

Rogers Fire Department Standard Operating Procedures



Policy Title:	Authorized Leave		
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PURPOSE

This policy provides guidelines for members in scheduling vacation and other authorized leave. A systematic scheduling process is necessary to reduce the occurrence of denied requests and overtime expenditure to maintain minimum staffing levels.

POLICY

Vacation Scheduling

Vacation scheduling is the responsibility of the individual member. The member is responsible for managing their vacation hours and maintaining awareness of hours available and scheduled. Hours taken in excess of what is available will result in no compensation and has the potential for disciplinary action.

A. Seniority-Based Vacation Scheduling

Members working a standard platoon (XXOOOXX) schedule will be offered the opportunity to schedule vacation days prior to January 1 of each year. This opportunity will be by seniority, whereas the most senior member on each shift shall have precedence on which vacation days they desire to take. Seniority based vacation scheduling will be conducted by auction through CrewSense. All requests for seniority-based vacation scheduling must be completed in the timeframe allotted by the CrewSense auction. The time off requests in this format should be denoted as Vacation with the subtype "Seniority". The Battalion Chief is responsible for setting up and initiating the auction for their assigned platoon. Members may not place more than their annual rate of accrual on the seniority-based vacation calendar.

B. High-Priority Vacation Days

It is recognized that certain dates throughout the year are highly sought after as vacation days; these dates are primarily located around the major holidays. In order to ensure fairness in distributing vacation time on these high-priority days, the following system will be used when one of these dates becomes available during the year. When a member removes a high priority day that was scheduled through the auction, the Battalion Chief will offer the day to members based on seniority until the available day has been filled. If all members decline to take it as vacation the date will be left open and it will be handled as described in Section C of this policy.

The days that will be treated as high-priority days will include the following holidays that are recognized by the City of Rogers: New Year's Day, Presidents Day, Memorial Day, Independence Day, Labor Day, Veterans Day, Thanksgiving Day, Christmas Day, and the days that immediately precede and follow these days.

C. Additional Vacation Scheduling

Members can also schedule vacation days not scheduled by the CrewSense auction. These requests are subject to availability with consideration for training requests and other non-seniority vacation days that have been scheduled. Members requesting vacation leave not scheduled during the CrewSense auction should submit a CrewSense time off request denoting Vacation with subtype "First Come" no later than 96 hours prior to the shift on which they are wishing to utilize vacation leave. The RFD may utilize available leave slots for training or department business as approved by the Fire Chief. When scheduling in the non-seniority based system, it is permissible to utilize 12-hour blocks (0700-1900 or 1900 - 0700). Probationary members may request vacation under the additional vacation scheduling system so long as the requested dates occur after graduation from the fire academy. Extenuating circumstances, as approved by the Fire Chief, can be granted for probationary members.

D. Use of Leave Slots for Worker's Compensation and Family Medical Leave Act Requests

Available leave slots may be utilized for Worker's Compensation (WC) and Family Medical Leave Act (FMLA) requests. The blocking of available leave slots for these unplanned absences should occur at the time of paperwork processing. Vacation and other leave already scheduled on the calendars maintained by the Battalion Chief(s) shall not be removed for WC and FMLA. However, any available slots may be blocked to prevent unnecessary overtime expenditures.

E. Standard Schedule Vacation

Members assigned to a conventional work schedule may utilize vacation as desired up to their available accrual. Because these positions are not minimally staffed, they only require the approval of the immediate supervisor. Vacation requests should be requested via CrewSense and routed to the appropriate personnel as described in the chart below.

Position	Notification
Fire Chief	Deputy Chiefs, Admin Manager, Timekeeper
Deputy Chiefs	Fire Chief, Other Deputy Chiefs, Timekeeper, Admin Manager, Direct Reports
Administrative Civilians	Admin Manager, Timekeeper, Associated Workplace Staff
Training Division – Sworn Staff	Deputy Chief – SOT, Timekeeper, Admin Assistant at Training Center
Risk Reduction Division – Sworn Staff	Deputy Chief – RRD, Timekeeper, Office Manager at RRD

Determining Criteria

The criteria used to approve or deny a request for leave centers around how the operations of the Department will be impacted. As a general guideline, the following criteria shall apply:

- The calendar can accommodate approximately five leaves slots before falling below minimum staffing. The first four slots are used for conventional leave (Vacation, Training) with the fifth slot general earmarked for department leave (WC, FMLA, Military).
- A maximum of four members are allowed to be released per shift, with three leave positions designated as vacation for members under all circumstances.
- High-Priority Vacation Days are eligible for five members to utilize vacation, if it is scheduled via the CrewSense auction. This is the only circumstance in which the fifth leave slot is earmarked for conventional vacation leave.
- After the completion of the CrewSense auction, all requests for vacation on any date other than those listed as High-Priority Days in Section B are by first come first served, not seniority
- Training, vacation, military leave, and city business carry equal weight in scheduling. One will not be cancelled to allow for another.

Cancellations

Cancellations of Vacation shall require 96 hours of notification prior to the vacation day. This will require notification of the supervisor and removal from Crew Sense. The 96 hours of notification will apply when the vacation calendar has no available leave slots. The Battalion Chiefs will have discretion to allow cancellations with less than 96 hours' notice with the approval of the Deputy Fire Chief – Field Operations.

Accrual Guidelines

All members will accrue vacation hours as time is worked. Members shall be entitled to use vacation as they earn it. Probationary members are subject to strict scrutiny for vacation usage during the first six (6) months of employment. Members may "roll over" an unlimited amount of vacation up to two times their annual rate of accrual. Members possessing vacation time in excess of two times their annual rate of accrual on their anniversary date may receive a reduction of accrued time based on the Fire Chief's evaluation of circumstances leading to the overage. In the event a reduction is warranted the hours shall be adjusted in payroll records and the CrewSense software to ensure accuracy in both formats.

Military Leave

Any member serving as a member of any military reserve or National Guard unit for the United States will be granted 120 hours of leave each year, plus travel time, to participate in annual training exercises or other duties performed in an official duty status. Members should submit the anticipated duty dates via time off requests via CrewSense along with copies of written orders associated with the dates requested to their Battalion Chief/Division supervisor as early as possible to allow for management of staffing.

Available leave slots may be utilized for Military Leave requests. The blocking of available leave slots should occur at the time that the Military Leave request is received.

Unless otherwise requested by the member, the 120 hours of Military Leave time will be applied to all official military duty until exhausted and the remaining military time off during the year shall be counted as No-Pay time. However, if there is a leave slot available on the Leave Calendar, the member may utilize accrued vacation time to attend any military duty by following the normal vacation requesting procedure. Additionally, the member may utilize No-Pay time prior to exhaustion of Military Leave by notifying the administrative assistant responsible for payroll in writing prior to the occurrence.