



## KING COUNTY FIRE RESOURCE PLAN

### Section 10 – Passport Accountability

---

#### **POLICY STATEMENT**

It shall be the Policy of the \_\_\_\_\_ to account for the location and safety of all personnel within an EMERGENCY INCIDENT PERIMETER at an emergency incident. Participation by members of the \_\_\_\_\_ in emergency incident mitigation without entering the PASSPORT SYSTEM is unauthorized.

#### **REFERENCES**

N.F.P.A. 1500 6-1.6

N.F.P.A. 1561

WAC 296-305 Safety Standards for Firefighters

#### **DEFINITIONS**

**ABANDON:** An immediate and rapid exit from the hazardous zone or structure. This may require sacrificing or discarding equipment in order to facilitate the immediate and rapid exit. Firefighters may have to continue operation of hose lines to protect others and effect a safe abandon operation. Firefighters should make every effort to exit as a team.

**APPARATUS OPERATOR:** Assigned Firefighter/Engineer, driver or apparatus operator (engine or aerial) designated as \_\_\_\_\_ Apparatus (e.g. Engine 45 Apparatus).

**COMPANY OFFICER:** Officers and Acting Officers in charge of Engine companies, Ladder companies, or Teams.

**ELECTRONIC SERIAL NUMBER (ESN):** Electronic identifier for 800 Mhz portable radio. Used to identify radio when EMER activation occurs.

**EMERGENCY INCIDENT:** Any situation to which the Fire Department responds to deliver emergency services including: rescue, fire, suppression, medical treatment, and other forms of hazard control and mitigation.

**EMERGENCY INCIDENT PERIMETER:** Any area where for safety reasons, the public is not allowed access.

**EMERGENCY TRAFFIC:** A signal to all units to immediately discontinue all radio transmissions. This will allow a clear broadcast of an urgent message or message alerting firefighters of a specific danger or problem.

**EVACUATE:** This term shall be used in reference to removing civilians from a hazardous zone or structure.

**HELMET SHIELD:** The helmet shield has letters and/or numbers identifying a company, unit, or administrative assignment. Unit designators may also be located on the sides of the helmet.

Examples: B45, E18, A62, A26, PIO, TRN, SAFT

**INCIDENT TERMINATION:** The conclusion of Fire Department operations at the scene of an incident, usually the departure of the last unit from the scene.

**MAYDAY:** A single word distress call, called three times (“Mayday, Mayday, Mayday”) to indicate that a firefighter/unit is in immediate danger and requires immediate assistance.

**NAMETAG:** A Velcro-backed plastic tag with a minimum of officer’s rank (if appropriate), last name, and department identification number.

**PASSPORT:** Approximately 2" X 4" boards made of Velcro and plastic used to identify and account for members and teams. Members affix nametags to Passports.

- Apparatus Passport and Nametag – A Passport that holds the apparatus operator(s) nametag and is piggy-backed to the apparatus passport.
- **Primary Passport:** White, passport kept with team leader.
- **Back-up Passport:** Red, passport stored visibly on the officer’s side of the apparatus.
- **Reserve Passport:** Green, used for multiple alarm shift changes and temporary replacement for lost primary and back-up passports.

**PASSPORT SYSTEM:** A procedure that utilizes helmet shields, passports, name tags, and status boards to track the assignments of companies, teams and individuals at an emergency incident and throughout a tour of duty.

**PASSPORT SYSTEM MAKE-UP KIT:** A kit designed to expand the Passport System at large incidents and provide immediate replacement for lost or damaged system materials.

**RADIO IDENTIFICATION TAGS:** Used as an additional layer of accountability. A Velcro and orange or yellow plastic tag used to identify an 800 Mhz portable radio’s electronic serial number (ESN) with its assigned user. Employee nametags are attached to this tag and the combined tag is placed on the Passport.

**ROLL CALL:** A poll of all teams or companies conducted to account for all personnel at an incident.

**STATUS BOARD:** A large hard plastic board with Velcro strips upon which commanders or supervisors hold passports of assigned teams and take notes.

**TEAM:** A group of two (2) or more Firefighters who work together and are responsible for each other's safety.

**TEAM LEADER:** Usually a Company Officer or member assigned or selected as the Team Leader.

**WITHDRAW:** This is a planned or orderly withdraw of Firefighters from the hazardous zone or structure. Firefighters generally exit as a company or team with all hose, tools and equipment.

## **PROCEDURE**

The \_\_\_\_\_ Fire Department shall use the Emergency Incident Passport Accountability System as adopted by the King County Fire Chiefs Association, in conjunction with the adopted incident management system.

## **RESPONSIBILITY**

The Incident Commander shall ensure the passport system is utilized as outlined in this procedure.

Team members must always be in contact with each other by voice, by sight, or by touch.

If a team member is in trouble, the other member(s) of the team shall take appropriate steps to help, which may include but is not limited too providing direct assistance, calling for help, and going to get help.

Members will stay together as teams when in the hazardous area and as otherwise directed by the Incident Commander until incident termination.

Maintenance of Shields and Passports shall be in accordance with the following:

- Company officers and/or team leaders shall be responsible to supervise the maintenance and proper placement of helmet shields and passports during the entire shift of duty and at emergency incidents.
- At the beginning of each shift or work day, for all personnel changes during a shift, or when reporting directly to the station or incident, ALL members are responsible to maintain:
  - The helmet shield matching their assignment.
  - Their name tags on the correct primary, backup and reserve passports (reserve; if utilized daily per local department policy).
  - Drivers will be accounted for by an individual passport that is piggy-backed, which can be separated when needed for fire ground operations.

Where staffing allows for two teams, company officers will pre-assign the members of the teams and the team leader of "Team B".

Company Officers and Team Leaders are responsible for members under their direct control.

Individuals assigned to administrative functions such as Training, Fire Prevention, etc. must have a helmet shield for their assignment.

The Department shall maintain materials and supplies for the ongoing support of the passport system.

### **PASSPORT ACCOUNTABILITY SYSTEM IMPLEMENTATION**

Materials: The Passport System utilizes fixed or removable helmet shields, primary, backup and reserve passports, nametags and portable status boards.

- Helmet shields shall be as described below:
  - Helmet shields shall be available and stored on the apparatus for each assigned team member on duty and for each member likely to respond on that apparatus.
  - The purpose of the helmet shield is to clearly identify the member's unit and zone or department to which the member is assigned. A combination of alpha and numeric digits designates the apparatus type and/or assignment. These designators include those listed below:

A = Aid Unit, HM = HazMat Unit, S = Support Unit  
AIR = Air Unit, I = Inspector,  
SFTY/SAFT= Safety Officer, B = Battalion Chief,  
L = Ladder Company, TRN, TRNG = Training Officer,  
C = Chief Officer, LF = Light Force, T = Truck,  
TN = Tender, CFR = Crash Truck, M = Medic Unit,  
U = Utility Unit, CHP = Chaplain, E = Engine Company, PIO = Public  
Information Officer, EXP = Explorers,  
R = Rescue Unit, MSO = Medical Services Officer, MSA = Medical Services  
Administrator

- Helmet Shields shall be in place on the member's helmet BEFORE participating as an in-service team member.
- Helmets are also color-coded to distinguish rank on the emergency scene.
  - Black/Yellow – Firefighters/Firefighter-Medics
  - Red – Lieutenant/Captain
  - Orange – Captain
  - White – Chief Officers, Fire Marshal
  - Blue – Non-Combat Personnel, i.e. Explorers, Non-suppression Paramedics

- The purpose of a passport is to provide accountability of all personnel at the emergency incident and during a tour of duty.
- Passports are a three-part board that contains the following information:

The top portion contains:

- Company Designator – Designates type of company.
- Fire Resource Zone Designator.
- Company Number.
- Team Designator (if applicable) "TEAM A" or "TEAM B"

Examples: E10-45, E10-46, T30-72, C10-01, Team A, Team B

The middle portion, which is Velcro, holds team member's nametags.

The bottom portion is for recording notes such as:

- Time of arrival
- Team assignment

- Passport color codes shall be as follows:
  - White: Primary
  - Red: Back-up
  - Green: Reserve
- There shall be two passports (one primary and one back up) provided for each on-duty chief, company, team, apparatus operator, or administrative assignment.
  - The White Primary Passport shall be controlled by the officer until used at an emergency incident.
  - The Red Back-up Passport is maintained as a duplicate of the primary passport and is used as follows:
    - For identifying Team Members when the primary passport is unavailable.
    - Red, back-up passport are stored visibly on the officer's side of the apparatus.
    - The Preprinted Green Reserve Passport is kept at each station and is used as follows:
      - Replacing a lost primary or back-up passport.
      - Members who needed to report for shift change at the emergency incident.
      - Located in the apparatus bays (or some other easily accessible location as determined by the department).
      - Blank Green Reserve Passports are carried in the Command vehicles and are used for:

- Temporary replacement of pre-printed, company-designated green flexible passports that have been placed in service.
  - Additional make-up companies and mutual aid companies who may respond to the incident scene without passports.
- Nametags shall be as described below:
  - Each uniformed member of the Fire Department shall maintain a minimum of six Velcro backed, engraved nametags.
    - Nametags are to be stored on the underside of the rear brim of the member's helmet.
    - One nametag is to be attached to each of the assigned primary and backup passports upon reporting for duty.
  - Nametags must be attached to the passports before responding with the assigned apparatus.
  - When assigned to one or more apparatus at the same time, such as a team, which responds on either an engine company or an aid car, the members shall use two additional nametags from their helmet to maintain passports on both apparatus during their shift.
  - There should always be at least one spare nametag on the member's helmet for the uses use at multiple alarm incidents too temporarily created teams and for immediate replacement of lost tags.
  - The Company officer/team leader nametags are placed at the top of the passports.
  - The apparatus passport with nametag of the driver of the apparatus (e.g. engine, aerial ladder) is placed on the company passport directly below the team (piggybacked).
  - When all members of a unit enter the hazardous zone or structure, the company officer/team leader, all members are accountable to the supervisor or team leader.
  - When the driver is assigned to the apparatus for pumping operations or operating the hydraulic aerial ladder device, the driver will be assigned to the division/group supervisor or IC for accountability purposes.
  - When a detailed, off-shift or volunteer member reports directly to an emergency scene, the member must check in with Command per local department policy.

## **800 MHZ RADIO ID TAGS (OPTIONAL USE AS ADOPTED BY DEPARTMENT)**

- Each member of the Fire Department shall have a minimum of two Velcro backed, identified radio ID tags.
  - Radio tags are to be stored with their nametags.
  - One nametag is to be attached to each of the radio tags and attached to the passports
  - Radio tags with nametags must be attached to the passports before responding with the assigned apparatus.
  - When temporarily assigned to another company or apparatus, the member would remove their combined radio/nametags from the primary and backup passports of the base apparatus. Upon reporting to the new apparatus, the member would place the combined radio/nametags on the passports.
  - Company officer and/or team leader combined radio/nametags are placed at the top of the passports.

## **EMERGENCY INCIDENTS**

- When a company or team reports to an incident (e.g. Staging, Division or Group) they transfer their primary passport to that Supervisor.
- Primary passports will remain with the officer or team leader when:
  - They are the only unit at the incident.
  - They are a committed first arriving unit at an incident prior to the establishment of a command post or have passed command to the next arriving company.
  - They are on or directed to a remote side of an emergency incident before the establishment of a Division Supervisor.
  - When first arriving teams that have not transferred their passports and leave a hazardous area, they will report their team status to the Incident Commander by radio or personal contact. The Incident Commander will direct the unit or team to a new assignment where they will transfer their passport.
- During emergency incidents the Incident Commander will require the transfer and use of passports at every incident.
- When an Incident, Division or Group Supervisor relieves a team, the Supervisor will:

- Confirm with the team leader that all team members are accounted for.
- Return the team's Passport and Apparatus Operator (if appropriate) to the team leader.