

Policy Number: 2019-011

Effective Date: 05/01/2019

Last Review Date: _____

Waterloo Vol Fire Department Standard Operating Guidelines

Accident Reporting Policy:

Purpose:

Our accident reporting policy is designed to outline the purpose and procedure for reporting any on-the-job accidents. The department is committed to enforce all health and safety guidelines to avoid such occurrences and expects members to comply. However, accidents are sometimes inevitable. Our provision in this case is to ensure all accidents are reported timely so they can be investigated properly and preventative measures can be reviewed and reinforced.

Scope:

This policy affects all members.

Policy:

- On-the-job accidents that must be reported include any incidents that may cause minor or severe injuries or incidents that are results of negligence or inadequate safety precautions. The victims may be members who were injured while performing their duties or other people that were on department premises or vehicles.
- Accidents must be reported as soon as possible in order to expedite investigation and increase likelihood of important findings. The sooner the cause or details of the accident are identified, the sooner the department can establish preventative measures for the future.
- The department encourages members to report all accidents no matter how minor. Accidents that involve very minor injuries like small cuts, non-extensive bruises etc. and would not normally require any action on behalf of the department (e.g. the breaking of a drinking glass) do not have to be reported (although members could report them if they want). On the other hand, accidents that involve (or could have involved) more severe injuries and require investigation and action from the department must be dutifully reported. Members are obliged to report any of the following:
 - Fatalities
 - Damage to the head, skull and face
 - Damage to any of the senses (e.g. partial or complete loss of hearing, sight etc.)
 - Incapacitation or dislocation of limbs that hinder functionality and movement (including paralysis and amputation)
 - Damage to the skin (e.g. extensive burns, bruises or cuts)
 - Blows or injuries to the spine, back and ribs

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- Harm to the nervous system or loss of consciousness through electrocution, hypothermia etc.
 - Poisoning
 - Contamination from hazardous substances or transmission of diseases
 - Any other injury that requires hospitalization or medical care
- Especially when an employee needs medical coverage, the accident must be reported immediately since insurance benefits may have to be approved after the investigation. Members are also required to report occurrences that may not have involved injuries or victims but could be potentially dangerous in that respect if repeated. These include but are not limited to:
 - Explosions
 - Slippery surfaces
 - Water or gas leaks
 - Inadequate insulation of circuits
 - Collapses of walls, ceilings etc.
 - Breaking of window glasses or frames

Procedure:

- When a member witnesses or is involved in an accident they must report it to a chief officer (personally, in writing or by phone if the accident occurred remotely) within one week. If the member anticipates an accident due to perceived negligence or inadequate safety, they must make notification as soon as possible so the accident can be prevented.
- All reportable accidents and injuries must complete a situation report obtainable from a chief officer and return to the chief officer.
- The officials responsible must initiate an investigation or request an investigation from authorities if appropriate.
- The member who reported the accident has to cooperate if called in for questioning to provide details needed. As a general rule, the employee must provide information as accurately as possible on the following:
 - The place of the accident
 - The date and time of the accident
 - The people involved or injured
 - Their position or involvement in the accident
 - Their actions immediately after the accident
 - Disciplinary Consequences

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The department places great importance in this policy. All members are obliged to comply. Any member that is discovered to have been aware of a serious accident and failed to report it will face appropriate disciplinary consequences. When members are the cause of an accident they must report it immediately to minimize legal repercussions.