



## Rogers Fire Department Standard Operating Procedures

<b>Policy Title:</b>	Training and Travel Request		
<b>Policy Number:</b>	111	<b>Volume:</b>	Administration
<b>Approved By:</b>	Tom Jenkins	<b>Last Reviewed:</b>	November 2022
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### PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to establish a procedure for members of the fire department to request leave, payment, and/or reimbursement for training and professional development opportunities.

### POLICY

Travel and training decisions will be guided by the department's annual training plan, available funds, and staffing needs required to support the training event. Members may attend training outside of scheduled on-duty courses. For approved training, the department will pay associated course fees and necessary travel expenses. Individuals are responsible for maintaining required receipts during travel.

### Request Procedure

Members seeking to attend a training course, including courses hosted by the department, must submit a completed RFD Form 95 in CrewSense no later than 30 days prior to the course. The box in this form that says "Email form to admin(s)" should include your Captain (if applicable), your Battalion Chief, the Battalion Chief assigned to the Training Division, and the DFC-SOT. Members will then email an attachment of the conference/training agenda to their Battalion Chief. Battalion Chiefs will print Form 95s and agendas for members of their platoon and meet with the DFC-SOT to approve or deny requests.

Overtime necessary to support any training event shall be minimized. Any overtime that may be incurred due to training shall receive prior approval from

the Fire Chief. It shall be the responsibility of the appropriate Battalion Chief to block the appropriate date(s) for leave and ensure overtime is eliminated or reduced prior to approving the training request. If the request is approved by the Battalion Chief, it will be forwarded to Command Staff for final determination. Requests will be reviewed by Command Staff and the disposition will be sent to the requesting member via phone or email. Approved requests will be forwarded by the DFC-SOT to a member of the training staff for travel case management.

Course enrollment and travel arrangements will be managed by a member of the training staff assigned to the travel case. The staff member will be responsible for preparing all travel forms in accordance with the city's most recent travel and reimbursement policy. These forms must be approved by the Fire Chief and Mayor. Members shall provide all information requested to support this effort.

### **Documentation**

In accordance with city policy, all overnight travel requires a travel request and subsequent approval. All members who are away from the department for training (or travel associated with a training course) will be placed in the "Employees Off" section of Crew Sense as "Training [TRN]" to reflect their absence for the purpose of training.

The status "City Business/Travel" will be used by sworn staff members when away for department business that is not training, such as serving as an assessor for promotional testing at another agency. This status will also be used by Administrative/Support and Physical Resource Technician Staff when they will be away from their desk for department business during normal working hours. The note section of the request will be completed with the nature of the time away. Because this status does not affect payroll, members only need to include their supervisor on the "Send to Admin for Approval" section of the request.

### **Expenses**

Registration: Fees associated with approved conference/course registration will be paid by the department.

Air travel: Airfare will be paid by the department to accommodate the most appropriate travel itinerary. Seating will be economy class unless approved by the Fire Chief. Baggage fees will be paid by the department. Baggage will be limited to one bag per member unless otherwise approved by the Fire Chief.

Vehicle: When driving is more economical than air travel (also accounting personnel time), a training division vehicle will be issued to the member. The member will be responsible for adherence to SOP 112 and SOP 120, including proper check-out and check-in of the vehicle, through the training staff. Use of

personal vehicles for approved travel is neither authorized nor eligible for reimbursement, unless approved by the Fire Chief. Necessary parking fees will be paid by the department upon approval.

Meals: Meals during overnight travel will be paid based on current per diem rates. Meals will be calculated with consideration to departure and arrival times. Meals provided by conferences or other measures, will be reduced from the per diem calculation. Meals will not be paid for during travel without an overnight stay. Meal receipts shall not contain alcoholic beverages. Gratuity is limited to 18%, pretax.

Lodging: Room fees and taxes associated with approved travel dates will be paid by the department.

Miscellaneous: Necessary course publications, etc. may be paid for by the department upon approval of the DFC-SOT. Other expenses not addressed by this policy shall only be reimbursed to the member upon approval of the Fire Chief.

All expenses will be subject to posted class times.

## **Receipts**

Members must maintain all receipts associated with their travel. Upon return the member must submit associated receipts to be scrutinized by the DFC-SOT and approved by the Fire Chief. If a member was issued a check from the City for meals during their travel, meal receipts are not required to be maintained by the member.

## **Credit card**

Upon approval of the DFC-SOT, members may be issued a credit card for travel. If a member is issued a credit card for travel purposes, they are responsible for ensuring proper use of the card. This includes use only for authorized expenses. If a member is not certain whether an expense is authorized for credit card use, they must contact the Fire Chief for approval.

## **Reimbursement to member**

If the member encounters an out-of-pocket expense during travel, they may request reimbursement upon return, in accordance with SOP 152. Reimbursement will only be made upon approval of the Fire Chief.

## **Reimbursement to City**

If the class dismisses earlier than planned, the member returns earlier than planned or other changes occur during travel, the member may be responsible for reimbursement of funds to the City. In such cases, the member shall contact their Battalion Chief and inform them of the situation. The Battalion Chief shall determine if reimbursement is required and notify the DFC-SOT of the occurrence, upon the individual's return from class. If a member fails to attend, or voluntarily withdraws, an approved course or travel event, they may be required to reimburse the City up to the total of all monies paid to support the request. Such instances shall require the member to notify their supervisor, Battalion Chief, and the DFC-SOT, and will subject them to the disciplinary process.

## **Miscellaneous**

Individuals may pursue training opportunities in which the individual and department share the cost of the specified training event. These will be handled on a case by case basis within budgetary constraints and upon approval of their supervisor, Battalion Chief, DFC-SOT, and the Fire Chief.

Individuals, who are sick or on injury leave on the day of the scheduled training or class, will notify the Deputy Chief-SOT through the chain of command, prior to the beginning of the class.

## **National Fire Academy Professional Programs**

The National Fire Academy offers two professional multi-year programs for firefighters to take advantage of. Members wanting to apply for admission into a program will submit their formal request on RFD Form 95 and follow normal procedure for all program components. Prioritization of program selection is detailed below. Upon acceptance into a NFA program, the department will provide continued support and funding for the duration of an individual's participation in the program.

The department continues to support attendance at all NFA courses. However, due to the competitive nature of selection and admittance into the NFA Managing Officer Program (MOP) and Executive Fire Officer Program (EFOP), the department will consider requests to attend either MOP or EFOP based upon the applicant's current assignment and applicability to the program's target audience identified by the NFA.

Members are encouraged to consult current NFA documents regarding programs and to seek advice from a member that has completed the program they are interested in.

Generally, Fire Equipment Operators and company officers will be best suited to attend the MOP as their responsibilities are categorized in the NFA target audience for the program. Upon a line officer's completion of the MOP, additional consideration will be given if they request to attend the EFOP.

Chief officers, MOP graduates, and company officers who have completed their chief officer task book are generally best categorized in the NFA target audience for the EFOP. The department will support these officers attending the EFOP.

### **Commission on Professional Credentialing Program**

The department supports individual credentialing through the Commission on Public Credentialing (CPC). This includes counseling and mentoring according to designation criteria through the application and review stages. Although the designation process is not considered a training program, members seeking designation should utilize RFD Form 95 to ensure the training division is aware of their pursuit, which may prioritize subsequent training to support improvement in any areas identified through the assessment process.

While members may submit an application for any credential that they feel they're qualified for, the department will only cover the cost of the credential under the following circumstances:

Fire Officer – Company officer who has completed the Managing Officer Program at the National Fire Academy, or company officer who has completed the Future Chief Officer Task Book and obtained a bachelor's degree.

Chief Fire Officer – Chief officer with a minimum of one (1) year of service to the RFD.

Fire Marshal – Chief officer with a minimum of one (1) year of service to the RFD in a capacity appropriate for the designation.

Chief EMS Officer – Chief officer with a minimum of one (1) year of service to the RFD in a capacity appropriate for the designation.

Chief Training Officer – Chief officer with a minimum of one (1) year of service to the RFD in a capacity appropriate for the designation.

Officers are encouraged to seek designation at a level commensurate with their responsibilities, assignment, and rank. Members are encouraged to consult current designation requirements and processes through the Center for Public Safety Excellence website, and to consult with other members that have attained designation. Upon attaining an individual designation that is commensurate with these considerations, the department will support and fund the member's

subsequent re-designations. However, the department will only fund a maximum of one designation for eligible company officers and two designations for chief officers.