



**PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY, MARYLAND  
FIRE/EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES DEPARTMENT GENERAL ORDER**

<b>General Order Number:</b> 01-01	<b>Effective Date:</b> March 12, 2012
<b>Division:</b> Administration and Organization	
<b>Chapter:</b> Fire Department Document Policy	
<b>By Order of the Fire Chief:</b> Marc S. Bashoor	<b>Revision Date:</b> August 28, 2015

**POLICY**

This document policy governs management of Department documents.

**DEFINITIONS**

**All Sworn, Civilian, and Volunteer Personnel Memorandum** – Official Departmental communication for announcements, information, notification, or to provide clarification on the implementation of a policy or procedure.

**Directive** – A program or course of action that has limited duration.

**Document** – Directives, General Orders, All Sworn, Civilian and Volunteer Personnel Memorandums, Training Bulletins and Provider Action Notices will be referred to as documents. Other documents may include Operational Reports, Safety Bulletins and others deemed necessary by the Fire Chief.

**Document Assignment** – Task to create or revise a document.

**Document Gatekeeper** – Person assigned by the Fire Chief responsible for finalization of all revised and proposed General Orders prior to submission for approval to the Fire Chief.

**General Order** – Issued by County Fire Chief to establish policies, procedures, regulations, standards, guiding principles, programs, or methods of operation used by the Department.

**General Order Work Group** – Group of personnel coordinated by a chairperson working together to organize, track, and maintain the Department’s General Orders. These personnel are assigned by the Fire Chief and represent various entities throughout the Department.

**Initiator/Project Manager** – Person responsible for managing a document review/revision assignment, including goal and objective identification, planning, coordination, resource management, review, and making recommendations to the appropriate Deputy Fire Chief or General Order Work Group. Initiators become part of the process by personal choice; Project Managers are appointed.

**Training Bulletin** – Document published by the Training and Leadership Academy outlining training initiatives, including educational information, and listing upcoming classes.



**PROCEDURES/RESPONSIBILITIES**

**I. General Provisions**

**A. Adherence**

1. Personnel will familiarize themselves with and follow applicable policy, procedures, and regulations. Supervisors will lead, manage, and command subordinates within these guidelines.
2. While intended to be comprehensive, it is impractical to expect that every possible scenario be documented. Personnel will exercise responsible conduct, sound management, common sense, and reasonable judgment.
3. This policy will not limit the Fire Chief's authority to create or issue documents independent of this process. Moreover, policies that must be revised to maintain compliance with local, state, and/or federal regulations will be updated immediately.

**B. Application**

1. General Orders shall supersede any conflicting information except local, state, or federal laws and regulations.
2. There are legislative and regulatory documents that affect Fire/EMS Department operations. Some are applicable by virtue of employment or membership, i.e., Subtitle 16 of the Prince George's County Code; others are applicable when involved in certain operations, such as the Maryland Medical Protocols for Emergency Medical Services Providers and certain provisions of Title 29 of the Code of Federal Regulations.

**II. Process**

- A. Creation, review, revision and approval of documents will be completed on an ongoing basis.
- B. Any Department personnel (sworn, civilian, and volunteer) may submit suggested changes or recommend the creation of a new document. Changes to documents, except General Orders, will be communicated in writing via the proper chain-of-command to the respective Deputy Fire Chief.
- C. Chief Officers/Civilian Managers may submit proposed revised/draft General Orders to the Work Group Chairperson at their discretion. All other personnel must submit proposed revisions/drafts to General Orders via a Chief Officer/Civilian Manager in their chain-of-command.
- D. The Work Group will handle General Order reviews. The Work Group Chairperson will review proposed changes and make recommendations to the Fire Chief.
- E. The Work Group will request resources through the Office of the Fire Chief.
- F. The Work Group Chairperson will forward draft General Orders to the Work Group members and to the Office of the Fire Chief.



## **PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY, MARYLAND FIRE/EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES DEPARTMENT GENERAL ORDER**

- G. The Office of the Fire Chief will forward the draft General Order to the following review group:
  - 1. Each Command Deputy Fire Chief
  - 2. Prince George's County Professional Fire Fighters and Paramedics Association, Inc., IAFF Local 1619
  - 3. Prince George's County Volunteer Fire and Rescue Association (PGCVFRA)
  - 4. Prince George's County Fire Commission
  - 5. Office of Law
- H. Work Group and review group members will return comments about the draft General Order to the Work Group Chairperson by the deadline identified by the Chairperson.
- I. The Initiator/Project Manager and/or Chairperson will review the comments submitted by the review group, make revisions, and return final draft to Work Group for final review. The Work Group Chairperson will provide final draft to the Document Gatekeeper.
- J. The Document Gatekeeper will finalize all proposed General Orders and submit them to the Office of the Fire Chief for approval.
- K. Any Changes made by the Office of the Fire Chief will be reviewed by the Work Group Chairperson prior to Department distribution.

### **III. Transition Period**

- A. Some General Orders may require a transition period for personnel to familiarize and train on them.
- B. New General Orders and other documents will be implemented at the discretion of the Fire Chief after an established transition period. An "Effective Date" will be identified in order to inform personnel of the end of the transition period.

### **IV. Document Assignment Process**

- A. The Initiator/Project Manager and/or Chairperson will follow a systematic process and document why the provisions in the document were established or selected. Follow these steps:
  - 1. Communicate needs to Work Group or appropriate Deputy Fire Chief via chain-of-command.
  - 2. Select subject matter experts to assist in document creation/revisions.
  - 3. Identification of the specific topic to be addressed and goals of the committee.
  - 4. Review related documents for inclusion or reference.
  - 5. Conduct research and collect/analyze data.
  - 6. Consider regulatory guidelines and industry standards and best practices.
  - 7. Gather input from members of the Department.
  - 8. Provide rough drafts of General Orders to Work Group.
  - 9. Revise rough draft upon return from review group and provide final draft and all related documents to Work Group.



**V. General Orders and Directive Format**

- A. Standard font and font size is Times New Roman 12 point. Line spacing is single (1.0) throughout the document.
- B. The outline will follow the alphanumeric format found below which is: bold capital Roman numerals, uppercase letters, Arabic numerals with a period, lowercase letters with a right parenthesis, Arabic numerals enclosed in parenthesis, lowercase letters enclosed in parenthesis, lowercase Roman numerals enclosed in parenthesis, lowercase letters enclosed in parenthesis, and lowercase Roman numerals enclosed in parenthesis.

**I. Heading 1**

- A. Heading 2
  - 1. Heading 3
    - a) Heading 4
      - (1) Heading 5
        - (a) Heading 6
          - (i) Heading 7
            - (a) Heading 8
              - (i) Heading 9

- C. Tab space one time after Roman numerals.
- D. When possible, do not allow a section to be broken up by a page break.
- E. General Orders will be divided into sections as follows:
  - 1. Policy
  - 2. Definitions
  - 3. Procedures/Responsibilities
  - 4. References
  - 5. Forms/Attachments

**VI. General Order Table of Contents Organization**

- A. General Orders are categorized into divisions by subject matter. Each document within a division will be assigned a number and referred to as a chapter. Directives affecting General Orders will be designated the same way and added to the table of contents until eliminated or included in a revised General Order.
- B. The Work Group will determine the number of divisions and their titles. Updated tables of contents will be distributed with each new document or update.

**VII. Distribution and Maintenance**

- A. Electronic copies of new and revised documents are distributed via “Fire/EMS Department” email.
- B. Electronic copies of current General Orders are placed on the intranet.
- C. An All Sworn, Civilian, and Volunteer Personnel Memorandum will accompany General Order and Directive releases to summarize contents and specify important dates.
- D. Each station and office will have and provide access to the above-referenced documents to promote effective operations and reference.
- E. Each Command, the Document Gatekeeper, and the Office of the Fire Chief will maintain supporting references.



**PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY, MARYLAND  
FIRE/EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES DEPARTMENT GENERAL ORDER**

- F. Each Command will ensure that field and office personnel under their Command are aware of and review all documents.

**REFERENCES**

N/A

**FORMS / ATTACHMENTS**

N/A