

City of Independence Fire Department Cadet Firefighter Program Guidelines

The Cadet Firefighter Program was instituted by the City of Independence Fire Department (IFD) as a training program for young men and women, aged 14-18, interested in serving their community and preparing to become active firefighters upon reaching the age of 18. At age 18, the Cadet Firefighter is eligible to attend the Firefighter 1 Course and to apply to become a full volunteer member of the City of Independence Fire Department upon successful completion or apply for an open position as a Firefighter if one exists at that time.

As a Cadet Firefighter, members serve in a support role for the senior firefighters at actual emergencies as a supplement to a formal training program. The Cadet Firefighters attend monthly training drills with the full Department. An IFD fire officer serves as the Cadet Firefighter training officer, and they are the primary contact person for the Cadet Firefighter. Those selected are expected to act in a mature manner and commit to a demanding, long-term program.

In both training sessions and actual emergency situations, the safety of the Cadet Firefighter is of paramount concern to the Department, and the City. As such, the activities of the Cadet Firefighters are limited in scope and the fire officers closely supervise them. The Cadet Firefighters quickly become an integral part of the firefighting team during emergencies, serving in such important capacities as establishing a water supply, supplying equipment for interior firefighters, changing air packs, manning exterior hose lines, and assisting with interior overhaul once a fire has been extinguished. It should be understood, however, that despite the training and supervision provided, firefighting is a dangerous activity, and serious injury is a possibility. The fire officers will make every effort to minimize the Cadet Firefighters' exposure to danger. It is also the responsibility of the Cadet Firefighter to avoid known hazardous situations.

Due to the inherent dangers of firefighting, strict rules of conduct and tight procedural standards have been established. In an actual emergency, it is essential that all firefighters, including Cadet Firefighters, act in a calm, efficient, and professional manner. The Cadet Firefighters are expected to attend training drills to be prepared for the many challenges presented in an emergency situation. Each member must read and understand these requirements and adhere to the standards. The IFD fire and administrative officers are available to discuss any questions.

Eligibility

1. Any resident of the City of Independence, or within the City of Independence Fire District (Sumner & Washington Townships), between the ages of 14-18, may submit an application for membership in the City of Independence Fire Department Cadet Firefighter Program.
2. The applicant must be in good academic standing at his/her school at the time of application and during the period of membership as a Cadet Firefighter. A minimum GPA of 2.0 ("C") must be maintained.

3. The applicant must complete an application, including a parental consent form that must be signed by a parent or legal guardian. The application must be approved by the IFD Chief, Officers and IFD Cadet Firefighter training officer.

General Rules

1. The general standard of conduct is to act in the manner of a professional. Cadet Firefighters represent the IFD and the City of Independence and are expected to be courteous and respectful to fellow firefighters and emergency service personnel and all citizens served. The IFD will not tolerate vulgar, offensive, discriminatory or threatening language or gestures at any time. Cadet Firefighters shall not wear any article of clothing that, in the opinion of a fire officer, would be offensive to the public served. Violations will result in disciplinary action and may include suspension.
2. The IFD maintains a “zero tolerance” policy with respect to drug and alcohol use and violation of public laws. Any possession or use of alcohol or illegal drugs or being under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs, on IFD premises or apparatus, emergency scene, training drill, official function, or while in IFD uniform will result in immediate and permanent suspension from the IFD Cadet Firefighter Program. Cadet Firefighters shall not smoke on IFD premises or apparatus, emergency scene, training drill, official function, or while in IFD uniform. Any arrest or conviction for a crime will result in a review of the circumstances by the IFD Chief and Officers, and may result in disciplinary action, including permanent suspension.
3. Cadet Firefighters shall not use or display emergency identification on their personal vehicle (e.g., blue lights and fire department plates). Cadet Firefighters shall not wear clothing identifying them as an IFD firefighter, except assigned protective gear, uniforms or logo shirts/hats worn for official purposes only.
4. Cadet Firefighters shall not enter an IFD fire station unless a senior member of the department is present, and then only for official business (emergency response, training drill, department meeting or work detail). Cadet Firefighters shall not bring friends or anyone else into a fire station or permit them to be aboard fire apparatus.
5. Cadet Firefighters must leave the station no more than 30 minutes following completion of the emergency response, training drill, department meeting or work detail.
6. Cadet Firefighters are not permitted to attend overnight stand-by details (will be released from a stand-by not later than 10:00 PM) or to accompany IFD firefighters covering the station of another fire department.
7. Cadet Firefighters shall not borrow IFD equipment for personal use.
8. Cadet Firefighters shall not operate IFD vehicles.
9. Power tools, hydraulic and pressurized air operated equipment, and cutting devices such as chain saws/roof saws, air bags and Hurst Tools are to be operated only under the direct supervision of a fire officer or his/her designee. A Cadet Firefighter must be at least 18 years old to operate any of this equipment. Power tool use is for training purposes only. A Cadet Firefighter shall not operate any power tool, hydraulic or pressurized air operated equipment or cutting device at an emergency scene. Full protective gear, including gloves and eye covering, must be worn by the Cadet

Firefighter when operating any power tool, hydraulic or pressurized air operated equipment, or cutting device.

10. Cadet Firefighters may climb IFD ground ladders or the aerial ladder for training purposes only. Any ladder use must be under the direct supervision of an IFD fire officer or his/her designee. A ladder belt or safety harness and full protective gear must be worn at all times. Ladders or aerial equipment of another fire department shall not be used by the Cadet Firefighter.
11. Cadet Firefighters are not to participate in any IFD activity, including emergencies, during school hours. Cadet Firefighters are not to leave school, or a school sponsored activity, for an emergency response. Cadet Firefighters are not to respond to any alarm dispatched after 9:30 PM on a school night (Sunday-Thursday). Cadet Firefighters will not be assigned pagers or radios. Cadet firefighters will be added to the I Am Responding system and notified of calls and training through the system.
12. Cadet Firefighters must attend a minimum of 30% of training drills or meetings conducted each year. Cadet Firefighters are not required to respond to emergency calls.
13. Cadet Firefighters are responsible for the care of all IFD gear issued to them and are financially responsible for loss or damage from other than official use as a Cadet Firefighter.
14. Cadet Firefighters shall not fill SCBA air bottles and are to remain clear of the filling area when air bottles are being filled.
15. No firefighter or Cadet Firefighter is to ride on a truck step. All firefighters are to be seated in the truck cab when the apparatus is in motion and seatbelt use is required. Cadet Firefighters shall not repack hose from the hose bed if the apparatus is in motion.
16. Cadet Firefighters are to report directly to the station at all times. Cadet Firefighters are not to drive personal vehicles to any scene unless directed by an IFD Officer.
17. All injuries are to be reported immediately to an IFD fire officer or safety officer.
18. Cadet Firefighters shall not accept monetary payment or gifts for services rendered as a firefighter. Any citizen offering payment of any kind should be reported to the Chief or an Officer. Those individuals seeking to make a contribution should be advised to consider a voluntary contribution to IFD as part of the annual fund drive.

Emergency Response

1. Cadet Firefighters may respond to emergency alarms, except as outlined in (2) and (3) below. Cadet Firefighters should respond to the firehouse or as directed by the IFD Chief or Cadet Firefighter Training Officer via a standing assignment order. Cadet Firefighters may respond on IFD apparatus if seats are available (Cadet Firefighters will relinquish seats to senior firefighters as needed). Cadet Firefighters are under the command of IFD fire officers from the time of their arrival at the station or emergency scene until released from duty by an IFD fire officer. If no officer is aboard the apparatus, the Cadet Firefighter will be under the command of the driver until reassigned to an IFD fire officer. Cadet Firefighters are not to leave an emergency scene without the knowledge and consent of an IFD fire officer (each Cadet Firefighter is to speak with an IFD fire officer directly, not via a third party).

2. Cadet Firefighters shall not respond to an emergency alarm relating to a hazardous material incident, biological or nuclear hazard, explosive device, terrorist incident, police jurisdiction/crime scene assistance or mass casualty (defined as one likely to involve four or more individuals seriously injured or killed – such as an incident involving a train, aircraft or bus accident). Cadet Firefighters are not to respond to a mutual aid alarm outside of City of Independence Fire Department Jurisdiction unless directed by an IFD Officer.
3. Prior to responding to alarms, the Cadet Firefighter must be trained, and demonstrate proficiency in the use of SCBA equipment. Cadet Firefighter use of SCBA equipment at an emergency scene is reserved for defensive, escape purposes only. A Cadet Firefighter is to remain well clear of an area of operation requiring use of supplemental breathing air.
4. Cadet Firefighters must wear all protective gear while riding on the apparatus and at an emergency scene.
5. Under no circumstances is a Cadet Firefighter entering a burning structure, confined space or underground area, or area subject to collapse hazard. Once a fire has been brought under control, and the building is determined to be structurally sound and free of hazardous materials and toxic gas, the Cadet Firefighter may enter the building if accompanied at all times by an IFD fire officer or his/her designee. This must be with the consent of the Fire Chief. Cadet Firefighters may operate exterior hose lines under the direction of an IFD fire officer or their designee. Cadet Firefighters must remain well clear of a motor vehicle fire or other type fire presenting exposure to flammable liquids or hazardous materials. At an emergency scene, a Cadet Firefighter shall not climb a ladder or operate from a roof or other elevated position. At an emergency scene, a Cadet Firefighter shall not operate any power tool, hydraulic or pressurized air operated equipment, or cutting device.
6. Upon arrival at an emergency scene, a Cadet Firefighter is not to enter a private dwelling or other structure with senior firefighters for investigation or emergency action of any type, unless expressly instructed to do so by the Fire Chief or an IFD Fire Officer. Cadet Firefighters are to remain with the apparatus or in close proximity to the incident commander and await specific orders from an IFD fire officer. If the Cadet Firefighter receives orders from an officer (or request from a firefighter) of another fire department, it is incumbent upon the Cadet Firefighter to advise that officer or firefighter of his/her status as a Cadet Firefighter and the limitations placed upon him/her.
7. All orders received from an IFD fire officer are to be obeyed and executed completely. If, due to safety concerns or for any other reason, the Cadet Firefighter is unable to complete an assigned task, the officer issuing the order, or another officer in their absence, should be immediately notified by the Cadet Firefighter who received the order.
8. At an emergency alarm involving downed power lines or gas leak, the Cadet Firefighter must remain aboard the apparatus until the area of operation for the Cadet Firefighter is determined to be safe by an IFD fire officer.
9. If assisting with directing traffic, the Cadet Firefighter must wear a reflective vest and reflective striped turnout coat. In the evening hours, the Cadet Firefighter must make use of a flashlight. The Cadet Firefighter must operate only in an area within

sight of fire apparatus and/or a police vehicle displaying flashing warning lights. The Cadet Firefighter shall not direct traffic on a divided highway or in snow or ice conditions that may impair motor vehicle control. When assisting with traffic control or crowd control, the instructions of a police officer are to take precedence.

10. Cadet Firefighters are not to make any public comments or make statements to the media at the time of an emergency incident, or following the incident, concerning anything related to the incident. Examples of comments to avoid are the cause and origin of any incident, the condition of victims, of property, fire fighting or rescue techniques. All public inquiries are to be referred to the incident commander or IFD Chief. It should be understood by the Cadet Firefighter that fire inspectors or arson investigators and other governmental officials are required to inspect certain types of damage, and their presence shall in no way indicate suspicion of wrongdoing on the part of the property owner. Cadet Firefighters must also understand that individuals whose property has been damaged or destroyed and/or family members injured or killed are extremely sensitive to the statements and actions of emergency personnel. IFD Cadet Firefighters are expected to demonstrate the utmost of respect and compassion for these individuals in both their words and actions.
11. Valuables found at an emergency scene are to be immediately turned over to an IFD fire officer or police officer. Theft by a Cadet Firefighter will result in an immediate suspension from the Cadet Firefighter Program and the Buchanan County Sheriff's Department will be notified.
12. Cadet Firefighters are not to have any direct contact with an injured person or dead body unless properly certified (First Responder, EMT or Paramedic), and then only at the direction of an IFD fire officer or EMS crew chief. Report any accidental contact with blood or other bodily fluid to an IFD fire officer or safety officer immediately, so that medical treatment can be initiated promptly.
13. For more information contact:
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