



County of Louisa

Department of Fire and EMS

Fire and EMS Chief Core Competencies

Outlined below are the Core Competencies which are expected of the Fire & EMS Chief. These competencies have been divided into distinct skill-sets including physical/technical expertise, public service, communication, teamwork, and professionalism.

PHYSICAL/TECHNICAL EXPERTISE

- **Directs all Emergency Management efforts for the County.** Develop plans to ensure County is prepared for all emergencies. Control County's emergency management resources; adding, eliminating, and allocating as appropriate.
- **Acts as an Incident Commander and provides command and control at emergency scenes.** Supervise all emergency operations and serves as a sector officer. Monitors strategic areas of responsibility including accountability, safety, and operations.
- **Plans for major disasters.** Develops comprehensive disaster plans that integrate other agencies' resources in order to rapidly and effectively mitigate the impact on a community. Ensures the agency operates at a civil disturbance, integrates with other agencies' actions, and provides for the safety and protection of members.
- **Administers a comprehensive risk management program.** Maintains, develops, and provides leadership for a risk management program so that injuries and property damage accidents are reduced.
- **Develops and updates standard department policies.** On an annual basis, prepares and/or updates standard department policies and departmental operating guidelines.
- **Maintains a safe and healthy work area.** Develops, manages, and evaluates departmental safety programs. Ensures that the results are evaluated to determine the program's effectiveness. Ensures personal and subordinates safety. Enforces all safety rules, wearing of PPE, and models safety practices for others to follow. Teaches safety practices to all subordinates.
- **Demonstrates operational readiness.** Ensures deployment policies of department are monitored and implemented on a constant basis. Identifies issues/problems and recommends strategies to address. Takes immediate action to maintain readiness, constant staffing, fleet, etc.
- **Conducts Fire & EMS Department investigations.** Investigates allegations of service interruptions, rules, values, or procedural infractions. Makes recommendations regarding corrective action on an organizational and individual level.
- **Administer contracts.** Establishes legal contractual services and monitors the performance of the contractor. Reports to supervisor any progress in terms of time and budget.
- **Demonstrates proper lifting, carrying, and other physical requirements.** Efficiently lifts, pushes, pulls, and handles packages, tools, and equipment. Uses appropriate technique at emergency situations when assisting patients and using equipment.

- **Demonstrates knowledge of department services and resources.** Provides information about department-specific services and resources.
- **Operates safely.** Stay Safe, Act Safe, Be Safe. Wears all appropriate personal protective equipment. Follows and models safety rules. Knows work environment by understanding hazards of all work-related equipment, chemicals, and operations and positively reinforces them.

PUBLIC SERVICE

- **Projects a positive image of the fire & EMS department to the community.** Attends, participates, and plays a leadership role in community events in order to enhance the image of the department.
- **Holds staff members accountable for outstanding internal customer service.** Continually seeks feedback from internal customers regarding service levels, communication, and satisfaction. Shares feedback with management staff and works with departmental officers to strategize service enhancements. Holds others accountable for making needed improvements.
- **Holds others accountable for identifying and implementing methods for improving customer service.** Ensures customer service enhancements are properly executed and maintained. Holds Assistant Chief and staff officers responsible and accountable for thoroughly executing approved recommendations. Provides direction as needed.
- **Holds others accountable for identifying and implementing solutions to issues.** Ensures issues impeding efficiency or customer service are resolved in a timely and appropriate manner. Holds Assistant Chief and staff officers responsible and accountable for thoroughly resolving issues. Personally addresses escalated issues.
- **Provides and demonstrates outstanding customer service.** Establishes the example for direct reports to follow by using effective language, responding promptly, and following department procedures.
- **Promotes and ensures internal customer service throughout the County.** Promotes outstanding customer service to other County departments and within the Department by responding in a timely manner to requests and inquiries.

COMMUNICATION

- **Emphasizes and models effective communication.** Ensures communication within the Department is a top priority. Models expected behavior.
- **Builds strong network of peers outside the County.** Through professional and peer organizations, shares ideas and learns from other's innovations and best practices. Promotes County's innovative programs and services.
- **Oversees efforts to recover state and federal funding.** Works effectively and professionally with various federal and state agencies to gain additional funding.
- **Creates documentation for others to follow.** Writes general correspondence, reports, memorandums, contracts, and articles for the newspaper. Submits responses to all requests for information by required deadline.
- **Maintains records and creates reports.** Completes all required reports accurately and within required deadline. Completes all required documentation as per County Guidelines.
- **Effectively reads and interprets written documents.** Demonstrates ability to read general correspondence, engineering reports, codes, standards, zoning submittals, technical and staff reports, policies, statutes, and federal regulations.

- **Makes presentations.** Delivers presentations to share information and make recommendations to County Administrator and Fire & EMS Department Leadership Team focusing on work-related issues. Presents to County Board of Supervisors in an effort to inform and achieve successful consideration of Fire & EMS Department requests for approval.
- **Communicates consistently in the workplace.** Effectively shares information on projects, purchases, and other organizational information in a clear, concise manner. Involves other work units and departments within the decision making process as appropriate. Ensures supervisor is aware of workplace issues and problems.
- **Effectively communicates with individuals outside the County.** Shares ideas and learns from other's innovations and best practices. Works effectively and professionally with various local, state, and federal agencies. Calls upon and utilizes vendors and suppliers for information on supplies, products, and purchases, as appropriate.
- **Prepares for and actively participates in meetings.** Participates actively in meetings with County department heads and County Administrator. Attends meetings promptly, professionally represents Fire & EMS Department, voices ideas and concerns, and follows up as appropriate.
- **Leads effective staff meetings.** Shares information and addresses issues through regular staff meetings. Considers knowledge and skill level of audience.
- **Listens actively.** Listens actively by maintaining focus, paraphrasing, and using open body language.
- **Extracts ideas from staff (Assistant Chiefs, Volunteer Chiefs, Captains, Lieutenants, Medic Firefighters, Firefighter/EMT's, Administrative Aides, etc.).** Consistently asks open-ended, probing questions to extract employee ideas and collaboratively develop solutions.
- **Uses effective verbal communication.** Demonstrates strong verbal communication skills by sharing information in a logical, clear, succinct manner.
- **Customizes communication styles to address other's style.** Considers other's learning and communication styles when coaching direct reports. Adjusts approach based on the most effective way to influence others.
- **Openly accepts feedback from others.** Solicits feedback from staff and County Administrator to create and expand upon self-development plans.
- **Holds others accountable for execution of interview process for all new hires and promotions.** Ensures departmental interviews occur as needed staff positions emerge. Participates in process as needed.
- **Coordinates interview process for all departmental interviews.** Coordinates departmental interviews for needed Chief Officer Positions. Demonstrates advanced interviewing techniques by asking critical questions, sharing specific position requirements/expectations, sharing next steps, and appropriately addressing interviewee questions.
- **Consistently communicates the department's values and philosophy.** Demonstrates knowledge of department's culture through modeling and discussion of values, philosophy, and message.

TEAMWORK

- **Leads teams.** Coordinates efforts of team projects, displays leadership, contributes

to team effort, and continually assesses and addresses impact of individual actions on the team.

- **Encourages team development.** Builds team cohesiveness within department by initiating on-going communication, frequent celebration of successes, and collaborative solutions to team issues. Recognizes individual growth and contributions which lead to the success of every effort. Fosters collaboration by promoting cooperative goals and building trust.
- **Builds respect of staff.** Builds respect from staff by contributing to the efforts of the department. Models expected behaviors to accomplish team goals.
- **Capitalizes on opportunities where team concept can be utilized.** Creatively identifies team projects to accomplish departmental goals and tasks.
- **Builds relationships within the Fire & EMS Department staff.** Proactively networks, shares ideas, and builds relationships within Fire & EMS Department staff.
- **Respects contributions of all County departments.** Learns and communicates about other County department's contributions by attending meetings, reading bulletins, and sharing information as appropriate.
- **Commits to the success of the County.** Participates actively in county-wide activities. Focuses on the County's needs when making decisions and taking actions. Maintains confidentiality and acts ethically. Does not promote departmental needs over the County's needs to the County Board of Supervisors.
- **Supports department's goals/strategies.** Uses department/team goals and strategies to guide decisions and actions. Considers needs and impact of actions on other departments.
- **Demonstrates flexibility.** Remains flexible and open to considering suggestions from internal and external sources for new approaches and handling of functions.
- **Recognizes and addresses negativity towards other staff and departments.** Eliminates negative discussion or comments about other departments or staff. Addresses direct reports who engage in this behavior.
- **Resolves conflict as needed.** Intervenes as appropriate to assist in the resolution of interpersonal conflict.
- **Considers impact of actions on others within department.** Prior to implementing decision/taking actions, identifies and discusses impact action will have on other department employees.

LEADERSHIP

- **Leads the Fire & EMS department.** Ensures all expected duties and requirements of the department are executed. Responsible for all end-results of department's efforts. Performs assignment within broad parameters defined by general organization requirements and accepted practices. Demonstrates knowledge of Core Competencies for all direct reports to model expected behavior — leads by example and upholds the Louisa culture.
- **Develops and implements long-range plans and fiscal projections.** Develops comprehensive long-range plans so that the projected needs of the community are met. Evaluates and projects training requirements, facilities, and buildings to meet departmental training goals. Clearly communicates and provides direction on goals and objectives with staff. Realigns staff and work based on goals, organizational planning, and priorities.
- **Takes educated risks.** Demonstrates ability to think outside the box and make educated changes within the department.

- **Evaluates program/work objectives and effectiveness.** Establishes performance measures with community input. Develops processes and systems to demonstrate desired community outcomes and accountability. Monitors department accomplishments related to performance indicators.
- **Develops short- and long-term recruiting, retention, and hiring strategies.** Develops strategy to enhance the recruitment process, address retention issues, and ensure staffing needs are met. Works with management team to execute strategies. Provides guidance and feedback as needed.
- **Approves budgetary recommendations.** Provides final budgetary recommendations to County Administrator. Monitors progress toward fiscal objectives and adjust plan as needed. Ensures employees have all required resources within budgetary constraints. Monitors monthly budget expenditures.
- **Administers job performance requirements to improve the department.** Appraises grievance programs to determine if the program is effective, consistent, and produces resolution at the appropriate level. Establishes and evaluates a list of education and in-service training goals so that all members can achieve and maintain required proficiencies. Ensures member-assistance program produces the desired results and benefits. Implements and evaluates incentive programs to reward achievement of desired results.
- **Leads projects with departmental and County-wide implications.** Leads process improvement and/or task teams to improve County's functions. Leads regional cooperative subcommittees composed of partnering fire or related agencies.
- **Holds management team accountable for employee performance issues.** Holds others accountable for documenting performance and addressing issues according to procedure. Responds to personnel issues immediately.
- **Builds in performance measurements and accountability.** Ensures performance measures are built into all programs, processes, and systems before they are implemented. Determines method or process for managing accountability throughout the program, process, or system.
- **Mentors subordinate personnel.** Works with staff members to identify professional goals and develop action plans. Provides guidance on business acumen. Constantly looks for mentoring opportunities to develop personnel to advance to higher ranks.
- **Demonstrates and coaches others on professional etiquette.** Influences others and builds relationships through demonstrating sensitivity to others concerns and using appropriate and effective language. Respects others time and coaches others on professional etiquette.
- **Coordinates employee development plans.** Prepares developmental plans. Spends a minimum of two hours monthly working with each direct report. Ensures all promoted employees attend new employee orientation sessions and are mentored in their new position. Schedules on-the-job training, classroom training, and seminars as needed.
- **Develops employee skills.** Trains and mentors subordinates for increasing capacity. Provides effective feedback and guidance with a focus on performance improvement. Exposes subordinates to work experiences that develop their capacity. Directs unit members during a training evolution so that the evolution is performed safely, efficiently, and as directed.
- **Evaluates job performance of assigned members.** Ensures each member's performance is evaluated accurately and reported according to Human Resource policies and procedures. Consistently assesses employee performance, asks probing questions to identify underlying causes for performance issues/successes,

and provides focused feedback.

- **Outlines performance expectations.** Clearly outlines expectations to all direct reports and provides appropriate feedback on performance. Promotes mastery of Core Competencies.
- **Writes clear and effective performance reviews.** Considers employee's performance throughout the year. Utilizes documentation, employee's input, and customer's input to develop a meaningful summary of employee's performance.
- **Monitors departmental performance reviews.** Holds supervisors/managers accountable for timely reviews. Ensures reviews are fair and reflective of employee's overall work performance.
- **Participates in the department strategic planning process.** Participates actively in the strategic planning process by providing input to improve the department's service delivery. Seeks to develop a broad perspective while providing operational perspective to the process.
- **Champions the Continuing Education Program.** Promotes and educates others on the Continuing Education Program including tuition reimbursement.
- **Acts professionally.** Serves the customers. Treats everyone with respect. Stays focused on the mission. Demonstrates, models, and incorporates the tenants of trustworthiness, respect, responsibility, fairness, caring, and citizenship.
- **Learns, embraces, and markets the Fire & EMS Department's message.** Models the message by your actions. Reinforces the message with your words and written communication.
- **Demonstrates strong ethical standards.** Ensures decisions and actions are in the best interest of the County and are not in favor of any individual, group, or self. Is mindful of representing the County at all times.
- **Demonstrates initiative.** Self-directed. Shows commitment through actions. Pursues personal growth in every endeavor.
- **Models a strong work ethic.** Demonstrates strong work ethic by remaining focused until the project is complete; assists direct reports when needed, goes beyond the scope of regular job duties. Understands impact on the team. Understands importance of professional conduct at all times while on duty. Creates and implements ethical standards within the department.
- **Applies professional judgment when solving problems.** Assesses a situation, identifies possible options, applies standard practices and procedures, and maintains accountability for decision.
- **Displays a positive attitude.** Displays a positive attitude by focusing on opportunities and solutions and reducing negative discussion within department. Maintains composure during crisis situations.
- **Takes responsibility for actions.** Readily accepts responsibility for his/her actions by recognizing issues, focusing on solutions, and avoiding blame. Admits mistakes and proposes method to rectify.
- **Manages time.** Models time management by timely response to requests, prompt attendance to meetings, and consistent meeting of deadlines.
- **Builds trust and respect within department.** Maintains commitments, holds true to word, and works with direct reports to strike a balance between personal goals/values and departmental goals.
- **Commits to self-development.** Accepts responsibility for managing own self-development plan and commits to continuous improvement of skills and knowledge.
- **Collaborates with colleagues in other departments.** Solve issues and complete special projects through working with other department heads and County

Administrator to arrive at mutually advantageous and agreeable solutions addressing current and future issues.

- **Makes professional contributions.** Works with professional organizations to advance the profession of Fire Chiefs and the fire service.