



# **FRESNO COUNTY FIRE**

**PROTECTION DISTRICT**

## **PAID-CALL FIREFIGHTER POLICY & PROCEDURE HANDBOOK**

**POLICY NO.:** 300-05

**SUBJECT:** EMERGENCY INCIDENT RESPONSE

**EFFECTIVE DATE:** November 1, 2009

**REVISION DATE:** October 1, 2013

**RESPONSIBILITY:** Fresno County Fire Protection District  
Paid-Call Firefighter

### **POLICY/PROCEDURE:**

#### **PURPOSE:**

It is the intent of the Fresno County Fire Protection District to train and maintain a workforce of highly trained and motivated Paid-Call Firefighters (PCF). As such, it is equally important that the District exercise fiscal responsibility in the application of their use. Therefore, a standard for PCF response has been established for implementation throughout the District.

#### **POLICY:**

PCF's will be utilized, as necessary, for emergency incident response until such time as the Incident Commander deems their use to be concluded. Decisions for the continued utilization of PCF Company members will be based upon the immediate operational needs for each incident.

At the earliest possible point in which an incident has been mitigated, all unnecessary resources and personnel shall be released, as appropriate.

***PCF's at all times while in a vehicle, either District owned or Private, must wear seatbelts and obey all traffic laws while the vehicle is in motion.***

***Under no circumstances will members be allowed to be under the influence of alcohol or controlled substances (drugs) while engaged in the performance of their duties.***

## Procedures

Under direction of the Fire Chief or his/her designee, and in conjunction with emergency command center protocols, individual Battalion Chiefs will determine the necessary level of staffing for apparatus response and/or station coverage to provide for the greatest level of service to the District. The following response criteria shall pertain to responders in District owned and privately owned vehicles:

### 1. Dispatch Nomenclature:

- a. Engine Company is considered to be the apparatus and its assigned personnel.
- b. PCF Company (i.e., Co. 75) will include all PCF personnel assigned to Station 75.
- c. PCF Apparatus (i.e., Patrol 77) will include the apparatus and those PCF who have been pre-determined to staff the apparatus for emergency response.

### 2. Dispatch Guidelines:

- a. **First Alarm Fire Assignment:**  
PCF personnel assigned to the Engine Companies designated on the first alarm assignment (dispatch) will respond to the incident on an automatic basis. However, this does not include instances where a Water Tender or Patrol has been identified (or requested) as a stand alone piece of equipment responding from a given fire station. In these instances, PCF personnel shall not respond unless they have been pre-designated to staff a Water Tender or Patrol. (Example: A dispatch involving Engines 89, 82, 90, Water Tender 90, Water Tender 83 would include all PCF personnel from Stations 82, and 90. Only Station 83 PCF personnel assigned to provide pre-designated Water Tender coverage would respond, not the entire company.) Should there be a need for additional PCF personnel; a special call will be initiated accordingly.
- b. **Second Alarm Fire Assignment:**  
PCF personnel assigned Engine Companies dispatched to a second alarm or augmented dispatch will not automatically respond to an incident. If additional PCF personnel are necessary, a special call will be initiated accordingly.

- c. **Medical Aid or Motor Vehicle Accident Response:**  
PCF personnel will not normally respond to these calls on an automatic basis. Exceptions identified by the Battalion Chief may include a need for automatic response of apparatus and/or equipment necessary to mitigate a specific type of emergency, utilizing pre-designated coverage for specialized or intended apparatus. PCF Company members, who may be most proximal to a given emergency location, either due to residence location or routine travel, may respond if their arrival will be timely enough to assist with the incident. Authorization for response must be made by the appropriate Station Captain or Battalion Chief.
  
- d. **Automatic Station Coverage:**  
PCF Company members will not normally provide automatic fire station coverage. Exceptions may occur when the District Duty Chief has deemed it prudent to initiate automatic station coverage in order to provide for a greater level of service to the community. In all cases, a minimum of two personnel are required to provide apparatus staffing as directed.
  
- e. **Unauthorized PCF Response:**  
PCF responses outside of the criteria defined in these procedures are not authorized unless a legitimate reason warrants the response. Examples may include an emergency incident occurring within close proximity to a PCF's residence or other unforeseen situation which may necessitate the urgent need for immediate assistance. It is not intended that this be a routine occurrence, rather it will be considered an exception. PCF who engage in an unauthorized response without legitimate reason will be released and may be subject to disciplinary action. If the exception occurs and a PCF not dispatched to an incident is assigned because of operational need, the Incident Commander will be advised and will provide notification to the appropriate fire station to authorize compensation. The notification will include a description of the incident and hours to be compensated. ***Note: Incident Commander Authorization must be obtained for PCF compensation on these incidents.***

### 3. Responding In Private Vehicles:

- a. All PCF Company members will wear seatbelts and adhere to all laws, as established in the California Vehicle Code, pertaining to the safe and legal operation of a motor vehicle on the public roadway. No member is exempt from following direction provided by a law enforcement official. "Code 3" driving in a personal vehicle does not exist, is considered to be an unacceptable practice and violators will be held accountable for their actions.
- b. PCF Company members must be aware of responding emergency vehicles and drive extra defensively, most particularly at intersections. Members must never follow responding apparatus any closer than is reasonably safe, no closer than 500 feet in all conditions, paying special regard to road and traffic conditions.
- c. Responding PCFs must use good judgment when parking vehicles at the incident scene. Vehicles should be parked away from the immediate area so as to allow for all fire apparatus, EMS and law enforcement vehicles to arrive, be positioned and operate in the most effective manner.

#### 4. Responding In District Vehicles:

Qualified PCF Company Officers and PCF Fire Apparatus Operator members driving apparatus owned and operated by the Fire District will at all times:

- a. Wear seatbelts and adhere to the laws governing the safe and legal operation of a motor vehicle on the roadway, not to exceed the speed limits as established by the "Basic Speed Law."
- b. Ensure the use of all emergency warning devices be in full operation while responding "Code 3."
- c. An emergency vehicle must drive slowly enough to stop without collision if its right of way is violated. It may be necessary to completely stop first and then proceed cautiously when the intersection is clear.
- d. Maintain communications with the emergency command center and other apparatus, equipment and Chief Officers, utilizing correct radio terminology and protocol.
- e. Respond in the proper personal protective equipment (PPE) as dictated by the incident type for which they have been requested.
- f. Ensure the apparatus inventory is maintained while at the incident scene.

- g. Be responsible for returning the apparatus to the fire station in a full service condition, ready for immediate emergency response. (i.e., full water and fuel tank, hose and tool compliment, etc.)

5. On Scene – Incident Protocols:

Upon arrival at an emergency incident, PCF Company members will:

- a. Check in with the Incident Commander or Staging Area manager, if established.
- b. Follow established guidelines regarding utilization of the Passport System on all incidents where it has been enacted.
- c. Be assigned to work with an Engine Company and remain with that assignment until such time as they are reassigned or released from the incident.
- d. Adhere to all orders provided by the engine company officer (career or paid-call) without question, following established departmental policies, rules and/or regulations.
- e. Perform work in a manner consistent with the level of training they possess for their position.
- f. Make every effort to preserve evidence which may lead to determining fire cause. This includes exercising situational awareness and caution when parking vehicles near the scene of roadside vegetation fires.
- g. Under no circumstances get on or off a moving vehicle.
- h. Under no circumstances make comments regarding the following, except to an immediate supervisor:
  - 1. Location of valuables
  - 2. Cause of the fire
  - 3. Location of fire victims
  - 4. Loss estimate
  - 5. Suspicious nature of the incident

- i. Make every effort possible to preserve personal property and prevent the loss or theft of money, jewelry, and other valuables at the scene of an emergency incident. Full authority limiting unauthorized access to the incident is typically granted to the fire department until such time as property is turned back over to the owner.
- j. Immediately report the finding of money and/or other valuables, or the receiving of complaints involving theft or loss, to their immediate supervisor or the Incident Commander.
- k. Under no circumstances remove any items or materials from the incident scene, regardless of the perception of non-value, or lack thereof. PCF's observing other firefighters or members of the general public removing items shall immediately report the act to their immediate supervisor or the Incident Commander.

**POLICY RESPONSIBILITY:**

Board of Directors, Fire Chief, District Administrative Officer, Division Chiefs, Battalion Chiefs, Station Captains, Paid-Call Company Officers, Paid-Call Fire Apparatus Operators, Paid-Call Firefighters.