




**PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY, MARYLAND
FIRE/EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES DEPARTMENT GENERAL ORDER**

General Order Number: 01-01	Effective Date: October 19, 2022
Division: Administration and Organization	
Chapter: Fire Department Document Policy	
By Order of the County Fire Chief: Tiffany D. Green 	Revision Date: September 28, 2022

PURPOSE

This General Order establishes the policy that governs the creation, management, and revision of a Department General Order.

DEFINITIONS

All Sworn, Civilian, and Volunteer Employee/Member Memorandum – Official Departmental communication for announcements, information, notification, or to provide clarification on the implementation of a policy or procedure.

Document – Directives, General Orders, All Sworn, Civilian and Volunteer Employee/Member Memorandums, Training Bulletins and Employee/Member Action Notices will be referred to as documents. Other documents may include Operational Reports, Safety Bulletins and others deemed necessary by the County Fire Chief.

Document Gatekeeper – Person(s) assigned by the County Fire Chief, responsible for reception and finalization of all revised and/or proposed General Orders prior to submission for approval to the Office of the Fire Chief. This person(s) will also be responsible for identifying objectives, coordinating with affected members, managing resources, reviewing documents, and making recommendations.

General Order (GO) – An official document issued by County Fire Chief to establish policies, procedures, regulations, standards, guiding principles, programs, or methods of operation used by the Department.

General Order Depository – An official location for all department General Orders, current and prior. The Document Gatekeeper & GO Work Group Chairperson will maintain the most up-to-date records.

GO Work Group – Group of employees/members coordinated by a chairperson working together to organize, track, and maintain the Department’s GOs. These individuals are assigned by the Fire Chief and represent various entities throughout the Department.

GO Work Group Chairperson – Individual responsible for the coordination of the GO process between receiving it and passing it to/from the Document Gatekeeper.

Initiator – Individual and/or group responsible for filing the GO Change Request Form to the Document Gatekeeper. Initiators become part of the process by personal choice; Project Managers are appointed.

Stakeholder Group – Group of department employees/members assigned to various



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Commands/Offices/Organizations recognized by the Department, which shall include but is not limited to: Emergency Services Command, Administrative Services Command, Support Services Command, International Association Fire Fighters (IAFF) #1619, Prince George's County Volunteer Fire & Rescue Association (PGCVFRA), Prince George's County Fire Commission, Office of Law (OOL), and the Department's Equal Employment Opportunity Office (EEO). The Office of the Fire Chief will reevaluate this group every two years, or as determined.

PROCEDURES/RESPONSIBILITIES

I. General Provisions

A. Adherence

1. Employees/Members will familiarize themselves with and follow applicable policy, procedures, and regulations. Supervisors will lead, manage, and command subordinates within these guidelines.
2. While a General Order (GO) is intended to be comprehensive, it is impractical to expect that every possible scenario will be documented. Therefore, employees/members are responsible for and will be held accountable for exercising responsible conduct, sound management, common sense, and reasonable judgment when representing and/or while providing services on behalf of the Fire/Emergency Medical Services Department (Department).
3. This policy does not limit the Fire Chief's authority to create or issue documents independent of this process. Moreover, policies that must be revised to maintain compliance with local, state, and/or federal regulations will be updated immediately.

B. Application

1. A GO shall supersede any conflicting information except local, state, or federal laws and regulations.
2. There are legislative and regulatory documents that effect Department operations. Some are applicable by virtue of employment or membership, i.e., Subtitle 16 of the Prince George's County Code, others are applicable when involved in certain operations, such as the Maryland Medical Protocols for Emergency Medical Services Personnel and certain provisions of Title 29 of the Code of Federal Regulations.

II. Process

- A. Creation, review, revision, and approval of documents is ongoing.
- B. The Department recognizes that the principles of diversity, equity, and inclusion are central to its mission and greatly impact the services the Department provides. Each Work Group and Stakeholder Group member should review and use the Equity Framework in Attachment A of this General Order when evaluating each proposed new or revised GO.
- C. Any Department employee/member (Sworn, Civilian or Volunteer) can be an Initiator and may submit suggested changes or recommendations the creation of a new GO by filling out a GO Change Request Form (Request Form) and attaching a copy of the proposed amended GO. Changes to documents, except a GO, will be communicated in



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- writing via the proper chain-of-command to the respective Deputy Fire Chief or appropriate Civilian Manager.
- D. Chief Officers/Civilian Managers may submit a proposed draft/revised GO and the required Request Form to the Document Gatekeeper at their discretion. All other employees/members must submit a proposed draft/revised GO and completed Request Form to the Document Gatekeeper through a Chief Officer/Civilian Manager in their chain-of-command.
- E. Once the Document Gatekeeper intakes the Request Form, the Gatekeeper is responsible for initiating the GO review process.
- F. The Gatekeeper must add the proposed GO to the GO Depository, and
- G. The Gatekeeper must notify the GO Work Group Chairperson of any proposed draft/revised GO.
- H. The GO Work Group Chairperson will review the proposed GO and is responsible for initiating a ten (10) Business Day Review Period for the GO Work Group. The Chairperson must forward any received GO proposal to the GO Work Group for review within three (3) business days of receipt, or as directed by the Gatekeeper.
1. The Office of the Fire Chief may require an expedited review of a General Order. This will be on a case-by-case basis. The Office of the Fire Chief will send formal written correspondence to the GO Work Group Chairperson.
- I. The GO Work Group is responsible for reviewing any proposed GO forwarded by their chairperson. If needed, the GO Work Group may request resources through the Office of the Fire Chief.
- J. Upon conclusion of the GO Work Group review, the GO Work Group Chairperson is responsible for sending the GO Work Group's completed proposed GO to the Document Gatekeeper within three (3) business days.
- K. Upon receipt of the GO Work Group's proposed GO, the Document Gatekeeper is responsible for initiating a ten (10) Business Day Stakeholder Group Review Period and must distribute any GO proposal received from the GO Work Group Chairperson to the following Stakeholder Group for review:
1. Each Command
 - Emergency Services Command (ESC)
 - Support Services Command (SSC)
 - Administrative Services Command (ASC)
 2. Prince George's County Professional Fire Fighters and Paramedics Association, Inc., IAFF Local 1619
 3. Prince George's County Volunteer Fire and Rescue Association (PGCVFRA)
 4. Prince George's County Fire Commission
 5. Office of Law (OOL)
 6. Department's Equal Employment Opportunity Office (EEO)
- L. The Stakeholder Group is responsible for submitting all comments, revisions, and supporting documents to the Document Gatekeeper by the identified deadline.
- M. At the conclusion of the Stakeholder Group review period, the Document Gatekeeper must send an overview of all proposed Stakeholder Group changes to the Initiator and the GO Work Group Chairperson.
- N. The Document Gatekeeper is also responsible for the finalization of any proposed Stakeholder Group GO and must submit all finalized GOs, along with all received Stakeholder Group comments and supporting documents, to the Office of the Fire



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Chief for final review and consideration.

- O. Any change made by the Office of the Fire Chief must be sent by the Document Gatekeeper to the GO Work Group Chairperson prior to Department distribution.
 - i. The time required for Fire Chief review may vary due to differences in the complexity of proposed changes, as well as inclusion of legal and contractual language that may require additional review by other relevant stakeholder groups not included within the initial stakeholder group as defined in this GO.
 - ii. If no changes are made by the Office of the Fire Chief, the document will be sent to the Department by Memorandum for distribution.

III. Transition Period

- A. Unless specified otherwise, a GO will be effective immediately upon distribution. However, some GOs may require a transition period during which employees/members can familiarize and train themselves on the policy to ensure compliance.
- B. Therefore, at the discretion of the County Fire Chief, new GOs, as well as other documents, may be implemented after an established transition period. In these instances, an “Effective Date” will be identified to inform employees/members of the end of the transition period.

IV. General Orders and Directive Format

- A. Standard font and font size is Times New Roman 12 point. Line spacing is single (1.0) throughout the document.
- B. The outline will follow the alphanumeric format found below which is: bold capital Roman numerals, uppercase letters, Arabic numerals with a period, lowercase letters with a right parenthesis, Arabic numerals enclosed in parenthesis, lowercase letters enclosed in parenthesis, lowercase Roman numerals enclosed in parenthesis, lowercase letters enclosed in parenthesis, and lowercase Roman numerals enclosed in parenthesis.

I. Heading 1

A. Heading 2

1. Heading 3

a) Heading 4

(1) Heading 5

(a) Heading 6

(i) Heading 7

(a) Heading 8

(i) Heading 9

- C. Tab space one time after Roman numerals.
- D. When possible, do not allow a section to be broken up by a page break.
- E. A GO will be divided into sections as follows:
 - 1. Purpose
 - 2. Definitions
 - 3. Policies/Responsibilities
 - 4. References
 - 5. Forms/Attachments

V. GO Table of Contents Organization

*Division 01– Administration and Organization
Chapter 01 – Fire Department Document Policy
Revision Date – October XX, 2022*



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- A. Every GO is categorized into a division by subject matter. Each document within a division will be assigned a number and referred to as a chapter. Directives affecting a GO will be designated the same way and must be added to the table of contents until eliminated or included in a revised GO.
- B. The Work Group will determine the number of divisions and their titles. An updated table of contents must be created and will be distributed with each newly created or revised document.

VI. Distribution and Maintenance

- A. Electronic copies of new and revised documents are distributed via “Fire/EMS Department” email.
- B. Electronic copies of every current GO must be uploaded and available on the intranet and the internet.
- C. An applicable Memorandum and Directive will accompany the new or updated GO to summarize the contents, highlight changes, and specify important dates of implementation.
- D. Each station and office must have and provide access to the above-referenced documents to promote effective operations and reference.
- E. Each Command, the Document Gatekeeper, and the Office of the Fire Chief will maintain supporting references.
- F. Each Command will ensure that field and office Employees/members under their Command are aware of and review all documents.
- G. The Volunteer Services Office will maintain a complete copy, including forms and attachments, of all prior effective versions of each General Order for historical and informational purposes. The VSO should maintain all prior versions.

REFERENCES

N/A

FORMS / ATTACHMENTS

- General Order Change Request Form
- General Order Change Tracking Form
- General Order Equity Framework