



## Fire Service Exploring

Fire Service Exploring/Junior Cadet (shall be referred to as Explorer) is a worksite-based program for young men and women who have completed the eighth grade and are 14 and older, but have not yet reached their 21<sup>st</sup> birthday.

Fire Service Explorer posts help youth gain insight into a variety of programs that offer hands-on career activities. Exploring offers experiential learning with lots of fun-filled, hands-on activities that promote the growth and development of adolescent youth.

The Alabama Child Labor Law restricts firefighting to 18 and older. Explorers/Junior Cadets are not firefighters and **should not be** treated in any way as firefighters.

### Explorer Participation Guidelines

- Explorer must have application on file with the local fire department and/or the Boy Scouts of America.
- Explorer must have a Waiver of Liability on file with the fire department.
- Explorer must have a completed individual health physical statement including Hepatitis vaccine documentation on file with the department.
- All school-age Explorers/Junior Cadets must be enrolled in school.

### Fire Services Exploring: Safety Issues

There are some issues and hazards specific to Fire Services Explorer programs that must be considered when organizing a post. These issues are fairly unique compared with other types of Explorer posts, being a direct result of the post's affiliation with fire departments and the potential for hazards.

The following is a detailed list of guidelines that must be used for the formation of a post Explorer safety policy. As with any program, extremes of temperature, humidity, and other atmospheric conditions should be considered during any activity.

One issue that requires particular attention is what the Fire Services Explorer will be allowed to do at the emergency scene. After completing all requirements, departments may allow Explorers to respond on approved apparatus with trained personnel. A detailed policy must be established as to what the Explorer may and may not do once he or she arrives on the scene.

## Explorer Safety Guidelines

- Explorers **will not be** substituted for trained personnel.
- Explorers must be equipped with personal protective equipment that is appropriate for the activity.
- Fire departments should equip explorers with special colors or some special indicator.
- Explorers may be mobilized only as a post, with required leadership.
- Explorers are not on call as individuals and may not drive any vehicle to any incident.
- Explorers who ride on apparatus or other department vehicles must be seated and must wear a seatbelt.
- Explorers may not climb ground or aerial ladders over 35 feet or not supported against a structure.
- Explorers may not enter or perform ventilation procedures on a burning structure.
- Explorers may not use any tools or gloves on energized electrical equipment.
- Explorers may not operate cutting torches.
- Explorers may not operate hydraulic rescue tools or equipment.
- **Explorers may not handle life nets.**
- **Exception: Using an official training facility, the use of aerial ladders with appropriate safety equipment, and entering a controlled burn building is approved.**

## Riding Fire and Rescue Apparatus Guidelines

- Explorer must be **Age Sixteen (16)** to be eligible to participate in a ride-a-long program on any fire department apparatus.
- Explorer must participate in program for minimum of six (6) months before being eligible for ride-a-long program and meet individual department basic training requirements.
- Explorer must have documentation of successful completion of CPR and basic first aid training.
- Explorer must have completed annual training in Blood Borne Pathogens.
- Department must document all training hours for each participant. Documentation should be kept on file for a minimum of five (5) years after the participant leaves the program.
- Explorer must be under direct supervision of Adult Leadership during ride-a-long.
- Explorers shall remain with trained personnel in the cold zone of an emergency incident scene.
- Explorer riding hours for High School Students are 0800-2200 if the Explorer has school the next day.
- Explorers may only participate during non-classified school hours.
- Explorers may respond only during the hours they are scheduled to be at the firehouse.
- Explorers may only respond from their assigned firehouse.
- Explorers may not leave until cleared by the (OIC) Officer in Charge.
- **Explorers are not allowed to come and go during the shift unless cleared ahead of time with the OIC.**

## Approved Explorer duties at a fire scene

- Explorers may assist pump truck driver in cold zone.
- Explorers may enter structure once incident commander declares structure in salvage stage.
- Explorers may assist in rolling hoses, putting away gear, and other non-hazardous duties.

## Driver duties and procedures

- Driver counts occupants before pulling out of station.
- Driver checks for occupants to be seat-belted.

## Approved Vehicle Guidelines

The Explorer program has a defined list of permitted fire vehicles, this policy must be complied with at all times. With the exception of the Chief's automobile, drivers of permitted vehicles must have completed an emergency vehicle operator course and/or have a fire apparatus driver certification. All vehicles must be completely enclosed and have DOT seatbelts and anchored interior attachments. Explorers must be seated and belted in approved apparatus before moving that apparatus.

**\*\*\*Explorers will not ride on any tanker apparatus\*\*\***

### Permitted vehicles are:

#### Command Vehicle



Squad truck



Completely enclosed pumper truck one thousand gallons or less



Completely enclosed ladder truck (excluding tiller apparatus)



Fire rescue truck or technical rescue truck



### **Additional Permissible Duties Age 16 and older**

- Participate in fire drills, attend classes in firefighting, emergency medical and related subjects.
- Receive and relay fire calls and alarms, using radio and other communication equipment.
- Participate in the inspection of buildings, hydrants and other structure in fire prevention programs.
- Assist in developing plans for special assignments such as emergency preparedness, hazardous communications, training programs, firefighting, hazardous materials and emergency aid activities.
- Maintain fire equipment, apparatus and facilities. Perform minor repairs to departmental equipment. Perform general maintenance work in the upkeep of fire facilities and equipment; clean and wash walls and floors; care for grounds around station; wash, hang and dry hoses; wash, clean, polish, maintain equipment.
- Present programs to the community on safety, medical, fire and injury prevention topics.

### **Permissible Duties Age 14 and older**

- Participate in fire drills; attend classes in firefighting and related subjects.
- Perform limited work in the upkeep of fire facilities and equipment to include; cleaning and washing walls and floors; care for grounds around station (may not operate any power equipment); wash, hang and dry hoses. (Note: any and all maintenance performed by 14- or 15- year-olds to any fire equipment, apparatus and facilities shall be under the direct supervision of a maintenance officer or fire chief.)
- Present programs to the community on safety, medical, fire and injury prevention topics.
- Participate in communication and computer training.

**\*Must be performed under supervision of qualified personnel.**

**Departments are urged to contact their local Boy Scouts of America, Learning for Life, Exploring Division to help establish any programs. Departments that establish their own Junior Cadet programs must comply with all guidelines and restrictions within this document.**