



Lexington County Fire Service

Standard Operating Procedures
Standard Operating Procedures Manual ADM-002

EFFECTIVE: April 25, 2007 **ISSUED BY:** Russell R. Rawl, Fire Service Coordinator

RECINDS: Previous Policy

SCOPE: All Lexington County Fire Service Personnel.

PURPOSE: To establish an easily accessible reference for communicating Lexington County Fire Service guidelines to all Fire Service personnel.

POLICY:

I. Knowledge of the Contents of the Manual.

All Lexington County Fire Service personnel shall be familiar with the contents of the Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) manual and shall adhere to the guidelines contained in the manual to the fullest extent possible. Failure to comply with an applicable SOP can result in disciplinary action.

II. Location of the SOP Manual

One SOP manual will be maintained in the fire station and will be accessible to all personnel. Additionally, one SOP manual will be assigned to the Fire Chief and Station Officer. Manuals assigned to Headquarters will be kept in an accessible location available to all employees of the work unit.

III. Updating SOPs

A. A request for the revision, deletion or addition of a SOP may be drafted at any level of the Department and submitted through the chain of command for approval. Upon receipt of a request, the Chief or Fire Service Coordinator may designate someone with knowledge of the particular subject to consider the

request and, if indicated, to draft the SOP. This draft shall be circulated for review to appropriate supervisor personnel and technical experts within the Department.

- B. Once the draft has been reviewed and revised, the Chief or Fire Service Coordinator will decide if the SOP is to be issued and if any further modifications are needed. No SOP will be issued without the Coordinator's approval.
- C. When a new or updated SOP is developed and approved, a memorandum drawing attention to the new SOP, a copy of the SOP and an updated Table of Contents will be sent to each station and individual who has a manual. The SOP and Table of Contents are to be placed in the SOP Manual and the old Table of Contents, and any SOPs that are rescinded by the SOP, will be removed from the manual and discarded.
- D. The contents of a manual can be confirmed by referring to the Table of Contents which lists each current SOP, its assigned number and the date it was issued. The issued date of the Table of Contents will be shown on each page of the Table of Contents so that personnel can ensure that they have a current version.
- E. At a fire station, when the SOP is received the Senior Officer on duty will:
 - 1. Meet with all on-duty personnel to explain the guideline
 - 2. Replace the old Table of Contents with new Table of Contents
 - 3. Insert the new guidelines according to its number
 - 4. Remove any old guidelines that are rescinded
- F. All individuals who are issued manual shall:
 - 1. Read the new SOP
 - 2. Replace the old Table of Contents with the new Table of Contents
 - 3. Insert the new policy according to its number
 - 4. Remove any old policies that are rescinded

IV. Referring to the Manual

The manual is divided into two sections. One is for administrative guidelines, the other for operational guidelines. To find an SOP, look in the appropriate section of the Table of Contents. In general, administrative guidelines transmit internal regulations and procedures that support administration of the Fire Department, while operational guidelines indicate how services are to be provided to the public.

- A. Administrative Procedures will be designated ADM [number]. Operational Guidelines will be designated OPS [number]. While the numbering will generally be sequential, there may be gaps in numbers as the result of anticipated SOPs and rescinded SOPs. The Table of Contents will show all current SOPs.

V. **Limitations of the Manual**

The SOP Manual is a dynamic document that provides guidelines for the operation of the Lexington County Fire Service. It is being issued initially with a limited number of SOPs. Additional SOPs will be issued with a priority placed on developing SOPs that are central to the Department's administration and services. Existing SOPs will be reviewed periodically and updated as necessary to meet changing administrative and service demands.

- A. Because the Manual will never be able to address every situation that may be encountered, personnel will need to use good judgment in applying the guidelines, coupled with training and experience. Just because a guideline does not exist for a particular situation, does not mean that actions should not be taken to address an administrative or operational problem.
- B. The Manual is not intended to take the place of federal, state or local laws. County policies or training those personnel receive. If there is a conflict between a SOP and a County policy, County policy will take precedent.
- C. Nothing in this manual or in any of the County's or Fire Department's policies shall be deemed to constitute a contract of employment and all employees of the County are "at-will employees" who may quit at any time for any reason and who may be terminated at any time for any reason or no reason. No oral or written promises or representations by a manager or supervisor will change the at will status of an employee. Only the County Administrator has authority to enter into contracts of employment and any such contracts must be in writing and signed by him/her.