



ADMINISTRATIVE POLICY

11701
(4-7-17)

EXPLORER PROGRAM

- 11701.1 Purpose:
The purpose of this policy is to describe the Fire Explorer Program and to document the rules of participation in the Program.
- 11701.2 Background:
To allow young adults ages 14-20 the opportunity to learn about, and participate in, a wide variety of Fire Department activities and training. The program is designed to provide motivated individuals with education and experiences that will guide them on a path towards a career in the Fire Service.
- 11701.3 Scope:
This policy applies to all personnel and Fire Explorers.
- 11701.4 Authority:
Not applicable.
- 11701.5 Definitions:
Not applicable.
- 11701.6 Policy:
- 11701.6.1 Explorer Program Positions:
The following positions are established to provide leadership and support for the program.
- 11701.6.1.1 Department Explorer Coordinator:
The Department Explorer Coordinator is the Training Chief. The Training Chief acts as the program's Executive Officer, which is a position within the Boy Scouts of America Learning for Life Program.
- 11701.6.1.2 Explorer Cadre Leader:
The Explorer Cadre Leader is responsible for the curriculum, exams and the overall delivery of the Explorer Program. The Explorer Cadre Leader will also act as the Post Committee Chair, a position within the Boy Scouts of America Learning for Life Program. The Explorer Cadre Leader shall review the program on a semester basis to ensure that all participating fire companies are administering this program in a fair and consistent manner.

11701.6.1.3 Explorer Post Coordinator:

The Explorer Post Coordinator is a designee of Explorer Cadre Leader. The Explorer Post Coordinator shall conduct the daily operations of the program for his/her assigned post, as well as assist in continued program development. The Explorer Post Coordinator shall maintain a current list of explorer names assigned to his/her post including phone numbers of parent(s)/guardian(s). The Explorer Post Coordinator will also act as the Explorer Advisor, a position within the Boy Scouts of America Learning for Life Program.

11701.6.1.4 Explorer Post Associate Advisor:

The Explorer Post Associate Advisors will be a cadre of station personnel and will be responsible for coordinating and hosting scheduled Explorer drills/meetings for their assigned Explorer Post. It is the responsibility of the Explorer Post Advisor to oversee the scheduling of explorers accordingly and resolve any associated issues. The Explorer Post Associate Advisor will be the main point of contact for Explorers assigned to his/her post. The Explorer Post Associate Advisor will also act as the Post Committee Member, a position within the Boy Scouts of America Learning for Life Program.

11701.6.2 Levels of Explorer Participation:**11701.6.2.1 Level 1: Ages 14-20:**

This is the entry level Explorer that would attend post meetings and drills. At this level the Explorer will start by understanding the fire service, chain of command, and basic fire principles. These Explorers will only be allowed to participate in station visits with an Explorer Post Advisor present.

11701.6.2.2 Level 2: Ages 16-20:

Level 2 Explorers have completed and passed all Level 1 curriculum and must be 16 years of age or older. These Explorers will be required to attend a two day Level 2 Academy, which will train the Explorers on station routine and responding on emergency. Level 2 Explorers will be assigned to companies that have volunteered to have a Fire Explorer for the school year. These Explorers are also eligible to ride out as an observer at any fire station with the approval of both the Explorer Post Coordinator and their Company Officer.

11701.6.2.3 Level 3: Ages 18-20:

Level 3 Explorers have completed and passed all Level 2 curriculum and must be 18 years of age or older. These Explorers will be required to attend a one week Level 3 Academy. This academy will consist of classroom instruction and manipulative tasks similar to our in-service Fire Academy. Level 3 Explorers will be assigned to companies that have volunteered to

have a Fire Explorer for the school year. These Explorers will continue to have the ability to ride out at any fire station with the approval of both the Explorer Post Coordinator and their Company Officer.

11701.5 Schedule of Events:

The Explorer Cadre Leader shall adhere to the following calendar of events utilizing the three year Explorer Calendar posted in LMS:

- Ongoing recruitment and community outreach.
- Explorer application deadlines will be twice a year on April 30 and October 31.
- Selection interviews will be conducted twice per year during June and December.
- Orientations will be held during December and June annually.
- Post meetings occur 1-2 times per month. Post drills will be monthly.
- Level 2 and 3 Academies will be scheduled as needed.

11701.10 Compensation:

The Department does not provide any compensation to the Fire Explorer for participation in the program.

11701.12 Conduct:

Explorers shall abide by all Department policies. The continuing enrollment in the Explorer Program shall be contingent upon good behavior.

11701.7 Procedure

11701.7.1 Fire Explorer Entrance Application Process:

11701.7.1.1 Fire Explorer Application Submittal:

Applications for participation in the Explorer Program are submitted through the VCFD public website (under the Explorer tab). Applications are accepted on a continuous basis.

11701.7.1.2 Selection Interview:

An interview board comprised of a combination of Explorer Post Advisors and panelists selected by the Fire Chief shall interview the applicants, if necessary.

11701.7.1.3 The Fire Chief or his designee shall review and approve all selections into the program.

11701.7.1.4 Enrollment as an Explorer:

The following will be completed or provided upon enrollment:

- Explorer applicants that have been selected for the Explorer Program will be enrolled in both the Boy Scouts of America Learning for Life Fire Explorer Program and the Ventura County Office of Education Career Program.
- An Explorer file will be created and maintained in Human Resources for necessary records.
- The Explorer will be issued an I.D. card.
- The Explorer will be provided access to the Learning Management System.

11701.7.1.5 Required Documentation:

Current copies of the following documentation on file in Human Resources are required for participation in the program.

- Proof of medical insurance.
- Copy of the Explorer's driver's license and proof of auto insurance.
- The Explorer shall submit a waiver, in memo form, for an inspection of the records of the California Department of Motor Vehicles pertaining to the driving record.
- A current VCFPD Form 84, "Release and Waiver of All Liability and Agreement Not to Sue" shall be on file.

11701.7.1.6 Explorer Orientation:

Prior to the start of the program each semester, the Explorer Post Coordinator will conduct an orientation. New Explorers shall attend with at least one parent or guardian. The topics to be addressed in this orientation shall include the following:

- Department policies that pertain to the Explorer participation in the program.
- Scope of the educational environment, including curriculum.
- Beginning and ending dates of the program for the individual Explorers.
- Uniform costs and other expenses.
- Required documentation.

11701.7.2 Uniform:

Explorers shall obtain the required uniform as specified below. This uniform shall be worn at all times during the hours of duty at the fire company.

11701.7.2.1 Level 1 Explorers:

11701.7.2.1.1 Shirt:

Dickies or equivalent khaki short-sleeved work shirt with the Explorer's name embroidered over the left breast pocket.

11701.7.2.1.2 Trousers:

Dickies 874NV, traditional work pants, navy.

11701.7.2.1.3 T-Shirt:

Gray T-shirt with "Ventura County Fire Department Explorer" logo on the left breast. This T-shirt is available from the Ventura County Professional Firefighters' Association

11701.7.2.1.4 Socks, Belt, and Safety Boots:

As described in AP 11100.

11701.7.2.1.5 Optional Hat:

A fixed, flex-fit style or adjustable, dark navy, cotton twill or wool, winter or summer, baseball-style cap with the VCFD logo, available from the Ventura County Professional Firefighters' Association.

11701.7.2.1.6 Optional Sweatshirt:

Gray, hooded, zip-front sweatshirt with "Ventura County Fire Department, Explorer" logo on the left breast. This sweatshirt is available from the Ventura County Professional Firefighters' Association.

11701.7.2.2 Level 2 Explorers:

Level 2 Explorers will adhere to the same uniform requirements as a Level 1 Explorer as well as the following:

11701.7.2.2.1 Ventura County Fire Department Patch:

The VCFD patch, navy blue with silver border, will be displayed on the left sleeve as described in AP 11100, "Uniforms, General."

11701.7.2.2.2 Rocker Patch:

The rocker patch "Fire Explorer" shall be displayed as described in AP 11100, "Uniforms, General."

11701.7.2.3 Level 3 Explorers:

Level 3 Explorers will adhere to the same uniform requirements as a Level 2 Explorer as well as the following:

11701.7.2.3.1 Shirt:

Dickies (or equivalent) light blue, short-sleeved work shirt

11701.7.2.3.2 The complete Explorer uniform shall be worn when public contact is anticipated. The sweatshirt and hat are optional in this case.

11701.7.3 Personal Protective Equipment (PPE):

PPE will be worn as directed by the Company Officer, and will be stored at the Explorer's assigned post, except as needed to attend required post meetings/drills, or when utilized for ride-alongs.

- The Level 1 Explorer will be issued a brush coat, and work gloves.
- The Level 2 Explorer will be issued a black structure helmet with a red shield. The shield will have the Explorer's last name on it.
- The Level 3 Explorer may use practice turnouts at the designated Explorer post or at supervised post activities.

11701.7.4 Hours:

11701.7.4.1 Station Rideout Hours:

The duty hours for Explorers are at the discretion of the station captain between 0800 and 2100 hours. No more than two Explorers may ride out with an engine company on a shift.

11701.7.4.2 Post Hours:

Post activities may occur at any time. If the post is at a station, section 11701.4.1 applies.

11701.7.5 Emergency Response:

Explorers that are on a rideout have the following restrictions:

- On emergencies, Explorers are under the direct supervision of a fire captain.
- Explorers are not to participate in emergency operations in any role other than assisting emergency personnel from a safe location.
- Explorers should have no direct patient contact.
- Explorers shall not respond on out-of-county incidents.

11701.7.6 Driving:

When driving a Department vehicle, the following provisions shall apply:

- The Explorer post has received training on the operation of Department vehicles.
- Explorers shall not drive any apparatus.
- Explorer shall not drive "CODE" at any time.
- Explorer shall not drive Department vehicles that they are not licensed for.

- "OUT OF SERVICE" placards shall be affixed to the vehicle at all times when driven by an Explorer.

11701.7.8 Performance:

11701.7.8.1 Curriculum:

It is expected that the Explorer will fully participate in the required curriculum.

11701.7.8.2 Explorers may review their performance at any time with their Post Advisor. Explorers that participate in the Ventura County Office of Education Career Program will also receive a letter grade commensurate with that program's requirements.

11701.7.9 Termination:

The Department, Boy Scouts of America, and the Ventura County Office of Education, or the Explorer may terminate the participation of the Explorer in the program at any time.