

# Administration

## Chapter 3

### 3.1 VFC Organization

VFC's are organized with an optional administrative board of directors, company training and/or apparatus officers, secretary and/or treasurer, support, EMS and full responders, operators and engineers, lieutenants and a captain.

The VFC membership will typically supervise its internal administrative affairs and non-emergency operations as outlined in this manual and the approved VFC bylaws and articles of incorporation.

The VFC will normally maintain strong community support, participation and may or may not be an incorporated, non-profit organization with assets and contributions to manage.

VFC's are encouraged to have non-profit status 501 C3 or 501 C4. Failure to obtain non-profit status subjects the VFC officers to tax liability and the inability to accept tax deductible donations. VFC's cannot solicit donations from the public unless they have non-profit status.

### 3.2 Allocations

All VFC's have an allocation of members by rank and total. The number of members allocated may not be exceeded without the approval of the Fire Chief.

#### Authorized Volunteer Company Allocations

Company 12, Stirling City	15
Company 21, Cohasset	15
Company 24, Forest Ranch	15
Company 25, Butte Valley	20
Company 26, Butte Creek Canyon	20
Company 33, Upper Ridge	30
Company 37, Golden Feather	15
Company 42, Chico Metro	40
Company 45, Durham	20
Company 52, Feather Falls	10
Company 55, Bangor	15
Company 61, Berry Creek	20
Company 64, Kelly Ridge	30
Company 67, Cherokee	10
Company 71, Richvale	15
Company 74, Gridley	20

Requests to exceed an allocation within a battalion should be submitted in writing through the chain of command to the Fire Chief. As new companies are formed, allocations will be determined by the department and specifically authorized by the Fire Chief.

All volunteer companies will be authorized the position of one VFC Captain and one VFC Lieutenant to help coordinate the VFC operations and maintain span of control.

VFC's shall maintain a Span-of-Control of one officer for every seven members.

#### Volunteer Captain

One volunteer captain is authorized per volunteer company.

#### Volunteer Lieutenant

One VFF lieutenant is authorized per VFC. One additional VFF Lieutenant is authorized for every seven VFF's.

#### Training Officer

The Company Captain will appoint the Training Officer, with concurrence of the Career Captain.

### **3.3 VFC Administration**

Each VFC is formed in accordance with the California Health & Safety Code, Section 14825 (attachment 10.45). Each VFC shall comply with the rules and regulations identified in this manual. VFC's organized as nonprofit/charitable organizations shall comply with applicable state and federal regulations.

Incorporated VFC's shall comply with applicable federal and California Corporation Code (CC), beginning with section 5000 through 6815. Unincorporated Charitable VFC's shall also comply with applicable state and federal regulations. The California corporation codes shall take precedence over any conflicting sections contained within this manual, only as related to the internal non-emergency operation of the VFC.

The responsibility for the administration of non-emergency operations of a VFC shall be by the appropriate officers of the VFC. All VFC's shall comply with the policies of the department as well as the VFC's bylaws. The Fire Chief may also issue department policy letters that apply to the VFC's.

The Career Captain will routinely confer with the VFC officers on applicable station level issues. Typically, elected VFC officers will be responsible for the business affairs and routine operational procedures of the VFC.

Specific administrative and operational duties may be found in various sections of this manual and in approved VFC bylaws.

### **3.4 Administrative Documents**

- Each VFC is required to meet and maintain professional business-like practices per state law. As the public entrusts a VFC with contributions, all periodic tax returns/reports (state and federal) shall be open for review to any citizen and the Fire Chief. Donor lists should not be disclosed to the public. VFC records and documents shall normally remain securely stored and/or filed at the fire station, unless otherwise approved by the membership. The Treasurer shall provide the membership with monthly financial reports, including a financial year-end summary. The year-end summary shall also be provided to the County Finance Officer and the Fire Chief.
- Minutes of the VFC meeting shall follow a standard format (attachment 10.20, Meeting Agenda) and be posted or maintained at the fire station. Draft minutes are not final until approved by the VFC. Confidential VFC (Personnel) issues shall only be discussed by voting members in closed session and the minute contents shall reflect only the action taken, if any. Minute contents from those sessions should be excluded from public view.
- In order to accommodate and encourage business like practices for each VFC, the Career Captain will establish and set aside, a suitable interior area for a VFC desk, a bulletin board, VFC Roster Board, filing cabinet(s) VFC phone, computer and VFC mail trays.
- The use of a VFC funded phone, fax or computer on fire station property shall be limited to appropriate VFC business matters. All computer users must follow and sign the approved department policy (attachment 10.36, Computer Use Policy).

### **3.5 Unification**

The Fire Chief will establish Fire Station Response Areas. These areas will correspond to the community served by a VFC. A single VFC may serve two or more fire stations. When five or more VFF's (off probation) live in a community where there is not a VFC, the department may consider establishing a new VFC. When two or less VFF's exist in a current VFC, the VFC shall seek unification with the nearest VFC.

Two or more existing unincorporated VFC's may also request unification when local conditions dictate. Incorporated VFC's shall refer to the California Corporation Codes, section 6010-6019.1 for the proper process and approvals which are required to merge incorporated VFC's. All cases require the approval of the Fire Chief prior to implementation.

### **3.6 By-Laws**

All VFC's shall establish and adopt By-Laws for the independent, business portion of the VFC. The business portion relates to internal company financial matters, business meetings, etc. It is highly recommended that VFC's use attachment 10.19 (By-Laws) as a guide in establishing their by-laws.

VFC by-laws are encouraged to be a document that establishes the foundation and basic administrative framework of a VFC (Incorporated VFC's refer to CC section 5150-5153). The VFC bylaws should not specifically identify meeting or training days/nights and times as these may change from time to time. The VFC bylaws (and Articles of Incorporation, if any) must be adhered to by all members. Disregarding and/or violating these documents may be considered a serious violation and subject to investigation and discipline.

VFC bylaws shall be reviewed annually by the VFC and updates made as necessary. A current set of the VFC bylaws must be on file with the County Finance Officer and placed in the volunteer operating policy manual binder and maintained at the fire station at all times.

### **3.7 Election of Officers**

All elected officers of the VFC must be elected annually by December 15 1<sup>st</sup> by 50% +1 (or more) of the voting membership, or as outlined in the VFC bylaws (Incorporated VFC's also refer to CC 5210-5227). Members may hold consecutive terms.

VFC elections shall be a democratic process open to discussion and debate. The process shall be free from undue pressure to run for a position, vacate a position, vote for or against a particular VFF member and no promise of reward or threat of discipline pertaining to a position or vote will be tolerated. All ballots for elected positions shall be cast in private.

The Fire Chief can remove a VFC elected officer with compelling documentation processed through the chain of command. The vacated position would be filled by a current VFC Lieutenant. If there is more than one Lieutenant, section 3.7 will be followed to select a new VFC Captain for the remainder of the term.

The Battalion Chief will forward (with a recommendation), to the Fire Chief, nominations of the VFC Captain and Lieutenant(s) from the VFC. The Fire Chief must approve all officer nominations by January 1<sup>st</sup> of each year). The term of the VFF Captain and Lieutenant appointment will be for one year beginning on January 1 of each year. In the event an elected VFC Captain or Lieutenant fails to perform at an acceptable level, the Fire Chief has the authority to remove the individual from the position.

### **3.8 Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) Committee**

The department will establish a committee of representative Volunteer and Career Firefighters to serve in an advisory capacity on issues related to the VFF Program.

The following procedures will apply to the establishment and activities of the VFF Advisory Committee.

- The Committee will be comprised of four Volunteer Firefighters, the Volunteer Liaison Officer, the Volunteer Training Coordinator, one Career Fire Captain or Battalion Chief, one Career Committee Chair and the County Finance Officer. Committee members will be approved by the Fire Chief.
- The Committee will meet biannually during the calendar year and more often if needed. The committee is encouraged to meet after each unit-wide Volunteer meeting.
- The purpose of the SOP Committee will be to address issues of interest or concern on a department-wide basis and to make proposed revisions of the SOP manual.

No department Career employee or VFF may alter, amend, or otherwise change any policy identified in this manual, without following the established process.

Requests for changes to the SOP manual shall be made, in writing, detailing the affected sections and proposed changes (attachment 10.21, Policy Proposal Change Form).

Proposed changes should be submitted to the SOP Committee Chair. The SOP Committee will review and send proposed changes to the Executive Staff for approval. (The Fire Chief will return recommendations or approvals to the SOP Committee Chairperson).

Notification of results of review will be returned to personnel submitting proposed changes within sixty (60) days.

### **3.9 Internal Affairs**

VFC internal administrative matters, not directly related to public service, are normally the concern of the VFC membership only. Guidance by the Career Captain shall be required only to ensure that each VFC is complying with this manual and the department policy manual. Internal administrative matters directly related to public service are the concern of the Fire Chief.

### **3.10 Chain of Command**

The administrative chain-of-command will be VFC Captain, to Career Captain (or designee), to Battalion Chief, to Division Chief, to Fire Chief. Normal communications for day-to-day business is between the Career Captain (or designee) and VFC Captain. It is the responsibility of everyone involved to establish and maintain communications, supervision, and support services for volunteer firefighter companies just as is the case of career engine companies.

Issues should be resolved at the lowest levels (i.e. Career Captain ((or designee) and VFC Captain)). Career Company Officers should regularly attend VFC drills and meetings.

### **3.11 Business Meetings**

The voting membership of each VFC shall determine the best date and time to hold the regular monthly business meeting. Incorporated VFC's shall provide that at least ten (10) days' notice is given before the membership meeting (CC 5511). VFC's may consider posting the anticipated annual meeting schedule (dates and times) at the Fire Station. The Board of Directors of each VFC shall determine the best date and time to hold the regular board meeting, if any.

If the meeting date and time of the Board of Directors of an Incorporated VFC is not fixed, at least 48 hours verbal notice must be given to board members (CC 5211).

Minutes of VFC business meetings shall be maintained at the station and forwarded to the Career Captain. The membership meeting minutes of Incorporated VFC's shall indicate the number of Yes, No and Abstention votes for each motion voted upon (CC 6325).

VFC Disciplinary Action/corrective counseling proceedings shall be conducted in closed-session. Non-voting members, excluding the Career Captain, are to be excused from these proceedings.

A VFC normally will allow an adjacent VFC officer to attend a company business meeting to discuss issues of mutual interest.

### **3.12 Administrative Records**

Each VFC shall maintain an administrative file for each member. The files shall be in a locked filing cabinet to maintain confidentiality and contain:

- VFC-issued equipment record
- Copies of letters of appreciation
- VFF evaluations

- Department/VFC Disciplinary Action letters
- Signed Oath of Allegiance
- Signed Rules of Conduct
- Signed Computer Use Policy

The Training and Safety Bureau will maintain a file for each member. The files shall be in a locked filing cabinet to maintain confidentiality and contain:

- Copies of all training records
- Copies of training certifications
- Copy of driver's license and endorsements
- Copy of all approval letters to respond and drive apparatus

The County Finance Officer will maintain a file for each member and VFC. The files shall be in a locked filing cabinet to maintain confidentiality and contain:

Member

- VFC Membership Application and interview results
- I-9 form
- Health questionnaire

VFC

- Copy of VFC bylaws
- Copy of 501 C3 or C4 status
- Annual financial statement

These files shall have restricted access, but shall be open to review by the individual, appropriate VFC administrative officer(s), Career Captain, Battalion Chief and/or Fire Chief. The aforementioned file(s) shall be maintained and stored in a secure location. Individual records must be kept for four (4) years after the member separates from the VFC.

**3.13 Fund Raising**

In an effort to maintain positive relations with the community served, VFC's are encouraged to consider conducting annual Open Fire-House events, and in order for VFC's to purchase, maintain and replace VFC apparatus and equipment, VFC's may conduct VFC benefit dinners, breakfasts, direct mail fund raising letters and other appropriate fund raising activities.

All fund-raising programs by volunteer companies shall be identified as such, without involving the name or logo of CAL FIRE or BCFD. It must be clear to potential donors and the general public that volunteer fund-raising is to provide local services and/or equipment not provided by the State, County, City or Town.

In order to achieve the aforementioned all new fund-raising activities must be submitted in writing to the Battalion Chief for review and approval. The VFC will maintain the approval letter at the station level. VFC's must meet any State or County regulations controlling the solicitation of donations, including acquiring necessary permits.

Prior to any fund raising activity that involves the preparation of food that will be sold to the public; the VFC must have a lead cook that has attended the food preparation class sponsored by the Butte County Health Department and have the prior approval of the Battalion Chief.

VFC's may not solicit funds outside their response areas without approval of other affected VFC's and approval from the Battalion Chief.

VFC's shall not solicit monetary donations in incorporated cities not under contract with BCFD without approval of the Fire Chief.

Fundraisers may not be held on department property that involves the sale of any controlled substance (alcohol, tobacco, etc.).

Event flyers and artwork for advertising must be approved two weeks prior to the publication of event by the Fire Chief or his/her designee.

Use of any department property or equipment for fund raising purposes requires approval of the Battalion Chief.

The online solicitation of funds using website such as GoFundMe are not approved.

### **3.14 Auxiliary Groups**

The establishment of an auxiliary group supporting the VFC is encouraged. Auxiliary groups provide an avenue of support for the individual VFC's not available through fire department channels.

The function of auxiliary groups are not limited, but generally confined to the following:

- Fund raising for particular VFC needs and/or desires.
- Social functions outside the department operations like barbecues and gatherings.

The auxiliary creates an opportunity for non-firefighting personnel to support their local VFC.



Members of the auxiliary are considered members of the VFC and must be approved through the application process (including Live Scan) to be covered by insurance. Each auxiliary group will be encouraged to acquire non-profit organization status.

Funds generated by the auxiliary will be under direct control of the elected officers of the VFC.

All activities of the auxiliary must be compatible with those of the department and complement the services provided by the department.

### **3.15 Community Cost Share Program**

The department maintains a “community cost-share” program. This program’s funding is dependent upon the County’s fiscal abilities for any given fiscal year.

The program provides a share of a Volunteer Fire Company’s costs toward apparatus, equipment, land, and station acquisition.

VFC’s may submit requests (attachment 10.23, Cost Share Agreement) through the chain-of-command, to the Fire Chief, with detailed descriptions of the proposal, including the disposition of replaced mobile equipment, in order to access this fund. The Fire Chief will make a decision based on the overall needs of the department.

The department will develop a five-year plan for VFC equipment mobile equipment replacement. The department will commit itself once a “community cost-share” agreement has been signed with a VFC. This agreement is the only process by which the department will commit itself to expend “community cost-share” funds.

### **3.16 Water Tender and Engine Reimbursement Funds**

When BCFD fire engines (career and volunteer, regardless of type) are reimbursed for their use on SRA or FRA wildland fires or for State mission special staffing needs, 100% of the funds generated will be placed directly into the department “community cost-share” program fund.

When BCFD water tenders are reimbursed for their use on SRA or FRA wildland fires or for State mission special staffing needs, 50% of the funds generated will be placed directly into the department’s water tender maintenance fund. These funds are used by fleet management to maintain the Units water tender fleet annually.

The other 50% of the funds generated will be placed directly into the respective VFC's water tender fund. VFC's can utilize their water tender funds to make approved purchases from an approved vendor, up to \$2,500 including tax and shipping. Any purchases over \$2,500 will require a purchasing requisition completed by County Finance and the purchase must be put out to bid.

Prior to purchases being made, the County Finance Officer must confirm the vendor is an approved vendor and the items being purchased meet the Butte County purchasing rules.

Examples of purchases that are authorized; apparatus equipment, uniforms for volunteers, volunteer awards, equipment repairs, and can be used as funds towards an approved Cost Share purchase. All purchases to repair or enhancement fire apparatus must be approved by the Shop FEM prior to the purchase.

Examples of purchases that are not authorized; purchasing meals in restaurants, purchasing fuel for personal vehicles, and any items not approved by a majority vote of the VFC members. There may be other excluded items because of County purchasing rules or deemed inappropriate use of public funds.

When VFC's staff a reserve water tender, the funds will be divided as outlined below. 50% of the funds generated will be placed directly into the department's water tender maintenance fund and 50% of the funds generated will be placed into the reserve water tender fund. These funds will be utilized for reserve water tender equipment needs and volunteer recruitment efforts.

Requests to spend funds in the reserve water tender fund may be presented at a volunteer captains meeting. The volunteer captains attending the meeting will vote and approve the expenditure of the funds. A majority vote is required to approve the expenditure of the funds.

The County Finance Officer will send out a quarterly summary of funds earned and placed in each VFC's water tender account and the community cost share account. The water tender account summary will be sent out quarterly to all the chief officers and volunteer captains.

### **3.17 Inventory Control and Accountability**

The VFC is responsible for maintaining an accurate accounting of VFC owned items and equipment.

Accountability must have detailed inventory and location of assets from date purchase, through recording on inventory listings, until release from accountability of assets.

Account for each item by property number, serial number, and description.

A compliment of equipment is established for each facility and vehicle. Assets assigned to a facility or vehicle must be within that facility or vehicle or have documentation of its location.

### **3.18 Accountability of Equipment**

All VFC owned equipment will be identified by company name or number. The VFC is responsible for the security, maintenance, and annual inventory of all VFC owned and/or operated vehicles and equipment.

A current equipment list which includes property serial numbers, equipment make, model and year shall be on file. Photographs are recommended.

Any lost, stolen or damaged equipment must be documented utilizing Form STD 152 and routed through the chain of command.

### **3.19 Disposal of Fixed Assets**

Disposal of all items will be through the Service Center.

If an item cannot be accounted for, complete Form STD 152 “ Property Survey Report.”

If an item becomes unserviceable, complete Form STD 152 “ Property Survey Report.”

### **3.20 Acceptance of Gifts**

The acceptance of gifts (not including cash donations) by a VFC for use in department functions is subject to established department policy, and donors should be advised that acceptance of any gift is subject to review.

Offers of gifts and donations must be in writing with a description of the gift, its cash value and any restrictions on its use clearly set forth. All such offers are to be submitted to the Fire Chief for review and disposition. Gifts could be vehicles, items normally considered property and equipment, lands, buildings, etc.

### **3.21 Fiscal Requirements**

The VFC Treasurer will handle all funds received or expended directly by a VFC, in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles, the VFC By-Laws, and these procedures. VFC's may adopt more restrictive procedures by a majority vote of VFC members.

These procedures do not apply to funds directly expended by autonomous auxiliary or community associations, although there is a similar expectation of public trust. It does cover funds donated to a VFC for direct expenditure by the VFC.

1. Companies shall adopt an Annual Proposed Budget. The budget must be approved by a majority of company members. Adopted budgets and amendments will be provided to the Battalion Chief annually with a copy provided to the County Finance Officer annually prior to December 31.

The budget may be amended during the year by a majority vote of company members. A sample budget is shown as attachment 10.27, Annual Proposed Budget.

2. All money, checks, warrants, etc. received by the VFC will be promptly deposited in the VFC bank account.

Under no circumstances will funds received by a company be placed in a personal bank account or be given directly to a vendor without going through the VFC bank account as an approved expenditure.

3. All checks written or account withdrawals on VFC bank accounts will require two signatures. One signature must always be the Treasurer. The second person must be designated by a majority vote of the company. In no case will the two signatures be of persons related to one another.

4. In addition to maintaining detailed records, an annual financial statement will be prepared by the Secretary/Treasurer. This statement will display actual income and expenditures for the year and will be signed by the Secretary/Treasurer. A copy will be provided to County Finance.

5. Budgets and annual statements for VFC's will be based on each VFC's calendar year.

6. VFC Captains will assure that these procedures are carried out in their VFC.

7. Violation of these procedures may be grounds for termination of VFF status.

8. VFC's are strongly encouraged to have a financial review annually and required to have a financial review every two years by a certified Public Accountant outside of the department.

### **3.22 Workers Compensation Roster**

Due to Workers Compensation Insurance requirements, it is necessary that the department provide an accurate roster of all VFF's. Career Captains responsible for a VFC shall immediately notify the County Finance Officer of any changes to the current VFC membership. Notification shall be made via email utilizing the CALFIRE BTU Volunteer Assignments email account.

### **3.23 Insurance and Liability**

All VFF's on the active roster will be provided general liability and hold harmless protection by the County of Butte and insurance for property damage and public liability when conducting the business affairs of the VFC and/or when operating department or VFC vehicles in compliance with department policies and regulations.

Liability for damage suffered to VFC-owned apparatus or equipment assigned to emergency incidents rests with the VFC.

The VFC shall obtain and maintain automotive insurance coverage for VFC owned apparatus and enforce safe driving practices and policies at all times.

Privately owned vehicles being operated by Volunteers responding to emergencies are not covered by any department automotive insurance.

Volunteers are subject to all laws regarding the operation of motor vehicles in the State of California.

### **3.24 Volunteer Subpoena and Deposition**

Any subpoena to be served upon a VFF requesting photographs, employee interviews or department reports made by persons outside the department for fire service related items must first be processed through the Fire Prevention Bureau.

### **3.25 Purchase or Donation of Emergency Equipment**

Any purchase of emergency warning lights, siren, new or replacement fire or rescue equipment from VFC funds must be approved by the Career Captain through the Fleet Manager.

No donated fire/rescue equipment is to be placed in service until approved by the Fire Chief or designee. All equipment must meet department standards.

### **3.26 Storage or Relocation of VFC Equipment**

Placement or storage of VFC purchased or donated equipment in the fire station will be coordinated through the Career Captain. Station use and storage space needs require that approval and planning occur before such equipment is brought to the station. Once such equipment is placed or stored in its approved place (including on specific apparatus), no Career Employee or VFF shall relocate said equipment without consulting the appropriate VFC Captain.

In the event a VFC has difficulties during specific time frames covering certain apparatus that carries specialized rescue tools/equipment, the VFC at its option, may elect and is encouraged to allow certain tools/equipment to be temporarily loaned/placed on other covered apparatus at the station until the VFC responded apparatus can routinely be covered.

### **3.27 County Acceptance of Volunteer Equipment**

Requests for donation or purchase of any volunteer equipment by the County must be submitted for approval, to the Fire Chief, in writing through channels, with clear description of each item. All fixed assets require County Board approval.

### **3.28 Hepatitis B Vaccinations**

All VFF's will be offered, at department expense, the Hepatitis-B Vaccination. This will consist of a series of 3 vaccinations over a specified time period.

If the VFF elects not to receive the vaccinations, they may respond to Emergency Medical Calls after completing the minimum training specified in this SOP manual and by submitting the Hepatitis-B Certification form, declining the vaccination.

The department highly encourages all personnel to receive this vaccination series.

### **3.29 Chaplain Program**

The purpose of the departments Chaplain Program is to utilize qualified individuals to provide ministry support designed to meet the physical, emotional, and spiritual needs of department personnel and/or their families.

The Chaplain shall serve independently, non-denominationally and without compromise of personally held beliefs and convictions.

The Chaplain does not take the place of the family minister, nor does the Chaplain promote doctrinal distinctive to his or her particular church, except by specific request of the person (s) involved.

The roster of department Chaplain's shall be listed in the departments' Emergency Resource Directory (ERD).

### **3.30 Injury and Accident Reporting Procedures**

The following lists procedures for reporting VFF injuries, vehicle accidents, damage to county property or the property of others, and incidents involving potential department liability. Contact the County Finance Officer for the most current accident reporting forms referenced by these procedures.

### **3.31 VFF Injuries**

Report all injury or illnesses IMMEDIATELY to the company captain or career employee supervisor (or IC if at an incident).

The career staff will complete all necessary paperwork. The paperwork must be sent to County Finance within 24 hours of the injury or illness. The paperwork must be sent in immediately if the VFF's injury or illness requires a hospital or doctor visit. If career station personnel are not available, contact the covering Battalion Chief to complete all paperwork.

Off duty injuries or illnesses may require paperwork to return to duty. See section 3.33 for return to duty requirements.

Follow current department accident reporting and documentation policy.

### **3.32 Vehicle Collision Reporting Procedures, Department Owned Vehicles**

The following procedures will be used to report all vehicle collisions involving department vehicles and VFF vehicles, when used to conduct department business:

- All vehicle collisions regardless of damage or dollar amount will be reported to the ECC immediately. The ECC will promptly notify the covering Battalion Chief and Duty Chief immediately.
- Following the collision, the VFF will complete the current "Field Report of Accident/Damage". Be sure to obtain the names, addresses, and telephone numbers of all parties in the collision.

- Submit the "Field Report of Accident/Damage" to the covering Battalion Chief, via the career station. This report should be submitted within 24 hours. The covering Battalion Chief will make the appropriate departmental notifications.
- Do not except liability or discuss the accident with anyone other than the investigating officer, your supervisor, authorized department officials or the county's insurance adjuster .

#### Career Captains Responsibilities

Within 24 hours of the accident, complete the Accident Investigation Report (Form S-1A) and submit it and the Field Report of Accident/Damage (Form S-1) to the department Head.

Note: If the VFF is not capable of completing the Field Report of Accident/Damage (Form S-1) within 24 hours of the accident, then the VFF's supervisor should complete the report and send it to the County Finance Officer.

#### Other Property Damage

All other incidents resulting in damage of county property or the property of others should be reported to the County Finance Officer as soon as possible utilizing the Field Report of Accident/Damage (S-1) and Accident Investigation Report (Form S-1A).

### **3.33 Return to Duty Injuries/Illness**

If injured or seriously ill (on or off duty), the VFF must notify the department as soon as possible of the injury occurrence. A VFF must have a written statement and a signed VFF stress statement from a qualified physician certifying fitness and health for return to duty.

The injured Volunteer Firefighter will provide to the Career Captain the written documentation. The VFF Stress Statements (attachment 10.30, 10.31 and 10.32) will be the basis for the physician to make his/her determination on the VFF meeting medical requirements and having the ability to resume emergency duties. For serious injuries or illness's Butte County Risk Management reserves the right to require additional clearances through an occupational health care provider. Serious injury or illness is defined as any injury or illness that prohibits a VFF's ability to perform the duties of a VFF. The County finance officer is responsible for keeping risk management informed of all serious injuries and illnesses.

The VFF must provide proper documentation and seek Career Captain and County finance officer approval prior to returning to duty from an injury/serious illness. The Career Captain will assure that all appropriate clearance has been granted. This will include an authorized return to duty clearance, approval from the County Finance Officer, and, if needed, approval from the Battalion Chief. There is no "limited/light" duty status for Volunteer Fire Fighters.



### **3.34 Public Event Liability Policy**

When a VFC holds a public event or fundraiser on property not owned by Butte County and no food is served, a one day (or for the duration of the event) liability insurance policy is required to be purchased to cover the VFC, VFC board members, Butte County and the property owner from liability. The insurance policy shall be for a minimum of \$1,000,000.

When a VFC holds a public event or fundraiser on property owned by Butte County and no food is served, there is not a need to purchase an additional liability insurance policy.

When a VFC holds a public event or fundraiser where food is served to the public either on county property or on property not owned by Butte County, a one day (or for the duration of the event) liability insurance policy is required to be purchased to cover the VFC, VFC board members, Butte County and the property owner from liability. The insurance policy shall be for a minimum of \$1,000,000.

The Butte County Health Department (phone # 538-7581) also requires a permit for any event serving food to the public. The permit must be applied for at least four weeks prior to the events start date.

During events where the VFC prepares and sells food as part of its fundraising event, the VFC shall have at least one individual involved with overseeing the preparation, handling or service of food obtain a California Food Handlers Certification Card; see the following web link.

[http://www.buttecounty.net/Portals/21/Env\\_Health/Food/HandlerCertification.pdf](http://www.buttecounty.net/Portals/21/Env_Health/Food/HandlerCertification.pdf)

If a commercial kitchen or licensed food vendor is providing food on behalf of the VFC at its fundraising event no additional certification is are not required.

Public events include car washes, serving meals to the public, festivals, fairs etc. All VFC's planning an event must notify their Career Captain of the event. The Career Captain will notify the Battalion Chief who in turn will notify the Division Chief and Fire Chief.

### **3.35 Duty Statements**

Duty statements have been developed for the below VFF ranks and are located in chapter 10, attachments.

- Support Responder, attachment 10.37
- EMS Responder, attachment 10.38
- Full Responder, attachment 10.39
- Operator, attachment 10.40

- Engineer, attachment 10.41
- Lieutenant, attachment 10.42
- Captain, attachment 10.43
- Volunteer Liaison Officer, attachment 10.44

### **3.36 Social Media**

The purpose of this policy is to set forth guidelines for authorized VFC's who engage and communicate with the public in an un-official capacity using social media websites.

The representation of the department through any social media communication such as blogs, wikis, websites or emerging social communication technologies including but not limited to: Facebook, Twitter, Google, LinkedIn, YouTube, Snapchat, Instagram, Flickr, or any other new platform used for social media, shall be approved by the Fire Chief by submitting attachment 10.51 Authorization for Use of Social Media through the chain of command.

The posting of any information related to the department is expected to adhere to strict guidelines. The department does not authorize the use of department resources to access unauthorized websites, online social networks, or open source applications without approval.

Authorized VFC's approved to participate in social media are to use the following guidelines when posting content on the VFC's social media sites:

- Once approved, the VFC's may create and post limited information on approved social media sites. The VFC name, VFC information and community served, community events, community fundraisers, training sessions, etc. may be posted. Photos consisting of department fire apparatus, VFF's in uniform displaying the department patch or other pictures of the department or VFC logo are approved to be published.
- The departments social media sites remain the main source and distribution point of most information. Approved VFC social media sites may repost previously posted on the department or CAL FIRE social media sites information about emergency incidents, approved incident updates, approved incident evacuations, department information, fire prevention campaign efforts or life safety messages that are applicable to the community served.
- Content posted on the departments social media sites have been approved by the Incident Commander, Fire Chief, or Public Information Officer.
- Posts should be timely, accurate and professional.

- Permission must be granted to publish any photos, images, logos or videos, and proper credit must be provided for any materials not produced or owned by the department or VFC.
- Posts should be relevant to the public or media.
- If corrections or clarifications are needed, keep the response appropriate, polite and respectful.

### Accurate Information

It's imperative that all information released on behalf of the department is accurate. Any posts on social media sites are immediately visible to the public.

If an error is made while posting, quickly correct it, modify the earlier post, and make it clear that it has been updated. Proof read all information and content prior to posting. While social media is based on timeliness, spelling and grammar errors reflect poorly on the department or VFC. Having a second person proof read the content will help ensure postings are accurate.

### Use Simple Language

Avoid using abbreviations, codes or fire service jargon that may be unfamiliar to the public. Even though many social media sites do not allow room for much content, try to limit the use of technical language.

### Restrictions

All authorized VFC members are held accountable for work related content and information they post on approved VFC social media sites. When you are representing the department or the VFC in an official capacity, the department is responsible for the content you publish on social media sites.

In order to comply with local, state, and federal laws and to protect the department from litigation, the following types of information and material should not be posted through social media, whether associated directly or indirectly with the department or VFC:

- Material that would constitute harassment, hate speech, plagiarism, defamation or libel.
- Material that could be considered obscene, profane, abusive, threatening or embarrassing to another person or entity. For instance, it is inappropriate to post threatening statements against a coworker.
- Material that would violate copyright, trademark, fair use, financial disclosure, or other laws.
- Material that would violate individual privacy or patient privacy laws. For instance, it is inappropriate to post someone's private medical information.

- Material that constitutes personal, sensitive or confidential information about or related to any individual's use of the department's services, even if this information becomes a public record. For instance, it is inappropriate to post audio recordings of emergency calls to the department, for the purpose of entertainment.
- Material that involves current or potential litigation. For instance, it is unacceptable to release information from a fire origin and cause report.
- Material that is confidential information, proprietary information, state government intellectual property, personal identifiable information or other announcements deemed inappropriate for uncoordinated public exchange.
- Material that constitutes confidential, proprietary, or non-public information learned of or obtained solely through the employee's position at the department.
- Material that is pornographic.
- Material that damages the public's trust or otherwise interferes with the department's ability to fulfill its mission.
- Material that otherwise does not comply with departmental conduct, ethics and behavior expectations.
- Material that is not clearly related to the mission of the department and/or that may be perceived as personal non-work related information.
- Material that is negative towards the department, its employees, the VFC, the VFC members, other departments and/or its vendors.
- Material that shows smoking or consumption of alcohol.
- Information posted must be one way communications.
- Information shared should be restricted from being forwarded or shared.
- The ability of the VFC to take questions from the public and answer questions must be disabled.

### No Opinions

When using approved social media accounts, refrain from posting comments or opinions about controversial issues, personal matters and other non-department material. Always keep in mind that you are representing the department/VFC and everything that is posted is a direct representation of the such.

Do not make any endorsements or recommendations for products, businesses, individuals, political parties, or candidates.

Don't Post Inappropriate Pictures or Videos. Caution should be used when posting pictures and/or videos you post on social media sites. Do not post media that may show uniformed or on-duty employees in inappropriate or questionable situations. Use discretion when posting images of accident scenes, camp crews, personnel, etc. Obtain appropriate permissions to avoid violation of any privacy rules. When in doubt, contact the departments Public Information Officer for clarification.