

Bethel Fire Department

Fire Cadets

B-006

April 2025

Purpose and Policy

The Bethel Fire Department, due to its Volunteer/ Paid-on-Call status requires a constant flow of individuals to fulfill its mission of providing fire and live saving services to the community. The nature of the work involved, and the needs of the member's personal life, is not always something that can be continued by the average citizen that does not perform these functions as a career. The Fire Cadet program is a suitable beginning step to expose potential candidates for the fire department to the needs and rigors of department life. The reality of the fire cadet program is that these are young people, below the age of 18 and governed by additional rules and regulations at both the state and federal levels and must never be allowed to enter in or work within an IDLH (Immediately Dangerous to Life and Health) situation or potential situation. These cadets are not firefighters or medics and, as such, must always take a non-dangerous and controlled role within the department without exception.

Responsibilities

The base responsibility of the Fire Cadet is twofold. First, they must show their willingness to follow orders correctly, vigorously, consistently, and without question no matter how boring or mundane the task appears. They have every right and requirement to ask questions and voice safety concerns. Second, they must prove that they are capable, willing, and ready to take the next step, through their attendance and dedication, of a Firefighter 1 class and moving into the role of a full member of the department if they will become a firefighter, or the next level of member status such as exists for vehicle management, driving/ operations, or other level as exists at the time. These responsibilities breakdown by age group when there are cadets available. These age groups are:

1. 14 and 15 years old
2. 16 and 17 years old

Both Age Groups

First, cadets of both age groups will not receive any form of remuneration for their activities prior to becoming a member of the department at the age of 18. They will be able to skip the initial probationary period at age 18, except how it involves training and taking of Firefighter 1 class, and can begin participation in the stipend program immediately. Also, no equipment will be issued to cadets.

Each age group is responsible for providing support for the department and department personnel. This will be accomplished mostly through station maintenance and low-level

equipment maintenance in order to both learn the equipment and to appreciate its value as well as limited training participation. This includes but is not limited to:

- Washing and waxing vehicles and specialty equipment
- Station cleaning, sweep downs, windows, bathrooms, etc.
- Assist members in Equipment maintenance which cannot involve potential hazardous evolutions.
- Participate in training events that does not involve hazardous evolutions other than as an observer.
- Must establish with the Chief and maintain the correct hours for working as prescribed by Vermont and Federal laws and regulations.

Specifics for 14 and 15 year-old cadets

- This age group is beginning and, as such, will be expected to spend most of their time in the clean component of equipment/ station/ and vehicle maintenance. "Wax on, wax off"
- Each cadet will be given a set of responsibilities and a mentor.
- No PPE or communications equipment will be issued.
- At no time can this age group be on any emergency scene during an emergency.
- At no time can this age group ride on any departmental vehicle at any time.
- At no time can this age group be involved with any evolution, including training events, that present any potential of danger at any level.
- This age group can only observe most training events and can participate in classroom exercises as allowed by the instructor.

Specifics for 16 and 17 year-old cadets

- This age group is beginning and, as such, will be expected to spend most of their time in the clean component of equipment/ station/ and vehicle maintenance. "Wax on, wax off"
- Each cadet will be given a set of responsibilities and a mentor.
- No PPE or communications equipment will be issued but may be drawn for a specific event as approved by the chief as needed for training or maintenance of equipment.
- This age group can begin to present themselves on emergency scenes as approved by the Chief, or the Incident Commander for each individual event.
- On scene, they will only assist away from any area considered Immediately Dangerous to Life and Health (IDLH), or dangerous from a situation issue such as collapse zones, any HazMat incident, any event on the Interstate I-89 or other situation as defined by the Chief-of-Department.
- This age group cannot ride on the emergency vehicles to any scene at any time but can drive themselves to the scene when and where allowed.
- This age group will serve as cadet mentors for the younger group.
- This group can begin to participate in training where not considered hazardous. This age group can pull PPE and/ or communications at events requiring PPE or communications.

Final Statement

The Cadet Corp of the fire department can and should serve as the first stepping stone into the department. While several years of the cadet's time in the department may seem boring and redundant, the experience and knowledge they can have when achieving the age of membership will launch them ahead of others coming into the department after that age. They will achieve a feeling and respect for every square inch of the equipment, understand its use, how to fix it, and will have a beginning understanding of regulations, procedures, and tactics along with an appreciation for the job in total and an appreciation for the Fire Brother/ Sister- hood. Cadets have strong regulations that govern the time they can participate and how they can participate. These are not a hinderance as these young assets must be protected at all times.

It is the responsibility of all members to read, understand and follow this Standard Operating Guideline.

Chief

Date

Printed Name

I have read and understood the SOG B006 for Fire Cadets and my need to follow it to the letter.
(Sign Below)

Signature

Date