

# OAK LEVEL VOLUNTEER FIRE AND EMERGENCY SERVICE DEPARTMENT

2019 Oak Level Road Halifax, Virginia 24558

## Constitution, Rules and Regulations

Revision – November 2001 – Approved Jan. 22, 2002

**Purpose:** In all well regulated organizations certain rules are adopted as essential for the order and operation. Therefore, we, the members of the Oak Level Volunteer Fire and Emergency Service Department for the purpose of promoting these purposes for which we have united, do hereby agree to support the following articles as our rules of operation:

**Article 1:** *Name of the Organization*

This company is to be known as the Oak Level Volunteer Fire and Emergency Service Department - a volunteer organization, existing as a non-profit organization and consisting of fifty (50) active members as a maximum membership.

**Article 2:** *Purpose of the Organization*

The purpose of the organization is to extinguish fires and protect the health and property of the citizens of our Fire District.

*Oak Level Volunteer Fire and Emergency Service Department Support Team*

The purpose of the support team is to help provide financial support for the organization through various activities.

**Article 3:** *Membership*

The membership of the organization shall consist of persons elected into membership in the designated manner. **They shall be citizens residing within the Oak Level Fire District at the time of application for membership into the organization.** All new members must be at least 16 years of age. Before members can drive any of the organization's vehicles, on any call, they must be at least 21 years of age, have a valid Virginia driver's license, and complete EVOC training.

Any person desiring to join the organization, must submit an application in writing. The submitted application must be held for consideration for 30 days and then be voted on for acceptance at the following scheduled business meeting.

Dues of \$10.00 per year shall be imposed upon each member of the organization, and the dues are to be paid by the regular November business meeting. Any person with delinquent dues as of January 1 will be removed from the roll and must submit a new application for membership. Dues for new members are to be paid on the night he / she is accepted as a probationary member. Dues are to be paid again by the November business meeting for the following year.

The members of this organization shall consist of (1) Regular Members, (2) Junior Members, (3) Honorary Members, and (4) Life Members. A member is considered to be in good standing if they attend 50% of training meetings and 50% of business meetings and 50% of fundraisers. Members wishing to receive credit for attendance at fire or Emergency Service calls must return to the station following the call. The only exception will be

permission to leave from the scene of the call from the officer in charge.

Members are defined as follows:

A **Regular** Member must be at least eighteen (18) years of age or older and must be active in the involvement's which occur during the year. This is to include fire calls, EMS calls, business meetings, and any other activities as determined by the membership. They must maintain a 50% attendance as mentioned above. Each regular member is also required to complete at least one – 16 hour training course – every other year.

A **Junior** member shall be between the ages of sixteen (16) and eighteen (18) and must have written consent from their parents or guardian. All Junior Members must maintain at least a C average in school to remain a member of the organization, copies of grades are to be kept on file by the secretary. Junior members are not to enter any burning structures until the fire is under control, and then only under the direct supervision of the officer in charge. Junior members are also expected to participate in the organization the same as outlined for the regular members. Junior members become regular members upon reaching eighteen (18) years of age as long as they are still in good standing in the organization.

Any member in good standing in the category of Regular Member will automatically become an **Honorary** member at the age of sixty (60) and may become inactive without loss of membership privileges (except as noted below). An Honorary member will be considered active as long as they continue to support the department with attendance at fundraisers and business meetings. The training requirements will not apply to Honorary members. Inactive Honorary members will be allowed to vote on issues only. They are not allowed to vote on officers and will not be eligible for any services provided by the state or county for active members. After a Regular Member has completed 20 years of service they will become a **Life** Member.

Any member who has reason to be absent from the district for a period of more than 30 days due to business obligation, military service, or school obligations is required advise an executive officer or secretary of their absence and they will be retained as a regular member for that period of time. Any member moving out of the fire district, more than one mile, must maintain their level of activity to remain in active status with the organization.

Membership activity will be evaluated every 6 months by the officers of the department, to determine the participation levels of the members. Members who are not actively participating in the activities of the department may be subject to not being allowed to use the department's activity room until participation is up to standards. While an active member of the organization, a charge of a drug related occurrence, or other criminal charge, will result in the member being suspended from the organization pending the outcome of the court appearance. Conviction of the drug related occurrence, or other criminal activity shall result in dismissal from the organization. Any dismissal from the organization will require that all equipment issued to them by the organization be returned to the organization.

All members of the organization are expected to dress in an appropriate manner for any function when representing the organization, and conduct themselves in a professional manner or in an appropriate manner, so as to be a positive reflection on the organization.

Failure to adhere to this code of conduct may result in suspension from the organization.

Members are expected to help with fundraisers and participate on committees, all such activities shall be considered towards the active participation requirements.

**Article 4: *Election of Officers***

All officers nominated for office are to be twenty-one (21) years of age, a non-probationary member, and an active member in good standing. They must also have at least one year of service.

In September of each year at the regular business meeting, nominations for officers will be accepted by written ballot. Each regular, honorary or lifetime member present will be given a ballot on which they are to write in their candidate for the offices listed. The ballots will be taken up by the Board of Directors and counted. Any person receiving two (2) or more votes for an office will be considered a candidate for that office.

Candidates may only run for one office at a time if nominated for President, Vice President, Chief, or Assistant Chief. Anyone nominated for these offices, and nominated for other offices as well, will have a period of two weeks from the October business meeting to remove his or her name from either the above nomination, or all other nominations. Failure to remove one's name before the two week deadline will result in the nominee's name being removed from all offices. Persons holding the above offices may hold only that office. All other officers may hold more than one office.

During the regular October business meeting the nominations for the offices will be read, and any other nominations accepted from the floor. A nomination will require a second to be considered a candidate. No other nominations will be accepted after the October business meeting.

The nominations for offices will be posted in the Fire Department until the regular November business meeting, at which time the election of officers will be done by secret ballot. There will be one ballot passed out during the November business meeting. This ballot will have all of the offices and the nominated members listed. Each voting member is to mark one candidate per office and return the ballot. The ballots will be collected and counted by the Board of Directors present. The results will be announced by the Board of Directors after the count has been completed.

The President will complete a ballot and give it to the Board of Directors before the votes are counted, but it will not be opened to be counted unless there is a tie, then his/her vote will be considered the tie breaking vote.

The executive officers of the organization shall consist of the following:

- President
- Vice-President
- Treasurer
- Secretary
- Parliamentarian
- (3) Member Board of Directors

The line officers of the organization shall consist of the following:

- Chief - elected

Assistant Chief - elected  
Chief Engineer - elected  
Fire Captain - appointed by the Fire Chief  
Lieutenants - appointed by the Fire Chief  
Fire Training Officer - elected  
Emergency Service Captain - elected  
Lieutenants - appointed by the Emergency Service Captain

When a vacancy occurs in any of the elected officers' positions, a successor shall be elected at the next regular business meeting.

**Article 5:** *Duties of the Executive Officers : Executive officers should be present at all business meetings unless excused.*

**President -**

Preside at all meetings of the organization and to preserve order

Shall appoint all committees not named by the organization

Call special meetings when necessary, or at the written request of seven (7) members of the organization

Serve as exc-official chairman of committees and the Board of Directors

Shall act in accordance with Robert's Rules of Order, and not interact in discussions on the floor, they shall remain neutral until called on for discussion or for a vote on the issue being discussed.

**Vice President**

Assist the President in every way

In the absence of the President to perform his/her duties

**Secretary**

To keep all minutes and records, valuable papers, etc.

Receive and disperse to the designated personnel for appropriate action all correspondence, keeping a copy of business letters in a permanent, up-to-date file, for reference.

Organization of the nomination ballots

Shall appoint an Assistant Secretary who will work with them and share any duties/responsibilities of the secretary when the secretary is not present.

**Treasurer**

To receive all moneys belonging to the department and to pay out to the appropriate agencies for the proper operations of the department.

Make all deposits of the organization to the designated banking facilities

To make a full and complete financial statement at each meeting

To prepare an annual report to be presented at the end of the year

**Board of Directors**

To handle any emergency business that may occur

Suppress all tumult and disorder with the organization

Has the responsibility of seeing that the affairs of the organization remain in good order and to protect the interest and status of the members

The collection and counting of the nomination and election ballots, and announcing the new officers

**Chaplain**

Offer an invocation at all administrative meetings and at other times as requested by the president or chief

Keep the membership informed of sickness, death, and needs of the organization's members

**Parliamentarian**

Be well versed in the Constitution and Rules of the Oak Level Volunteer Fire and Emergency Service Department

Serve as an advisor to the presiding officer and membership at meetings concerning the Organization's Rules and Robert's Rules of Order

**Article 6: *Duties of Line Officers***

**Chief**

Has command over the organization and all other persons who may be present at the scene of a fire.

Controls the operations of the organization, engines, and of all others for the purpose of extinguishing the fire and preventing its spreading; removing articles from buildings on fire or in danger thereof and guarding the same

Exercise the authority as conferred on him/her for the general supervision and charge of all equipment of the organization - make sure equipment is kept in good serviceable condition

Assign the members of the organization to such positions or duties and assign them relative grades as in his/her judgement.

Can call out the organization for practice at such times as he/she may deem proper to insure the quality of training needed

Perform such duties as are usually incumbent on the commanding officer of a fire department

Holds office until his/her successor is duly elected

**Assistant Chief**

Serve in the absence of the chief and perform the duties of the chief

Carry out duties and responsibilities asked of him/her by the chief

**Fire Captain**

Oversee all fire fighting operations as requested by the Chief

**Fire Lieutenants**

Perform the duties outlined to him/her by the Chief and/or Captain

Help oversee fire fighting operations as requested

**Emergency Service Captain**

Oversee all Emergency Medical Services operations

Develop standard operation policies for Emergency Service

Oversee Emergency Service training and maintain training records on members to be given to the Secretary to be kept in the members' training files.

**Emergency Service Lieutenants**

Perform the duties outlined to him/her by the Emergency Service Captain

**Chief Engineer**

Oversee the vehicles and equipment of the organization

Report the condition, repair, and replacement needs, methods of repair, and cost appraisals at each regular meeting

**Fire Training Officer**

Responsible for Fire Training

Responsible for maintaining training records on membership to be given to the Secretary to be placed in the member's training file.

In the absence of the Chief the order of command will be the Assistant Chief, Captain, Lieutenants. The ranking officer shall have all the authority and powers of the Chief and be in absolute command.

**Article 7: *Duties and Rules of Membership***

When an alarm is sounded it shall be the duty of each member to proceed with all dispatch to the scene of the fire or emergency service call with all of the necessary equipment. The member arriving first at the fire shall assume command until some officer of the

organization arrives and takes over command.

It shall be the imperative duty of each member of this organization to conduct himself at all times, and discharge his/her duties at and about a call, or any other activity at which they are representing the organization, so as not to reflect discredit on the organization. No gambling or profane language around the firehouse or grounds will be tolerated. Any member who shall break any of these rules will be subject to dismissal by Board of Directors without recourse or an appeal to the members of the organization.

No member or officer shall leave a fire or EMS call until all of the equipment is cleaned and loaded back on the responding unit at the station, and the unit is back in service. Members are to return to the station to clean the equipment and sign the run sheet. The only exceptions will be the ones granted by the officer in charge of the scene. Members must notify the officer in charge if they are not able to return to the station for clean up duties if they wish to receive credit for running the call.

It shall be the first duty of all members to obey all commands of their officers while on duty, unless such commands are clearly unsafe.

For willful disobedience to any order of the officer in command, or for intoxication or any conduct at any time tending to reflect discreditably on the organization, the offending party shall be suspended/expelled by order of the Board of Directors.

**Article 8: *Meetings (held at the Oak Level Fire Department)***

Business meetings will start at 7 PM on the forth Tuesday of each month

Fire Training will start at 7 PM on the second Tuesday of each month  
(subject to change by the fire training officer)

Emergency Service will be at 7 PM on the first Tuesday of each month.  
(subject to change by the EMS training officer)

A 24-hr notice must be given prior to all special meetings

**Article 9: *Committees***

The president shall appoint committees as may be necessary, for tasks.

The following standing committee with a term concurrent with that of the appointing officer may be formed to handle violations and grievances:

**Grievance Committee** - consisting of five (5) members – appointed to handle all violations and grievances that may from time to time occurs within the organization. The findings of this committee shall report, together with recommendation, to the Board of Directors for final action. The decision of the Board of Directors shall be final.

**Article 10: *Resignations***

The resignation of a member will not be accepted while he/she is under charges of violating any of the rules of this organization nor while he/she is in possession of any property belonging to the organization.

Resignations must be in writing and will be void on at the next regular meeting following submittal.

**Article 11: *Violations***

Any member who willfully damages anything pertaining to the equipment or of the organization, or altering, defacing or damaging any property of the organization, or belonging to members of the organization shall be called before the grievance committee.

Any member reporting for duty at the fire department or at any emergency while under the influence of intoxicants shall be expelled from the organization, without recourse.

Any member guilty of using inappropriate language while representing the organization in any capacity or while on the organization's property can be suspended or dismissed from the scene, at the discretion of the Fire Chief or other officer of the organization.

All suspended, dropped, or expelled members shall return all property belonging to the organization within ten (10) days or legal steps may be taken to recover same.

**Article 12: *Rules of Order***

Only one member shall be entitled to the floor during discussions

Every member desiring the privilege of the floor shall obtain permission of the presiding officer before taking the floor

No question can come before the organization unless declared open for discussion by the presiding officer

All questions, unless otherwise decided by the Rules, shall be settled by a majority vote.

When a point of order is raised by any member, the person having the floor shall take his/her seat until the point is decided by the chair, when, if proper, he/she may resume.

When a motion is properly made before the organization, it must be disposed of before another can be entertained.

Where not otherwise stated, Robert's Rules of Order will be the accepted guidelines.

**Article 13: *Amendments to Rules***

No amendments or alterations shall be made to this code of rules except in writing at a regular meeting.

The amendment/alteration will be submitted to the special rule committee for consideration and recommendation.

The committee will report at the next regular meeting, and then the amendment/alteration

may be acted upon

All members must be notified of the last and final reading, for which it will take a three-fourths (3/4) majority vote of those present for adoption.

**Article 14: *Order of Business***

Call to Order  
Roll call  
Reading of minutes of previous meeting  
Report of Treasurer  
Old Business  
Reports of Committees  
New Business  
Applications of Membership  
Adjournment

**Article 15: *Probation and Training***

Training shall consist of 6 months probation and a trainee must:

Successfully pass the required training requirements for the organization

Show proper operation of all pieces of equipment

Exhibit proper attitude and cooperation with all members

A trainee shall attend all meetings the same as required for regular members

**Article 16: *Impeachment of Officers***

Any officer of the organization may be impeached for the abuse of his/her authority or misconduct in his/her office.

A two-thirds (2/3) vote of active members at a regular business meeting is required.

The charge against him/her must be made in writing and filed with the secretary

It must be signed by at least three names of active members

It must be filed with the secretary at least one (1) month before any vote can be taken upon it

A copy of the said charge must be served upon the officer to be impeached by the secretary at least two (2) weeks before such a vote shall be taken

**Article 17: *Disbandment***

The organization shall not be disbanded except by three-fourth (3/4) vote of the entire membership of the organization.

A published or served notice shall be given of the meeting for the purpose of disbandment

at least one month before said vote is to be taken

A copy of the notice or publication shall be delivered to the Clerk of the County at least thirty (30) days prior to the taking of the vote to disband.

In the event of disbandment of the Oak Level Volunteer Fire and Emergency Service Department all of the fire apparatus and equipment used in connection with the organization shall be turned over to the County without charge.

**Article 18: *Terms of Officers***

All line and executive officers will serve a term of one (1) year. The offices of Chief, Assistant Chief, President, and Vice President may not be held by the same person for a period of more than five (5) consecutive years.

***Installation of Officers***

The outgoing president of the organization will install the new executive and line officers.

They will be installed at the December Christmas Banquet.

The Service of Installation:

*Out-going President:* “You have been elected as an officer in the Oak Level Volunteer Fire/Emergency Service Department. It is an honor and a responsibility to serve your friends and companions in the organization’s activities. Will you serve in your office to the best of your knowledge and ability and will you uphold a high standard for us to follow?”

*Officers:* “I do accept the honor and responsibility as an officer in the Oak Level Volunteer Fire/Emergency Service Department. I will do all in my knowledge and ability to keep this community service organization in it’s most efficient and functional condition. I hereby pledge myself to the duties of this office I have accepted as outlined in the Constitution Rules and Regulations. I also, pledge myself to my fellow members and ask their support.”

*Out-going President:* “We, the members of this organization appreciates your accepting this honor and responsibility. We will support you in office in whatever ways we can.”

*Out-going Chaplain:* offer a prayer of dedication

**Article 19: *Pledge of Membership***

Every member of the organization shall subscribe to the attached pledge of service:(to be kept on file)

**Article 20: *Equipment***

Any equipment entrusted to a member for his/her use should be kept as though said equipment was purchased by him/her. Any member that has a monitor or protective equipment entrusted to him/her shall read and sign the loan agreement:(to be kept on file)

# Oak Level Volunteer Fire Department

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## **Equipment Loan Agreement**

I \_\_\_\_\_ agree that: Upon my lack of participation, or if my work or health situation should change as to impair me from participating in the organization's meeting, training, and fund raising projects, or under a conviction of any criminal charge, it is my understanding that the monitor, and any other equipment issued to me, will be collected and resigned by the Board of Directors to a member who may have a greater need for said monitor/equipment, than my own.

Signed \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

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## **Pledge of Membership**

I \_\_\_\_\_ in accepting a position in The Oak Level Volunteer Fire and Emergency Service Department, hereby pledge myself to abide by the Constitution, Rules and Regulations of said organization, and hereby promise to obey all orders of the chief or other officers in anything pertaining to the work of said organization (as long as my safety is not in jeopardy). This pledge shall stand good until my resignation has been submitted and accepted.

Signed \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_