

ESCAMBIA COUNTY FIRE-RESCUE

Standard Operating Guidelines

1105.005

Organizational Structure

Implemented: 01/03/05

Revised: 05/18/20



Paul Williams, Fire Chief

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PURPOSE:

To achieve peak administrative and operational efficiency, emergency service organizations must establish a solid organizational structure and chain of command. The chain of command must be fully understood and strictly adhered to by all personnel.

OBJECTIVE:

To provide all ECFR personnel with the proper chain of command, thereby promoting good communications and preventing duplication of efforts.

SCOPE:

All Personnel

CHAIN OF COMMAND

The chain of command establishes that each member reports to one person. In the Incident Management System this is known as Unity of Command. In the simplest terms, personnel report to one person above them, and each succeeding level to the supervisor or person above them. Conversely, orders are established higher in the organizational level and communicated down through the ranks.

All personnel shall follow the chain of command in dealing with day-to-day operations and department related activities. Department related activities include but are not limited to the following: clarification of policies and procedures, work assignments, requests for information within the organization, and requests for information outside the organization that may pertain to normal work duties. Specifics may include, but are not limited to the following; requests for information pertaining to vacations, holidays, sick leave, training activities, station assignments, personnel, workers compensation, and requests to meet with the Fire Chief, Deputy Fire Chief, or Public Safety Director.

Members begin the communications process with requests or discussions with his/her immediate supervisor. If response from the supervisor is unsatisfactory or an issue must be taken to the next level, communication shall be from the member through the supervisor to the next level. The process of communications will continue from supervisor to District Chief/Battalion Chief to Volunteer Coordinator (if applicable), to Deputy Chief to Fire Chief. Members will follow the "chain of command" for all matters including concerns, recommendations, and complaints. To bypass the chain of command will only delay corrective action and possibly result in duplicated efforts, as the problem will be referred to the appropriate supervisor. Members circumventing the chain of command can be disciplined. Refer to the BOCC Policies and Procedures, Section I – Part "C", 2. Chain of Command.

The chain of command assists officers at all levels to achieve their primary function of accomplishing the departments assigned mission/assignment while caring for personnel and

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property in their scope of responsibility. A simple and direct chain of command facilitates the transmittal of orders from the highest to the lowest levels in a minimum amount of time and with the least chance of misinterpretation. The command channel extends upward in the same manner for matters requiring official communication from subordinate to senior.

The Incident Command System (ICS) shall be used on all emergency scenes. Personnel shall follow all departmental rules, regulations, policies, procedures, directives, and/or guidelines as they relate to ICS.

OPEN DOOR POLICY

The Fire Chief has an open-door policy for those members desiring a conference. This request will be made through the administrative assistant.

The Deputy Fire Chief, Battalion Chiefs and District Chiefs shall establish an open-door policy within their shift/station. The open-door policy does not supersede the chain of command but provides an alternative process for extenuating circumstances. Personnel are responsible to ensure that the officers are made aware of problems that affect discipline, morale, and mission effectiveness; and an open door policy allows members of the department to present facts, concerns, and problems of a personal or professional nature or other issues that a member was unable to resolve or it involved someone in their specific chain of command. Members utilizing the open-door policy or superseding the chain-of-command shall be able to demonstrate the reasons for doing so.

The following chain of command shall be recognized and followed by all ECFR personnel:

Fire Chief
Deputy Fire Chief
Assistant Fire Chief
Battalion Chief
Division Chief
District Chief
Assistant District Chief
Captain
Lieutenant
Firefighter
Firefighter Trainee