

# CAPTIAL FIRE MUTUAL AID

## STANDARD OPERATING GUIDELINE

NUMBER: XXXXX

APPROVED: \_\_\_\_\_

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**SUBJECT: Accountability**

### PURPOSE

To establish a comprehensive and functional personal resource tracking system for the users of the Capital Fire Mutual Aid System (CFMA), which provides for the accountability of all personnel operating at an emergency scene.

### AUTHORITY & RESPONSIBILITY

Supervising Officers are responsible to ensure that all members conform to these rules and regulations.

### DEFINITIONS

- **Accountability Board:** Used by the Incident Commander or Personnel Accountability Officer to track personnel assigned and operating within a hazard area at an incident.
- **Hazard Area:** Any location that may pose a significant safety or health risk to members due to, but not limited to: the presence of products of combustion, oxygen-deficient or enriched atmospheres, any IDLH atmosphere, hazardous equipment or operations, fire suppression, or any location which predisposes members to become lost, disoriented, or trapped, including confined spaces and wildland interface zones.
- **IDLH:** Immediately Dangerous To Life and Health.
- **PAR (Personnel Accountability Report):** Roll call of all personnel assigned and operating within a hazard area.
- **PAT (Personnel Accountability Tag):** Plastic or metal luggage-type tag with a snap hook connector that can be attached to an accountability board. Tags identify the member and their department and are color-coded: Silver, Red, Green, or Blue. The back may include optional information (e.g., blood type, medications, allergies, religion).
- **Personnel Accountability Officer:** Assigned by the Incident Commander to track and maintain accountability of all personnel.

- **SECTOR Accountability Officer:** Assigned by Incident Commander to track and maintain accountability of personnel operating in a specific geographic area of the incident.
  - **Tactical Worksheet/Incident Command Templates:** Used by the Incident Commander to track progress on tactical objectives and serve as a reminder for crucial objectives.
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## I. ACCOUNTABILITY

Accountability requires a commitment from all members to work within the safety system of an incident.

**A.** Command will always maintain accurate tracking and awareness of where resources are committed at an incident.

**B.** Accountability will be a key element in the Incident Action Plan (IAP). Barriers to effective accountability must be identified and addressed.

**C.** Company and Sector Accountability Officers will track and supervise crews assigned to them in their areas of responsibility.

**D.** All personnel are accountable for their safety and that of their team members. Awareness of the position and function of all team members must be maintained.

**E.** Crew integrity is a critical component of successful accountability.

**F.** Crews will work for command and will be assigned specific areas. **Free-lancing is prohibited.**

**G.** Officers are responsible for training personnel and ensuring compliance with this guideline.

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## II. SYSTEM HARDWARE

### A. PERSONAL ACCOUNTABILITY TAG (P.A.T.)

Each department member will be issued two PATs with a snap-style retention device. Tags will include the department name and individual's name. Color codes indicate operational status:

1. **Color Coding:**
  - **Silver:** Line Officer\* or greater
  - **Red:** Interior Firefighter Status
  - **Green:** Exterior Firefighter Status
  - **Blue:** Safety Officer

\*Line Officers must inform Command if they are NOT an interior firefighter.

2. **Optional Back Information:** Blood type, medications, allergies, religion, etc.
3. Lost, damaged, or updated tags must be reported to the department's chain of command.
4. Blank tags should be carried on each apparatus for emergency replacements.

## **B. ADDITIONAL CONSIDERATIONS:**

1. Accountability boards are a crucial component to accountability and **must be used** for the safety of our members.
2. Tactical Worksheet/Incident Command Templates should be considered.

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## **III. PERSONNEL ACCOUNTABILITY REPORT (PAR)**

Accountability benchmarks in tactical operations include regular roll calls:

- A. Team leaders confirm all assigned members are visually accounted for.
- B. Sector Accountability Officers account for all teams within their sector.
- C. PAR reports should include member locations and current operations.
- D. PAR reports are best conducted face-to-face within teams or sectors.
- E. PAR will be required for the following situations:
  1. Missing or trapped firefighter.
  2. Change from offensive to defensive mode.
  3. Sudden hazardous events (e.g., flashover, backdraft, collapse).
  4. All-clear reports.
  5. At 15-minute intervals or Incident Commander's discretion.
  6. Incident containment or under control.
  7. Evacuation orders.
  8. As deemed necessary by the Incident Commander.

- F. Members exiting at a control point must record their exit time and collect PATs.

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## **IV. LOST, MISSING, OR TRAPPED FIREFIGHTER**

- A. An absent member is presumed lost or trapped until confirmed safe.
- B. Crew leaders must report absences immediately.

**C. Incident Command **required** actions for lost firefighters:**

1. Request next greater alarm.
  2. Initiate a PAR.
  3. Deploy Rapid Intervention Team (RIT).
  4. Adjust strategy to prioritize search-and-rescue.
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**V. ACCOUNTABILITY OFFICER(S)**

**A.** May include apparatus operators, company officers, or designated personnel.

**B.** Responsibilities include:

1. Collect PATs.
  2. Track and account for personnel.
  3. Implement Sector Accountability Officers as needed.
  4. Provide progress reports to Incident Command.
  5. Initiate PARs as required.
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**VI. TERMINATING THE ACCOUNTABILITY SYSTEM**

**A.** Accountability is maintained until a report of “situation contained.”

**B.** Incident Command will determine the need to extend the accountability system based on conditions.

**C.** Personnel must retrieve their PATs upon release from the incident.

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**VII. TRAINING**

Training on personnel accountability should occur annually and during all training evolutions, especially live fire scenarios. Accountability should be practiced on every response to ensure effectiveness during true emergencies.

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**THIS PROGRAM IS REQUIRED BY NFPA 1500 AND DESIGNED TO PROTECT YOU, THE FIREFIGHTER.**