PLEASANT VALLEY FIRE DISTRICT

RETURN TO DUTY POLICY

PURPOSE:
The purpose of this policy is to establish a set of procedures for Pleasant Valley Fire District employees returning to duty from an injury, illness, and/or mental health leave.

SCOPE:
This policy will apply to all Pleasant Valley Fire District, career fire and EMS employees of any rank, position, or roll. This policy excludes publicly elected Fire Commissioners.

The following requirements can be modified or adjusted at the discretion of the Pleasant Valley Fire District Chief (or his/her designee) or the Pleasant Valley Board of Fire Commissioners. Honorary Life members are exempt from this guideline.

DEFINITIONS:
Leave – medical leave, scheduled leave of absence, unscheduled leave of absence, unapproved leave, personal leave or any other leave from duty.

Pleasant Valley Fire District Employee (Member) – Any person employed by or volunteer with the Pleasant Valley Fire District and/or directed by the District Chief. This includes, but is not limited to, employees referenced as: Fire/Rescue/EMS; career staff: part time, per diem and/or full time; volunteer, restricted age member, district employee.

Essential Job Functions – shall mean all job functions that may be required to be performed by the employee on active duty.

Specific Job Functions – shall mean any specific skills, certifications or requirements pertaining to a specific roll or employee position.

POLICY:
1. Employees are to report to the District Fire Chief (or his/her designee), as soon as possible, in writing, a request for leave outlining an estimated duration for the leave. The leave will begin upon written notice and approval from the District Fire Chief. Any unscheduled/unapproved leave will begin from the last documented emergency call for service the member was on. The District Chief will notify the BOFC of employees out on leave.

2. Employees must report to the District Fire Chief or his/her designee on a monthly (30 Day) basis giving a status update and revised duration for the leave.

3. If an employee meets the criteria for leave and does not report to the Fire Chief, it will be assumed as a breach of duty (voluntary resignation) and the member can be terminated. All property of the Pleasant Valley Fire District will be returned to the District Fire Chief in 30 days. If an employee wishes to return to duty after an unscheduled/unapproved leave, the Pleasant Valley Fire District may request the employee to re-submit a new membership application, background check, arson form and medical screening.

4. If the employee going on leave is a supervisory rank (i.e. Captain, Lieutenant Coordinator/Manager, etc.), or in a special assignment/position, their roll will be temporarily reassigned until the member on leave returns to service.

5. Employees returning from a medical leave shall obtain a medical release from the physician certified in the area pertaining to the illness/injury/condition. Pleasant Valley Fire District is compliant with NFPA 1582 standards and requires the employee to also obtain medical clearance through the District Medical Provider (TEK, Lisa Holz PA) at no cost to the employee. Both forms of medical clearance are required to be cleared for “Return to Active Duty”.

6. The Pleasant Valley Fire District reserves the right to require a second medical opinion regarding a physician’s certification of an employee’s ability to return to active duty in the event the employee demonstrates an inability to perform essential job functions. Any such second opinion will be paid for by the Pleasant Valley Fire District and shall be performed by Pleasant Valley Fire District designated physician.

7. The Pleasant Valley Fire District shall assure that employees are physically capable of performing duties/skills that may be assigned to them during emergencies situations or training activities.

8. The Pleasant Valley Fire District shall not permit employees with known physical limitations reasonably identifiable to the employer to participate in emergency activities or training activities, unless a physician has released the employee to participate in such activities.

9. When under medical restrictions, the member shall not be assigned to active duty.

10. When a member meets the criteria for leave for any reason, they shall be required to receive focused training from the District Fire Chief (or his/her designee) to update them on any changes/updates in the department during the member’s absence.

a. Additional training may be required depending on specific job functions.

b. All missed required/mandatory training shall be satisfactorily completed and manipulative training exercises may be assigned to ensure the member is technically and physically capable of performing duties as assigned.

c. Employees may participate in and are encouraged to do online training as outlined by District Policy.

11. Employees out on leave, may not be physically present on Fire District property, may not attend in person meetings, trainings or drills. Attendance in ZOOM meetings is allowable.

REFERENCES:

1. American’s With Disabilities Act, Family Medical Leave Act, Snohomish County Fire District Seven (Snohomish, WA).