### Sample Orientation Agenda

Approximately Four Hours – Scheduled after work hours or a weekend.

| **Approximate Time**  **(Minutes)** | **Topic** | **Key Points** | **Presenter** | **Comments** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 5 | Welcome and Introduction | * Review housekeeping (washrooms, breaks) * Review agenda * Intro to key speakers | * Fire Chief * Deputy * Training Officer * Other members * Council Rep | Coffee or refreshments available. |
| 5 | Municipal Government Welcome | * Welcome speech from the municipality | * Mayor/Chief or Council Member | Municipal Government Representative should be scheduled well in advance of the orientation date. |
| 15 | Human Resources Paperwork | * Personal information | * Chief or Community Human Resources Representative | See Relevant Human Resources Forms |
| 10 | History | * Date department established * Significant milestones | * Fire Chief | n/a |
| 10 | Organizational Chart | * How the fire department fits into the municipal organization * Rank and reporting structure of the department | * Fire Chief | See Sample in Handbook |
| 20 | Mission, Vision, Values | * Vision, Mission * Goals and Objectives * How members’ actions contribute to the achievement of goals and objectives | * Fire Chief | See Sample in Handbook |
| 15 | Break | | | |
| 15 | Core Programs and Services | * Geographical Area of coverage; * Core services; * Station information (human resources and apparatus). | * Fire Chief * Leads for: * Suppression; * Prevention; * Training Officer; * Administration. | A map of the area of coverage would assist in explaining. |
| 30 | Expectations | * Code of Conduct; * Relevant policies, procedures, operating guidelines; * Attendance; * Training; * Role in responses; * Equipment provided; * Mentor opportunities; * Performance expectations; * Milestones and timeframes; * Progress after probation. | * Fire Chief * Leads for: * Suppression * Prevention * Training Officer * Administration | Refer to established policies or operating guidelines (e.g. Local Assistants Handbook - see MACA).  See Sample Code of Conduct in Handbook. |
| 10 | Other Scheduled Events (if applicable) | * Meetings * Fundraising * Fire department events | * Chief * Deputy * Training officer | As established by the fire department. |
| 15 | Break | | | |
| 20 | Occupational Health and Safety | * Occupational Health and Safety Requirements; * Rights and responsibilities; * Potential hazards, controls, equipment and training to prevent or mitigate hazards; * Hazard reporting; * Accident reporting and process. | * Workers Safety and Compensation Commission (WSCC) * Fire Chief or delegate * Other seasoned Volunteer Fire Fighters | WSCC staff participation should be scheduled well in advance of the orientation date. |
| 45 | Overview of Equipment and Apparatus | * Distribute PPE; * Review apparatus and equipment; * Review public education and prevention equipment; * Review administrative supplies and equipment. | * Fire Chief * Leads for: * Suppression; * Prevention; * Training Officer; | Equipment should all be serviceable, and well organized and/or displayed. |
| 15 | Break | | | |
| 20 | The Good, Bad and the Ugly | * The benefits and challenges of joining – the good, the bad and the ugly * Critical Incident Stress overview * Coping with the demands | * Department members * Significant other or family member | Participation on behalf of family members for current volunteers should be organized well in advance. |
| 10 | Closing remarks | * Questions and answers and contact information for future inquiries. | * Chief | A handout with contact information is most helpful.  See Volunteer Recruitment brochure. |

### Sample Organization Chart for a Fire Department

**Local Government**

**Senior Administrative Officer**

**Fire Chief**

**Fire Prevention Officer**

**Senior Firefighter**

**Firefighter**

**Firefighter**

**Firefighter**

**Senior Firefighter**

**Firefighter**

**Firefighter**

**Firefighter**

### Fire Department Code of Conduct: Guidelines

A code of conduct is a list of principles and values to guide Fire Department members. They sometimes describe specific things that firefighters should or should not do. They can also describe the desirable conduct that volunteers should aim towards. As every fire department has different needs, it is not practical to write a code that applies to all departments. This summary is provided to give fire departments a starting point. Each fire department should decide on the actions or statements that are important to them. When developing a Code, consider the following:

* Develop guidelines that are clear and practical
* Focus on the things that are important to the members
* Make sure that the Code is understood by all of the members

A Code of Conduct is a statement that helps firefighters to make the right choices.

***Oath***

The Fire Department may want to have new fire fighters swear an oath of service. An oath is a short-form version of the Code and a verbal reminder of duty and expectations. An example is provided below.

“As a Fire Fighter, my fundamental duties are to protect and save lives, and to safeguard property in the service of my community. I will set a good example in all actions and deeds. I will conduct myself at all times, both on and off duty, in a way that will bring honour to the department. I will never use my position for personal gain. I will obey the law, and dedicate myself to the safety of the citizens of and visitors to *[community name]*.”

***Values***

More likely, new members will be informed of the important things that describe their service to the Fire Department. A list of possible statements is given below. It is not a complete list. Your department may want to change the statements or make up new ones. The statements fall into the following categories: *General Principles*, *Professional Conduct*, and *Exercise of Duty*.

***General Principles:***

* Members shall serve the public by performing duties with honesty, courage, and good judgment.
* Members shall be polite and show respect for others, both on or off duty.
* Members shall obey the law at all times.
* Members will treat everyone fairly.
* Members will be truthful and honest at all times.
* Members will provide equal service to all people.
* Members will conduct their personal affairs in a way that does not negatively affect the performance of their duties, or bring discredit to the Fire Department.
* Members will avoid situations that would affect the public perception of the Fire Department.
* Members will accept responsibility for their actions and for the consequences of their actions.
* Members will be respectful and conscious of each member’s safety and welfare.

***Professional Conduct:***

* Members shall always conduct themselves (on and off duty) in a manner that reflects positively on them, the Fire Department, and the community.
* Members shall not report for duty while under the influence of alcohol, no consume any alcoholic beverage while on duty.
* No member shall consume alcohol or drugs while on duty or in uniform that will impair their ability to perform their duties.
* No member, while in uniform, shall enter any premises where alcoholic beverages are sold or consumed, except in the performance of fire department duties
* No member shall propose or accept personal rewards or gifts that may create a conflict of interest
* Members should not make statements on Fire Department business to the media or other persons at a fire scene or any other place.

***Exercise of Duty:***

* Every member will comply with all general orders and department rules and regulations, as the Fire Chief deems necessary.
* Members shall follow the chain of command. It exists for everyone’s safety, and to help make decisions quickly and wisely.
* Members shall not refuse to obey any proper direction of a superior officer.
* Members shall report for duty immediately upon receiving orders to do so.
* In an emergency, every member is expected to perform all duties as required of their assigned role in the department.
* No member will leave their duty without the permission of the officer in charge, either while at the emergency scene or at training.
* Members shall notify the chief if they expect to be absent from duty (including training).
* Members shall be honest and efficient stewards of fire department resources, including uniforms, facilities, vehicles and equipment.
* Members should keep the fire hall clean and orderly. Their safety depends on it, and its condition reflects upon the department as a whole.

### Vision, Mission, Goals and Values: Guidelines

***Vision***

A vision statement is a broad description of the ultimate goal of the fire department. This could be as simple as the vision being a community that is safe from the devastating impact of fire or natural disasters.

***Mission***

A mission statement provides a brief description of the fire department’s efforts to achieve that vision. It is a broad description of the following:

***What*** the department does. For instance:

* Its purpose;
* Major services it provides:
  + Emergency response (fire suppression, highway rescue, medical response, ground ambulance, other);
  + Public education;
  + Fire prevention activities such as inspections.

***How*** it does it. For instance:

* Quality of service;
* Efficiency of service;
* Proactive vs. Reactive programs;
* Cost effective or economical services.

***For*** whom it does it. For instance:

* The community;
* The public;
* The taxpayers.

***Goals***

Goals are broad accomplishments to be achieved by your fire department:

* They are broken down into objectives and deliverables;
* Objectives are clear statements of specific activities/tasks that must be performed to achieve the goals;
* Deliverables are tangible, verifiable outcomes that demonstrate that you have met an objective;
* Ensure goals and objectives are smart (specific, measurable achievable, results-focused and time-bound);

When developing goals for the fire department, they should be in line with the vision and mission. Look to the major services identified in your mission. Most likely they include public education, inspections and emergency response. Each of these services should have clearly identified goals. To assist you in identifying those goals, solicit ideas from members of your department that provide those specific services.

For instance, goals for public education might be to implement and maintain public education programs that meet the needs and circumstances of the community. One objective could be to implement and maintain the “alarmed for life program”. Its deliverable may be the number of households surveyed during that year who had operational smoke alarms. Another objective could be to promote the use of the “risk watch” program in the local school. Its deliverable could be the number of classes that have implemented the “risk watch” program into their curriculum during the school year.

***Ownership***

Once you have identified your vision, mission, goals and objectives, you will need to communicate them clearly, and often to your membership. Post them on your walls, incorporate them onto letterhead or business cards. Recognize individuals who have contributed to achieving goals.

Another way to reinforce your goals and to illustrate how each member contributes to achieving those goals is to have each individual identify tasks that he or she does that contributes to the goals of the department.

This could be the mechanic who maintains the trucks in operating condition, which allows fire fighters to respond to calls in a timely manner. This could be the office clerk who maintains the files, which allows the chief to quickly access information he needs and contributes to the overall effectiveness of the department. This could be the retired schoolteacher who visits the school on a regular basis to provide public education and conduct inspections, thereby making the public more informed about fire safe behaviours and the school safer by ensuring the fire alarms work and the fire drills are conducted.

***Values***

Values are beliefs that influence the way an individual or group of individuals behave. They are the foundation for your “code of ethics”. Common values in the fire service are: professionalism, the pursuit of excellence, integrity, safety, generosity, contributing to the community, helping others, respect, discipline, teamwork and fellowship. This list is limitless, and is unique to each fire department and its membership.

To help you in identifying values that will shape your code of ethics, survey your department members to determine what their values are. From that list, identify the most common ones that align with your vision, mission and goals.

By identifying the values of your department, you have begun to “talk the talk”. For this to really work, you and your membership need to “walk the walk”.

One way in which you can do this is to discuss these values with your members, ensuring that everyone’s understanding of the values is consistent. For each value, identify behaviours that would demonstrate that value and also behaviours that contradict that value.

For instance, if one of your fire departments values is safety, ask your members to identify ways in which they demonstrate safety (i.e. Using PPE, following operating guidelines, etc.). You can also identify behaviours that go against the values (i.e. not wearing PPE, driving too fast during response, not following operating guidelines).

Another example of a value is teamwork. Behaviours such as working together; open, honest and respectful communication; following orders at an emergency scene; helping each other with tasks and thanking each other demonstrates teamwork. Behaviours such as freelancing, gossiping and not helping out contradict the value of teamwork.

Once you have established your vision, mission, goals and values with your members, ensure that you reinforce them. Make them part of your performance evaluation. Recognize those individuals who are “walking the walk” and who contribute to achieving the department’s goals.

Remember, needs and circumstances do change. Ensure that you revisit your vision, mission, goals and values to ensure that they continue to meet the needs of your community and the needs of your fire department.

### Sample Equipment Sign-off Sheet

Name: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ F. F. # \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Officer: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ F.F. # \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Item** | **Date Rec’d** | **FF. Initial** | **Date Returned** | **F.F Initial** | **Authorized Initials** |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |

Upon my departure from the {Name of Fire Department}, I hereby understand that if the above items are not returned, the cost of the item(s) will be charged against me.

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Fire Fighter Signature Date