

SOUTH PORTLAND FIRE DEPARTMENT

STANDARD OPERATING GUIDELINES

Policy #:	5.205	Effective Date:	11/1/2023
Title:	Student Firefighter Program	# of pages:	7
Category:	Personnel	Classification:	Green

1. PURPOSE:

To establish guidelines for the administration of the South Portland Fire Department Student Firefighter Program.

2. POLICY:

A. STUDENT FIREFIGHTER PROGRAM

The Student Firefighter Program exposes the student to the vocation of firefighting.

Student Firefighters will be issued structural firefighting equipment, a radio pager and trained in the skills needed to fight various types of fire, vehicle extrication and rescue and many other specialized rescue techniques.

Students are supervised by senior personnel when responding to emergencies, training and other Department activities.

Students will be trained in many techniques that would place them in a hazardous environment, but will not operate in hazardous environments until they are stabilized by senior firefighters and the incident commander has declared them safe for entry.

B. PROGRAM ORGANIZATION

The Chief of the Department and a Student Coordinator (normally the Captain) from each company shall oversee the Student Program. The Chief has oversight over the entire program while the coordinators oversee the aspects of the specific team the student is assigned to.

The Student Program will be limited in membership to six (6) students from educational institutions with a formal student program agreement with the South Portland Fire Department.

Each student will have a Coordinator(s) that directs his or her program and that the student reports to.

C. PROGRAM MEMBERSHIP REQUIREMENTS

- A. Minimum 16 years.
- B. Written permission from parent or legal guardian.

- C. Demonstrated emotional maturity and good citizenship.
- D. Compassion for human life and ability to relate well to others at all levels.
- E. Ability to accept responsibility and direction from established authority.
- F. Complete a medical physical examination submitted by licensed physician, physician's assistant or nurse practitioner.
- G. Complete Student Program training requirements (Maine BLS Basic Fire School).
- H. Meet requirements on attendance for drills, meetings and response to emergency calls.

D. PROGRAM MEMBER FUNCTIONS

1. Respond to related emergency calls during non-school hours, with parental permission.
2. Assist the Department with Public Education programs or other events of a public orientation where large amounts of personnel are required or desirable.
3. Assist with Search and Rescue operations and exercises that require a large number of personnel to effectively conduct.
4. Attend related training with Department & Student Program personnel.
5. Assist the Department with related work details and general housekeeping of stations, apparatus & equipment.

Minors who are 16 and 17 MAY:

- Ride as a passenger in the cab of a fire truck or in an emergency vehicle
- With proper training, fight ground fires when they are directly supervised, except ground fires which involve an existing "crown fire" exposure
- Perform patient care (for which they are licensed) in an emergency vehicle or at the scene of an accident or other emergency.
- Attend and take part in supervised training.
- Participate in fire department functions within the rehabilitation area of an emergency scene. This could include setting up the engine, assisting in water supply efforts, and other support functions, which do not expose the Junior Firefighter to hazardous areas or atmospheres.
- Pick up hose and clean up at the fire scene after it has been declared safe by the Incident Commander.
- Enter a structure only when accompanied by an adult firefighter once the structure has been determined safe by the Incident Commander.
- Perform search and rescue activities, other than structural firefighting.
- Operate a fire pump located outside the danger zone at the direction of the Incident Commander.
- Use pressurized hose lines if properly trained, under the direction of an Incident

Commander, and out of the danger area.

Minors who are 16 and 17 MAY NOT:

- Perform fire suppression involving structures or vehicles.
- Drive fire department or emergency vehicles.
- Respond with operating red lights (drive any vehicle, including their own car with attached operating red lights) to the scene of a fire or emergency.
- Perform firefighting “overhaul” activities (except when the structure has been declared safe by the Incident Commander and then only with adult firefighter).
- Respond to Hazardous Material events (except for support functions within the cold zone).
- Perform any activity (except training), which involves the use of self-contained breathing apparatus.
- Participate or assist in any extrication activities at the scene of an accident or emergency (except in the capacity of a support function).
- Participate in any activities at the scene of an accident or emergency where fire is involved, unless they are performing support functions from outside the danger area.
- Participate in actual “ice rescue” activities, but may provide assistance within any designated rehabilitation area or as a support member on dry land only.
- Direct traffic at the scene of a fire or other emergency.

E. PROGRAM RULES & REGULATIONS

1. By Maine State Labor Law, persons under the age of 18 are prohibited from working during the hours of 10:00 p.m. to 7:00 a.m.
2. Student firefighters are prohibited from performing direct fire suppression operations related to structural & vehicle firefighting.
3. Student firefighters must attend approximately 80% of all student meetings, drills, and other scheduled events.
4. Student firefighters will not enter burning buildings and/or structures until the incident commander has declared the building safe for entry. The student must be under the direct supervision of a senior firefighter when entering such structures.
5. Student firefighters will only operate in the staging & support aspects of hazardous material incidents, vehicle extrications, or other specialized rescue operations.
6. Student firefighters will not ride outside the enclosed cab of any piece of apparatus.
7. Emergency calls and other Department activity notifications will be received by radio pager system and text message, which alerts the student that he/she is needed.
 - a. The monitoring of any public safety receiver of any kind by a Student Program member during school hours is prohibited.
8. Students will remain in the program until graduation; they may not become regular employees of the Department until they have graduated (or achieved a GED) and reached their 18th birthday. When a student reaches the age of 18 but has not graduated from High School, they will remain in the program, but the company may utilize that student member as if they were an adult employee. This is at the discretion of the company.

9. Known use of alcohol, tobacco products, and/or other illicit substances by Student Program members is prohibited.
10. Student Program members will follow all rules and regulations of the Department and obey all orders of the Chiefs, Officers, senior personnel and Student Coordinators of the Department.
11. Student Program members are not authorized to operate department vehicles.
12. Student Program members are not to display warning devices of any kind, i.e. courtesy red lights, four-way flashers, horns, etc.
13. Student Program members will respond with the flow of traffic observing legal speed limits and all other traffic laws at all times.
14. Student Program members will respond to the station unless otherwise directed.
15. Student Program members will not respond to emergency calls, work details, meetings, trainings or other functions during the following periods:
 - a. When a student is suspended or expelled from school and/or school functions.
 - b. When a student is absent from school for the day he/she is absent.
 - c. During scheduled tests, quizzes, and/or presentations.
 - d. Midterm and final examination week.
16. It is to be clearly understood by all members that Student Program involvement is not an excuse to be relieved from the responsibility of being a good student, rather it is to be considered by student, principal and educator as an extracurricular activity of enormous importance to our community.
17. All meeting and trainings will be after school hours.
18. Student Program members will not respond to the following types of calls:
 - a. Emergency Medical calls involving known:
 - i. Attempted or actual suicide
 - ii. Drug overdose
 - iii. Cardiac arrest & deaths
 - iv. Significant trauma (may include motor vehicle collisions)
 - v. Behavioral & psychiatric emergencies
 - vi. Any calls located at any South Portland Schools
 - b. Civil disturbances.

19. In order to respond to emergency calls, attend training and assist in Department events, a student member must have passing grades in all subjects.
20. Students must provide a copy of semester and year-end grades to the Student Coordinator for review.
21. Discipline will be in accordance to the South Portland Fire Department Rules and Regulations, the agreement between the educational institution and the Department, and the City Personnel Policy.
 - a. The Chief and Student Coordinators will review all disciplinary issues involving a Student Program member.
 - b. The Chief and Student Coordinators will recommend a course of disciplinary action.
 - c. Final decisions regarding discipline lie solely with the Chief of the Department.

F. PROGRAM SELECTION PROCESS

Applications for membership into the Student Program will be accepted on a rolling basis, as space is available.

The Chief and Company Captains will review applications and schedule interviews with the applicants.

Students will be interviewed and selected by the Chief, Company Captain & Student Coordinator from the interview process and assigned to the Program.

G. PROGRAM TRAINING REQUIREMENTS

Students will have to complete the Basic Firefighter Program as prescribed by Maine Bureau of Labor Standards before they begin to respond to emergency calls and/or Department events. The following training requirements are in effect for all Student Program members:

- Orientation to the South Portland Fire Department Student Program (includes Parent / Guardian)
- Confidentiality & HIPAA
- OSHA Bloodborne Pathogen Training
- OSHA Respiratory Standards & Fit Test
- Sexual Harassment Training
- Hazardous Materials: Awareness Training
- Command Structure & Incident Command System
- Emergency Scene Safety

- Personal Protective Equipment

3. REFERENCES:

- CEFD SOG 6.10
- Maine Bureau of Labor laws related to child labor:
http://www.maine.gov/labor/labor_laws/wagehour.html
<http://www.mainelegislature.org/legis/statutes/26/title26ch7sec0.html>
<http://www.mainelegislature.org/legis/statutes/26/title26sec773.html>
www.mainelegislature.org/legis/statutes/26/title26sec774.html
www.mainelegislature.org/legis/statutes/26/title26sec782.html
<http://www.safeteen.org/>
- U.S. Department of Labor laws related to child labor:
<http://www.dol.gov/>

By Order of:



Phil Selberg
Fire Chief