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| **Accountability Procedures (Volunteer)** | Related Policies:Accountability Procedures; SCBA; Rapid Intervention Teams; ICS |
| *This policy is for internal use only and does not enlarge an employee’s civil liability in any way. The policy should not be construed as creating a higher duty of care, in an evidentiary sense, with respect to third party civil claims against employees. A violation of this policy, if proven, can only form the basis of a complaint by this department for non-judicial administrative action in accordance with the laws governing employee discipline.* |
| Applicable KY Statutes: KRS 338.031Applicable KY Administrative Regulations: |
| OSHA: 29 CFR 1910.134, 1910.156 |
| NFPA Standard: NFPA 1500 Ch. 8, NFPA 1561 |
| Date Implemented: | Review Date: |

1. **Purpose:** To establish written standard operating procedures for a personnel accountability system that provides for the tracking and inventory of all members operating at an emergency incident that meets the requirements of NFPA 1500 and NFPA 1561.
2. **Scope:** The accountability procedures shall be used by all members of the fire department when responding to emergency incidents.

**III. Definitions**

**Accountability Officer:** The individual designated to collect Accountability Tags, check personnel into and out of the incident, form personnel into crews, and otherwise track and account for personnel at the scene. The Accountability Officer works directly with the Incident Commander to ensure accountability of all personnel operating at an emergency scene.

**Company:** An engine company, ladder company, water tanker/tender, hose company, brush or wildland company, rescue (heavy rescue, squad) company or emergency medical services (EMS) unit. A company includes the apparatus and the personnel responding on the apparatus.

**Company officer:** The officer, acting officer, or senior member in charge of a company or crew.

**Crew:** A team of members without an apparatus, under the command of a company officer assigned to work together at an incident scene. Crew sizes shall range from three to a maximum of eight members, including the company officer.

**Working structure fire:** A fire in a structure that requires the use of a 1 ½” or larger fire attack hose line and also requires the use of SCBA for members entering the hazardous area

**IV. Basic Procedures**

1. **Accountability**
2. The personnel accountability system shall be used at all incidents.
3. It shall be the responsibility each member of the department to actively participate in the personnel accountability system.
4. Members shall comply with and follow personnel accountability system procedures.
5. **Accountability Tags and Rings**
6. All personnel shall be assigned accountability tags.
7. All apparatus shall have accountability rings.
8. Upon reporting for duty at a fire station to respond with/onboard an apparatus, it is the duty of each member to attach his/her accountability tag to the apparatus accountability ring on the apparatus he/she is responding with. The personnel on board that apparatus shall constitute a company.
9. Upon reporting for duty at an emergency scene, it is the duty of each member to turn in his/her accountability tag to the Accountability Officer.
10. When a member does not have his/her officially assigned accountability tag, a drivers license or other suitable temporary tag shall be utilized to represent that the member is onboard an apparatus or present on scene.
11. A member is prohibited from engaging in any emergency scene activities without first turning in his/her accountability tag to the Accountability Officer, or placing it on the appropriate ring.
12. Upon reporting off duty and/or leaving an emergency scene, it is the duty of each member to retrieve his/her accountability tag as required by the policy.

**C.** **Company and Crew Integrity**

1. All members constituting a company shall arrive and operate at the scene of an emergency as a company under the command of a company officer. Company members shall remain together, intact as a unit, to the greatest extent possible. The Accountability Officer may reassign company members as necessary to ensure a balance of experienced members.
2. Upon being assigned to work as part of a crew, all members shall remain together, intact as a unit, to the greatest extent possible. The Accountability Officer may reassign crew members as necessary to ensure a balance of experienced members.
3. Unless ordered to do otherwise by their company officer, firefighters shall remain with and under the supervision of their company officer for the duration on an incident, subject only to changes assigned by the Accountability Officer.
4. Company officers shall maintain an ongoing awareness of the location and condition of all company/crew members under their command, and shall be responsible for their safety and their actions.
5. In the event that company/crew members must separate for any reason (excluding the pump operator, or members engaged in tasks which require them to remain entirely outside of and away from the fire building or hazardous area), members shall operate in teams of two or more. Company officers are strictly accountable for knowing the location and condition of all company/crew members even when separated from the company officer.
6. Maintaining company/crew integrity shall be the direct responsibility of the company officer.
7. At working structure fire, no company or crew may enter the fire building unless the company officer is equipped with a portable radio.

**D.** **Incident Scene Accountability**

1. The incident commander shall maintain an awareness of the location and function of all companies and crews operating at the scene of the incident.
2. The first arriving officer or senior firefighter at an incident shall be the initial incident commander, in accordance with the Incident Command System. Until the arrival of the first piece of apparatus, the Incident Commander shall serve as the Accountability Officer.
3. Upon the arrival of the first piece of apparatus, the driver shall serve as the Accountability Officer until duly relieved of that responsibility. The Incident Commander shall endeavor to assign a ranking officer to serve as Accountability Officer as early into the incident as possible.
4. Upon assigning an Accountability Officer, the Incident Commander shall brief the Accountability Officer as to the disposition of companies/crews to that point, and transfer to the Accountability Officer all accountability tags/rings. Thereafter the Incident Commander and the Accountability Officer shall remain in direct contact to the greatest extent possible.
5. Upon the arrival of subsequent companies on the scene, the company officer shall give the apparatus accountability ring with the accountability tags for each member on board to the Accountability Officer. Thereafter, the company may be deployed by the Incident Commander.
6. Upon the arrival of individual members to the scene, each member shall report to the Accountability Officer, and tender his/her accountability tag. Arriving chief officers who have checked in with the Accountability Officer shall thereafter report directly to the Incident Commander. The Accountability Officer shall organize firefighters and company officers into crews. With the approval of the Incident Commander, chief officers may be assigned duties as company officers.
7. Upon members being formed into a crew, personnel shall report as a crew to the Incident Commander for deployment.
8. Personnel who have not checked in with the Accountability Officer shall not be utilized or deployed by the incident Commander, and are prohibited from engaging in any on-scene activities.
9. Once deployed, companies/crews shall not change location or function without informing the Incident Commander. This will allow the Incident Commander to know with some degree of accuracy, where each company/crew is operating and what function is being performed.
10. Where division/group supervisors are appointed, all companies/crews assigned by command to a given division/group shall report to the appropriate division/group supervisor. The division/group supervisor shall maintain an awareness of the location and function of each company assigned to the division/group, and shall directly supervise and account for the companies operating in that division/group.
11. The incident commander and members who are assigned a supervisory responsibility for a tactical level management component that involves multiple companies or crews under their command shall have assigned a member or members to facilitate the ongoing tracking and accountability of assigned companies and crews.
12. Depending upon the size, complexity, or needs of an incident, the Incident Commander may assign additional officers to assist command or branch/division/group officers with accountability.

#### V. Levels of Accountability at Emergency Scenes

1. There shall be three levels of accountability, designated Level I, Level II, and Level III.
2. All members and officers are strictly responsible for knowing which accountability level is presently being utilized as a particular incident.
3. Level I Accountability – The lowest level of accountability
4. Level I Accountability shall be utilized at:
5. Initial operations at working structure fires at residential occupancies of three units or less
6. Reported gas leaks
7. Carbon monoxide investigations
8. Other emergency scenes that involve an IDLH atmosphere, or the potential for an IDLH atmosphere
9. Investigations where there is no indication of a working structure fire
10. Under Level I Accountability, company/crew members may separate into teams of two or more, provided the following:
11. All aspects of the “Two-In Two-Out” requirement are met
12. The members of each team shall remain within visual, voice, or physical contact with each other.
13. The company officer shall maintain an awareness of the location and condition of all company/crew members, including those not in his/her immediate location.
14. Each team shall be equipped with at least one portable radio. Intra-company/crew radio communications are prohibited, except between the officer and an apparatus operator who is with the apparatus, or in the event of an emergency.
15. The company officer shall personally confirm the location and condition of all crew members at 10 minute intervals, or less. THIS SHALL NOT BE DONE OVER THE RADIO, but rather in person.
16. Note that the splitting of companies/crews into teams is not an option for companies/crews of less than four personnel.

## B. Level II Accountability – A heightened level of accountability

1. Level II Accountability shall be utilized at all:
2. Second Alarm or greater incidents
3. Working structure fires in commercial occupancies
4. Working structure fires in residential occupancies of more than three units
5. Any time ordered by the Incident Commander

**Editor’s Note**: For departments that do not utilize multiple alarm designations, any structure fire where additional resources beyond the first alarm assignment as dispatched should trigger Level II Accountability. Small departments who have a limited number of experienced interior structural firefighters may choose to require Level II Accountability for all working structure fires.

1. Under Level II Accountability:
2. All company/crew members must remain together, intact as a unit, under the command and control of the company officer. The ONLY exception shall be in cases where the apparatus operator must remain outside the building with the apparatus.
3. All members shall remain within visual, voice, or physical contact with each other.
4. Under appropriate circumstances, the Incident Commander, in conjunction with the Accountability Officer, may split up or combine tactical units to accomplish specific missions, in which case these reassignments shall be noted in writing at the command post.
5. When operating under Level II accountability, members may not enter or exit the building alone, or in teams smaller than their entire company/crew, for any reason. This includes sending an individual member or members to obtain additional equipment, going to rehab, replacing SCBA cylinders, obtaining spare SCBA cylinders, etc.
6. Company officers are strictly responsible for compliance with this requirement.

# Level III Accountability – the highest level of accountability

1. Level III Accountability shall be utilized at:
2. Hazardous materials incidents where entry into the “Hot Zone” is necessary
3. Confined Space Rescue Incidents
4. Any time ordered by the Incident Commander
5. Under Level III Accountability:
6. Members entering the hazardous area shall be logged in and logged out of the building, area, or Hot Zone, in writing.
7. Pertinent information shall be maintained in writing including member name, SCBA cylinder air level, time in and time out.
8. Strict control over entry and exit from the hazardous area shall be maintained

### VI. Command Level Accountability Procedures

1. At all incidents that proceed beyond the investigation mode, the Incident Commander shall document the location and assignment of all companies/crews on scene, in writing. For purposes of this provision, the term “in writing” shall include writing in pen or pencil on paper, marking on an erasable board, or the utilization of a computer to enter and store such information.
2. The IC shall utilize such forms, clipboards, command boards, charts, maps, floorplans and software as may be available and appropriate to track the required information.
3. At any given moment that IC shall be responsible to know the location and function being performed by all companies/crews on the scene. The IC shall assign additional personnel to assist with this task as needs may dictate.

### VII. Personnel Accountability Reports

1. A Personnel Accountability Report (or "PAR”) is a roll call of personnel, companies, and crews operating at an emergency scene conducted to ensure that all personnel are safe and accounted for.

1. A PAR will be initiated by the Incident Commander for the following situations:
	1. Any evacuation of a structure or portion of a structure;
	2. Any Mayday report
	3. Any report of missing or trapped firefighters;
	4. Any change from offensive to defensive mode of attack;
	5. Any significant event at an incident – such as a flashover, backdraft, or collapse
	6. At a working structure fire being fought in the offensive mode, at 20 minutes elapsed time from arrival on scene, and every 20 minutes thereafter until defensive operations commence or until discontinued.
	7. Any time ordered by the Incident Commander or the Incident Safety Officer
2. To initiate a PAR, the incident commander shall concisely notify dispatch of the circumstances, and order a PAR.
3. Dispatch will immediately order Emergency Traffic, notify all companies operating at the incident of the emergency, and instruct all units to stand by for a PAR roll call.
4. Upon hearing the radio announcement notification for a PAR, all division/group officers, company officers, and command personnel shall immediately account for the location and safety of personnel and companies assigned to their responsibility. This accounting shall take place in person via face-to-face communications, and shall not be conducted over the radio under any circumstances.
5. After a fifteen second pause to allow officers to account for their personnel, the Accountability Officer shall begin calling companies and crews over the radio to ascertain their PAR status. The dispatcher shall assist the Accountability Officer to the greatest extent possible.
6. Officers whose personnel are safe and accounted for shall inform the Accountability Officer that they have “PAR”. Officers whose personnel are not accounted for shall notify the Accountability Officer that they “DO NOT HAVE PAR”, and provide the identify and last known location of the member or members who are not accounted for.
7. The Accountability Officer will continue with the PAR roll call until all units have answered, and upon completion shall report to the IC any units not answering, or units who did not report PAR.
8. In lieu of the Accountability Officer conducting the PAR roll call, the Incident Commander may personally conduct the roll call, or may assign that responsibility to the Safety Officer or other command level assistant.
9. Upon completion of such a PAR the IC shall notify dispatch of the status of the PAR.
10. In the event that all units do not report PAR, the Incident Commander shall take immediate steps to account for the missing members, including deployment of the Rapid Intervention Team.

**EDITOR’s Note:** Combination fire departments should review and evaluate the Accountability Procedure policies for both career and volunteer departments and determine which policy will work better for them. There is no right or wrong, as a combination or even a volunteer department may find the career policy may better suit their operations, and vice versa. In some cases a hybrid policy taking parts of both may work best. What is vital is that a department has an accountability policy that allows them to track personnel on scene.