



## OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR/FIRE CHIEF

May 16, 2014

### INSTRUCTIONAL BULLETIN #14-15

**TO:** All Fire and Rescue Personnel

**FROM:** Martin L. Senterfitt, Director/Fire Chief 

**RE:** **New Sick Leave Policy**

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Departments throughout the country are struggling to deal with sick leave issues and how it affects operating budgets and the JFRD is no different. This policy is to clarify existing language in the Collective Bargaining Agreement, Civil Service Rules & Regulations, and JFRD's policies and procedures.

**Sick Leave** is defined in the Local 122 Agreement as being "unable to report to work because of illness.... Absences because of illness are subject to investigation by the appropriate supervisor, which may include the requirement of a doctor's certificate." Another definition exists in SAP 213.04.02 titled Sick Leave. Sick Leave is used for the employee's illness only.

**Sick Leave Abuse** is defined when a pattern clearly develops demonstrating the employee is abusing personal leave taken for illness.

**Sick Leave Fraud** is defined as using ones Sick Leave when not sick. It is wrongful deception intended to result in financial or personal gain. An example would be using Sick Leave because no other leave is available to you or to attend an off-day job.

Using current definitions and language found in the Local Agreement 122 and SAP's, the following policy will apply to all Divisions.



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When an employee is unable to work due to illness, the employee will call the appropriate District or Battalion Chief prior to 0730 hours. This is a change from previous practice.

The number of Sick Leaves is based on the previous 365 days and is a sliding scale.

At the effective date of this Instructional Bulletin, any employee with four or more Sick Leave's will be considered beginning at Step 1.

\*If you had a Doctor's note or were on FMLA, then those days do not count towards the four or more rule.

The first three (3) incidents of Sick Leaves (SL); no action is taken, if used properly.

Step 1

Upon the 4<sup>th</sup> incident of Sick Leave, the appropriate District or Battalion Chief will conduct a face to face meeting with the employee and develop an attendance improvement plan or document true medical issues via email to the appropriate Division Chief and employee.

Step 2

Upon the 5<sup>th</sup> incident of Sick Leave, the District or Battalion Chief, with concurrence of the Division Chief, will decide if a *Letter of Counseling* is necessary to the employee and *can* require all future Sick Leave requests be accompanied by a doctor's certificate per the Local Contract Article 19.9 A and 20.7 A.

Sick Leave Fraud will result in a Rule Infraction Charge on the first offense.

Sick Leave Abuse will be investigated and appropriate actions up to and including Rule Infraction Charges will be issued.

Any employee on FMLA will be governed according to the Federal Law and has all rights and privileges as such.