

CHAPTER 35

VOLUNTEER FIRE DEPARTMENT AND EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES

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35.01 ESTABLISHMENT AND PURPOSE. A volunteer fire department is hereby established to prevent and extinguish fires and to protect lives and property against fires, to promote fire prevention and fire safety, and to answer all emergency or natural disaster calls as established herein. An Emergency Medical Services Department is also established. The Emergency Medical Services Department will be operated from the Riverside Fire Department and shall be directed by the Riverside Fire Chief. The fire department will be named the Riverside Community Volunteer Fire Department.

35.02 POLICIES AND PROCEDURES. The Department may adopt policies and standard operating procedures it deems best calculated to accomplish the objectives established herein. Such policies and procedures may not be inconsistent with the ordinances and policies of the City of Riverside or laws of the State of Iowa and must first be approved or ratified by the Riverside City Council.

35.03 ORGANIZATION.

1. The department shall consist of the Fire Chief and such other officers and personnel as may be authorized by the Council, which will generally determine the size and compensation of the Department.

2. The City recognizes the nonprofit organization, "Riverside Emergency Services Association, Inc." established by the fire fighters and emergency response personnel as a partner in promoting the welfare of personnel and the Department to enhance the emergency response capabilities for the City and surrounding areas.

35.04 COMPENSATION. Compensation of the members shall be established by resolution with affirmative vote of the Council.

35.05 TRAINING. All members of the department shall meet the minimum training standards established by the State Fire Marshal and attend and actively participate in regular or special training drills or programs as directed by the Fire Chief. All members of the Department shall meet minimum health standards as established by the City Council and shall take and pass a health screening physical designed for the Fire Department, as may be established and directed by the City Council.

35.06 ELECTION OF OFFICERS. A Fire Chief shall be appointed by the Fire Department consistent with the constitution and bylaws, with the approval of the City Council. The department may elect other officers as its constitution and bylaws may provide. In case of absence of the Fire Chief, the officer next in rank shall be in charge and have and exercise all the powers of Fire Chief.

35.07 FIRE CHIEF'S DUTIES. The Fire Chief shall direct the operations of the Riverside Community Volunteer Fire Department and Emergency Medical Services Department and shall perform all duties required of the Fire Chief, by law, resolution, ordinance or as otherwise directed by the Riverside City Council, including but not limited to the following:

1. Enforce ordinances and laws regulating fire prevention and the investigation of the cause, origin and circumstances of fires.
2. Upon request, give advice concerning private fire alarm systems, fire extinguishing equipment, fire escapes and exits and development of fire emergency plans.
3. When in charge of a fire scene or other emergency, direct an operation as necessary to extinguish or control a fire, perform a rescue operation, investigate the existence of a suspected or reported fire, gas leak, or other hazardous condition, or take any other action deemed necessary in the reasonable performance of the Chief's duties.
4. Prohibit an individual, vehicle or vessel from approaching the fire scene of an emergency. The Chief may also remove or cause to be moved or removed from the scene any object, vehicle, vessel or individual that may impede or interfere with the emergency operations.
5. When in charge of a fire scene or other emergency, the Chief may place or erect ropes, guards, barricades or other obstructions across a street, alley, right-of-way, or private property near the location of the fire or emergency so as to prevent accidents or interference with the efforts or operations of the fire department, to control the scene until any required investigation is complete, or to preserve evidence related to the fire or other emergency.
6. Be charged with the duty of maintaining the efficiency, discipline and control of the fire department. The members of the fire department shall, at all times, be subject to the direction of the Fire Chief and other command personnel in the authorized chain of command.
7. Exercise and have full control over the disposition of all fire apparatus, tools, equipment and other property used by or belonging to the fire department, subject to the direction and control of the City Council.
8. The Chief or the Chief's designee shall investigate into the cause, origin and circumstance at every fire occurring in the city or township where there is a contract for fire protection, by which property has been destroyed or damaged or which results in bodily injury to a person, and determine whether the fire was a result of natural causes, negligence or design. The State Fire Marshall may assist in the investigation or may direct the investigation if the Fire Marshall determines it necessary.
9. Have the right, during reasonable hours, to enter any building or premises within the Fire Chief's jurisdiction for the purpose of making such investigation or inspection which under law or ordinance may be necessary to be made and is reasonably necessary to protect the public health, safety and welfare.

10. Make such recommendations to owners, occupants, caretakers or managers of buildings necessary to eliminate fire hazards.
11. At the request of the State Fire Marshall, and as provided by law, aid said Marshall in the performance of duties by investigating, preventing and reporting data pertaining to fires.
12. Keep accurate records of the fire department personnel, firefighting equipment, depreciation of all equipment and apparatus, the number of responses to alarms, their cause and location, and an analysis of losses by value, type and location of buildings.
13. Compile and submit to the City Clerk, Mayor and City Council monthly and annual reports of the activities of the department, including such calls for service and expenditures, as well as such other reports as may be requested by the City Clerk, Mayor or Council. It is expected that the Fire Chief or the Chief's designee will appear annually at the City Council meeting to provide a report of the Fire Department and Emergency Medical Services activities for the previous year and answer any questions that the Mayor or City Council may have.
14. Establish rules for the Department, as necessary for the operation of the Department, not in conflict with this Code or State law, subject to the approval of the City Council.

35.08 OBEDIENCE TO FIRE CHIEF. No person shall willfully fail or refuse to comply with any lawful order or direction of the Fire Chief.

35.09 ACCIDENTAL INJURY INSURANCE. The City Council shall insure the City against liability for worker's compensation and against statutory liability for the costs of hospitalization, nursing, and medical attention for volunteer firefighters and emergency services personnel injured in the performance of their duties for the City, whether within or outside the corporate limits of the City. All volunteer firefighters and emergency services personnel shall be covered by said insurance.

35.10 LIABILITY INSURANCE. The City Council shall provide liability insurance to insure against liability of the City or members of the Fire Department and Emergency Medical Services Department for injuries, death or property damage arising out of and resulting from the performance of departmental duties within or outside the corporate limits of the City.

35.11 CALLS OUTSIDE FIRE DISTRICT. The department shall answer calls to fires, medical emergencies and other emergencies outside the City limits pursuant to department policies, operating procedures, agreements and mutual aid contracts. The City Council and the Fire Department will work cooperatively to establish criteria to be used when answering emergency calls within the City limits and outside of the City limits, subject to City Council approval.

35.12 MUTUAL AID. The City, upon approval of a majority of the City Council, may enter into mutual aid agreements with other legally constituted fire departments and ambulance services. The City Council may also enter into agreements with other governmental or municipal entities by which the Riverside Community Volunteer Fire Department will provide fire and emergency services under the terms and conditions agreed upon by the City Council and contracting entity. Copies of any such agreements shall be filed with the City Clerk and provided to the Fire Department.

35.13 AUTHORITY TO CITE VIOLATIONS. The Fire Chief acting under the authority of the Code of Iowa may issue citations for violations of state and/or local fire safety regulations.

35.14 INTERFERENCE. It shall be unlawful to interfere with any Fire Department or Emergency Medical Services Department member in the performance in the performance of his or her duty at any emergency, going to or returning from a fire or emergency, or while attending to his or her duties as a member of the Riverside Fire Department.

35.15 PRIVATE USE. It shall be unlawful to take or use any City fire apparatus, tools or equipment for private use, and no member of the Fire Department shall allow any private use of any property of the Fire Department or the City, without prior affirmative vote of approval by the Riverside City Council.

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