

Hanover Volunteer Fire Department By-Laws

Hanover Volunteer Fire Department

BY-Laws

AUGUST 5, 2010
Hanover Volunteer Fire Department
By-Laws

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Introduction

The Hanover Volunteer Fire Department By-Laws are the operating guide to the administrative business of the Department. It is the responsibility of all members of this department to read and understand the writings in this document.

These By-Laws are augmented by the Department Standard Operating Procedures and the District Boards By-Laws. The Standard Operating Procedures, the By-Laws and the District Boards By-Laws will not conflict with each other at any time. If a conflict is discovered the Chief Officers shall bring up a solution to the membership and the District Board with in 60 days upon discovery of a conflict.

All members must sign the page at the back of this document to remain a member in good standing with this Department.

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Article I - Organization and Purpose

1. This organization shall be known as the Hanover Fire Volunteer Department, hereafter referred to as the Department.
2. The mission of the Department is to provide the highest level of professional fire protection and emergency medical care to the citizens and visitors of the Hanover Fire Protection District.
3. Whenever possible, these same services shall be provided on a mutual aid basis to areas outside the District boundaries.
4. These By-Laws are augmented by the Department Standard Operating Procedures and the District Boards By-Laws. The Standard Operating Procedures, the By-Laws and the District Boards By-Laws will not conflict with each other at any time. If a conflict is discovered the Chief Officers shall bring up a solution to the membership and the District Board within 60 days upon discovery of a conflict.

Article II - Definitions

1. Auxiliary Member - A member in good standing that assists at emergency scenes and at the stations. Is not a certified firefighter or medical provider and does not have to meet the minimum requirements of a Member.
2. Department - The Hanover Volunteer Fire Department
3. Firefighter - Any person that is in any division of the department that responds to emergency alarms.
4. Member - Any person that is in any division of the department.
5. Member in Good Standing - A member that consistently meets or exceeds the minimum requirements of their position
6. Probationary Member - A member who, (1) is accepted on the department in any capacity is on probation for the first six (6) months, (2) continues in a probationary status past the mandatory six (6) months, or (3) is put on probation as a result of a disciplinary action.
7. Prospective Member - A member that has submitted as application for membership, but has not made the required four activities and has not been approved for membership.

Article III - Rules of Order

Unless stated otherwise, Roberts Rule of Orders shall govern all conduct of the department meetings.

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Article IV - Meetings

1. The Departments Business Meeting shall be held on the first (1st) Tuesday of the month.
2. The Department's Officers Meeting shall be held on the first (1st) Thursday of the month.
3. Department Fire/Rescue Training shall be held on the second (2nd), fourth (4th) and fifth (5th); (if applicable;) Tuesday's of the month.
4. Department Medical Training shall be held on the third (3rd) Tuesday of the month.
5. The order of the business meeting shall be as follow:
 - A) Call to Order
 - B) Approval of the Minutes
 - C) Approval of the Secretary/Treasurer's Report
 - D) Runs
 - E) Calendar and Correspondence
 - F) Officer's Report
 - I) Deputy Chief
 - II) Station One Captain
 - III) Station Two Captain
 - IV) Station Three Captain
 - V) Medical Officer/Safety Officer
 - VI) Fire Chief
 - G) Equipment Report
 - H) Unfinished Business
 - I) Grants
 - J) New Business
 - K) New Members
 - L) Items for the Good of the Department
 - M) Adjournment
6. A quorum shall consist of attendance of fifty percent plus one (50% +1) of the membership in good standing and shall be required for a vote on all matters concerning all volunteer matters.

Article V - Members

1. The Department shall consist of no more than 50 members.
2. To be eligible for acceptance as a member into the department the applicant must:
 - A) Submit an application.
 - B) Be at least 18 years of age and a high school graduate or equivalent.
 - C) Reside within the area established for members. This area consists of the Fire District and a three-mile radius outside the District boundaries. This may be extended based on the prospective member's certifications.
 - D) Possess a valid driver's license.
 - E) Agree and submit to a background check for criminal history.
 - F) Have no felony convictions.

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- H) Provide a driving report to cover the last 3 years from the DMV. Applicant will provide the Department with a receipt and the department will reimburse the cost to the member. The District Board will reimburse the department after the 6 month probation is completed or if the person is found fit to drive the equipment.
3. Newly accepted personnel shall be in a probationary status for six (6) months. The start of the probation period shall be the date of acceptance by the volunteers at the business meeting.
 4. Newly appointed personnel will be sworn in to their duty(s). The member will then be issued a badge. The member will then sign for the badge. The badge will be returned to the Department upon separation.
 5. Each member is eligible to attend all meeting, in house training or no cost training to the Department and functions designated for the general membership as funds permit and as approved by a Chief Officer.
 6. Members that wish to attend any training must get prior approval from the membership if they wish to get reimbursed. If the school has a last minute opening, announcement of training, a short registration process, or a high demand course, and the Chief feels that this is in the Departments scope of service that we provide to this community he or she has the authority to approve the member to attend the school.
 7. Any member may be delegated to represent the Department at functions outside the Department by a Chief Officer.
 8. Any member in good standing may be elected or be appointed to any committee.
 9. Members shall be issued Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) for their use with this Department. Prior to departure from the Department, equipment issued shall be turned in to their Supervisor on the date of their resignation.
 10. Each member may be responsible for reimbursing the Department for the full cost of any lost equipment; any equipment damaged due to neglect on the member's part and not turned in upon their departure from the Department. Fair wear and tear will be considered. This includes the removal of any decals, stickers, or plates identifying them as a part of this agency. Members that refuse to turn in any equipment a report will be filled with the El Paso County Sheriff's Department for recovery equipment and an insurance claim will be filled with the insurance company.
 11. Members that volunteer/work for another Fire or EMS agency shall advise a Chief Officer within 30 days.

Article VI - Duties of Members

1. Members shall attend a minimum of 2 trainings per month unless a valid excuse is presented to a Department Captain.
2. Every member shall respond to 15% of alarms. Members are also required to attend 15% of all non-emergent Department activities per quarter.
3. Every member is responsible for keeping the Department facilities and equipment neat, clean sanitary and in operating condition.
4. Members shall assist, if possible, in any work when requested at all functions of the Department.

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5. Each member shall maintain a working relationship with all members of the Department.
6. Members shall obey all reasonable command of officers or member in charge.
7. Appearance at Department meetings functions will be a minimum of a non-faded Department T-shirt and clean presentable pants.
8. Each member shall prevent unnecessary damage to property of the Department, the District and citizens personal property at all times.
9. Each member is responsible for any act of negligence on their part, which may contribute to a violation of rules, procedures, SOP's, or By-Laws of the Department or District.
10. Members shall not criticize the Department, Department Policies, programs, actions, or members by performing acts or make written or oral statements that ridicule any member or interfere with the supervision or operation of the Department or the proper discipline of members in public.
11. Members shall not gossip about any other member to his/her discredit whether the subject is true or false. Members having a grievance against any policy, procedure or other member shall process the matter through the chain of command for due consideration.
12. Members shall not criticize in public any member, person or agency in relation to Department business (people will disagree on matters not related to the Department).
13. Members that have a complaint against a person or agency that is not a member of this department shall notify a Chief Officer. A complaint against another member of this department shall be processed through the chain of command. Exception to this is any unlawful event, or if the complaint is against their supervisor. In this case the member shall bring the complaint to the Chief Officer. If the complaint is against a Chief Officer the member may bring it to the attention of the District Fire Board.

Article VII - Appointment of Officers

1. Any member that is in good standing with the Department, not on probation, and has one (1) year of service with the Department, may apply for, or be appointed to an officer position.
2. Officers of the Department are as follows:
 - A) Captain
 - B) Medical/Safety Officer
 - C) Treasurer/Secretary
 - D) Training Officer
 - E) Any other position as deemed necessary by the Chief
3. A list of members eligible for an officer position will be provided by a Chief Officer at the January business meeting.
4. The positions of Captain will be by application to the District Fire Board and reviewed by an outside committee. Letters of intent will be turned in prior to the second Tuesday of December. Interviews will be conducted during the second and/or third week of January. Successful applicants will be notified by the last Tuesday of January.

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5. Officers will take office at the February business meeting.
6. All officer positions will be for a term of two (2) years. These terms shall be offset by one year.
 - A. Station 1 and 3 Captain and Medical safety officer will be appointed on even years.
 - B. Station 2 Captain, Secutary/Treasure, Training officer will appointed on odd years
7. Line officers of the Department shall consist of the Chief Officers and Captains.
8. Each outgoing officer shall provide, to their successor at the time of appointment, all records, equipment and department assets that they have acquired as a result of their term in office.
9. In the event of any officer vacancy and enough time remains before the next ballot. The position will be filled, as determined by the Chief. The term will run until the next regular appointment of officers. The Chief may appoint a member to that position or call for a special vote.
10. The District Fire Chief and District Deputy Chief will be appointed by the District Fire Board will determine requirements for these position.

Article VIII - Requirements for Officers

1. The following are the requirements to hold a Captains position with the Department:
 - A) Certified Firefighter I
 - B) Be a member in Good Standing
 - C) Have a minimum of one (1) year as a member of the Department
 - D) Minimum medical certification of CPR
2. Medical/Safety Officer shall be certified at a minimum of EMT-Basic and is not required to hold a Firefighter I certification.
3. Requirement for Administrative Officers require a minimum of one (1) year with the Department and be a member in good standing
4. The Chief may alter the minimum requirements for the good of the Department to fill any office at his/her discretion and provide written rationale for the decision to the Board and volunteer members with in 30 days of altering the requirements.

Article IX - Impeachment of Officers

1. Any officer may undergo impeachment proceedings for failure to discharge their official duties, but may be retained as a member.
2. The disciplinary action process outlined in Article X, paragraphs 6 through 10, shall be the process for impeachment proceeding of officers.

Article X - Disciplinary Actions

1. A member may be sent home from any station or scene by any line officer or placed on immediate suspension for up to fourteen (14) days by the Chief Officer, Captain or Safety Officer for any of the following violations:
 - A) Improper use of emergency lights and sirens

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- B) Personal conduct unbecoming of a member of the Department
 - C) Unnecessary property damage
 - D) Damage to Department, District or citizen property through neglect or improper procedures.
 - E) Blatant disregard for personnel safety.
 - F) Criticizing the Department, Department Policies, programs, actions, members, or perform acts or make written or oral statements, which ridicule any member or disrepute's or interferes with the supervision or operation of the Department or the proper discipline members.
 - G) Gossiping about any other member to his/her discredit whether the subject is true or false.
 - H) Criticizing in public any member, person or agency.
 - F) The member may provide written rebuttal to the next higher chain of command for consideration if they feel action not warranted.
2. Any member that fails to attend a minimum of 10% of the Department activities for the quarter without an excused absence shall be notified of the violation. A written counseling shall be conducted within five (5) days with the member and their captain regarding the violation and possible personnel actions that may be taken, up to and including termination from the Department.
 3. Members may be excused from the Department functions for the following:
 - A) Sickness
 - B) Vacation
 - C) Work
 - D) School
 - F) Personal Reason
 4. Any member who expects to be away or unavailable to attend meetings, trainings or respond to alarms for two (2) week or more must notify their Captain prior to their non-availability.
 5. A member may be terminated from the Department by the Chief without consulting the rest of the officer corps for the following reasons, but not limited to:
 - A) Repeat violations of the offenses listed in Article X
 - B) Disregard for personnel safety causing actual injury to member(s) or citizen(s)
 - C) Loss of Drivers License
 - D) Theft of Department property or property of others
 - E) Intoxication while at the station or on scene
 6. Violations of Department policies shall be discussed at an officers meeting to determine if further personnel action will be taken. If further action is deemed necessary the member will be notified in writing all violations presented which will be kept in written form until separation from the department.
 7. Upon receipt of notification of action to be taken, the member has the right to request and receive a meeting with the Department officers for the purpose of presenting circumstances in their defense. The member has the option of presenting circumstances in writing if he/she so desires. The meeting shall be convened within two (2) weeks of receiving the request. At a minimum there shall be a Chief Officer and one Captain at this meeting.
 8. After hearing all circumstances in defense from the member, the officers present shall

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discuss the matters presented and determine what action, if any, is warranted. The Fire Chief has the final authority and may or may not concur with the recommended action.

9. The member shall be notified in writing of the final decision within 60 days.
10. All information of circumstance i.e. (reports, violations, and counseling's) will be provided to Fire Chief. The Fire Chief may seek legal review over the packet and requested course of action. The decision and actions taken in the matter shall be final and the case shall then be considered closed.
11. The member may request a formal meeting with the Fire Protection District Board. The Board may overturn the Fire Chief decision upon hearing the facts within 60 days of the Fire Chief decision.
12. The Fire Chief will have 30 days to provide the Fire Protection District Board with a written review of the circumstances and the process in determining his or her course of action with all supporting documentation.
13. Only the Fire Chief may reinstate a member on suspension to full status before the end of the period of the suspension.

Article XI - Leaves of Absence

1. Any member not in a probationary status may request a leave of absence. The request must be in writing and submitted to their Captain. The maximum period requested shall be for three (3) months. Requests for consecutive leaves or leaves lasting longer than three (3) months shall be considered on a case-by-case basis by the Chief Officers. Members returning from a leave must do so on or before the date listed on the request or they will be automatically removed from the Department's Roster.
2. All Department equipment that has been issued or otherwise assigned to that member taking a leave shall be turned into their Captain on or before the day the leave takes affect.
3. The equipment turned in shall be secured while the member is on leave. Upon returning from their leave the member shall receive all equipment turned in exceptions to this will be radios and pagers.
4. While on leave, members shall not have the privilege of responding to alarms or attending any department functions as a member of the Department.
5. Medical leaves are a special type of leave and shall be granted on a case-by-case basis. The length of a medical leave shall be determined by the situation presented and may be extended to any length of time as determined by the officers. Attendance at business meetings and trainings shall be acceptable. Light Duty, in some cases, may also be acceptable.
6. Members that have had to be hospitalized, or under doctors restrictions or is doing any type of physical therapy MUST provide a signed release form signed by the attending doctor before returning back to duty.
7. An emergency leave may be granted by the members assigned Captain for special cases, for a length of time as determined by the Captain.

Article XII - Fire Department Volunteer Fund

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1. The purpose of the volunteer fund is to have funds available for financing of Department events, training, the purchase of Department uniform items and any other use as determined by the membership.
2. Revenue for the volunteer fund is derived from fundraisers, restitutions, sale of Department (not District) items, donations and other various sources.
3. Money spent from the volunteer fund, other than those functions previously voted to be recurring expenses and pre-authorized for payment, require a quorum and a majority of the membership before the transaction can be made.
4. Transactions of \$100.00 or less require approval of a Chief Officer only.
5. In the event of an emergency, and time does not allow for a vote of the members, the Treasurer and a Chief Officer, together and agreed by both, may make an emergency decision to spend funds from the volunteer fund up to \$1,000. Any emergency expenditures will be reported at the next regular business meeting.
6. The treasurer's report to the membership shall be in the following format:
 - A) Expenditures for the past month and total
 - B) Revenues for the past month and total
 - C) Balances in the cash box, checking and savings accounts
 - D) Total funds available
7. The Volunteer fund is subject to an annual audit by an audit committee appointed by the Chief. Any member may request one additional audit during the year with justification. The requesting member must present evidence to support this request. There shall be no more than two (2) audits per year without proper evidence if proper evidence is provided, audit should not be limited.
8. Grants and other Donations that are used to better the Department or District have to fall in line of what we need as an agency. Both the Volunteers and the Fire Protection District Board have to agree on the need if there are matching funds that are requested.

Article XIII - Committees

1. The Chief Officer shall appoint or otherwise cause to be formed, on a permanent or temporary basis, any committee that he/she deems necessary.
2. A Chief Officer may appoint Department personnel for the purpose of representing the Department at meetings of various organizations and committees.

Article XIV - Honorary Membership

1. Any citizen with a direct positive impact of the Department is eligible for honorary membership with the Hanover Volunteer Fire Department.
2. An active member in good standing must sponsor the applicant for consideration for honorary membership. A letter requesting consideration for honorary membership must be submitted to the officers for initial considerations. The application will be presented by a Chief Officer at the next scheduled business meeting for consideration by the membership. The application should state the justification for honorary membership.

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3. A majority vote (50% +1) of all members present shall be required for acceptance as an honorary member.
4. Honorary members of the Hanover Volunteer Fire Department shall have the privilege of attending all department social functions and department meetings. Honorary members have no voting privileges. They will not be eligible to respond on alarms unless they are a part of a Department support group.
5. Honorary Member does not participate in any insurance or pension benefit.

Article XV - Insurance

1. The Department and all members shall comply with applicable policies of the insurance underwriters of the Hanover Fire Protection District.
2. All members are covered under workers compensation when injured on the job with the Department.
3. The District provides a retirement program and an AD&D rider, available to all members.
4. Members are responsible to know the requirements of the retirement plan to be counted for a year of service. Personnel that do not meet the requirements will not be eligible for that year. Requirements include 36hrs per year in:
 - A. Department support roles.
 - B. Meetings.
 - C. Training.
 - D. Answering alarms.
5. It is the Members responsibility to ensure that they attend all of the retirement plan meetings and understand their benefits.
6. The pension board is made up of the 5 District Board members and 2 volunteer members.

Article XVI - Amendments to the By-Laws

1. Any member who wishes to propose an amendment to the By-Laws shall bring it to the attention of their Captain. The Captain shall assist the member in putting the proposal in writing. The proposal shall be discussed at the next scheduled Officers meeting.
2. Amendments to the By-Laws will be sent out via email to the members and posted at each of the stations NLT 30 days prior to the next meeting for review. Members without email will notify the Department Secretary and a copy will be mailed to them.
3. Copies of the written proposal shall be available at the next scheduled business meeting and shall be brought up for discussion as an item under "New Business". After the Chief Officer reads the proposed amendment, the member offering the proposal may answer any questions or explain their proposal. If the member that is proposing the amendment is not present at the meeting to address any questions then
4. A motion shall be entertained to adopt or not to adopt the proposal.

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it will be tabled until the following month.

5. A one (1) month period must pass between items 3 and 4.
6. An amendment shall be adopted if it receives a 75% vote of the membership present.
7. The Officers will review the Departments By-Laws at least annually.

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By signing this page, I (printed name) _____, certify that I have received a copy of the Hanover Volunteer Fire Department By-Laws dated August 5, 2010 and agree with the contents of this document. I also certify that I have read every page. I am aware that a Chief Officer will also be signing this page as a witness.

Signature: _____

Chief Officer Signature: _____

Date: _____