

**Vashon Island Fire & Rescue
Policies and Operating Guidelines**

Policy: VOLUNTEER FIRE FIGHTER GRIEVANCE PROCEDURES
Number Effective Date **Approved and Issued:**
2022.1 01/04/00 01/04/00

1.0 REFERENCE
NA

2.0 POLICY

2.1 A grievance claimed by any volunteer member of Vashon Island Fire & Rescue shall be settled as soon as possible, between the aggrieved and immediate supervisor. Only in unusual cases may the grievance process bypass the chain of command up to the Fire Chief or eventually to the Board of Commissioners without an effort to settle it.

2.2 In many cases a District member may be able to verbally pass on to their supervisor a grievance which they feel must be settled. If the grievance is settled to the member's satisfaction, the problem need not go any further. If that is not the case, the following steps shall be taken.

- a. If the aggrieved has not received satisfaction, they may reduce the grievance to written form and submit it for review. The Supervisor must promptly answer the grievance in written form, returning a copy to the aggrieved party and forwarding up the chain of command a copy of the answer to the next senior supervisor.
- b. If, after following the procedure above, the aggrieved feels justified in seeking further redress, they may ask the supervisor to address the grievance to the next person in the Chain of Command.

2.3 As each step of the chain of command is reached, each supervisor shall promptly answer the grievance and pass back through the chain of command his answer. At each step, the supervisor answering must forward a copy of the answer to the next level of supervision. This shall hold true up to the rank of Fire Chief.

2.4 Once the grievance moved up to the Fire Chief, and is unresolved, the Fire Chief may answer the grievance or allow it to pass to Step 2.5.

2.5 The Fire Chief may convene an Officer's Review Board to hear arguments about a grievance. The Board shall have four members:

- a. An officer selected by the aggrieved.
- b. An officer selected by the Fire Chief.
- c. An officer selected by the first two board members as in (a) and (b) above.

- d. The Assistant Chief of Operations shall:
1. Be moderator and appoint a third member if the first two board members fail to agree on a third.
 2. The Assistant Chief of Operations shall set the time and place for the board to convene, taking into consideration the availability of persons involved.
 3. Be empowered to require witnesses to appear and testify.
 4. Ask questions to clarify positions and points only.
 5. Report in writing the findings and conclusions of the board after all facts are heard.

2.6 The aggrieved may request that the Assistant Chief of Operations call such witnesses as necessary to testify on their behalf. The aggrieved may also have other fire fighters from the District present to represent them. The aggrieved need not speak before the board, nor may they be required to testify before the board.

2.7 In the event that the grievance which has been filed is against another member of the District, the following shall take place. The officer listed in step (2.5.a) shall be chosen by the person charged with the grievance. The person shall be afforded every opportunity the aggrieved would have as listed in (2.6) above.

2.8 No one involved directly with the grievance shall be selected to serve on the board. In the event of this case, the Fire Chief shall choose another officer to sit on the board in any position necessary.

2.9 The Fire Chief shall review the findings and recommendations of the review board and may choose to uphold or modify the Board's recommendations. The Fire Chief shall submit their final findings to each member involved.

2.10 Any member who feels the findings of the Fire Chief are not acceptable may submit to the Board of Commissioners in writing a request to be heard.

3.0 **DEFINITIONS**

NA

4.0 **RESPONSIBILITIES**

NA

5.0 **GUIDELINES**

NA

6.0 **ADDITIONAL REFERENCES**

NA

7.0 **APPENDIX**

NA