary for use in the operation and maintenance of the company. He will furnish annually, to the Director of Fire and EMS, a proposed budget for the next fiscal year.
- Section 5.** The Company Chief shall ensure that an accurate record of all business transacted by the company is maintained.
- Section 6.** The Company Chief may reprimand, or recommend the demotion, suspension, or termination of any member of the company as provided by these rules and regulations.
- Section 7.** The Company Chief shall recommend leave of absence to members of the company in such manner as provided by the By-Laws or Department Policy.
- Section 8.** The Company Chief will ensure that all undesired fires are extinguished with the least possible danger to life and property and prevent unnecessary damage at fires by the use of water or other extinguishing agents and equipment.
- Section 9.** The Company Chief will ensure that subordinates take proper precautionary measures so those premises on which fires occur are left in such condition that they will not rekindle and further endanger life or property.
- Section 10.** The Company Chief may, at his discretion, call meetings of the officers and all officers should make every effort to attend unless excused by the Company Chief.
- Section 11.** Nothing in these rules and regulations shall be misinterpreted to limit the power, discretion and authority granted the Company Chief. The Company Chief is Manager by the company by-laws or other applicable statutes (state and federal laws) in the operation of fire service, fire prevention, emergency medical services and administration of all affairs of the individual volunteer Fire and/or EMS Companies

Article III. All Officers

- Section 1.** Under the general direction of the Director and/or Company Chief, the other officers are responsible for the activities of the Fire and/or EMS company/shift.
- Section 2.** The officers are responsible for the equal and effective application of established policy, rules, regulations, practices, and procedures of the Department.
- Section 3.** They will attend fires, emergency medical calls, and other emergencies according to Department SOP's and/or the individual company procedures and by-laws.
- Section 4.** They will make inspections, observations, and investigations as may be necessary to keep them thoroughly informed of conditions of the service under their command. They will note any evidence of neglect, carelessness, or improper attention to duty and ensure the correction of any deficiency found.
- Section 5.** All officers will be responsible for the full performance of duties delegated to them. They will require subordinates under their command to comply with all orders, rules, regulations, practices, and procedures of the department. They will promptly report, by well-sustained charges, any violations or negligence.
- Section 6.** All officers will make a prompt verbal report to their superior officer of any unusual occurrence concerning the department. All such occurrences are to be investigated at once and, when necessary, a report containing the facts of the case forwarded at once to the Director.
- Section 7.** All officers are responsible for the completeness, accuracy and dispatch of all reports with which they are concerned. No report or communications will be intercepted or unnecessarily delayed in transit.
- Section 8.** All officers will ensure that all undesirable fires are extinguished with the least possible danger to life and property and prevent unnecessary damage by water or other extinguishing agent. They will take proper precautions against rekindling and leave the premises in a safe condition.
- Section 9.** All officers are to take precautionary measures to prevent unnecessary risks to members of the department.
- Section 10.** The officer will notify the police department whenever drugs are suspected on a fire scene, EMS incident, or any other illegal act, such as child abuse, etc. as required by Virginia statute.
- Section 11.** Whenever a question arises concerning interpretation of Rules and Regulations, policies, accident procedures or other items of an administrative nature, the officers shall call the Company Chief for an answer or interpretation.
- Section 12.** Whenever a member saves a human life at the risk of his or her own, or performs an especially commendable act, the officer under whom the act was performed will make a full report on the subject to the respective Company Chief and the Director of Fire and EMS.

Section 13. No officer will interfere in matters or operations for which another officer of equal rank is responsible, except with the latter's consent, or by order of a superior officer. Conflict of authority must be strictly avoided.

Section 14. Whenever a fire is of suspicious origin, the officer – in – charge shall contact the dispatcher to notify the Director of Fire and EMS or designee, and the police department on-duty supervisor who will approve or disapprove the calling of an investigator.

Article IV. Duty of All Members

- Section 1.** All members will respond with their units to all alarms and emergency calls and assume command if no one has done so in accordance to applicable SOP'S and SOG's.
- Section 2.** All members shall keep the station and premises neat, clean and in good order.
- Section 3.** All members shall make sure apparatus, ambulances, and equipment are maintained, clean and ready for service after each call for service.
- Section 4.** All members shall perform related work as the Director, Company Chief, or other Officers may require.
- Section 5.** When two members find themselves in a position which requires immediate action, the senior member will assume command until relieved by an officer.
- Section 6.** All members shall maintain state certifications as required by the department policy, company by-laws or state regulations.
- Section 7.** All members shall be thoroughly familiar with all equipment they may be required to use in the full performance of their duties, and perform related work as required.
- Section 8.** Any member eighteen years of age or older and still attending High School shall maintain a 2.0 grade point average and/or passing grades in all school classes. The member must report to an authorized agent of the company with their report card within fifteen days of receiving their report card.
- Section 9.** Any member eighteen years of age or older and still attending High School shall also be responsible for following all school regulations.
- Section 10.** Any member suspended for failure to maintain passing grades or failure to follow school regulations shall not report to the fire station or calls while under such suspension.
- Section 11.** Any member who cannot report to school due to injury or illness shall not report to the fire station or calls.
- Section 12.** All members will abide by all state, federal laws or local ordinances.

Article V. Cadets and Junior Members (Age 16-17)

- Section 1.** Cadets and Junior Members will respond with their units to all alarms and emergency calls.
- Section 2.** Cadets and Junior Members shall keep the station and premises neat, clean and in good order.
- Section 3.** Cadets and Junior Members shall make sure apparatus and equipment are maintained, clean and ready for service after each call for service.
- Section 4.** Cadets and Junior Members shall perform related work as the Director, Company Chief, or other Officers may require.
- Section 5.** Cadets and Junior Members who have obtained firefighter certification from the Department of Fire Programs shall have approval from the Company Chief before engaging in any fire suppression operations which would require SCBA or be hazardous to life or limb.
- Section 6.** Cadets and Junior Members shall not use any emergency lighting or equipment as authorized by state law in both their personal or department vehicles.
- Section 7.** Cadets and Junior Members shall maintain a 2.0 grade point average and/or passing grades in all school classes. The cadet member must report to an authorized agent of the department with their report card within fifteen days of receiving their report card.
- Section 8.** Cadets and Junior Members shall be responsible for following all school regulations.
- Section 9.** Any Cadet or Junior Members suspended for failure to maintain passing grades or failure to follow school regulations shall not report to the fire station or calls while under such suspension.
- Section 10.** Any cadet member who cannot report to school due to injury or illness shall not report to the fire station or calls.
- Section 11.** Cadets and Junior Members shall leave the property on school nights, Sunday through Thursday, by 22:00 hours. They shall not respond to any call after 22:00 hours, and are authorized to leave the fire scene, fire station or training exercise. This is only after they report their leaving to an officer or training instructor.
- Section 12.** No Cadet or Junior Members shall use the fire department functions as a means to deceive a parent or guardian. It is important that a parent or guardian knows the cadet members whereabouts.
- Section 13.** All Cadets and Junior Members shall abide by all state, federal laws or local ordinances.

Article VI. General

- Section 1.** The Rules and Regulations of Prince George Fire and EMS shall be adopted in its entirety by the individual companies. Any company may amend these rules or regulations as long as the individual amendment is more restrictive than Prince George Fire and EMS. Companies shall assure that any additions or amendments are noted and reported to the Director of Fire and EMS.
- Section 2.** Under the direction of the Company Chief members heading the various subdivisions of the company will have responsibility for the administrative duties of their respective subdivisions. They will be responsible for the maintenance of discipline and authority.
- Section 3.** All members of the department are regarded as a part of the working force and may be required to perform such duties as circumstances of the service demand.
- Section 4.** The official roster of each fire company/emergency crew and date affecting the tenure of office of members will be maintained by the organization and updated as necessary to the office of Fire and EMS each year by February 1st.
- Section 5.** When a member receives an order that is in conflict with a previous order, the member will inform the officer who issued the conflicting order and be governed by the officer's instructions.
- Section 6.** Any member having cause to believe that he has been unjustly or unfairly treated may appeal through their chain of command. Any member having cause to believe that he has been unjustly or unfairly disciplined may appeal through the department's grievance procedure.
- Section 7.** When two or more members have been appointed to like positions on the same date, seniority will be determined by their respective service date.
- Section 8.** When in view of the public, all members should be addressed by their title or their title and last name.
- Section 9.** In the transaction of department business, members will, unless otherwise directed, operate through their immediate superior officer.
- Section 10.** No member will conduct him or herself in a manner, or be a party to any act, which would tend to impair the good order and discipline of the department.
- Section 11.** No information relative to the business affairs of the Department will be furnished to persons not connected therewith, except as authorized by the Director.
- Section 12.** No member will lend their name, as a member of the department, to any commercial or business enterprises, nor will they approve the use of the name and prestige of the department for any such purpose.
- Section 13.** No individual member will receive or accept a personal monetary reward, fee or gift from any person for services rendered related to the performance of duty, except with the permission of the Company Chief and the Director.

- Section 14.** No member will solicit or accept the personal or financial aid of any subordinates to promote his private interests or those of a superior officer.
- Section 15.** No solicitations, speeches, distribution, posting or display of campaign literature for or against any candidate to public office will be permitted on County property or buildings.
- Section 16.** All members must familiarize themselves with and be obedient to the laws, rules and regulations, manuals of operations and orders affecting the operation of Prince George Fire and EMS.
- Section 17.** All members must report to an officer the loss or finding of any department identification card, badge, book or equipment.
- Section 18.** All members must exercise precautionary measures to avoid injury to themselves and others, while in the performance of duty. All members shall immediately report to an officer any accident, sickness or injury occurring to themselves while on duty, no matter how trivial.
- Section 19.** Accident reports will be filled out properly and forwarded to the Company Chief and the Office of Fire and EMS immediately or as soon as feasible after the incident.
- Section 20.** The officer-in-charge is responsible that this report is properly made.
- Section 21.** All members must exercise due caution to avoid unnecessary damage to, or loss of, department property. A report of the damage, loss, or stolen property shall be made as soon as possible to an officer, who shall report any stolen property to the proper authorities.
- Section 22.** All members must accord obedience, respect and courtesy to superior officers, and those performing the duties of a higher rank.
- Section 23.** All members must be courteous and respectful in their dealings with the public.
- Section 24.** All members must, if assigned to act in higher rank, accept the responsibility for the performance of the duties of that position.
- Section 25.** All members must promptly notify a superior officer of all matters coming to their attention affecting the interest and welfare of the department.
- Section 26.** All members must participate in all company activities as directed by the Director, Company Chief, or designee.
- Section 27.** All members must state clearly and without reservation all facts pertinent to any case or matter in question when called upon to give or make a disposition before an administrative board or hearing.
- Section 28.** In matters of general conduct, not within the scope of Department rules, members shall be governed by the ordinary rules of good behavior observed by law-abiding citizens, and shall be disciplined for conduct tending to bring reproach or reflection upon the department or its uniform.

- Section 29.** All officers and members are to be made aware that the following subjects will not be discussed or alluded to in or on County property or in uniform or in County attire in any manner, which will knowingly offend any person:
- (a) Religious practices and beliefs,
 - (b) Racial origin, background or degrading names and remarks,
 - (c) Local political practices or organizations
- Section 30.** Any person aggrieved by any action of their peers pertaining to the conduct of a fellow member shall immediately bring the incident to the attention of the officer-in-charge. All complaints shall be immediately forwarded to the Company Chief and Director through their chain-of-command.
- Section 31.** Smoking is not permitted in the stations areas to include offices and living areas. Smoking is also prohibited on/in any County vehicles or apparatus. Smoking shall only be permitted in designated areas. Consuming of food and beverages in the station will be restricted to areas designated by the Company Chief.
- Section 32.** All members shall not loan, sell or give away property of the County of Prince George.
- Section 33.** No members shall drink or consume, or be under the influence of any alcoholic or intoxicating beverage or drug while on Department of Fire, EMS and Emergency Management property, nor shall they report for duty or call for service while under the influence of an alcoholic or intoxicating beverage or drug. In addition, no member shall drink or consume, or be under the influence of any alcoholic or intoxicating beverage or drug while wearing attire that may identify them with a specific county fire or EMS company or Prince George Fire and EMS.
- Section 34.** The Director and/or Company Chief reserves unto himself, and/or his appointed designee the right, at any time, to inspect all property and equipment allocated to the department in order to safeguard the health and safety of the department personnel, to provide for orderly operation of the department, and to maintain proper discipline and order in this department.
- Section 35.** All department personnel are hereby notified that such inspections are so authorized and that such inspections may occur routinely or when facts are available which give the Director, Company Chief or his designee reasonable belief that articles and/or materials exist which could possibly, or are likely to, pose a threat to those objectives which are listed here and above.
- Section 36.** Suggestions for the improvement of overall Fire, EMS and Emergency Management, or well-being of the membership, shall be reported in writing to the Company Chief. These suggestions shall be forwarded to the Director. These suggestions are always welcomed and will be carefully considered.
- Section 37.** Any member assigned, or responsible for radio equipment, will be held strictly accountable for that radio and any traffic directed to or from that unit.

Section 38. County property is off limits to suspended and terminated members. Any suspended or terminated member needing to come upon County property to claim personal property or for other business should contact the Office of Fire and EMS.

Section 39. At no time is there to be any sexually explicit materials or sexual acts conducted in/on County property. Those personnel found violating this policy will be subject to disciplinary action.

Article VII. Station Duty, Uniform and Personal Grooming

- Section 1.** Personnel on duty at the station for a prescribed period shall maintain a professional appearance, and duties and actions shall be recorded as prescribed by the Company Chief. The Company Chief or the Director will notify members when the uniform is required.
- Section 2.** Facial Hair shall not interfere with the proper operation of the SCBA's. The hair is to be kept clean and neatly combed.
- Section 3.** Members should use extreme caution wearing earrings and jewelry while engaged in fire ground operations, so that such use will not interfere with the donning of Personal Protective Equipment.
- Section 4.** The member will replace any insignia lost by them. A report of the loss is to be made immediately to an officer.
- Section 5.** All promoted personnel (except acting promotions) should turn in their old uniform brass to the Company Chief.
- Section 6.** All personnel are responsible for maintaining their issued clothing and turnout clothing in accordance to the uniform and equipment procedures. Any deterioration or damage shall be reported to an Officer immediately, and if needed, the article of clothing shall be removed from service as a safety issue.
- Section 7.** Care should be taken in wearing cologne or perfume as it will affect others with possible respiratory problems.

Article VIII. Phone and Computer/Internet Usage

Section 1. House phones are county phones for Official County business. However, personnel may use the phones for personal use, only if it is not abused and meets the following regulations:

- (a) If involved in a personal call and county business is pending; the phone must be given up immediately.
- (b) No calls to personal Directory Assistance or long distance calls (other than for business) will be made on house phones. This includes calls charged to your home phone and reversed charges. Long distance phone calls shall be allowed for County business only. Any long distance calls shall be approved by the Company Chief, or Director.

Section 2. Use of the Internet shall be for the purpose of information and education or training. No sexually explicit material shall be viewed, downloaded or otherwise obtained through the use of County computers. All computer use will follow the policies for computer use prescribed by the County of Prince George. Failure to follow these policies and procedures will result in disciplinary action.

Article IX. Apparatus and Equipment

- Section 1.** A member may take apparatus out of service when deemed necessary. Communications and the Company Chief will be notified immediately when apparatus is out of service. Apparatus is not considered out of service when out of quarters for fuel or prescribed drill activities or when pre-planning or making inspections in the district.
- Section 2.** When operating any County vehicle, the driver must use extreme caution to observe all policies and procedures as well as traffic laws that pertain to the safe arrival and departure of personnel aboard. .
- Section 3.** County vehicles will be used for official business only. The carrying of civilian passengers not specifically authorized by the Director and Company Chief is strictly forbidden.
- Section 4.** Mechanical defects in apparatus or equipment will be reported to an officer immediately upon discovery. The member will report the condition through the proper channels in accordance with applicable policies and procedures.
- Section 5.** Members will not change or alter the arrangement of equipment on apparatus, nor otherwise disarrange the system without approval from the Company Chief and Director.
- Section 6.** All vehicles will be washed and inventoried as needed.

Article X. Personal Protective Equipment

- Section 1.** All personnel will wear appropriate personal protective equipment during firefighting operations and emergency responses. Pump operators shall wear appropriate safety equipment, i.e., work gloves or other approved safety gear.
- Section 2.** All personnel engaged in interior firefighting or any hazardous atmosphere will wear SCBA and activated PASS devices. The fireground commander will determine when SCBA may be removed. This rule will be vigorously enforced.
- Section 3.** Appropriate minimum safety equipment shall be worn while training. The instructors should reference the Department of Fire Programs training materials, department policies and procedures, or other standards.
- Section 4.** All personal protective equipment shall be worn in accordance with the County's Infectious Control Manual during all EMS calls or rescues. Members should refer to trained EMS personnel when in question.
- Section 5.** Personal Protective Gear will not be tampered with at any time, whether it is malicious or horseplay. Severe disciplinary action will be taken.
- Section 6.** All gear shall be washed in appropriate machine when soiled to enhance protection and life of turnout gear.

Article XI. Operations

- Section 1.** The term "Operation" will apply to movements and operations in connection with fires or other emergencies from receipt of alarm to re-housing of apparatus.
- Section 2.** The officer-in-charge will be responsible for the correct interpretation of alarms and for the notification of all units that respond from quarters. The officer-in-charge will notify the Dispatcher before responding to walk-in or verbal alarms.
- Section 3.** The member receiving a walk-in or verbal alarm will immediately notify other members in quarters and assist in preparations to respond and proceed with apparatus unless otherwise assigned.
- Section 4.** Due caution must be exercised when leaving quarters. Absolute understanding between personnel and drivers regarding response procedure and routes must be maintained. In all cases where practicable, companies will proceed along the same prearranged route.
- Section 5.** All members, except apparatus drivers, will wear appropriate personal protective equipment from receipt of alarm until after the immediate emergency. After the emergency is over the Incident Commander may authorize removal of this equipment. Those excepted may dispense with the equipment during response only but must equip themselves before engaging in firefighting operations.
- Section 6.** Apparatus will not be driven at a greater speed than can be maintained with safety. At intersections extreme caution will be exercised and the apparatus brought to a complete stop at all red lights, stop signs, or uncontrolled intersections. Members are directed to be guided by regulations set forth in the Code of Virginia covering the operation of emergency vehicles. Apparatus will not be driven at greater speeds than 35 MPH or as recommended by the manufacture when tire chains are installed.
- Section 7.** An emergency vehicle, while responding and approaching a school bus that is taking on or unloading children, will come to a complete stop and will not proceed until such time as the driver of the school bus assures the driver the way is clear and safe.
- Section 8.** Fire apparatus and ambulances will be operated as an emergency vehicle with all warning devices used continuously as provided by law. Particular care should be given to operating the siren on a fluctuating sound.
- Section 9.** In response to alarms, apparatus will not pass each other unless delayed or disabled. Racing with apparatus at any time is strictly prohibited.

Section 10. Department members and apparatus from time to time are required to work outside the county. Should members respond to an alarm outside the county, the officer-in-charge should notify Dispatch of this fact and, unless advised to do otherwise, extinguish the fire in the same efficient manner as in the County of Prince George. The officer-in-charge of the outside jurisdiction has primary responsibility for control of a fire in his jurisdiction. The department will cooperate closely but will retain command of the County vehicles and personnel and will be responsible for their direction and safety. In the event of a serious difference of opinion by the officer-in-charge of the outside jurisdiction, and the officer-in-charge of the individual company, particularly where safety of personnel is involved, the responsible officer of the Prince George Fire and EMS will follow his own judgment and will notify the Company Chief of the difference of opinion as soon as feasible. Such information will be forwarded to the Director by the end of the following business day.

Section 11. Dispatch will be notified immediately:

- (a) When an individual company responding to an alarm, returning from an alarm or proceeding to any destination which encounters a fire, and no fire department apparatus is present;
- (b) When apparatus responding to an alarm is unable to reach its destination;
- (c) When apparatus are not in assigned quarters;
- (d) When apparatus is out-of-service.

Section 12. Members of the Prince George Fire and EMS will make every effort to cooperate with all law enforcement agencies in activities involving the individual companies.

Section 13. Members-in-charge of any incident will conduct operations in accordance with the Incident Management SOP and personnel accountability will be maintained by the Incident Commander and/or appropriate positions. The Incident Commander will avail himself of information necessary to enable them to make all reports incidental to operations.

Section 14. The first arriving member at the scene of an emergency will establish command in accordance to the department's Incident Management SOP. When, in the incident commander's judgment, additional companies or apparatus are needed, he will call them without delay.

Section 15. At all fires, the Incident Commander will establish a "Command Post" at a convenient and accessible point from which he will direct operations. Whenever the Incident Commander is called away from the "Command Post" he must assign another member to represent him in his absence.

Section 16. Drivers must exercise care in placing apparatus and privately owned vehicles at fires. Unless otherwise directed, the drivers of POV's must not park so as to obstruct the roadway in the immediate vicinity of a fire, block fire hydrants, or access to fire ground operations. On any assignment, room shall be left for additional arriving companies.

- Section 17.** Incident Commanders will be guided by the judgment of pump operators in charge of pumpers as to the advisability of handling additional lines.
- Section 18.** Safety must be kept in mind when fueling any equipment on the fire ground. This includes all appropriate PPE. All refueling shall be conducted outside of the immediate fire ground or scene.
- Section 19.** While operating at fires, members must be on the alert for evidence which may have contributed to the cause of the fire. Members will make every effort to preserve evidence of incendiaries at fires. The Incident Commander should carefully consider the removal of debris so as not to disturb the condition surrounding fires before the arrival of investigators.
- Section 20.** Members will make every effort to prevent loss or theft of money, jewelry or other valuables at the emergency scene. Full authority is granted to the Incident Commander to prevent the approach of any person or to remove and keep away all persons not engaged in the operation or not having a legitimate reason for being present at the emergency scene. The Incident Commander will use this authority to prevent entrance or loitering at the scene of fires.
- Section 21.** Any member, finding money, jewelry or other valuables at the scene of an emergency will immediately report this to the Incident Commander. The Incident Commander will turn the valuable over to an officer of the Prince George Police Department in return for a receipt. Receipts and a report will be forwarded through channels. Property will be described completely and accurately in report (i.e. "gold colored watch" - not "gold watch").
- Section 22.** Any member receiving a complaint of theft or loss of valuables at the emergency scene will immediately report this to the Incident Commander. If the complaint cannot be satisfactorily resolved immediately, the Incident Commander will immediately notify the Prince George Police Department, Director, and the Company Chief and remain on the scene until released by one of these individuals.
- Section 23.** Unless they are in charge of a fire, and unless otherwise directed, officers will stay with their groups at all times to direct movements.
- Section 24.** Members operating on an emergency incident will work together at all times. Aimless wandering about the premises is strictly prohibited.
- Section 25.** In the event of response to an emergency in occupancy, which is known to be under fumigation, members will enter only when wearing self-contained breathing gear. In no event will members enter occupancy where cyanide or other fumigant is being used, until the occupancy has been thoroughly and adequately ventilated, and then only using self contained breathing apparatus and followed by appropriate decontamination.
- Section 26.** The Director or designated Public Information Officer is authorized to issue a brief verbal statement to the news media. This statement is to briefly summarize what happened at the incident. If the authorized PIO is not on scene and the media is present, the officer-in-charge shall immediately notify the Director.

- Section 27.** On premises where fires have occurred, sprinkler systems, standpipes, fire escapes and other auxiliary firefighting equipment used must, where possible, be left in a serviceable condition. Only a certified contractor can return a system to service; this is the responsibility of the owner and not the fire service.
- Section 28.** Department vehicle drivers will, before leaving the scene, make an inspection to determine that their equipment is complete. If any equipment is missing, the individual officer will initiate a search before returning to quarters. Any equipment that cannot be located will be reported through channels. Excess equipment picked up at the emergency scene will also be reported.
- Section 29.** The officer-in-charge will make a complete and thorough investigation of the loss of any department property an emergency scene or elsewhere and submit a written report promptly to the Company Chief, outlining the investigation made. When loss of property is due to neglect or carelessness of members, the facts as determined must be fully reported.
- Section 30.** Department vehicles will not be driven over hose line except in cases of necessity.
- Section 31.** Police action will be requested when hose in use at fires or drills is driven over by drivers of unauthorized vehicles.
- Section 32.** All members must attend all fires, alarms, or calls to which they may be assigned, detailed or summoned in accordance with individual company by-laws, and to exert their greatest energy and best ability to perform their full duty under any and all circumstances.
- Section 33.** Aerial equipment will not be used as battering rams or for forcing windows or doors in firefighting or training applications.

Article XII. Discipline

- Section 1.** Employees and volunteers reporting to the Department of Fire and EMS shall be disciplined in accordance to state and local regulations.
- Section 2.** All members shall comply with departmental policies, procedures, and expectations of behavior and performance. Non-compliance with these expectations must be remedied and will subject the non-complying member to disciplinary action, which may include dismissal. Failure to perform requirements in a satisfactory manner, offenses or misconduct which violate policies of behavior or are specifically prohibited by law, and acts involving moral turpitude, such as lying, cheating, or stealing, will also subject the member to disciplinary action.
- Section 3.** It is the goal of Prince George Fire and EMS to educate and motivate members to exhibit behavior which will contribute to individual growth and development and to the successful operation of the department. Company Chiefs and supervisors are encouraged to meet with their assigned personnel to discuss the circumstances, and counsel the member, if appropriate, about suitable performance, behavior, and expectations.
- Section 4.** The Company Chief will process all disciplinary cases involving volunteers assigned to their company. The outcome of all cases shall be forwarded in a report to the Director for review.
- Section 5.** The Director reserves the right to process all major disciplinary cases involving the Company Chief.
- Section 6.** The following guidelines for disciplinary actions will be applied to all members equitably, without bias or prejudice. Discipline should be characterized as corrective and constructive, and should be utilized as an element to contribute to the employee meeting performance and behavior expectations. Disciplinary action will be taken to remedy, punish, or discourage unsatisfactory behavior, performance, or non-compliance with departmental policies and procedures.

The need for disciplinary action may arise as a result of different kinds of actions on the part of the employee. The following principles will be observed when considering disciplinary action:

- a) The disciplinary action shall be situationally appropriate and shall be consistent with the special needs of the department, the seriousness of the employee's behavior and performance, and the repetition of the behavior or performance.
- b) The disciplinary action taken must be consistent (similar penalties for similar circumstances).
- c) Chief Officers, Line Officers and other Supervisors, because of their positions, shall be held to a higher standard of performance and behavior than other members.

- d) Members are responsible for knowing the departmental and company policies and procedures and the performance or behavioral expectations of their department; disciplinary action shall assume that knowledge.
- e) In determining the severity of the disciplinary action, the Company Chief and/or Director shall take into consideration prior violations of policy, prior problems of performance or behavior, and prior disciplinary actions.
- f) The disciplinary action taken shall not be influenced by the member's race, color, religion, gender, national origin, age, or disability.

Section 7. Any personnel may be placed on disciplinary action as a result of violations of these rules and regulations in one or more of the following:

- (a) Verbal reprimand
- (b) Written reprimand
- (c) Suspension for not more than 6 weeks
 - (i) Suspension for any criminal or illegal action which the member is a defendant; the suspension shall remain in effect till the criminal matter is disposed of in court. If allowed by State Law or County Ordinance, the member may return to active membership only after final disposition in the matter.
- (d) Demotion
- (e) Reinstatement of the member's probationary period when such member's performance or ethical standards are not consistent with departmental requirements. *(This discipline is only appropriate under circumstances which could support termination but there is reason to believe that the employee's performance or standards may improve.)*
- (f) Termination
 - (i) Any cadet member failing to maintain a 2.0 grade point average and/or passing grades in all school classes shall be suspended for a full grading period. Any second or subsequent failure to maintain a 2.0 grade point average and/or passing grades in all school classes, may result in termination from the department.

Section 8. All disciplinary action shall be documented and all documentation shall be forwarded to the Fire and EMS Director and placed in the members personnel file.

Section 9. All disciplinary actions will follow the Department Rules and Regulations and the County Personnel Policy Manual.

Article XIII. Grievance Process

Section 1. A grievance shall be a complaint or dispute relative to a member involving (but not necessarily limited to):

- a. Disciplinary actions, including dismissals, disciplinary demotions and suspensions, provided that dismissals shall be grievable whenever resulting from formal discipline or unsatisfactory job performance,
- b. Concerns regarding the application, of personnel policies, procedures, policies and regulations,
- c. Acts of retaliation for using the grievance procedure or of participation in the grievance of another member,
- d. Complaints of discrimination on the basis of race, color, creed, sex, age, political affiliation, disability, or national origin,
- e. Acts of retaliation because the employee has complied with any law of the United States or of the Commonwealth, has reported any violation of such law to a governmental authority, or has sought any change in the law before the Congress of the United States or the General Assembly, and
- f. Any other actions outlined in the Prince George Fire and EMS Policy and Procedure Manual as a grievable matter.

Section 2. All stages of the grievance beyond the first step shall be in writing. However, the purpose of the management steps is to hear from the grievant and witnesses as to why his/her grievance has merit and not to hear arguments of counsel.

Section 3. Once a member reduces his/her grievance to writing, he/she must specify the relief he/she expects to obtain through use of this procedure.

Section 4. After the initial filing of a written grievance, failure of either party to comply with all substantial procedural requirements of the grievance procedure without just cause will result in a decision in favor of the other party on any grievable issue, provided the party not in compliance fails to correct the noncompliance within five (5) business days.

Section 5. All time periods listed in this procedure may be extended by mutual agreement by the parties to the agreement.

- Section 6.** **Step I:** Within twenty (20) business days after the occurrence of or condition giving rise to the grievance, the member affected shall identify the grievance verbally to the member's Company Chief. Within five (5) business days of such presentation, the Company Chief shall give his/her response to the employee with respect to the grievance, or shall advise the member that additional time for such decision is needed, in which case a decision must be given the employee within five (5) business days thereafter.
- Section 7.** **Step II:** If the grievance is not resolved to the satisfaction of the member at Step I, the grievant may file a written grievance with his/her Company Chief not more than five (5) business days following completion of Step I. A copy of the written grievance is given to the Director by the grievant. This document reflects the member's explanation of what has occurred. If additional information is necessary, the information shall be attached to the grievant's document. The member's Company Chief and the Director will then meet with the grievant within five (5) business days of receipt of the written statement. A written reply by the Director is made to the grievant within five (5) business days of this meeting.
- Section 8.** **Step III:** If the grievance is not resolved to the satisfaction of the member at Step II, the grievant may file a written grievance not more than five (5) business days following completion of Step II with the County Administrator. A copy of the written grievance is given to the County Administrator by the grievant. The Company Chief, Director and the County Administrator will then meet with the grievant within five (5) business days of receipt of the written statement. The grievant's immediate Supervisor may also attend if the County Administrator determines that his/her testimony is necessary to understand the matter. The County Administrator shall make the final decision. A written reply by the County Administrator is made to the grievant within five (5) business days of this meeting.
- Section 9.** Employees reporting to the Department of Fire and EMS shall utilize the grievance process outlined in the County of Prince George personnel policies and procedures manual.