

Operating Guideline # 1518

Chain of Command

October 1, 2020



PURPOSE:

Chain of Command is the unbroken line of authority extending from the Fire Chief through a single subordinate at each level of command down to the level of execution.

It is important to utilize the proper “chain of command” in dealing with any type of situation. Therefore, all fire personnel are directed to utilize the chain of command in all situations.

ISSUE/RATIONALE:

Breaking the Chain of Command creates communication, follow-up and other management problems.

GUIDELINE:

1. The Chain of Command of the Fire Department is the order of vested authority and responsibility by which the business of the Department shall be conducted. It serves the function of allowing information to flow in an orderly manner from volunteer to the Chief and to all steps between. The proper use of the Chain of Command depends upon each member working within his assigned responsibility.
2. The Chain of Command is the vehicle used for all orders, grievances, requests, etc., and its proper use by all members is both necessary and mandatory.
3. Official communications both up and down the chain of command must not skip any rank. Any assignment given to any person, must pass through all the appropriate ranks to ensure clear, complete knowledge transfer and avoid confusion.
4. Any request, comment, suggestion, complaint etc. forwarded up the chain of command must start with the person’s immediate supervisor.
5. When e-mail communications take place across the ranks, everyone in the proper chain of command between the sender and recipient of the e-mail must be copied (CC’d). This holds true for e-mail communication both up and down the chain of command.
Example: Firefighter e-mails the deputy chief with a suggestion and CC’s both their Captain, and District Chief.
Example: Return e-mails from the Deputy chief to the firefighter should also CC the Captain and District Chief.
6. Those individuals acting in a rank are considered of full rank for chain of command purposes. These individuals will have full responsibility of the rank for the period of time they are assigned to “Acting” status
7. List of Chain of Command is below
Probationary Firefighter > Firefighter > Captain > Deputy District Chief > District Chief > Deputy Chief > Fire Chief

RESPONSIBILITY:

It is the responsibility of all firefighting staff to comply with this Operating Guideline.

REFERENCES:

N/A