

BETHANY-SALEM FIRE DEPARTMENT

JUNIOR FIREFIGHTER PROGRAM

The Junior Firefighter Program was instituted by the Bethany-Salem Fire Department (BSFD) as a training program for young men and women, aged 13-17, interested in serving their community and preparing to become active firefighters upon reaching the age of 18. At age 18, the Junior Firefighter is eligible to attend the Firefighter Course to become a full member of the Bethany-Salem Fire Department upon successful completion.

As a Junior Firefighter, members serve in a support role for the senior firefighters at actual emergencies as a supplement to a formal training program. The Junior Firefighters attend weekly training drills with the full Department. A BSFD fire officer serves as the Junior Firefighter training officer, and he is the primary contact person for the Junior Firefighter. Those selected are expected to act in a mature manner and commit to a demanding, long-term program.

In both training sessions and actual emergency situations, the safety of the Junior Firefighter is of paramount concern to the Department. As such, the activities of the Junior Firefighters are limited in scope and the fire officers closely supervise them. The Junior Firefighters quickly become an integral part of the firefighting team during emergencies, serving in such important capacities as establishing a water supply, supplying equipment for interior firefighters, changing air packs, manning exterior hose lines and assisting with interior overhaul once a fire has been extinguished. It should be understood, however, that despite the training and supervision provided, firefighting is a dangerous activity and serious injury is a possibility. The fire officers will make every effort to minimize the Junior Firefighters' exposure to danger. It is also the responsibility of the Junior Firefighter to avoid known hazardous situations.

Due to the inherent dangers of firefighting, strict rules of conduct and tight procedural standards have been established. In an actual emergency, it is essential that all firefighters, including Junior Firefighters, act in a calm and efficient manner. The Junior Firefighters are expected to attend training drills to be prepared for the many challenges presented in an emergency situation. Each member is expected to read and understand these requirements and to adhere to the standards. The BSFD fire and administrative officers are available to discuss any questions.

Eligibility

1. Any resident of the Bethany-Salem communities, between the ages of 13-17, may make application for membership in the Bethany-Salem Volunteer Fire Department Junior Firefighter Program.
2. The applicant must be in good academic standing at his/her school at the time of application and during the period of membership as a Junior Firefighter. A minimum GPA of 2.0 ("C") must be maintained.
3. The applicant must complete an application. Included with the application is a parental consent that must be signed by a parent or legal guardian. The application must be approved by the BSFD Chief, Officers and BSFD Junior Firefighter training officer.

General Rules

1. The general standard of conduct is to act in the manner of a professional. Junior Firefighters represent the BSFD, and are expected to be courteous and respectful to fellow firefighters and emergency service personnel and all citizens served. The BSFD will not tolerate vulgar, offensive,

discriminatory or threatening language or gestures at any time. Junior Firefighters may not wear any article of clothing that, in the opinion of a fire officer, would be offensive to the public served. Violations will result in disciplinary action, and may include suspension.

2. The BSFD maintains a "zero tolerance" policy with respect to drug and alcohol use and violation of public laws. Any possession or use of alcohol or illegal drugs, or being under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs, on BSFD premises or apparatus, emergency scene, training drill, official function, or while in BSFD uniform will result in immediate and permanent suspension from the BSFD Junior Firefighter Program. Junior Firefighters may not smoke on BSFD premises or apparatus, emergency scene, training drill, official function, or while in BSFD uniform. Any arrest or conviction for a crime will result in a review of the circumstances by the BSFD Chief and Officers, and may result in disciplinary action, including permanent suspension.

3. Junior Firefighters may not borrow BSFD equipment for personal use.

4. Junior Firefighters may not operate BSFD vehicles.

5. Power tools, hydraulic and pressurized air operated equipment, and cutting devices such as chain saws/roof saws, air bags and Hurst Tools are to be operated only under the direct supervision of a fire officer or his/her designee. A Junior Firefighter must be at least 16 years old to operate any of this equipment. Power tool use is for training purposes only. A Junior Firefighter may not operate any power tool, hydraulic or pressurized air operated equipment or cutting device at an emergency scene. Full protective gear, including gloves and eye covering, must be worn by the Junior Firefighter when operating any power tool, hydraulic or pressurized air operated equipment, or cutting device.

6. Junior Firefighters may climb BSFD ground ladders or aerial ladder for training purposes only. Any ladder use must be under the direct supervision of a BSFD fire officer or his/her designee. Full protective gear must be worn at all times. Ladders or aerial equipment of another fire department may not be used by the Junior Firefighter without the consent of a fire officer from the other department and a BSFD fire officer.

7. Junior Firefighters must attend a minimum of 30% of training drills or meetings conducted each year. Junior Firefighters are not required to respond to emergency calls.

8. Junior Firefighters are responsible for the care of all BSFD gear issued to them, and are financially responsible for loss or damage from other than official use as a Junior Firefighter.

9. Junior Firefighters may not fill SCBA air bottles, and are to remain clear of the filling area when air bottles are being filled.

10. No firefighter is to ride on a truck step. All firefighters are to be seated in the truck cab when the apparatus is in motion. Junior Firefighters may not repack hose from the hose bed if the apparatus is in motion.

11. Report any injury to a BSFD fire officer or safety officer.

12. Firefighters may not accept monetary payment or gifts for services rendered as a firefighter. Any citizen offering payment of any kind should be advised that payment for firefighting services is not expected. Never accept contributions at an emergency scene. Those individuals seeking to make a contribution should be advised to consider a voluntary contribution to BSFD as part of the annual fund drive.

Emergency Response

1. Junior Firefighters may respond to emergency alarms, except as outlined in (2) and (3) below. Junior Firefighters should respond to the firehouse or scene as directed by the BSFD Chief or Junior Firefighter Training Officer via a standing assignment order. Junior Firefighters may respond on BSFD apparatus if seats are available (Junior Firefighters will relinquish seats to senior firefighters as needed). Junior Firefighters are under the command of BSFD fire officers from the time of their arrival at the station or emergency scene until released from duty by a BSFD fire officer. If no officer is aboard the apparatus, the Junior Firefighter will be under the command of the driver until reassigned to a BSFD fire officer. Firefighters are not to leave an emergency scene without the knowledge and consent of a BSFD fire officer (each firefighter is to speak with a fire officer directly, not via a third party).

2. Junior Firefighters may not respond to an emergency alarm relating to a hazardous material incident, biological or nuclear hazard, explosive device, terrorist incident, police jurisdiction/crime scene assistance or mass casualty (defined as one likely to involve four or more individuals seriously injured or killed- such as an incident involving a train, aircraft or bus accident). Junior Firefighters are not to respond to a mutual aid alarm outside of Bethany-Salem Fire Department Jurisdiction unless directed by a BSFD Officer.

3. Prior to responding to alarms, the Junior Firefighter must be trained, and demonstrate proficiency in the use of SCBA equipment. Junior Firefighter use of SCBA equipment at an emergency scene is reserved for defensive, escape purposes only. A Junior Firefighter is to remain well clear of an area of operation requiring use of supplemental breathing air.

4. Firefighters must wear all protective gear while riding on the apparatus and at an emergency scene.

5. Under no circumstances is a Junior Firefighter to enter a burning structure, confined space or underground area, or area subject to a collapse hazard. Once a fire has been brought under control, and the building determined to be structurally sound and free of hazardous materials and toxic gas, the Junior Firefighter may enter the building if accompanied at all times by a BSFD fire officer or his/her designee. This must be with the consent of the Fire Chief. Junior Firefighters may operate exterior hose lines under the direction of a fire officer or his/her designee. Junior Firefighters must remain well clear of a motor

vehicle fire or other type fire presenting exposure to flammable liquids or hazardous materials. At an emergency scene, a Junior Firefighter may not climb a ladder or operate from a roof or other elevated position. At an emergency scene, a Junior Firefighter may not operate any power tool, hydraulic or pressurized air operated equipment, or cutting device.

6. Upon arrival at an emergency scene, a Junior Firefighter is not to enter a private dwelling or other structure with senior firefighters for investigation or emergency action of any type, unless expressly instructed to do so by the Fire Chief or a Fire Officer. Junior Firefighters are to remain with the apparatus or in close proximity to the incident commander, and await specific orders from a BSFD fire officer. If the Junior Firefighter receives orders from an officer (or request from a firefighter) of another fire department, it is incumbent upon the Junior Firefighter to advise that officer or firefighter of his/her status as a Junior Firefighter and the limitations placed upon him/her.

7. All orders received from a fire officer are to be obeyed and executed completely. If, due to safety concerns or for any other reason, the Junior Firefighter is unable to complete an assigned task, the officer issuing the order, or another officer in his/her absence, should be immediately notified by the Junior Firefighter who received the order.

8. At an emergency alarm involving downed power lines or gas leak, the Junior Firefighter must remain aboard the apparatus until the area of operation for the Junior Firefighter is determined to be safe by a BSFD fire officer.

9. If assisting with directing traffic, the Junior Firefighter must wear a reflective vest and reflective striped turnout coat. In the evening hours, the firefighter must make use of a flashlight. The Junior Firefighter must operate only in an area within sight of fire apparatus and/or a police vehicle displaying flashing warning lights. The Junior Firefighter is not to direct traffic on a divided highway or in snow or ice conditions that may impare motor vehicle control. When assisting with traffic control or crowd control, the instructions of a police officer are to take precedence.

10. Firefighters are not to make any public comments or make statements to the media at the time of an emergency incident, or following the incident, concerning conditions relating to the emergency scene, this includes the use of social media. Examples of comments to avoid are the cause and origin of a fire, condition of fire victims, condition of a home interior or fire fighting technique. All public inquiries are to be referred to the incident commander or BSFD Chief. It should be understood by the Junior Firefighter that fire inspectors or arson investigators and other governmental officials are required to inspect certain types of damage- their presence may in no way indicate suspicion of wrongdoing on the part of the property owner. Firefighters must also understand that individuals whose property has been damaged or destroyed and/or family members injured or killed are extremely sensitive to the statements and actions of emergency personnel. BSFD firefighters are expected to demonstrate the utmost of respect and compassion for these individuals in both their words and actions.

11. Valuables found at an emergency scene are to be immediately turned over to a BSFD fire officer or police officer. Theft by a Junior Firefighter will result in an immediate suspension from the Junior Firefighter Program and the Pickens County Sheriff's Department will be notified.

12. Junior Firefighters are not to have any direct contact with an injured person or dead body unless properly certified (First Responder, EMT or Paramedic), and then only at the direction of a BSFD fire officer or EMS crew chief. Report any accidental contact with blood or other bodily fluid to a BSFD fire officer or safety officer immediately, so that medical treatment can be initiated promptly.

Objective

The Junior Firefighter Program is for teens between the ages of 13 and 17. As these members reach 18 years old, they become eligible for Active Membership. Our goal is to give them a sense of belonging and that they can help. It gives them the chance to see what firefighters do and to learn the basics before taking the State Certified Firefighters Course. We are looking for individuals that are willing to work as part of a team, be able to take commands from BSFD Officers, be able to serve in a professional manner, and be able to attend the regular trainings and meetings.

Parental Consent

My son/daughter, _____, has my permission to be a Junior Firefighter with the Bethany-Salem Fire Department. I give my consent to allow my son/daughter _____ to be a Junior Firefighter and do not hold the Bethany-Salem Fire Department or Pickens County responsible for any injury that might occur.

Junior Firefighter Signature and Date

Parent/Guardian Signature and Date

Contract of Understanding

I and my son/daughter have read **ALL** of the Junior Firefighter Guidelines and understand the guidelines set up to outline the purpose of the Junior Firefighters. I and my son/daughter understand that Junior Firefighters serve as support members of the Bethany-Salem Fire Department to learn the basics of Firefighting and to prepare them to become a full member at the age of 18. I and my son/daughter understand that Junior Firefighters are to follow all instructions from members of the BSFD and that the general standard of conduct is to act in the manner of a professional. I and my son/daughter understand that he/she is expected to be courteous and respectful of other members (Junior and Regular) and to all citizens as they are representing the Bethany-Salem Fire Department. I and my son/daughter understand there is a “**zero tolerance**” policy regarding drug and alcohol use. I and my son/daughter understand that by signing this Contract of Understanding we are declaring that any violation of the guidelines is grounds for immediate dismissal. I and my son/daughter understand that any acts that violate the guidelines and that are illegal by state law will be referred to the Pickens County Sheriff’s Department.

Junior Firefighter Signature and Date

Parent/Guardian Signature and Date

Acknowledge Receipt of Guidelines

I acknowledge that I and my son/daughter have received a copy of the Bethany-Salem Fire Department Junior Firefighter Program Guidelines and have reviewed them prior to signing these documents.

Junior Firefighter Signature and Date

Parent/Guardian Signature and Date

I acknowledge that the above named received a copy of the Bethany-Salem Fire Department Junior Firefighter Program Guidelines.

Fire Chief Signature and Date

Officer Signature and Date