

POLICY #:	PS 004	POLICY TITLE:	Firefighter Pay & Compensation Rates
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APPROVAL DATE AND MOTION:	October 2001 (57-10-01)	CROSS-REFERENCE:	PS 004 – Subsistence Rates for Firefighter Training (2015) Standard Operating Guidelines #2013-1-13 Standard Operating Guidelines #2023-A-16
RESPONSIBILITY:	Director of Protective Services	APPENDICES:	
APPROVER:	Council	EFFECTIVE DATE:	October 2001
REVISION DATE(S)/ MOTION #	September 2015 (82-09-15) March 14, 2023 (2023-03-06)	NEXT REVIEW DATE:	Q1 2024

1. DEFINITIONS

- a. **Approved Training** is training, outside of that conducted at the local station on a training night, that has been reviewed and approved by the County Fire Chief.
- b. **Contracted Stations** are the fire departments owned and operated by municipalities located within the boundaries of the County and with which a fire services agreement has been established.
- c. **County** is the County of Vermilion River in the Province of Alberta.
- d. **County Firefighter** is a member of the County of Vermilion River Fire Service, either from a County or Contract station, that are actively performing duties within the geographic boundaries of the County of Vermilion River.
- e. **Recognized Course** is a program of study set out by the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) or a similar governing body, that follows a standard and/or syllabus, which results in a candidate being able to achieve a certificate of qualification.

- f. **Regular Station Training** occurs at the local fire station level under the guidance of a Station Training Officer in accordance with local level priorities.
- g. **“Voucher”** is the form template provided by the County of Vermilion River to claim individual pay and/or reimbursement for costs associated with training.

2. POLICY STATEMENT

The County of Vermilion River Fire Service endeavours to create a fair and equitable pay and compensation scale applicable to all County Firefighters, regardless of status, in recognition of the time spent away from work and family, in order to achieve and maintain professional skills required of a first responder.

3. OBJECTIVE

The following are the goals of this policy:

- a. to standardize the pay and compensation rates for all County Firefighters when responding to County fire calls
- b. to systematize the pay and compensation rates for all County Firefighters while attending training at the local station level and when taking recognized formal training external to their regular station training
- c. to regulate the stipends for County Firefighters when instructing a recognized course, such as a National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) course
- d. To provide incentive pay to executive officers for the increased time commitment for performing of their duties.

4. BACKGROUND

The County Fire Service is broken down into 2 separate categories, "Contract" and "County-Operated".

- a. "Contract" fire stations provide services through their respective Memorandums of Understanding (MOU), which dictate pay rates attributed to their firefighters. This has, in the past, meant that differing pay scales created an unintentional imbalance in how County Firefighters were compensated for their time.
- b. It is the goal of the County Fire Service to align all Memorandums of Understanding (MOU), as well as to align the "County" fire stations (who do not have the benefit of an MOU to base their rates off) to this policy.

5. GUIDING PRINCIPLES

This policy applies to all County Firefighters when representing the County of Vermilion River Fire Service.

- a. **Standard Fire Call Rate:** is the hourly rate paid per firefighter for responding to dispatched emergencies within the County.
 - i. The 2023 rate an hour for emergency response is: \$29.82
- b. **Standard Station Training Rate:** is the hourly rate paid per firefighter for participating in regular training held at the local level, to a maximum of 2x training nights a month, in accordance with any applicable Memorandum of Understanding cost sharing measures.
 - i. The 2023 rate an hour for station training is: \$17.16
- c. **Standard Regional Training Rate:** is the pay provided to each individual County Firefighter, via voucher, for attendance in a course outside of their regular station training, and includes training off-site, recognized certificate courses and other training as deemed applicable by the County Fire Chief.
 - i. The 2023 rates for regional training are:
 - \$75 for half days (4 hours or less)
 - \$125 for full days (4 hours or more)

- d. **Travel and Accommodation Rate:** At times, approved duties may occur at a location outside of the County of Vermilion River boundaries, as such, applicable compensation rates for mileage, accommodations, and meals, will be pre-authorized by the County of Vermilion River.
- i. The County of Vermilion River will follow the rates set by the Government of Canada
- e. **Specialized Rate:** is the pay provided to each individual County Firefighter, via voucher, for providing advanced skill sets to the County. This may include teaching, proctoring, or instructing a recognized course of study and may include specific taskings, such as consulting, as approved by the County Fire Chief. This takes into account time spent prepping material, submitting documents, etc.
- i. The 2023 rate for providing specialized skills is:
 - \$125 for half days (4 hours or less)
 - \$300 for full days (4 hours or more)
- f. **Appointment Rates:** are annual stipends applied to County Firefighters that hold executive positions within the County Fire Service, to acknowledge the unaccounted time spent ensuring the business of the Fire Service is conducted in a professional manner.
- i. The 2023 appointment rates are:
 - \$1250 for District Fire Chiefs
 - \$1000 for Deputy District Chiefs

6. ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES

ROLE/TASK	TITLE(S) OF PERSON RESPONSIBLE
HANDLING INQUIRIES	Protective Services Co-ordinator
MONITORING REVIEWS AND REVISIONS	Director of Protective Services
IMPLEMENTING POLICY	
COMMUNICATING POLICY	Protective Services – Fire Service
INTERNAL STAKEHOLDERS	County Fire Stations (Blackfoot, Clandonald, Dewberry & Islay)
EXTERNAL STAKEHOLDERS	Contract Fire Stations (Kitscoty, Marwayne, Paradise Valley & Vermilion)

7. EXCEPTIONS

This policy formalizes and combines the previous established pay rates, and incorporates the methods used to ensure payment of funds.

- a. This policy will not supersede any Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) agreed upon between the County and a Contractor, and only serves to supplement any rates paid by the Contractor to their Firefighters while operating within their boundaries.
- b. Recognized courses will be at the approval of the County Fire Chief
- c. County Firefighters will only be compensated for recognized courses provided they successfully met the standard.
- d. Firefighters and Instructors will submit attendance confirmation to the Protective Services Co-ordinator within 30 days of completion of the recognized course/period of instruction.
- e. Unless otherwise agreed upon, Response & Training invoices will be submitted to the Protective Services Department by the 1st of December every year, in a roster and hour format, for calculations to pay.
- f. Payment will be made by the County to the appropriate Fire District, for further dissemination to Firefighters.



- g. As the County Fire Chief is a salaried position, approval to receive compensation for recognized courses will rest with the Chief Administrative Officer (CAO).

8. POLICY EVALUATION

The evaluation will include the following:

- a. Adjustments to the Standard Fire Call Rate and the Standard Station Training Rate will be made annually in accordance with the County of Vermilion River Council approved cost of living rate (COLA).
- b. This policy will be reviewed annually by the County Fire Chief and District Fire Chiefs at the first quarterly meeting of the new year.