Southern Webster County Fire Protection District

Cadet Program Policy
Policy No.: 2025-09v2
Effective Date: _____
Issued By: Deputy Chief Justin Levy
Approved By: Board President _____ on _____

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1. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to provide structured, safe, and educational opportunities for youth interested in the fire service while outlining expectations, supervision requirements, limitations, and roles within the Southern Webster County Fire Protection District Cadet Program.

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2. Scope

This policy applies to all Cadets, Cadet Officers, District Officers, and personnel responsible for supervising or interacting with cadets during any district activity, training, or public event.

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3. Program Objectives

The Cadet Program aims to:

- Expose youth to firefighting, EMS, rescue concepts, and emergency service culture.
- Develop leadership, discipline, teamwork, communication, and responsibility.
- Provide hands-on, age-appropriate training opportunities.
- Prepare cadets for future transition into adult membership when eligible.

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4. Eligibility Requirements

Cadets must:

- Be **between 14 and 18 years old**.
- Must maintain good academic standing, which requires a grade point average of 2.0 (in Core Classes) Cadets must provide proof of passing grade to participate in the cadet program
- Have written parental/guardian consent.
- Attend required orientation and safety briefings.

The Fire Chief or Deputy Chief may recommend the removal of any cadet for safety, conduct, or performance concerns to the Board of Directors.

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5. Membership Expectations

Cadets are expected to:

- Follow all directions from Cadet Officers, Fire Officers, and supervising firefighters.
- Maintain a professional and respectful attitude at all times while representing SWCFPD and in everyday interactions
- Keep uniforms and PPE clean and functional.
- Attend trainings and meetings regularly.
- Follow all district policies and safety rules.
- Any disciplinary actions must be reported to the Cadet Officer

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6. Supervision Requirements

- Cadet Officers oversee the program under the Deputy Chief.

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7. Training Guidelines

Cadets may participate in age-appropriate training.

Cadets may attend **live fire training ONLY if**:

- They are enrolled in an official live fire training course,
- It is taught by approved instructors, **AND**
- They have proper PPE.

Allowable training includes hose handling, hydrant work, ladder basics, PPE/SCBA familiarization, search techniques, equipment review, and CPR/First Aid if available.

8. Emergency Response Participation

8.1 Response Rules

- Cadets **are not permitted** to respond directly to emergency scenes in a POV.
- Cadets may **only respond to the station** when a call is dispatched.
- Cadets may only respond to incidents if student attended required school attendance.
- Cadets may not respond respond to J4, Severe Trauma, Stage in the Area, and CPR.
- Cadets can not respond to any incident with hazardous road conditions.
- Cadets may ride on department apparatus only when:
  - Approved by a **Cadet Officer or Fire Officer**, **AND**
  - There is **open seating** after all qualified members have boarded.

If the apparatus is full, the cadet must remain at the station.

8.2 Operational Participation by Incident Type

A. Structure Fires

Cadets may participate in **defensive exterior firefighting** ONLY when all of the following conditions are met:

1. The cadet has been **cleared by the Cadet Officer** for fireground operations.
2. The cadet is wearing **full structural PPE and SCBA**.
3. The cadet is **accompanied by a firefighter who is not in probationary status**.

Prohibited at All Times

- **Interior firefighting**
- **Roof operations**
- **Ventilation operations**

B. Natural Cover (Wildland) Fires

Cadets may participate in **all natural cover fire operations** under **direct supervision**, including suppression, mop-up, and tool operations. ****Cadets will not operate a Drip Torch and back-pack blower****

The Incident Commander must ensure the cadet is placed in a **safe, appropriate operational area** at all times.

C. Medical Calls

Cadets may participate in medical calls **only when both conditions are met**:

1. They have been **cleared by the Cadet Officer**, AND
2. They have **completed the required EMS training.**

Permitted

- Equipment retrieval
- Assisting with carrying supplies
- Observational learning

Not Permitted (unless certified)

- Direct patient care
- Performing any EMS-certified task

D. Motor Vehicle Accidents (MVA)

Cadets may respond to **all MVAs except those located on U.S. 60**.

Conditions

- Must be **cleared by the Cadet Officer** for MVA participation.
- Must have completed **MVA Operations Education**.

If the Cadet Is Already on the Apparatus

If dispatched to an MVA located on **U.S. 60**, the **Cadet will remain in vehicle secured**.

E. Inclement Weather Operations

During inclement weather responses:

- Cadets can not respond to any storm spotter and/or tornado incident.
  - Cadets shall **report directly to the Incident Commander**.
- Assignments will be limited to **safe support roles** such as equipment readiness or logistical assistance.

F. Mutual Aid Calls

Cadets **shall not respond to or participate in Mutual Aid calls**, regardless of incident type.

9. Prohibition on Emergency Lights

Cadets are strictly prohibited from possessing, installing, activating, or operating ANY emergency lighting or warning devices on any vehicle they operate or ride in.

This includes, but is not limited to:

- Red/blue lights
- Amber lights
- Light bars
- Dash-mounted lights
- Sirens or audible warning devices

Cadets are prohibited from operating or riding in:

- Any POV pretending to be an emergency vehicle

Cadets may not respond POV under emergency conditions **unless they are riding with an approved member of the district operating under emergency response**.

Violation may result in immediate discipline or removal from the program.

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10. Conduct & Discipline

Cadets must behave professionally at all times. Prohibited conduct includes unsafe behavior, disrespect, equipment misuse, drugs/alcohol/tobacco/vaping, or weapons.

Discipline may include warnings, suspension, or removal.

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11. Uniform & Appearance

- Cadets must wear approved uniforms.
- PPE must be clean, safe, and worn when instructed.
- Cadets must maintain a neat, professional appearance.

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12. Meetings & Attendance

Cadets must attend at least **50%** of scheduled meetings/trainings to remain active.

Excused absences may include work, school events, illness, or family needs.

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13. Program Graduation & Advancement

Upon turning 18, a cadet may request transition to adult firefighter membership.

Evaluation is based on:

- Attendance
- Performance
- Behavior
- Readiness

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14. Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed annually by the Deputy Chief and Cadet Officers and submitted to the Board for needed updates.