Grant County Fire Protection District 3

POLICY AND PROCEDURE

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1. NUMBER: 5.2.01

2. SUBJECT: ***Employee Benefits***

3. POLICY: It is the Policy of Grant County Fire District 3 to provide certain personnel benefits to employees as outlined in this Procedure.

4. SCOPE: This Policy and Procedure is applicable to all career personnel of Grant County Fire District 3.

5. RESPONSIBILITIES:

   A. The District Fire Chief is responsible for monitoring compliance with these programs and recommending to the Board of Commissioners suggested changes and improvements.

6. PROCEDURE:

   A. Retirement:

      1. State Retirement System: District full-time employees are required to participate in either the State of Washington's Public Employee's Retirement System (PERS) or the Fire Fighters' Retirement System (LEOFF) as long as their compensated hours continue to qualify them for service credit under the appropriate plan.
      2. Participating employees shall pay any required amounts towards the contribution costs. The employee's contribution shall be made by means of a payroll deduction. The District shall also make appropriate contributions required by state law. No service credits will be granted during a month when compensable service drops below the minimums established for these two plans. For further details or possible changes, consult the state statutes and other materials summarizing the Retirement Systems.

   B. Health and Welfare Plans: All full-time and some part-time employees are eligible to participate in the District health insurance programs. The programs and criteria for eligibility will be explained at the time the employee becomes eligible to join. **The District reserves the right to make changes in the carriers and provisions of these programs, including eliminations of the benefits or programs**.

C. Extended Health Benefits:

1. In compliance with COBRA: (the Consolidated Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act), the District will offer continuing health care coverage on a self-pay basis to full-time employees (other than LEOFF I employees) and their dependents (to the same extent the benefits are provided to existing employees) in the event an employee or dependent loses coverage as a result of termination (except for gross misconduct) or reduction in hours of a converted employee; divorce or legal separation of a covered employee from the employee's spouse, the death of a covered employee, or any other qualified event under COBRA.
2. LEOFF I employees will be afforded health care coverage in accordance with their Retirement System laws and regulation.
3. Once continuation coverage is established, the coverage can be terminated at the end of 36 months (18 months after termination of employment or reduction of hours of the employee), or at any other time if:
   a. The employer does not provide any group health plan to any employee.
   b. There is a failure to pay a premium.
   c. The employee gets another job.
   d. The covered person obtains coverage under any other group health plan.
   e. The dependent spouse or child becomes eligible for Medicare benefits or for benefits under Section XVII of the Social Security Act.

D. Other Insurance: The District makes contributions on behalf of each employee to the Social Security System (as required), in addition to those contributions each employee makes through the FICA payroll deductions. Unemployment compensation benefits are generally available after termination of employees who become unemployed through no fault of their own. LEOFF I employees do not contribute to Social Security.

E. Worker's Compensation:

1. All employees (except LEOFF I employees) of the District are insured in a state insurance program which is designed to protect them against medical costs from on-the-job accidents and injuries and for work time lost as a result of such accidents or injuries. The District pays a substantial portion of the premium costs for this coverage. Worker's compensation insurance also provides vocational rehabilitation services when required and cash settlement awards for permanent or partial disability.
2. All accidents and on-the-job injuries must be reported to a supervisor. That supervisor shall direct the injured employee to seek immediate

medical treatment if necessary and be responsible for reporting the injury to the District Fire Chief. The supervisor shall also be responsible for insuring, as soon as physically possible, that the injured employee completes the appropriate form for reporting the accident.

F. Educational Assistance:

1. It is the District position to encourage employees to obtain additional training and education which will facilitate their advancement in District employment and will be consistent with the best interests of the District.
2. The District may provide an education assistance plan for regular full-time employees to improve their current and future job-related skills, knowledge and abilities. The District Fire Chief shall have the discretion to determine whether the training or course work for which the employee requests education assistance is related to the employee's present position or a position to which an employee may reasonably be promoted.
3. Employees must make a written application for educational assistance to the District Fire Chief. If the request is approved, the tuition, books and other required course materials may be reimbursed to the employee.

G. Training:

1. Training opportunities for employees may be provided. The District may develop training programs to meet District-wide needs or prepare employees for promotions, when it is determined such programs will improve the efficiency or effectiveness of the services rendered by District employees.
2. Training sessions may be held during regular working hours at the discretion of the District. Employees shall be compensated for any time spent in such training sessions during the employee's regular working hours.
3. Employees shall not be compensated for any time spent at training sessions held outside of the employee's regular working hours unless attendance at the training session was mandatory or the employee was required to perform productive work. However, the District Fire Chief has the discretion to compensate employees for time spent in District sponsored training sessions held outside regular working hours when the training session relates to the employee's reasonably anticipated duties or position(s).

H. Extended Death and Disability Benefits: Employees are eligible for death and disability benefits that may be provided by Federal or State laws and additional benefits provided by the District. The District reserves the right to make changes in the carriers and all provisions of these programs including eliminations of the

benefits or programs when deemed necessary or advisable. The extended benefits apply only while in service for the District.

I. Telephone Base Rate: District full-time employees are required to use personal telephones for District business and are required to be available for contact and consultation. To facilitate these needs, the District will pay full-time employees a flat fee of $40.00 per month for telephone expenses or provide a cell phone for District use.

J. Deferred Compensation:

1. Deferred Compensation Program- Employees may participate in any qualified deferred compensation program approved by the District, including but not limited to DRS (DCP) or the IAFF-FC Program.
2. Eligibility- An employee shall have completed one (1) year of service with the District to be eligible for a District matching contribution to deferred compensation.
3. Matching Contribution- Effective as of January 1, 2026, the District will match, dollar-for-dollar, up to $150.00 per month for any employee participating in a qualified deferred compensation program. After five years of completed continuous service with the District, the monthly matching contribution will increase to $200.00. After ten years of completed continuous service, the monthly matching contribution will increase to $250.00.
4. For non-bargaining members The District shall pay an additional $75.00 per month to DRS (DCP).

K. WSCFF Employee Benefit Trust: Bargaining unit members

1. Contribution by District- The District shall pay $75.00 per month for each LEOFF Plan 2 employee to the Washington State Council of Firefighters Post-Retirement Medical Trust.
2. Liability- The Union and the employees shall hold the District harmless and indemnify the District from any liability, claim, demand, suit, judgment, loss, damage or injury of any kind arising from or related to the implementation and administration of or participation in the Trust. The Local and the employees shall be fully liable for any liability, inclusive of any federal, state or local agency determination regarding such liabilities which arise out of the Trust. The Local and the employees shall be liable for any tax penalties or other liabilities arising out of the implementation and administration of or participation in the Trust.
3. No Direct Benefit Payment- Under no circumstances will the District be liable for making any direct payment of any Trust benefit to any employee, retired employee or beneficiary.

L. Air Ambulance: All full-time employees will be eligible to participate in the Air Ambulance Program. **The District reserves the right to make changes in the carriers and provisions of these programs, including eliminations of the benefits or programs.**

M. Athletic Dues:
The District will pay for a single membership for non-bargaining unit members.