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Guideline for Recruit Firefighter Probation

This document shall serve as a guideline for conducting on-boarding and probationary training and subsequent evaluation for Recruit Firefighters.

Pre-Academy Orientation

Recruit Firefighters shall complete two days of department orientation. The intents of this orientation are: indoctrination to CCFD culture and expectations for performance; HR on-boarding; issuance of PPE and SCBA for Academy; introduction to CCFD facilities, apparatus, and vehicles; use of CCFD communications and technology systems; and overview of Academy, Friday Night Ride-a-long and Probationary programs.

Academy

Recruit Firefighters shall attend an in-service Academy to develop foundational firefighting skills.

Friday Night Ride-a-longs

Recruit Firefighters are placed on a 56-hour schedule during the Academy, and shall ride-a-long on apparatus each Friday night after release from the Academy until 0800 Saturday morning. The intent of the Friday Night Ride-a-longs are to further indoctrinate the Recruits to CCFD policy and procedure and to provide the opportunity to job shadow the tailboard Firefighter. There is no post-Academy training prior to starting on shift. The expectation is that the Recruit Firefighter is prepared and evaluated as ready to perform as the third member of the Engine company during the Friday night ride-a-longs.

All Recruit Firefighters shall report to a single location after Academy dismissal for Policy training. The assigned policies should be read in advance by the Recruits in preparation for the training session. Once the Policy training is complete, the Recruits shall be dismissed to their scheduled Ride-a-long apparatus. The Friday night ride-a-long rotation schedule and the Policy Task Book are published in the Career Development section of the department website. The Policy Task Book shall be printed and carried by the Recruit Firefighter to be signed off by the Captain instructing each Friday night.

The Recruit Firefighters are not cleared for IDLH work until after the completion of live fire training and firefighter survival. If there is any doubt as to whether these are complete, supervisors shall err on the side of not permitting IDLH work during active firefighting operations. The Company Officer shall tightly supervise the Recruit Firefighter at any IDLH event where the company officer determines it appropriate to have them don a SCBA.

Probationary Modules

The intent of each Probationary Module is to add depth and practical application of fundamental firefighting skills in alignment with CCFD inventory, policy, procedure and standard operating guidelines. Thus the knowledge, skill and ability of the Probationary Firefighter should be advanced from Academy foundation to stand alone competency with apparatus, equipment, routine and emergent tasks.

The Captain shall ensure training is provided for all the items listed in the Module Task Book. The Captain shall then evaluate and certify by sign-off that Probationary Firefighter meets expected performance standards and have a strong working knowledge of all the Task Book subject material. For each Module, the Captain shall complete mid-point and end of module evaluations of the Probationary Firefighter.

Probationary Testing

Testing will occur at the culmination of each Probationary Module. The intent of the Probationary Test is to verify that knowledge and skill acquisition has taken place and also that the member is capable of reasoned thought and task performance under stressful circumstances. These exams will be based upon the content of the current module, but may also include any previously covered materials. The Engine and Truck Firefighter Module Exams are typically conducted in round robin style with multiple testing stations and multiple members being tested. Module Exams that evaluate Driver Operator skills are typically held for a limited number of members per day.

Testing modalities include: skill performance demonstration, oral presentation, direct questioning, and written exam. For the oral presentation the member being tested should be prepared to “teach-back” in brief and also at length about any tools, equipment, tasks, policies and procedures for which they are responsible.

Module Test Failure

In the event that a probationary employee fails part or all of a module test, necessary steps will be taken to ensure CCFD accurately documents and provides a procedure for the probationary employee and the organization.

1. Failure of a section during a Module Test

- a. If a probationary employee fails a portion of a module test, the employee has the opportunity to retake that portion of the exam the same day. A Chief Officer will be called in and will have an understanding of where the employee made mistakes and will supervise the re-take portion of the exam.
- b. If the probationary employee fails the portion of the exam a second time, the Chief Officer will make the recommendation to have the probationary employee assigned to the Training Division and perform a 40 hour performance improvement plan (PIP.)
- c. If the probationary employee passes the re-take exam, the employee shall return to shift work and continue onto the next Module.
- d. If the probationary employee fails the exam after the PIP, the Training Division will recommend a meeting with the Deputy Chief of Operations for their decision on whether to release the employee. All documentation from supervising Company Officers and test evaluators will be given to the Deputy Chief in order to make a decision on whether to continue with the employee or to release the employee.

2. Failure of multiple sections of a Module Test

- a. If a probationary employee fails multiple sections of a Module Exam, the test will stop and the probationary employee will be assigned to the Training Division and perform a 40 hour performance improvement plan (PIP.)

- b. If the probationary employee passes the re-take exam, the employee shall return to shift work and continue onto the next Module.
- c. If the probationary employee fails the exam after the PIP, the Training Division will recommend a meeting with the Deputy Chief of Operations for their decision on whether to release the employee. All documentation from supervising Company Officers and test evaluators will be given to the Deputy Chief in order to make a decision on whether to continue with the employee or to release the employee.

3. Failure of a second Module Test

- a. If a probationary employee fails a part of a second Module Exam, the test will stop and the probationary employee will meet with the Deputy Chief and the Fire Chief. The Deputy Chief and Fire Chief shall make a decision to keep or release the employee.

Modification of the Plan

The individual's demonstrated competency or organizational needs may be cause to modify or deviate from this plan; any modification will be at the discretion of the Fire Chief or his/her designee.