

# San Juan County Fire District #4

## Volunteer Information

7/20/22

Our mission statement is:

**“We are dedicated to the preservation and protection of life, property and the environment through a team effort of public education, fire prevention and disaster preparedness. We provide emergency fire, rescue, and medical services.”**

Our vision of our Department is:

- **An organization of proud individuals committed to community service**
- **A department where our team members are motivated, competent, and enthusiastic**

Our values include:

- **Our fundamental commitment is to serve our community**
- **In pursuit of excellent service, we will base our relationships with each other and our community members on respect, honesty and open communication**
- **We are committed to learning and growing individually as a department**
- **We value collaboration and diversity**
- **We are committed to affirming and appreciating department and community members**
- **We strive to be professional, cooperative and accountable as a team**

The Fire Commissioners, Staff, and Volunteers of San Juan County Fire District 4 are proud to be in service to the Lopez community.

### **ESTABLISHING VOLUNTEER STAFFING NEEDS**

The Fire Chief has the responsibility of establishing and maintaining volunteer staffing numbers. Prior to reaching minimum levels, a recruiting process should obtain sufficient new department members not to exceed established maximum levels. The minimum and maximum number of volunteer members in each Division:

	Minimum	Maximum	Students
EMS –	10	17	3
Fire -	18	35	5

### **VOLUNTEER MEMBERSHIP DEFINED**

A volunteer is, “One who serves or acts of his or her own free will. One who helps others, without expecting to be helped. A member is one of a whole, a person belonging to a group”. Emergency Services require a volunteer to respond in an organized, consistent, and professional manner following pre-established rules, regulations and operating guidelines.

#### Probationary Members

Applicants become probationary volunteer members after the applicant:

1. Fulfills the Minimum Qualifications for Eligibility stated below under the same title.
2. Files an application at the District Office.
3. Is selected by the Fire Chief.
4. Passes a criminal background check.
5. Passes a Board of Volunteer Firefighter Physical.

Once 1-5 are completed, probationary members must successfully complete firefighter recruit training and/or EMT training/certification with a recommendation from the instructor(s) as to whether the probationary

member has met the class requirements. The Fire Chief makes the final decision on the transition from probationary to full District membership.

The volunteer continues to serve the community by training to an emergency service level that provides the skills to respond to an incident safely and effectively while controlling the incident for the Lopez Island community.

### **Volunteer Member Eligibility Requirements**

A volunteer is “One who serves or acts of his or her own free will. One who helps others, without expecting to be helped. A member is one of a whole, a person belonging to a group.” Emergency Services require a volunteer to respond in an organized, consistent, and professional manner following pre-established rules, regulations, and operating guidelines.

A District volunteer is a person who has fulfilled the minimum qualifications, filed an application at the District Office, and is selected through a process meeting all standards and qualifications for the desired position. The volunteer continues to serve the community by training to an emergency service level that provides the skills to respond to an incident safely and effectively while controlling the incident for the Lopez Island community.

The minimum qualifications for eligibility are:

- Be a resident of Lopez Island and a U.S. citizen.
- Be a minimum of 18 years of age at the time of application, except student volunteers who must be a minimum of 16 years of age.
- Have a level of physical ability to perform the duties listed in the specific job description.
- Possess a valid driver’s license, except student volunteers who may be in the process of obtaining their license within 30 days of becoming a member.
- Have no criminal record.
- Maintain an insurable driving record with the District’s carrier.
- Meet minimum participation levels established by Standard Operating Guidelines.
- If a student, meet the additional requirements listed in Standard Operating Guidelines ADM -06 which is attached to this manual.

### **How to Join**

All interested community members will complete the District’s application packet, which is available at the District Office, 2228 Fisherman Bay Road. Return all forms to the District Office when completed. The initial packet includes the following:

- Volunteer Information For Applicants
- Letter to the District \*
- Application form \*

(\* - Return to the District)

The Fire Chief or designee will review the applications and select the most qualified for the staffing needs.

Once selected, an applicant must:

- Pass a physical exam at the Lopez Clinic. An appointment will be made by the Department and the exam is covered by the state.
- Pass a criminal background check conducted by the San Juan County Sheriff’s Office.
- Pass a physical agility test administered by the District.
  1. Run a ¼ mile in (2) minutes or less
  2. Perform (20) sit-ups in (1) minute or less
  3. Perform a body drag-dragging (125) lbs. a distance of (50) feet.
  4. Perform applicants choice of (5) pull-ups or (5) push-ups in (1) minute

### **What the Department Expects of its Volunteers**

Once a member of San Juan County Fire District 4 you will have the following responsibilities:

- Stay current with District rules and regulations, and standard operating guidelines (SOGs)
- Maintain at least 75% training drill attendance and respond to incidents when assigned and available. EMS drills are on the first and third Tuesdays, Fire drills are on the second and fourth Tuesday of every month. The drills times are 6:30 pm to 9:30 pm.
- Maintain compliance with applicable training, safety program, participation, membership, and job description requirements
- Apply the principles of accident prevention and safety practices in performance of jobs
- Report changes in personal status (e.g. address changes, health issues, etc.) to the Administrative Secretary
- Initiate requests for excused absences, leaves of absence, etc.
- Report changes in your physical condition that may limit your ability to safely perform normal duties
- Participate in an exit interview and return all items issued by the District upon leaving the District

### **Benefits**

- As a volunteer with the Lopez Island Fire and EMS Department, you will be working with many of the best people in our community. You will be a part of a proud team who put their neighbors' health and welfare first.
- At times you will go home at night knowing you made a positive difference in someone's life. There are also more tangible benefits provided by the Department as well.
- Our firefighters and EMTs are classified as volunteers, but do receive a \$13.00 per call or drill stipend. This is paid as a lump sum in November of every year.
- The Board for Volunteer Firefighter's Pension Fund is a state sponsored pension based on the length of service as a volunteer. All volunteer firefighters are eligible. For example, a firefighter who served twenty-five years would be eligible for \$280 per month at age sixty five. The Department contributes \$30.00 per year per volunteer, and \$30.00 is contributed from each volunteer's stipend per year to cover their state required contribution.
- All members are eligible for government rates for cellular phone service while serving as a volunteer. The details on this program change periodically, so ask the Administrative Secretary for current program information if interested.
- All volunteer firefighters are covered by the Board for Volunteer Firefighter's Relief Fund. This is a state sponsored program that covers medical expenses, disability and death, for any accidents that occur while volunteering. The program pays for all medical expenses including disability and line of duty death benefits. The Fire District contributes the yearly fee for each member.
- A variety of fitness equipment is provided for volunteers at the District Office, Station 41. A shower and kitchen facilities are also available.
- In December of each year a volunteer recognition banquet is held and the member may bring one guest.

## **Initial Training**

### **Fire Division:**

A volunteer firefighter can expect to attend approximately 100 hours of fire suppression classes. Upon completion of required training the student will attend two days of live fire training at the Washington State Patrol Fire Service Training Center in North Bend, WA.

### **EMS Division:**

A volunteer EMT can expect to attend approximately 130 hours of initial training, plus 10 hours of mainland Emergency Department and ambulance ride time. The EMT program is taught by Senior EMT Instructors to the Washington State curriculum. A State written and practical exam ensure that our EMTs meet or exceed minimum standards.

## **On-going Training**

A yearly training schedule is issued to Department members in December for the following year. This schedule covers the regular drills offered the first and third Tuesday of each month for EMS, and second and fourth Tuesdays for fire, plus some drills scheduled for Saturdays. Additional training will be added throughout the year. The Tuesday night sessions keep members up to date on their skills, familiar with Department equipment, and competent to deal with the challenges and risks of emergency services.

### **On-going Training cont.**

The importance of attendance at these drills cannot be overemphasized. The minimum attendance is 75%.

Off island training is also available throughout the year. The Department will usually pay tuition, travel, food, and housing costs. All off island training must be authorized by the Fire Chief for funding.

## **Organizational Structure**

San Juan County Fire District San Juan County Fire District uses a traditional chain of command in our organizational structure.

## **Board of Fire Commissioners**

The residents of Lopez Island elect three community members to the Board of Fire Commissioners. The Fire Commissioners are responsible for setting policy, determining taxation and finances and overseeing the actions of the department. They serve as a board of directors for the Department.

## **Career Staff**

The Fire Chief supervises all activities and is responsible for managing the Department. This includes long-range and short-range planning, implementing policy, developing procedures and guidelines, coordinating with assisting agencies, budgeting, staffing, and ensuring adequate preparedness at the department level. The Fire Chief is the final authority on operational issues and command and control of emergencies.

The Firefighter/Paramedics' participate in the daily operational activities of the Department. They are responsible for maintaining the District's stations and ensuring the apparatus and equipment are ready to respond. Their first priority is to respond to medical emergencies where they provide medical care, and are in charge of the scene. Firefighter/paramedics respond to fire calls where they fill any required role. The on duty firefighter/paramedic is the Duty Officer and as such, investigates calls which do not require an emergent response. When the Chief is absent, they assume his immediate duties and responsibilities.

The Administrative Assistant serves as the department secretary and participates in the daily office activities. She is responsible for payroll, bookkeeping, correspondence and data entry.

## **Volunteers**

All firefighters are assigned to one of four stations. Firefighters are responsible for being prepared for emergencies, keeping their fire fighting gear available and ready (i.e. full water bottles, clean turnouts); responding to calls and performing assigned duties. Fire Lieutenants are responsible for ensuring that the

apparatus, equipment and personnel are ready to respond and supervising the firefighters during training, routine duties and emergencies, in addition to the responsibilities of being a firefighter.

All EMTs are assigned to one of three teams. Each team is assigned to a twelve hour duty period for two weeks, followed by one week off. EMS Lieutenants are responsible for ensuring that apparatus, equipment and personnel are ready to respond and supervising the EMTs during training, routine duties and emergencies, in addition to the responsibilities of being an EMT.

The following is a graphical illustration of our chain of command.

## Chain of Command

	<b>Fire Commissioners</b>	
	<b>Fire Chief</b>	
		<b>Administrative Secretary</b>
	<b>Firefighter/Paramedic</b>	
<b>Suppression Division</b>		<b>Emergency Medical Services</b>
<b>Station 41 Captain</b>		<b>EMS Team 1 Lieutenant</b>
<b>Sta. 41 Firefighters</b>		<b>Team 1 EMTs</b>
<b>Station 42 Lieutenant</b>		<b>EMS Team 2 Lieutenant</b>
<b>Sta. 42 Firefighters</b>		<b>Team 2 EMTs</b>
<b>Station 43 Lieutenant</b>		<b>EMS Team 3 Lieutenant</b>
<b>Sta. 43 Firefighters</b>		<b>Team 3 EMTs</b>
<b>Station 44 Lieutenant</b>		<b>EMS Substitute Lieutenant</b>
<b>Sta. 44 Firefighters</b>		
<b>Student Firefighters</b>		<b>Student Aid Members</b>

## **Policy and Procedures**

The Board of Fire Commissioners enacts policy. Copies of the policy manual are available in the training room. The Fire Chief develops operational guidelines. These are published in a manual as the Standard Operating Guidelines (SOGs). The SOGs are constantly being updated.

This information packet is based on the policy and the SOGs manual. Please refer to the policy manual or the SOG manual if you have specific questions.

## **Requirements to Maintain Membership in Good Standing**

### **Firefighters**

Firefighter must meet the following requirements to stay active:

- Attend 75 % of the regular Tuesday night drills
- Train on SCBA use quarterly
- Pass an SCBA fit test annually
- Attend the annual bloodborne pathogens class
- Maintain Healthcare Provider CPR certification
- Maintain a current first-aid card
- Attend wildland training drills
- Respond to fire incidents when available
- Participate in Department activities as needed

### **EMTs**

EMTs must meet the following requirements to stay active:

- Maintain Emergency Medical Technician certification
- Attend 75 % of the regular Tuesday night drills
- Maintain Healthcare Provider CPR certification
- Recertify with Washington State every 3 years
- Attend those drills required by Washington State for continuing education
- Respond to EMS calls when on duty, or find a substitute
- Participate in Department activities as needed

### **Firefighter's Association**

The Firefighter's Association is a non-profit organization comprised of all active volunteer firefighter members of District 4. The purpose of the Association is to function as an auxiliary to San Juan County Fire District 4. It is organized exclusively for charitable purposes. All funds collected by the association shall be used for the betterment of the community and to benefit the operation of the Fire District Fire Unit. Funds may be used for equipment, scholarships, training, and appropriate meals.

### **EMT Association**

The EMT Association is a non-profit organization comprised of all active EMT members of District 4. The purpose of the Association is to raise and/or collect funds to be used for equipment, scholarships, training, and other items deemed appropriate by its members.

### **Inactivity and Leave of Absence**

When members do not meet the regular requirements to stay active, they may be placed on the inactive roster. Inactive members cannot respond to emergencies until cleared by Department staff.

When a member expects to be inactive, he or she may request a leave of absence. Department staff must clear returning members to return to active duty.

## **Issued Personal Equipment**

District owned personal equipment will be issued to new members and replacement equipment on an as needed basis. At the time of separation from the District all issued equipment should be returned to a staff member who will verify the equipment's return.

## **Firefighters**

Firefighters are issued the following structural gear and equipment:

- Rubber boots
- Turnout coat and pants
- Gloves
- Helmet with shroud
- Flashlight, hose strap, door wedges, hose wrench
- SCBA face mask
- Pager, charger, case, spare batteries
- Gear bag
- Department jacket after a year of service

Firefighters are issued the following wildland gear:

- Leather boots
- Nomex pants and shirt, or coveralls
- Hardhat with shroud
- Goggles
- Web belt with canteens
- gloves

## **EMTs**

EMTs are issued the following gear:

- Equipment vest
- Jump kit
- Stethoscope
- Blood pressure cuff
- Expendable supplies such as dressings, ice packs, etc.
- Pocket mask

## **Responding to Calls -**

### **Pagers**

Each firefighter and EMT is issued a pager. Pager tones are activated by the San Juan County Dispatch center in Friday Harbor. We share our radio frequency with the Friday Harbor Fire Department, San Juan Island Fire District, Shaw Fire and EMS, and the town of Friday Harbor Public Works Department.

### **When to respond**

#### **Firefighters**

When a tone is received, listen to the page. Fire and EMS have different tone sets, with Fire sounding as repetitive beeps, and EMS having a long continuous tone. For fire, the dispatcher will state which apparatus are to respond. If you are assigned to the apparatus that is dispatched, or if you are in the area of the incident, you should respond. If you are not needed immediately, leave your pager open and listen for requests for additional personnel.

If you are close to the station toned out, respond with the apparatus. If you are close to the incident, and there are others responding with the apparatus, you may respond directly to the scene. If you are qualified by Department procedure to drive apparatus do not by-pass apparatus in stations. Members assigned to second alarm apparatus should try to respond with the apparatus whenever possible.

## **EMTs**

EMTs should respond to EMS calls when they are on duty. If the call is for a patient in cardiac arrest, with difficulty breathing, or some other life threat, and you are close by but not on duty, you should respond.

From 6:00 pm until 6:00 am each team has an assigned driver. During the day any on call team member should drive the closest ambulance. If two EMS calls occur at the same time, or additional help is needed, the on duty lieutenant will request a second team response. Leave your pager open if you are on the night shift for a day time call, or vice versa.

The on call EMS team responds to any structure fire, and to other fire calls as requested by the fire division.

## **Special Request**

Some pages request specific personnel such as rope rescue, or fire AED response. Others will request additional personnel for an on-going incident, or for an off-island incident. Staging locations or reporting procedures will usually be given with the page. If there is a request for personnel for a search, any member who is able should respond.

Do not respond if you have consumed alcohol or are using drugs or medications that may impair your ability to perform the job. If you are ill or not physically well enough to respond, stay home. If an EMT is on duty but unable to respond, you should attempt to find a replacement. If you are unable to do so, contact the Duty Officer or on duty Lieutenant.

## **Privately Owned Vehicles (POV)**

When responding to a call in a personal vehicle you are required to obey all Washington State traffic laws. This includes maintaining a valid license and appropriate insurance. Members are not allowed to exceed the posted speed limit or to pass in no-passing zones. Law enforcement officers will cite anyone who disobeys the traffic laws.

Members are issued a sticker identifying them as members of the Department. It does not identify you as an emergency response vehicle, or force vehicles to move aside for you. If you sell the vehicle or leave the Department, you are required to remove it.

## **Driving Department Vehicles**

New members will be trained in the safe operation of Department vehicles before operating them solo or in an emergency response. Once authorized to drive, members are encouraged to drive the vehicles non-emergently to maintain familiarization and competency.

If you are the first to arrive at the station when responding to a fire call, start the engine, announce the apparatus number and awaiting one, don PPE, and pull the apparatus out onto the apron. If no other members have arrived by then, go enroute.

## **Disaster Preparedness and Response**

The Department encourages all members to be prepared for disasters. Each member should keep enough food, water, clothing, and other essentials to be self-sufficient for a minimum of three days. Additional information about disaster preparedness is available at Station 41.



**Leaving the Department**

When a member leaves the Department for any reason, he or she should notify the Fire Chief. The Chief will conduct a brief “exit interview” to try and help identify how the department can better retain members. The Administrative Assistant will prepare the paperwork necessary for separation. This includes payment of the Board for Volunteer Firefighter’s Pension Fund amounts if appropriate, and termination of some benefits. The Administrative Assistant will explain the procedures. All members must return all issued personal protective equipment, communication equipment, and all district equipment. Department stickers should be removed from personal vehicles.