Southern Webster County Fire Protection District

Chain of Command Policy

Policy No.: 2025-01

Effective Date: 08/12/2025

Issued By: Deputy Chief Justin Levy

Approved by: Board President. On

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1. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to establish and maintain a clear chain of command within Southern Webster County Fire Protection District to ensure effective communication, operational efficiency, accountability, and the safety of all personnel during emergency and non-emergency operations.

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2. Scope

This policy applies to all members of Southern Webster County Fire Protection District, including, volunteer members, officers, administrative personnel, and any individuals operating under department authority.

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3. Policy Statement

The chain of command is the structured line of authority within the Southern Webster County Fire Protection District. All members shall follow the established chain of command for reporting, decision-making, and operational direction, except in situations where immediate action is required to prevent injury or loss of life.

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4. Chain of Command Structure

The official chain of command for Southern Webster County Fire Protection District is as follows:

1. Chief of Department
    - Overall authority and responsibility for the department.
    - Final decision-making authority on operational, administrative, and policy matters.
2. Deputy Chief
    - Second-in-command; assumes full authority in the absence of the Chief.
    - Oversees operations, facilities, training, maintenance and supervises all officers .
3. Captains
    - Command officers responsible for assigned stations, apparatus, and personnel.
    - Direct supervision of Lieutenants and firefighters.
4. Lieutenants
    - First-line supervisors; responsible for crew management, incident supervision as assigned.
5. Firefighters
    - Operational personnel responsible for carrying out assigned duties as directed by supervising officers
6. EMR/EMT
    - Operational personnel responsible for carrying out assigned duties as directed by supervising officers.
7. Probationary Firefighters / Cadets
    - Members in training status; work under direct supervision of a firefighter or officer.

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5. Operational Chain of Command During Incidents

- Incident Command shall follow NIMS/ICS protocols.
- The highest-ranking qualified officer on scene shall assume the role of Incident Commander (IC) until relieved by a higher-ranking qualified officer, if deemed

appropriate .

- Functional roles (Operations, Safety, Accountability, etc.) may be delegated per the needs of the incident.

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6. Administrative Chain of Command

For non-emergency matters (personnel issues, maintenance requests, etc.):

- Members report to their immediate supervisor first.
- Issues are elevated only if unresolved at the current supervisory level.

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7. Deviation from Chain of Command

Members may bypass the chain of command only when:

- Immediate danger to life or safety exists.
- Criminal conduct, harassment, or serious policy violations occur and involve their direct supervisor.

  In such cases, members should report directly to the next higher authority or designated Board contact.

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8. Compliance

Failure to follow the established chain of command without just cause may result in disciplinary action, up to and including suspension or termination.

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9. References

- NFPA 1021 – Standard for Fire Officer Professional Qualifications
- NFPA 1561 – Standard on Emergency Services Incident Management System

- Department Bylaws and SOPs