

**ANIMAS VOL.  
FIRE & RESCUE  
DEPARTMENT**



**JUNIOR FIREFIGHTER  
STANDARD OPERATING  
PROCEDURES**

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Created and Adopted on 01/25/2024

### 1.0 Purpose

- 1.1 The Animas Fire & Rescue Department welcomes young adults between the ages of 16 and 18 to serve in the fire department. This program offers an unparalleled opportunity to serve the public in a meaningful way while learning new skills and interacting with their peers who have the same interests. Due to the nature of firefighting, and the inherent dangers that can be involved with some of these activities, we have developed Standard Operating Guidelines (SOP's) to protect the students during their participation. We recognize the importance of education and the building of character during this developmental period in their lives, and the following guidelines have also been designed to encourage these aspects while they participate in activities as a Junior Firefighter.

## **2.0 Objective**

- 2.1 The objective of this Junior Firefighter SOP is to provide a basic foundation in firefighting for high school between the ages of 16 and 18. On the emergency scene, Junior Firefighters will operate and complete support functions only. The Junior Firefighter will only be permitted to operate in a support function role after the initial emergency and only when the scene has been declared safe by the Incident Commander. The Junior Firefighter shall be closely supervised by a designated fire officer or senior firefighter.
- 2.2 The firefighting skills to be obtained by the Junior Firefighter will be accomplished through classroom instruction, hands on or practical training sessions, and fire call attendance. Junior Firefighters are required to follow all rules stated in this SOP and the Standard Operating Procedures of the Fire Department.
- 2.3 Upon graduation of high school, in concurrence of their 18<sup>th</sup> birthday, and providing the Junior Firefighter has successfully completed all training requirements identified in the training skills matrix, the member will be required to complete an application for full membership.

## **3.0 Definition**

- 3.1 A Junior Firefighter shall be defined as a member of the Fire Department who is: From the age of 16 to the day of their 18<sup>th</sup> birthday. Upon graduation, Junior Firefighters must complete the application process to be a full member of the department.
- 3.2 Note: Any 18-year-old who is still enrolled in school as defined below shall fall under the guidance of this Junior Firefighter SOP until such time as they graduate.
- 3.3 A student is defined as a participant who is attending a local high school; to include, a home school equivalent, regional vocational technical school, etc.
- 3.4 A Junior Firefighter will receive firefighter reimbursement as subject to the Hidalgo County Volunteer Firefighter Pay-Per Call Policy.

## **4.0 Junior Firefighter Requirements**

- 4.1 A copy of required Federal Identification Documents, along with all other member documents, will be kept in each Junior Firefighters Personnel File located in the office at Station 1.
- 4.2 Junior Firefighters are approved using the same process as regular firefighters. To that point, Junior Firefighters are subject to the same policies, rules, guidelines, SOP's, and all other regulations just as other fire department members are.
- 4.3 Any Junior Firefighter who is issued a radio, after completing their 90 day probation, will not carry the radio while attending classes. The radio will not be worn at any school function where it could interfere with the learning environment. Any violation of this policy will result in loss of the radio and/or suspension from the department.
- 4.4 Junior Firefighters will submit, to the Fire Chief or designated Fire Officer, a copy of the progress report from school at the end of each 9 weeks. The Fire Chief or designated Fire Officer will review each individual progress report. All progress reports will be retained in the Fire Department's personnel file for the full school year. If failing in any course(s) the Junior Firefighter will be suspended until the grades are passing. Failing shall be defined as any grade lower than a "C" or the equivalent number grade. Any firefighter who receives a failing grade, in any class, will be suspended until the next progress report card is received. Parents will regulate home-schooled firefighters, and proof of maintaining passing academic levels will be provided at the same intervals progress reports are issued.
- 4.5 At the earliest convenience after a suspension for failing grades has been imposed, the Fire Chief or designated Fire Officer should schedule a meeting with the Junior Firefighter and a parent or guardian to ensure that all parties understand what has transpired and why. Additionally, the Fire Chief or designated Fire Officer will explain what is expected of the Junior Firefighter to make a successful transition back to unrestricted status.
- 4.6 Any Junior Firefighter suspended from high school will automatically be suspended from the Fire Department, for the duration of the school suspension.
- 4.7 If a Junior Firefighter is unable to attend school for any reason, to include inclement weather, he/she must not be present at the station, attend training, respond to any calls, or be present at any fire scene, in any capacity, during school hours until they return to school in full capacity or until they have been cleared to return to school. Failure to obey this rule will result in one week suspension from the Fire Department.
- 4.8 Junior Firefighters must be in good standing with the community, follow all Standard Operating Procedures of the Fire Department. Any violations of this Junior Firefighter SOP, Department SOP's, may result in progressive disciplinary action up to and including dismissal.
- 4.9 Only a Fire Officer may formally discipline a Junior Firefighter to their discretion. The disciplinary action will be made to fit the offense. The Fire Officer and Assistant Fire Chief will administer firefighter discipline according to the following procedures:
  - 1<sup>st</sup> Offense: Verbal Warning
  - 2<sup>nd</sup> Offense: Written Warning

3<sup>rd</sup> Offense: Suspension / Dismissal from the Fire Department will be considered.

4.9.1 Note: A suspension or dismissal from the Fire Department will be a joint decision between the Fire Officer and Assistant Chief. Their recommendation, in writing, will be brought to the Fire Chief for final review and action. All levels of discipline will be documented and signed copies stored in the Junior Firefighter's personnel file.

- 4.10 Junior Firefighters are expected to conduct themselves in a manner consistent with being a public servant.
- 4.11 Junior Firefighters should not use or be under the influence of alcohol, tobacco, nicotine containing products, or drugs while on Fire Department Property, while participating in Fire Department Activities, or representing the Fire Department in any way, including wearing a Fire Department shirt or cap.
- 4.12 Any Junior Firefighter accused or convicted of the possession, sale, distribution of a controlled substance will be subject to disciplinary action up to and including dismissal.
- 4.13 Junior Firefighters may be disciplined for being charged or convicted of criminal violations while off-duty.
- 4.14 Any arrest or conviction by the member will be reviewed by the Fire Chief and may be grounds for denial of membership or dismissal from the Fire Department based upon the Fire Department SOP's.
- 4.15 All potential disciplinary action will be reviewed and determined by the Fire Chief. In accordance with Fire Department Policy. All issues that arise that are not covered by the SOP or the SOP of the Fire Department, will be decided upon by the Fire Chief or the senior fire officer present. The fire officer will always decide with prudence and caution. Communication will then be done to make clear to all affected Firefighters the issue at hand.

## **5.0 Allowed Activities**

- 5.1 Junior Firefighters may perform the following:
  - 5.1.1 Respond to fire station during off school hours, with the exception of school nights on which said Junior Firefighter will not respond during the hours of 10:00PM to 7:00AM. If present on a fire call or at the fire station, the Junior Firefighter must sign out by 10:00pm
  - 5.1.2 Attend and take part in supervised firefighter / rescue training.
  - 5.1.3 Perform nonhazardous duties at the fire station under supervision of a fire officer or senior firefighter.
  - 5.1.4 Operate all tools and equipment under direct supervision of a fire officer or senior firefighter. Note: Gas powered saws may be used in the training settings only and only under direct supervision of a fire officer or senior firefighter.

- 5.1.5 Use pressurized hose lines if properly trained, under the direction of the Incident Commander or a fire officer, and out of the danger area. This note is in reference to ground fires only.
- 5.1.6 Participate in department functions within support areas of an emergency scene. This may include assisting the engine operator, assisting in water supply efforts, rehabilitation, and/or other support functions, which do not expose the Junior Firefighter to hazardous duties, areas, or atmospheres.
- 5.1.7 Pick up hose and clean up at the fire scene, after Incident Commander has declared the scene safe.
- 5.1.8 With training, fight ground fires when they are directly supervised, except ground fires that involve an existing "Crown Fire". If while operating at a ground fire, a crowning fire results, the Junior Firefighter will be restricted to an area away from the standing timer/crown fire. The Incident Commander and/or company officer may remove a Junior Firefighter from operations at any time due to escalating risk.
- 5.1.9 Perform search and rescue activities, other than structural firefighting, in support roles only.
- 5.1.10 Ride as a passenger in the cab of fire department vehicles when room exists. Full turn-out. Gear and seatbelts must always be worn in the jump seats.
- 5.1.11 Junior Firefighters will not respond to any out of district calls.
- 5.1.12 Junior Firefighters will be permitted to ride and respond to an emergency call at the discretion of the apparatus officer. The Junior Firefighter shall stand by the officer's door and wait for permission from the officer to board the apparatus. At the direction of the Incident Commander and/or fire officer, Junior Firefighters may be asked to stay in the apparatus during the call to limit exposure to "serious emergency scenes" including fatalities, fires, etc. This will be a judgement call by the Incident Commander or fire officer on scene.
- 5.1.13 Operate portable fire pumps only, with proper supervision, if located outside of the danger zone at the direction of the Incident Commander or a fire officer.

## **6.0 Restricted Activities**

- 6.1 Perform any activity (except in training) which involves the use of Self-Contained Breathing Apparatus (SCBA).
- 6.2 Perform structural firefighter "overhaul" activities.
- 6.3 Respond to calls before 7:00AM on a school day and 5:00AM on a non-school day.
- 6.4 Respond to calls after 10:00PM the night before a school day.
- 6.5 Respond to calls after midnight if there is no school the next day.
- 6.6 Be in a station between the hours of 10:00PM and 7:00AM on a school night, and between the hours of Midnight and 5:00AM on a non-school night.
- 6.7 Respond to any out of district calls in a Privately Owned Vehicle (POV). Junior Firefighters are required to respond to the fire department.

- 6.8 Operate any Fire Department Vehicle.
- 6.9 Perform fire suppression involving structures or vehicles except in a training setting.
- 6.10 Perform search and rescue activities involving structures with the exception of training activities.
- 6.11 Respond to the fire department or scene of an emergency with operating red lights. (Junior Firefighters shall not drive any vehicle, personal or other, with attached and operating red lights).
- 6.12 Respond to hazardous materials events (except for support functions within the cold zone).
- 6.13 Will not respond to, or participate at, a motor vehicle accident that involves fire or extrication.
- 6.14 Junior Firefighters responding on the apparatus to accidents not involving fire or extrication shall immediately report to the Incident Commander who will decide where the non-hazardous areas are on the scene and direct the Junior Firefighter to support functions within the non-hazardous areas.
- 6.15 Direct traffic at the scene of a fire or other emergency.
- 6.16 Respond to any calls without proper protective clothing.
- 6.17 Respond to any calls or training sessions while suspended from school or the Fire Department.
- 6.18 Additional rules, regulations, or situations not covered by the policies in this document will be decided upon, implemented, and enforced by the Fire Chief or Fire Officers of the Fire Department.

## **7.0 Training Requirements**

- 7.1 All Junior Firefighters must complete in the first 3 months of becoming a member:
  - 7.1.1 ICS 100
  - 7.1.2 ICS 700
  - 7.1.3 CPR / First-aide / AED
  - 7.1.4 HIPAA & BBP Training
- 7.2 All Junior Firefighters must complete within the first year of becoming a member:
  - 7.2.1 S130/S190
  - 7.2.3 Junior Firefighter Training Matrix or Taskbook

## **8.0 Probation**

- 8.1 Upon successfully joining the Animas Fire & Rescue Department, the Junior Member will be placed on a 90-day probation period. During the probation period, the new member will have no junior voting privileges and may not respond to calls except during training. Probationary members may attend special events such as banquets, picnics, parades, and meetings/trainings.
- 8.2 Requirements:
  - 8.2.1 Complete 3 months of service.

- 8.2.2 Attend 50% of all scheduled meetings and trainings.
  - 8.2.3 Compete any required training.
  - 8.2.4 Have an understanding of the Animas Fire & Rescue Department Operations and Apparatus, Accountability, Command Structure, Personal Protective Equipment, and Safety.
- 8.3 Failure to complete the probationary requirements will result in a one-time extension of the probationary period. Continued failure to complete the probationary requirements will result in loss of membership.

## **9.0 Attendance**

- 9.1 Junior Firefighters are required to attend 50 percent of all scheduled meetings and trainings in remain an “active” member of the department.

## **10.0 Officers**

- 10.1 When certain thresholds are met, Junior Officers shall be elected by the Junior Firefighters.
- 10.1.1 Three or more Junior Members, a Captain shall be elected.
  - 10.1.2 Six or more Junior members, a Lieutenant shall be elected.
  - 10.1.3 Additional officer positions can be created and or eliminated by the Junior Advisor as needed.
- 10.2 To hold an officer position, a member must be active and in good standing for at least six months and completed all required training. Officers must be willing to provide additional hours to complete the duties of the position. Candidates must be approved by a Junior Advisor to run for a position.
- 10.3 Elections are held when the regular department elections are held with no less than 50% of the voting junior members present. Votes are cast by secret ballot. Members are elected by a simple majority vote. Tie votes will be determined by the vote of the Junior Advisor, Chief and Asst. Chief. At least one month written notice shall be posted before elections.
- 10.4 Duties of Officers
- 10.4.1 Junior Officers are designated with a white strip running the length of the helmet along the top.
  - 10.4.2 Junior Captain: will be the ranking Junior Member. The captain will oversee all junior events, meetings and functions. The Captain will conduct the junior business meetings and supervise duties of other junior officers. The captain will coordinate recruiting and recognition of Junior members. At an emergency incident with multiple junior members, the Junior Captain will report to the Incident Commander as a representative of all juniors on the scene. However, the Incident Commander has total control of the Junior Members on an emergency scene.



10.4.3 Junior Lieutenant: will be responsible for records of attendance and training of junior members. The Lieutenant will fill the duties of the Captain in their absence. Recording of minutes and correspondence. The Lieutenant will provide a summary report of junior activity each month to be presented at the Animas Fire & Rescue Department Business Meeting. Such reports shall include any change in members, awards, training events completed, etc.

Appendix #1

**Receipt of Acknowledgement**

I acknowledge that I have received a copy of the Animas Fire & Rescue Department Junior Firefighter Standard Operating Guidelines and will make every attempt to follow the rules identified therein.

If I have any questions, comments, concerns, or suggestions, I shall consult with my Mentor or Chief Officer.

*Junior Firefighter*

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

Printed Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

*Parent or Guardian*

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

Printed Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Appendix # 2

**Junior Firefighter Consent Form**

I, \_\_\_\_\_, consent to participate in the Animas Fire & Rescue Department's Junior Firefighter Program and abide by its Standard Operating Procedures (SOP's) to the best of my ability. I agree to submit, to my Fire Officer, a copy of my progress reports from school at the end of each 9 weeks. I understand that if I am failing in any course(s), lower than a "C", that I will be suspended until grades are passing. I understand there are inherent risks in responding to/and or training in the response to fire, rescue, and emergency medical calls, and that all efforts shall be made by the Fire Department, fire officers, firefighters, and by myself to mitigate those risks. I agree to participate in the training offered by the Fire Department as part of the Junior Firefighter Program and any ongoing education and training with the Animas Fire & Rescue Department. If I have any questions, I shall contact my chosen Mentor, Fire Officer, or Fire Chief. I have received a copy of the Animas Fire & Rescue Department Junior Firefighter Program Standard Operating Procedures (SOP's) and I understand what is expected of me as a part of this program.

*Junior Firefighter*

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

Printed Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Appendix # 3

**Parental / Guardian Acknowledgment of Risk, Waiver, and Release**

We, the parent(s) or guardian(s) of \_\_\_\_\_,  
Hereby give our consent for them to participate in the Animas Fire & Rescue Department’s Junior Firefighter Program. We understand there are inherent risks in training and responding emergencies, and that all efforts shall be made by the Fire Department, Fire Officers, Firefighters, and said Junior Firefighter to mitigate those risks.

We hereby give \_\_\_\_\_, consent to participate in emergency calls and training activities, such as wearing gear, participating at training events at designated locations, including using fire hoses, riding in the fire department vehicles, with the Animas Fire & Rescue Department and acknowledges and agrees as follows:

**Acknowledgement and Assumption of Risks**

Firefighting activities can be inherently dangerous and carry a risk of injury. Possible injuries can range from minor to life-threatening. As a participant, you understand that your child has a responsibility to reduce the risk or possibility of injury by following all safety rules, instructions, inspecting all personal protective gear closely for defects, reporting any and all unsafe conditions to a Fire Officer or Senior Firefighter immediately, recognizing signs of fatigue which may place them or others at risk of injury, and voluntarily removing yourself from training when necessary.

**Consent to Emergency Transportation and Responsibility for Emergency Care**

By signing below, you consent to emergency transportation and any treatment that may be necessary in the event of injury or illness.

**Maintaining Grades**

You understand that a minimum letter grade of “C” or equivalent will be required for all academic grades in order to participate in this program and progress reports must be presented to the Fire Chief every 9 weeks.

**Release**

By signing below, I understand and agree that in exchange for my son's/daughter's participation with the Animas Fire & Rescue Department (AFRD) and any of its activities, I agree to the following:

- A. I hereby waive and will not pursue any claims, actions, lawsuits against the AFRD, the County of Hidalgo, and as against any or all of its members and officers.
- B. That in the event my child or I am injured while participating in the Animas Fire & Rescue Department's training session(s), meeting(s), parade(s), activity (ies), youth firefighter program or demonstration(s) or any emergency call(s), cannot sue the Animas Fire & Rescue Department, the County of Hidalgo, nor any of its members and officers. My child and I shall be able to make claim against any medical insurance company or provider that I (as a parent/guardian) may have.
- C. I assume any and all liability for any injuries or damages that may occur to my child during any training session(s), meeting(s), parade(s), activity (ies), youth firefighter program or demonstration(s) or any emergency call(s) my child participates in with the AFRD and the County of Hidalgo.

I understand and agree that I may at any time, on my son's/daughter's behalf, have him/her not attend until I determine for myself whether the activities are appropriate for my child from a physical, emotional, and/or any other standpoint.

I hereby sign on my own and my son's/daughter's behalf intending to be legally bound and agree to the terms above.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Participant's Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Participant's Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Parent/Guardian Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Parent/Guardian Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date Signed

\_\_\_\_\_  
AFRD Officer/Witness Signature

Appendix # 4

**Junior Firefighter Application**

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Last First MI

Physical Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Mailing Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City, State, Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Home Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Cell Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

DOB: \_\_\_\_\_

Emergency Contact Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Emergency Contact Phone # \_\_\_\_\_

Emergency Contact Relationship: \_\_\_\_\_

Why do you want to become a Junior Firefighter?

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I have read the job description and agree to the duties and responsibilities listed.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Applicant Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

## *Appendix # 5*

### **Job Description**

Job Title: Volunteer Junior Firefighter

Physical Demand: Heavy

#### General Purpose:

The Volunteer Junior Firefighter (“JVFF”) will be training to serve the community by responding to a wide variety of situations, ranging from emergencies that immediately threaten life or property to requests for assistance. JVFFs perform duties in the following general categories: the suppression of fires, emergency medical rescue, and training.

JVFFs are encouraged to attend regularly scheduled training in order to acquire the knowledge, skill, and ability necessary to function safely and effectively as a firefighter in accordance with state law, city/county protocols, and standard operating procedures.

The work performance of JVFFs is continuously evaluated for general knowledge, skill proficiency, and ability to work as part of a team. Any deficiencies will be addressed/corrected through remedial training.

#### Essential Duties:

The JVFFs shall attend trainings to learn the “hands on” techniques to operate fire and rescue equipment. The JVFF may ride in an emergency vehicle in response to the suppression of fires and emergency rescue calls. On scene, JVFFs will shadow Command Personnel, pack/load hose, and observe fire ground activities. Other duties are auxiliary work at fireground operations, such as providing refreshments to the first responders outside of the “Hot Zone” or operational area.

#### Desired Minimum Qualifications:

##### Interest in Learning About:

- Modern fire service principles, procedure, techniques, and equipment.
- Fire protection systems, evacuation considerations, and building construction regulations for fire safety.

##### Ability to:

- Follow instructions.
- Communicate effectively, both orally and in writing; the ability to understand and carry out verbal and written instructions in English.
- Remain calm in emergency situations.
- Learn and know the geography of the County and the Fire District, including but not limited to, the local streets and locations of important buildings.

- Participate in training activities, including but not limited to, drills, classes on firefighting, equipment, and other training sessions associated with recognized firefighter standards.
- Complete general maintenance of station facilities, such as janitorial activities and grounds keeping.
- Participate in community activities.
- Be a minimum of sixteen (16) years of age.

### Physical and Mental Demands

The physical and mental demands described here are representative of those necessary to be a JVFF who successfully performs his or her duties. Reasonable accommodations may be made to enable individuals with disabilities to perform these duties.

**Physical Demands:** Work is performed in the fire station, on emergency scenes, and could include mass casualty, fire scenes, and extraordinary events as they occur. Performing tasks, or solely witnessing events, under emergency conditions may require strenuous physical exertion. Exposure to death, emotional stress, patients with contagious diseases, and terminal illness can be expected.

**Mental Demands:** While witnessing and performing duties, JVFFs will learn how emergency respondents use written and oral communication skills; read and interpret data, information, and documents; problem solve and reason analytically, logically, and mathematically; observe and interpret stressful situations; acquire and apply new information and skills; and interact with other volunteers, agencies, county staff and the public.

### Work Environment

The work environment described here is representative of what JVFF can expect to encounter while performing his or her duties. Reasonable accommodations may be made to enable individuals with disabilities to perform these duties.

Physical hazard from fire, equipment, traffic, smoke inhalation, and falling objects at emergency scenes. Exposure to health risks may occur. Performance of hazardous tasks under emergency conditions may require strenuous exertion under limited visibility, exposure to hazardous or toxic chemicals and gasses, extremes in temperatures, cramped surroundings, and contact with death, emotional stress, contagious diseases, and terminal illness.



**Appendix # 6**

**Application Checklist**

- \_\_\_ Application (*Appendix # 4*)
- \_\_\_ Copy of ID or Driver's License
- \_\_\_ Copy of Vaccinations
- \_\_\_ Copy of Most Recent Progress Report
- \_\_\_ Receipt of Acknowledgement (*Appendix # 1*)
- \_\_\_ Junior Firefighter Consent Form (*Appendix # 2*)
- \_\_\_ Parental/Guardian Acknowledgement (*Appendix # 3*)
- \_\_\_ W9
- \_\_\_ PERA Form
- \_\_\_ Benefits Form
- \_\_\_ Confidentiality Agreement