



Jackson Hole Fire/EMS Operations Manual

Approved by: Mike Moyer
Mike Moyer, Interim Chief

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Division: 5
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SECTION I - PURPOSE

To identify the process for an Active Volunteer Member to take a Leave of Absence from Jackson Hole Fire/EMS (the "Department"), for personal or medical reasons, or for military commitments, and to outline the procedure for that Member's return to active duty.

SECTION II - DEFINITIONS

For purposes of this policy, the following italicized definitions shall have the meanings attributed to them below:

- *Chief* shall refer to the Department's designated and highest ranking chief officer serving in such capacity from time to time.
- *Leave Form* shall refer to that form which is attached hereto, and as the same may be updated from time to time by the Department, and is used to identify and track a member's leave of absence.
- *Leave of Absence* shall refer to any Personal Leave, Medical Leave or Military Leave which is approved in accordance with the provisions of this Policy.
- *Medical Director* shall refer to the Department's designated medical director serving in such capacity from time to time.
- *Medical Leave* shall refer to a temporary leave of absence from the Department due to medical reasons which render the Member unfit for duty, and which were not the result of an injury sustained during a Department training or emergency response which would be covered by the Department's Workers Compensation Insurance coverage. Medical Leave will also include caring for a family member with a serious health condition. A Medical Leave shall be limited to three (3) months from the date when the Leave Form is approved, unless Station Leadership and the Chief approve a longer duration, not to exceed a period of six (6) months.
- *Member* shall refer to an Active Volunteer Member, as defined and described in the Membership Policy, provided that the Member shall have maintained such status in good standing for a period of one (1) year or more, unless such time requirement is waived by the Chief.
- *Membership Policy* shall refer to the Department's Membership Policy, Division 5, Article 1.
- *Membership Requirements* shall refer to those requirements associated with a particular Member's "membership level" and as are more particularly set forth for their particular membership level in the Membership Policy.
- *Military Leave* shall refer to a leave of absence from the Department when such Member is called to military service and shall be for a period of time equivalent to their military service deployment.
- *Pay-per-Training/Pay-per-Call Policy* shall refer to the Department's Pay-per-Training/Pay-per-Call Policy, Division 5, Article 4.
- *Personal Leave* shall refer to a temporary leave of absence from the Department for personal reasons of

the Member which impact their ability to render their duties to the Department. A Personal Leave shall be limited to three (3) months from the date when the Leave Form is approved, unless Station Leadership and the Chief approve a longer duration, not to exceed a period of six (6) months.

- *Required Annual Proficiencies* shall refer to those annual requirements which are required of every Member of the Department pursuant to the Membership Policy, specifically including BLS for Healthcare Providers (CPR) or equivalent, Emergency Vehicle Operations Course, Hazardous Materials Refresher, Wildland Safety Refresher, Department physical agility test or work capacity test, and to the extent required a medical physical as designated by the Department.

- *Station Leadership* shall refer to those officers of the station where the Member is primarily assigned.

SECTION III – LEAVE OF ABSENCE AVAILABILITY

One (1) Leave of Absence of three (3) months, unless a longer period is granted by Station Leadership and the Chief, shall be available to each Member every three (3) consecutive calendar years.

SECTION IV - LEAVE OF ABSENCE DOCUMENTATION

No Leave of Absence will be granted or recognized unless a Leave Form is submitted and approved by Station Leadership and the Chief, as well as the Department's Medical Director in the case of any Medical Leave, unless the Chief, in his discretion, elects to waive this requirement for good cause shown. A Member seeking a Leave of Absence from the Department shall promptly submit a completed Leave Form to their Station Leadership for their review, and if such Leave Form is approved by Station Leadership then the Leave Form shall be submitted to the Chief for his review. In the event that a Member is unable to complete the Leave Form in a timely fashion, such Member's Station Leadership may submit the Leave Form on the Member's behalf, and then shall submit the same to the Chief for his review. The Leave Form shall contain the following material information depending on the type of Leave of Absence being requested:

- In the case of Personal Leave, the Member shall provide a brief narrative of the purpose for the Leave of Absence as well as the date when they would anticipate returning to service.
- In the case of Medical Leave, the Member shall provide a brief narrative of the medical condition which impacts their ability to serve, what steps they are taking to treat the medical condition, and the date when they would anticipate returning to service.
- In the case of Military Leave, the Member shall provide a brief narrative of their deployment terms, as well as the date when they would anticipate returning to service.

Any one or more of Station Leadership or the Chief, as well as the Medical Director in the case of any Medical Leave, may request such meetings with the Member or supplemental information from the Member as they deem reasonably necessary to assess the Leave Form. If any one or more of Station Leadership or the Chief, or the Medical Director in the case of any Medical Leave, reject the Leave Form then the Leave of Absence shall not be granted

If at any time during the Leave of Absence the Member is made aware that they will be unable to return to service by the date previously indicated in the approved Leave Form, that Member shall promptly notify their Station Leadership and the Chief of the circumstances which make their timely return to service unlikely. In such a situation Station Leadership and the Chief will review the situation to determine an appropriate plan of action.

An approved Leave of Absence does not affect the Member's date of employment for benefit calculations. However, the Department will cease to pay for a volunteer Member's pension and Supplemental Insurance policy(ies) for the duration of any Personal Leave, and such volunteer Member will be responsible for reimbursing the Department for their pension and Supplemental Insurance premiums within thirty (30) calendar days after commencing their Personal Leave, with it being understood that Department pension and/or Supplemental Insurance policy(s) will be cancelled if not paid in the time required. A volunteer Member approved for a Medical Leave will be excused from paying their Department volunteer pension or Supplemental Insurance policy(ies).

SECTION V – LEAVE OF ABSENCE RESPONSIBILITIES

Under no circumstances will a Member on any Leave of Absence be allowed to respond to emergency callouts.

A Member who is on a Personal Leave of Absence will not be eligible to receive any compensation for participating in Department activities, and as more particularly described in the Pay-per-Training/Pay-per-Call Policy, except to the extent expressly authorized to the contrary in that policy.

Any Member on a Medical Leave of Absence will be encouraged to attend their monthly station meetings and will observe such other trainings as they are able; provided, however, that no Member who is on a Medical Leave of Absence may physically participate in any trainings due to medical restrictions that may or may not be known by the Department and the Department's Workers Compensation Insurance.

If the Member has requested a Personal Leave or Medical Leave, the Member shall make arrangements to maintain their Required Annual Proficiencies, and shall be prepared to work with their Station Leadership to cure any deficiencies associated with their Membership Requirements prior to their return to Active Member status. It is the responsibility of the member taking the leave of absence to fulfill any emergency medical licensing requirements for the period of time the Leave of Absence is taken, including continuing education and competencies.

In the event that any Member is seeking a Leave of Absence longer than three (3) months, it will be required that the Member shall return all Department issued items, clothing and equipment, as assigned to such Member, to the Department for safekeeping during the Leave of Absence. Upon such Member's return to service, such items, clothing and equipment will be returned to the Member.

SECTION VI – RETURN TO SERVICE

A Leave of Absence shall terminate:

- In the case of any Personal Leave, as of the date when such Personal Leave was scheduled to expire, or such earlier date if the Member requests early termination of the Personal Leave.
- In the case of any Medical Leave, as of the date when such Medical Leave was scheduled to expire, or such earlier date when the Chief and Medical Director determine that the Member is fit to return to duty based on the certification of the Member's treating physician, after such Member's treating physician has been provided with a copy of the Member's job description.
- In the case of any Military Leave, as of the date when the Member's deployment ends and the Member returns to the Department.

If a Member on a Leave of Absence fails to return to service following the termination of their Leave of Absence, it will be treated as if the Member had resigned from the Department.

Upon the termination of any Leave of Absence it is expected that the Member will promptly return to service as an "Inactive Volunteer Member", as is more particularly described in the Department Membership Policy. Upon such Member's return to service the Member will work with their Station Leadership to promptly make-up any Required Annual Proficiencies as well as cure any deficiencies associated with their particular Membership Requirements.

If a Member returning from a Leave of Absence is unable to bring current their Required Annual Proficiencies or complete their Membership Requirements within three (3) months following their return to service, then such Member shall be terminated from the Department, unless such termination is waived by the Chief for good cause shown.

