

**VOLUNTEER LENGTH OF SERVICE  
AWARD PROGRAM  
(LOSAP)**

for

**Vernon Township  
Division of Fire Suppression**

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### DEFINITIONS RELATIVE TO THIS PLAN

#### “LOCAL UNIT”:

*Eligible Vernon Township Division of Fire Suppression:*

Vernon Fire Department #1

McAfee Fire Department #2

Highland Lakes Fire Department #3

Pochuck Valley Fire Department #4

#### “ACTIVE VOLUNTEER MEMBER”:

Means a person who has been so designated by membership in accordance with the by-laws of the Vernon Township Division of Fire Suppression and who is faithfully and actually performing volunteer service in that organization.

“AUTHORITY HAVING JURISDICTION”

The organization, office, or individual responsible for approving equipment, a procedure, or training.

“CERTIFICATION LIST”:

The Vernon Township Division of Fire Suppression will furnish Vernon Township an annual certification list, certified under oath, of all volunteer members who have qualified for credit under the LOSAP program, for the previous year.

“CREDIT”:

Credit will only be given for volunteer emergency service in Vernon Township Division of Fire Suppression.

“DRILL”:

The process of continued repetition of a The Vernon Township Division of Fire Suppression exercise; to instill (ideas, facts, procedures, etc.) by repeated exercises.

“ELECTED OR APPOINTED POSITIONS”:

President, Vice President, all Secretaries, Treasurer, Trustees, Chiefs, D/C Chiefs, Captain, Lieutenants, Delegates to the New Jersey State Fire Association, and those appointed by the President to chair or co-chair any standing or special committees, that are active volunteer members of the Vernon Township Division of Fire Suppression

“LENGTH OF SERVICE AWARD PROGRAM”:

A system established to provide tax-deferred income benefits to eligible, active volunteer members of the Vernon Township Division of Fire Suppression by means of investment in those products permitted.

“PARTICIPANT”:

An active volunteer member of Vernon Township Division of Fire Suppression, who is eligible for a benefit under a service award program.

“QUALIFIED PERSON”:

A person who by possession of a recognized degree, certificate, professional standing, or skill, and who by knowledge, training and experience, has demonstrated the ability to deal with problems associated with the subject matter, the work, or the project. This person shall be approved by or acceptable to the authority having jurisdiction.

“SPONSORING AGENCY”:

Vernon Township

“VEST/ VESTING”:

An active volunteer member shall be eligible to vest in the length of service award program provided under the provisions of P.L. 1997, c.388 if the active volunteer member has completed

at least five years of emergency service in Vernon Township Division of Fire Suppression. Prior Service credit will not count toward vesting in the program.

“YEAR OF ACTIVE EMERGENCY SERVICE”:

The year will be a calendar year from January 1 to December 31 of each year in which the active volunteer member is eligible. The eligible member shall participate in the fire service and satisfy the minimum requirements of participation, established by the Vernon Township Division of Fire Suppression on a consistent and uniform basis.

LENGTH OF SERVICE AWARD PROGRAM

The Annual Contribution for each year of current, and future service to eligible active volunteers of the Vernon Township Division of Fire Suppression shall be \$1150.00, with an annual approved increase by the Township Council of Vernon Township based on the determined COLA (as per the Local Finance Board). While the maximum amount is set by statute, it is subject to periodic increases that are tied to the consumer price index (CPI). The permitted maximum amount will be established annually, according to the emergency services volunteer length of service award program act (NJSA:40A:14-185(f) and NJAC: 5:30-14.9).

The program shall not provide for contributions for prior years service alone.

Under the length of service award program, a year of active emergency service will be credited for each calendar year in which an active volunteer member accumulates 100 points that are granted in accordance with the point schedule adopted.

The length of service award program point schedule, activity requirements and special situations will apply.

The time-frame for defining a “year of active emergency service” must be used for calculating credit for the year.

Active volunteer members of the Vernon Township Division of Fire Suppression who participate in the length of service award program and serve as paid employees within a local government unit of the State; will supply the Secretary of the Vernon Township Division of Fire Suppression

their regularly assigned work periods. These periods will be used in the credit computation. It is the responsibility of the participating active volunteer member to keep these work periods current. The law states that: In computing credit for those active volunteer members who also serve as paid employees within a local government unit of the State, credit shall be given for activities performed during the individual's regularly assigned work periods.

The Vernon Township Division of Fire Suppression is taking the words faithfully (performing emergency service) and actually (performing emergency service) at their exact meaning. The Vernon Township Division of Fire Suppression will also include ready (to perform emergency service), willing (to perform emergency service) and able (to perform emergency service), in the accumulation of points for yearly credit.

LOSAP funds may be transferred to or from a similar plan or program, with another LOSAP plan.

**Vested** LOSAP funds may be withdrawn (without IRS penalty) as follows:

1. Separation from volunteer service
2. Financial hardship
3. Disability
4. Death

Prior to the first regular, not organizing, meeting of the Vernon Township Council in January of each year, the Vernon Township Division of Fire Suppression will provide the Vernon Township Clerk with the Certification List of all volunteer members who have qualified for credit under the LOSAP program for the previous year. They will also provide quarterly point reports. Such reports shall be held confidential in accordance with the length of service awards program.

Upon receipt of the certification list, the Township Council will review it and approve the final certification.

If the Township Council has questions concerning the eligibility of any individual, it may request supplemental documentation from the Vernon Township Division of Fire Suppression. It will be the responsibility of the questioning member(s) of the Vernon Township Council to examine the supplemental documentation within a reasonable time of 30 days after their January meeting.

It shall be the decision of the Vernon Township Division of Fire Suppression in regards to the eligibility of any participants. Any Volunteer member has the right to appeal this decision for a period of 30 days, at which time the decision of the Vernon Township Division of Fire Suppression shall be final and the list shall be certified.

A volunteer may request, in writing, to have their name deleted from the list as a participant in the LOSAP program and will remain as a non-participant until the request is similarly withdrawn.



## APPEAL PROCESS

An active volunteer member whose name does not appear on the approved certification list may appeal within 30 days of the posting of the list.

The appeal must be in writing and sent via certified mail to the Township of Vernon Fire Commissioner at 21 Church Street, Vernon, NJ 07462

- (a) In conducting its investigation, the sponsoring agency shall give due consideration to evidence submitted by the active volunteer member in support of the appeal, and evidence submitted by the emergency service organization in support of its decision. All such evidence shall be in the form of records or other written materials which clearly substantiate the reasons for filing an appeal by the active volunteer member, and the reasons for denying certification or credit for prior service, as determined by the emergency service organization.
- (b) Upon receiving an appeal, and prior to conducting its own investigation, the sponsoring agency may, at its discretion, and within 10 days, refer the matter back to the emergency service organization in an effort to settle the dispute internally.
- (c) If the appeal and all written documentation is referred back to the emergency service organization, and the emergency service organization fails to settle or take action on the issue within 30 days, the sponsoring agency shall then investigate the appeal, as set forth in section (d) above.
- (d) If an appeal is not referred back to the emergency service organization, or within 30 days of receiving an unresolved appeal from the emergency service organization, the sponsoring agency shall conduct its own investigation, as set forth in (a) above, and shall submit a non-binding recommendation to the emergency service organization with respect to the matter. The emergency service organization shall either accept, modify or deny the sponsoring agency's recommendation, and thereby, decide the matter.
- (e) The final decision by the emergency service organization shall be subject to appropriate judicial review

Minor, clarifying, or administrative amendments that do not significantly affect the elements of the plan approved by the voters may be amended via Ordinance by a majority vote of the Vernon Township Council.

## The Vernon Township Division of Fire Suppression LOSAP Point Schedule

### General Provisions:

- a. Earning 100 points will award an eligible year of service.
- b. Member is vested after five (5) qualifying years.
- c. The remaining points must be earned in a minimum of 4 other categories as listed below.

### Categories:

#### 1. **Training Courses** - 30 point Maximum

1 point per training hour attended (No points accrue for traveling hours or overnight stay hours)

- a. This includes, but is not limited to, Fire department -sanctioned activities, such as:
  - i. In house training
  - ii. hands on practice
  - iii. training located off premises
  - iv. Video, computer, or other technical training

#### 2. **Drills** - 20 point Maximum

2 points per drill; any drill over 2 hours, add 1 point per additional hour attended. This includes, but is not limited to, fire department-sanctioned activities, such as:

- a. Drill Nights
- b. Four Company drills
- c. Driver Training drill

#### 3. **Call Response:** 50 point maximum, 10 point minimum

- a. 61% - 100% = 50 pts

51% - 60% = 45 pts

41% - 50% = 40 pts

31% - 40% = 35 pts

21% - 30% = 30 pts

11% - 20% = 10 pts

01% - 10% = 0 pts

- b. Members with 30 years of service, or those disabled, shall be exempt from this category, but shall remain eligible for LOSAP, provided that the required points are earned in another category.



4. **Elected and appointed positions:** 30 point maximum

A full term must be served to acquire the full points of said position.

ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICERS: (Must be an active volunteer member to receive points)

- a. President 30 points
- b. Vice President 20 points
- c. Secretaries 25 points
- d. Treasurer 25 points
- e. LOSAP Administrator 15 points
- f. Trustee 10 points

LINE OFFICERS:

- a. Chief 30 points
- b. Deputy Chief 25 points
- c. Captain 20 points
- d. Lieutenant 20 points
- e. Ex-Chiefs 15 points

APPOINTED POSITION:

- a. Appointed by President 5 points
- b. All delegates to NJ Fireman's Association 5 points
- c. Chair/Co-chair of any standing/special committee 5 points  
(subject to approval of the Fire Commissioner)

5. **Fundraising and Recruitment:** 20 point maximum, 10 point minimum

- a. One point per hour, up to 8 points per activity per day

6. **Miscellaneous sanctioned activities:** 20 points maximum

- a. One point per 2 hours, up to 6 points per activity per day

7. **Service time, not continuous time:** 30 points maximum

- a. One point awarded per year of service
- b. May include all past years served up to 10 years prior to the start of the LOSAP per N.J.S.A. 40A:14-188(c).

## TRAINING REQUIREMENTS

The Fire department shall provide training and education for all active members commensurate with the duties and functions that they are expected to perform.

For every hour of instruction / training attended; the Active Volunteer Member will receive one (1) point. The total maximum for category shall be 30 points.

Points accumulated for Instruction / Training will be given in the same year in which the Instruction Training finished and no other year.

If the Instruction / Training class had a pass / fail test, you must receive a passing grade; or have acquired a certificate of completion to receive points.

The date on any certificate is the year in which credit will be given. Training will only be approved that directly relates to the Vernon Township Division of Fire Suppression functions.

Training shall include but not be limited to:

- a. FF1, FF2, FF3, CPR
- b. In-Service training
- c. Special training
- d. Member/Officer training
- e. Advanced training
- f. Driver training
- g. Training required by regulatory agencies (e.g., PEOSHA, OSHA, etc.)
- h. State Mandate training

Training shall be provided either in-house; or at other locations by qualified persons.

A training class or session might be conducted by an individual who has special expertise or abilities in the subject area, whether or not the instructor is a member of the fire department or a qualified fire service instructor.

## **DRILL REQUIREMENT**

The actual practice of the Vernon Township Division of Fire Suppression.

Members who engage in emergency operations shall be trained commensurate with their duties and responsibilities. Training shall be as frequent as necessary to ensure that members can perform their assigned duties in a safe and competent manner.

Two (2) points will be acquired for every Drill attended. For drills over 2 hours, one point will be added for each additional hour.

The Active Volunteer Member must be in attendance for a sufficient duration of the drill, as determined by the qualified Instructor. The total maximum for category shall be 20 points.

## **CALL RESPONSE REQUIRMENT**

61% - 100% = 50 pts

51% - 60% = 45 pts

41% - 50% = 40 pts

31% - 40% = 35 pts

21% - 30% = 30 pts

11% - 20% = 10 pts

01% - 10% = 0 pts

Members serving 30 years, or those disabled (with doctor's certificate), shall be exempt from this requirement, but shall remain eligible for LOSAP benefits, provided that the required points are earned in other categories. The total maximum for category shall be 50 points. The total minimum for category shall be 10 points.

**ELECTED or APPOINTED POSITIONS REQUIREMENT**

A full term must be served to acquire the full points of said position. The total maximum for category shall be 30 points.

**ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICERS:**

(Must be an active volunteer member to receive points)

- |                        |           |
|------------------------|-----------|
| 1. President           | 30 points |
| 2. Vice President      | 20 points |
| 3. All Secretaries     | 25 points |
| 4. Treasurer           | 25 points |
| 5. LOASP Administrator | 15 points |
| 6. Trustees            | 10 points |

**LINE OFFICERS:**

- |                 |           |
|-----------------|-----------|
| 1. Chief        | 30 points |
| 2. Deputy Chief | 25 points |
| 3. Captains     | 20 points |
| 4. Lieutenants  | 20 points |
| 5. Ex-Chiefs    | 15 points |

**APPOINTED POSITIONS:**

- |  |          |
|--|----------|
| 1. As appointed by the President                           | 5 points |
| 2. All delegates to the NJ State Firemen's Association     | 5 points |
| 3. Chair or co-chair of any standing or special committee. | 5 points |

### **FUNDRAISING AND RECRUITMENT**

One point per hour, up to 8 points per activity per day, up to 20 Points Maximum.  
A minimum of 10 points must be earned in fundraising or recruiting.

Fundraising shall include, but not be limited to:

1. Assistance in regular annual fund drive
2. Stand in the Road
3. Santa Run
4. Dinners/Breakfast
5. Raffles

Recruiting shall include, but not be limited to:

1. Making and handing out flyers and posters
2. Meeting with civic groups to recruit
3. Writing articles to recruit.
4. Creating video or CDs to recruit members.

### **MISCELLANEOUS SANCTIONED ACTIVITIES**

One point per hour, up to 8 points per activity per day, up to 20 Points Maximum.  
Travel time shall not be included, only the actual time at the activity will apply. Each miscellaneous activity shall be approved by the Fire Commissioner. Those activities shall include but not limited to:

- A. Participation in Parades
- B. Building maintenance: painting, cleaning, repairs, etc.
- C. Memorial Service, Funerals
- D. Wet downs
- E. Public education

- F. Attendance of NJ State Fire Convention
- G. Health Fairs
- H. Scout tours of building
- I. Special projects (file of life, etc.)

### **SERVICE TIME**

To offer incentive for members with experience to continue to serve the residents of Vernon Township, the following will be applied:

One point per year of service shall be awarded to each member. This shall include all prior years. Service is not required to be continuous. Credit shall be limited to not more than 10 years of active emergency service periods preceding the creation of the program by the Township of Vernon as per N.J.A.C. 5:30-14.14.

### **SPECIAL SITUATION REQUIREMENTS**

#### **JURY DUTY:**

No points will be awarded due to Jury Duty. Active Volunteer Members are exempt from jury duty.

#### **PERSONAL LEAVE OF ABSENCE:**

No Points will be awarded unless the Active Volunteer Member is participating (faithfully and actually) in activities of the Length of Service Award Program Point Schedule.

#### **MEDICAL LEAVE OF ABSENCE:**

No Points will be awarded unless the Active Volunteer Member is participating (faithfully and actually) in activities of the Length of Service Award Program Point Schedule.

**FEDERAL FAMILY AND MEDICAL LEAVE ACT:**

No Points will be awarded unless the Active Volunteer Member is participating (faithfully and actually) in activities of the Length of Service Award Program Point Schedule.

**STATE FAMILY LEAVE ACT:**

No Points will be awarded unless the Active Volunteer Member is participating (faithfully and actually) in activities of the Length of Service Award Program Point Schedule.

**PERSONAL LEAVE OF ABSENCE:**

No Points will be awarded unless the Active Volunteer Member is participating (faithfully and actually) in activities of the Length of Service Award Program Point Schedule.

**MILITARY LEAVE OF ABSENCE:**

No Points will be awarded unless the Active Volunteer Member is participating (faithfully and actually) in activities of the Length of Service Award Program Point Schedule.

**BEREAVEMENT TIME:**

In the event that an active volunteer member miss any activity listed on the Length Of Service Award Program Point Schedule due to a death in the immediate family, they shall notify the person in charge of record keeping for the program at the next monthly meeting.

An Active Volunteer Member will be allowed a maximum of seven (7) days that they will receive points for activities missed for the following:

A: Death of a father, mother, spouse, child, stepchild, brother, sister, grandparent, grandchild, aunt, or uncle, current mother-in-law, father-in-law, brother-in-law, sister-in law.

**FIRE RELATED INJURY**

Any fire related injury will be handled as follows:

No Active Volunteer Member in any fire company will ever be penalized for an injury while in the performance of duties in the Township of Vernon Division of Fire Suppression.

Immediately following any incident, the Active Volunteer Member is required to complete a State of New Jersey Employer's First Report of Accidental Injury or Occupational Disease Report. This report will be turned over to the person in charge of Workers Compensation Claims for the Township of Vernon.

Should immediate medical attention be warranted, the Active Volunteer Member will be seen by a Hospital Emergency Room. The person in charge of Worker's Compensation Claims for the Township of Vernon will be notified.

Should the Emergency Room Doctor give the Active Volunteer Member a Prescription/ Disability Certificate for (No Work) due to the injury, he/she shall receive full credit for activities during absence or injury.

Should an injury turn into a Workmen's Compensation claim against the Township of Vernon Division of Fire Suppression, at a later date, the Active Volunteer Member will be given credit for activities during the absence or injury, back to the date of the injury.

In both cases above they will terminate upon the Active Volunteer Member being released to return to full active duty at the Township of Vernon Division of Fire Suppression.