



Jackson Hole Fire/EMS Operations Manual

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Title: **Operational Shift
Personnel Guidelines**
Division: 5
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PURPOSE

To provide direction for staffing, scheduling, and organization of Fire/EMS career operational shift personnel in areas not specifically addressed in the Teton County Employee Policies Manual.

Note: The following guidelines may be changed at the discretion of the Assistant Chief of Operations to insure appropriate operational coverage, staff administration, and for budgetary reasons.

SECTION I – WORK SCHEDULE

The 'Work Period' for shift personnel engaged in fire protection activities, as defined in 29 C.F.R. §553.224(a), is a 24-day cycle under the FLSA 7(k) exemption. For payroll purposes, the 24-day work period begins at 7:00am and ends at 7:00am after 24 consecutive days. The schedule within the 24 day 'Work Period' will be four (4) tours of duty, in an ABC rotation.

The 'Work Shift' shall be defined as one, twenty-four (24) hour day. A shift shall begin at 7:00 a.m. and end at 7:00 a.m. the following day.

The 'Tour of Duty' assigned shall be defined as two (2) consecutive 'Work Shifts'. A 'Tour of Duty' is followed by ninety-six (96) hours off.

Work shifts of less than twenty-four (24) hours will not occur unless under special circumstances approved by the Battalion Chief. A split shift may occur to ensure staffing for short notice sick coverage or during periods of significant call volume.

The Assistant Chief retains the right to change groups, workdays, and/or transfer employees to other shifts to meet mission requirements. Rotations will be kept to a minimum as crew integrity is a goal.

SECTION II – OPERATIONAL STAFFING

Staffing levels will normally be maintained per the following guideline. Staffing levels will be adjusted according to operational needs. Additional staffing will be forecasted as far in advance as possible, preferably 30 days out by the Battalion Chief.

Shift Staffing				
Total staff	Captains	Engineers	Minimum # of Paramedics	
9	2	2	4	

Shift Staffing assignments are the number of career operational staff assigned to a shift prior to vacations, sick, etc.

Scheduled Staffing				
Total staff	Captain	Engineer	ADO	Minimum # of Paramedics
7	1	1	1	3

Scheduled Staffing is the level allowed for vacation and training requests.

Minimum Shift Staffing				
Total staff	Captains	OIC	Min. # of ADOs	Min. # of Paramedics
6	1	1	2	2

Minimum Shift Staffing is the lower threshold after which mandatory hold-over will be initiated.

Overtime shifts will be granted to maintain a staffing level of 7 personnel.

Staffing may be reduced due to sick calls with no available coverage or urgent staffing issues if minimum staffing levels are maintained.

Mandatory hold-over:

To ensure **Minimum Staffing** as defined above, the on duty staff will be questioned to first seek volunteers able to hold-over and then will go to the least senior staff positions(s) necessary to meet Minimum Staffing. Mandatory holdover requirement will supersede work/rest ratio guideline. Reasons for not being held over will be considered by the Battalion Chief for special circumstances.

Mandatory hold-over is a stopgap that will be utilized to fill the vacancy. The Battalion Chief will announce the critical need by all technological means available to find a voluntary staff member. If the critical need is not filled voluntarily, a mandatory callback per 3-2 Mandatory Callback Policy will be implemented.

Maximum consecutive hours:

Shift personnel will not be scheduled for more than 48 consecutive hours. In extenuating circumstances, and with the approval of the Battalion Chief, staff may be brought in or held over for an additional 24 hours to cover sick calls or during significant incidents. Staff must have a minimum of 12 hours off before working the next 48-hour tour. With the approval of the Battalion Chief, this may be reduced to eight (8) hours if appropriate.

SECTION III – VACATION REQUESTS

Shift personnel assigned to specified tours shall choose their annual vacation leave in accordance with the following procedures.

- Requests will generally be granted on a first come, first serve basis.
- Requests may be made up to 365 days in advance.
- Vacation requests will be submitted through the online scheduling system to the Shift Battalion Chiefs who will approve or deny the request.
- Scheduled Staffing must be maintained utilizing the guidelines noted in Section II.
- During the high season months of July-September, staff may not be granted more than six shifts of vacation/personal leave.
- The maximum number of consecutive work shifts off that may be approved at the Battalion Chiefs level will be 4 (96 hours).
 - Additional hours may be approved with a positive recommendation from the Battalion Chief and approval by the Assistant Chief.
- Exception for Spring Break vacation requests:
In an attempt to balance the limited opportunities during this desirable period, the following guidelines have been developed for the 14-day period of the public-school Spring Break (starting Sunday and ending the second Saturday).
 - Battalion Chiefs/Captains may initially request off only one 48-hour tour.
 - Battalion Chiefs/Captains desiring to request off additional time will need to confirm in writing that other Battalion Chief/Captain will not be requesting off during that period.
 - Battalion Chiefs/Captains may utilize Shift Trades in order to maintain minimum staffing in order to allow two Captains or Captain and Battalion Chief on a particular shift to be off during the same tour.

SECTION IV – SENIORITY IN SCHEDULING/BIDDING

- Bidding will occur on a 2-year cycle or as determined by the Assistant Chief. Date bid will take effect is when the 24-day work cycle and 14-day pay period align. Bidding will be 3 months prior to the date the bid will take effect.
- For the purpose of seniority in scheduling, the staff will be divided into the following categories.
 - Captains
 - Engineers
 - Full-time shift personnel
- Within the Captain group, seniority will be based on the promotion date to Captain.
- Within the Engineer group, seniority will be based on the date of promotion to Engineer.
- Within the Full-time group, seniority will be based on the hire date to full-time status.
- When officers or staff share the same promotional or hire date, seniority will be granted based on ranking at time of the promotion or hire. Names will be drawn if hire date is the same without a rank from testing process.

SECTION V – VACANCIES

Purpose

To establish the process by which vacant positions at the Engineer, FF/Paramedic, FF/EMT-I and FF/EMT levels will be filled when vacancies occur due to retirement, promotion, resignations, removal, death, etc. (does not apply to promotions, temporary vacancies of less than 30 days or newly created positions, which is normally 1 position per shift). Also referred to as lateral moves.

Parameters

- Shift Staffing in accordance with Shift Staffing defined in Section II shall be maintained.
- Employees changing shifts via request or bid, forfeit previously approved leave and trades. Employees must resubmit requests for time off and trades.
- Employees below the rank of Captain and of like rank may swap one (1) time per bid cycle as long as the following criteria are met. Employees mutually agree to the swap for the duration of the bid cycle. Initiating employee shall submit a written request through the chain-of-command to the Assistant Chief or his/her designee requesting the swap. Involved employees and affected leadership will be notified within 2 weeks of the approval/denial of the swap.

Process

Employees that are qualified for such vacancy will be notified 2 weeks prior to the vacancy being filled. Those employees will be asked in order of seniority in rank if they would like to fill the vacancy. The process will continue until the bottom of the seniority list is reached.

Subsequent Vacancies: Those resulting from an assignment made pursuant to the above shall be filled in the same manner as prescribed above.

SECTION VI – OPEN SHIFTS & OVERTIME ALLOCATION

Purpose of the section:

To create clear expectations of administrators and staff pertaining to the open shift sign-ups. This will be done by defining timelines for the sign up for open shifts and improving the communications about the open shifts. This will also create a transparent and equitable distribution of the open shifts while maintaining the operational needs of JH Fire/EMS.

Goals:

- To maintain staffing levels as defined in Section II.
- Establishing clear timelines for shift assignments.
- Establish a rotating list for staff with time stamps for the date shift was assigned, date of shift to be worked, identifying if shift is Vacation Leave, Training Leave, or Immediate Need.
- To create a “scheduling group” of 3 Battalion Chiefs to maintain scheduling during each tour.
- To create clear guidelines of staff priority in assignment of open shifts.

Definitions:

- Immediate Need (IN): will be considered any shift needs that must be filled within 48 hours of shift needing filled.
- Vacation Leave (VL)/ Training Leave (TL): will be considered pre-approved time off usually more than 30 days out.
- Scheduling group – Battalion Chiefs assigned to manage Aladtec and work assignments within.
- Rotating List –rotating list will be maintained by Scheduling group and accessible to all staff

Time stamped rotating list:

The rotating list will consist of an Excel Sheet including a row with each of the following: staff name, date shift was assigned by staff group, date to be worked by staff, indicator if shift assigned is TL, SL, IN.

Scheduling Group:

Primary Scheduling group will consist of 3 Battalion Chiefs. This group will maintain scheduling needs based on the timelines, rotating lists and as communicated in following sections. If a Battalion Chief is not on shift, the responsibility for Immediate Need will go to the Captain acting up to Battalion Chief.

Timelines:

Immediate Need (IN) will be considered any staffing need arising within 48-hours of a scheduled shift. Scheduling group will communicate the vacancy via the notification system to staff simultaneously. These shifts will be filled by the “first come, first serve” system. Staff assigned will maintain their spot on the rotating list.

Staffing needs between 2 days and thirty days out will be assigned by rotating staff list. A notification will be sent to alert staff of the available shift, as far in advance as possible. These shifts will be assigned 48-hours after notification to staff. When this 48-hour window will push the assignment into the Immediate Needs time frame, the Scheduling Group Officer may choose to assign the shift more quickly. The assigned Staff member will drop to the bottom of the rotating list. When more than one Staff member is signed up for an available shift within this window, the shift will be awarded to the employee who was awarded a shift least recently. Vacancies created by scheduled vacations and training leave will be assigned 30 days out from the tour when possible.

At times, for planning purposes, staff and Chief Officers need to be able to request and approve or deny leave several months in advance of a trip or event. To allow for this, particularly when one crew member has already received approval for leave from a tour, additional staff members may recruit another employee to work their desired shift off. This recruit must satisfy staffing minimums related to certifications and abilities. When this happens, Scheduling Officers will send a notification to all staff of the “available” shift. This is to allow an employee with a higher position on the rotating list than the recruit the chance to work the “available” shift. 24 hours after this notification Scheduling Officers may award the shift to interested staff based on previously mentioned rules. The original staffer looking to give this shift away will be responsible to work their shift until the Scheduling Officer has awarded their shift to another employee within the scheduling software.

Communications:

All shifts will be signed up for by staff via the scheduling software unless directed otherwise by Scheduling Officer during IN coverage efforts. All advertisement for available shifts will be done via the scheduling software except for IN. IN will be advertised via text paging system by scheduling group to staff as soon as the need arises.

SECTION VII – TIME RECORDS

- Hours will be recorded in the Timekeeping system.
- Overtime pay would apply when actual hours worked exceed 182 hours in a work cycle of twenty-four (24) consecutive days.
- For actual hours worked between 182 and 192 the employee will receive monetary overtime compensation at one and one-half times.
- For actual hours worked greater than 192 in a 24-day cycle, the employee may elect to either receive monetary overtime compensation or accumulate compensatory time at the overtime rate of one and one-half hours.
- Staff are allowed up to 15 minutes prior to the start of the shift to prepare equipment in order to be ready to respond at the start of the scheduled shift (ex; clocking in at 0645 in order to be prepared for an 0700 assumption of response). Officers are allowed 15 minutes past their tour of duty for shift transition.

SECTION VIII – SHIFT TRADES

The responsibility for working a Tour of Duty is that of the person who is scheduled to work on that tour assignment. When an employee agrees to work the tour assigned to another employee, he/she assumes the assigned obligations to work. Any trade in shifts may only be paid back by exchange of time worked and shall not be paid back by payment of money or any consideration other than time.

Shift Trades may be permitted under the following rules:

- All requests for tour or shift trades must be made no less than 48 hours in advance.
- All requests must be approved by the Scheduling group.
- Exchanges shall ensure the Scheduled Staffing requirements are met, as required in Section II.
- The minimum number of hours that can be traded is 12 hours.
- Trades must occur within the twenty-four (24) day work cycle.

SECTION IX – SHIFT SUBSTITUTIONS

Section 7(p)(3) of the FLSA provides that two individuals may agree, solely at their option and with the approval of the public agency, to substitute for one another during scheduled work hours.

The hours worked shall be excluded by the employer in the calculation of the hours for which the substituting employee would otherwise be entitled to overtime compensation under the Act. Where one employee substitutes for another, each employee will be credited as if he or she had worked his or her normal work schedule for that shift.

The provisions apply only if employees' decisions to substitute for one another are made freely and without coercion, direct or implied. An employer may suggest that an employee substitute or "trade time" with another employee, but each employee must be free to refuse to perform such work without sanction and without being required to explain or justify the decision. An employee's decision to substitute will be considered to have been made at his/her sole option when it has been made (i) without fear of reprisal or promise of reward by the employer, and (ii) exclusively for the employee's own convenience.

A public agency under this subsection is not required to keep a record of the hours of the substitute work. In order to qualify under section 7(p)(3), an agreement between individuals must be approved by the agency. This requires that the agency be aware of the arrangement prior to the work being done.

In practice within Jackson Hole Fire/EMS, staff may substitute for one another up to four hours in a single shift. Substitutions shall be communicated to the Shift Battalion Chief or Captain Acting into the role.

SECTION X – STATION CALLOUTS/TRAININGS

- Shift personnel are encouraged to respond to their home or shift station calls as available. A page for the shift personnel's home station or "All County" page is approval to respond.
- Shift personnel are encouraged to attend Wednesday night trainings. Key station-based annual trainings (CPR, EVOC, Wildland Refresher, etc.) may be required. Approval for trainings other than station-based Wednesday trainings will require pre-approval from assigned Battalion Chief.

SECTION XI – SHIFT RESPONSIBILITIES

Each shift will have daily responsibilities based on the 48-hour tour of duty as well as a weekly, monthly and quarterly schedule.

Tour of Duty

- Apparatus checks and rehab
- Training (all-hazards) – All-hazards training will include EMS, Fire and Special Operations (HazMat, Rope Rescue, Swiftwater, TEMS, etc.) on a rotating basis in order to maintain proficiency. A training plan will be implemented by each Captain.
- Physical Training – Crews are encouraged to choose exercises based upon duties associated with position description and appropriate for the crew members and the workplace. Exercise induced injury is a risk. Reduce the risk through decision making and risk management.
- Cleaning- Leaving the station clean for the following shift; including clean and tidy living and sleeping quarters, clean bathrooms, kitchen, gym, bays, as well as spot checking the entire station prior to the am shift change.
- Equipment and apparatus cleanliness & maintenance

Other scheduled duties will be coordinated.

- Monthly medications outdates and Quarterly equipment outdates
- Supplies and ordering
- Fire Inspections
- Pre-Incident planning
- Public Education
- Station duties, hose testing / pump testing / deep cleaning / volunteer reviews

SECTION XII – TOUR OF DUTY DAILY WORK SCHEDULE GUIDELINES

Tour of Duty guidelines are flexible, based upon the Captain's discretion. Call volume will dictate the need for additional downtime.

Day 1

07:00 Shift Change – Personnel on Apparatus floor in Uniform
07:00-08:00 Shift Exchange/Rig Checks
08:00-17:00* PT/Training/Daily Duty/Projects/Preplanning with Lunch and Breaks provided
17:00-22:00 Evening Activities – Downtime & Training
22:00 Quiet Time

Day 2

Captain should be aware of any Volunteers/Observers/Students starting at 07:00.
08:00 Personnel available in Uniform
08:00-09:00 Crew Breakfast/Teambuilding
09:00-17:00* PT/Training/Daily Duty/Projects/Preplanning with Lunch and Breaks provided
17:00-22:00 Evening Activities – Downtime & Training
22:00 Quiet Time

Day 3

By 07:00 Clean Living Quarters/High Use Areas

* Downtime in afternoon to account for Evening Trainings