DIX HILLS FIRE DISTRICT

POLICIES, RULES, AND REGULATIONS

Effective Date: January 1, 2026 | Revision Date: June 8, 2026

Issued By: The Board of Fire Commissioners

SECTION 1: MISSION STATEMENT

The Dix Hills Fire District and Dix Hills Fire Department are dedicated to protecting life and property through excellence in fire, rescue, and emergency medical services. We foster continuous organizational improvement through modern training, technical innovation, and progressive leadership.

SECTION 2: GROUNDS

2-1: Property Management and Authority

- **Exclusive Control:** Pursuant to New York State Town Law Section 176, all Fire District land, buildings, facilities, parking areas, and related real property are managed under the authority of the Board of Fire Commissioners.
- **Policy Enforcement:** No order, directive, bylaw, or policy issued by any Department member or officer may supersede, subvert, or disregard Board authority. Any unauthorized use or occupancy of District property is invalid.
- **Disciplinary Actions:** Personnel attempting to enforce unauthorized policies through Department bylaws or informal directives may be subject to Board review and discipline consistent with applicable law, District policy, and due process requirements.
- **Structural Changes:** No District building, station, fixed property, or permanent building system may be moved, structurally altered, or modified without approval from the Board of Fire Commissioners. Firematic operational input shall be obtained from the Chief of the Department when the proposed change affects emergency operations.

2-2: Facility Maintenance and Equipment Accountability

- **Grounds Maintenance:** The District Manager directs all maintenance operations for District buildings and grounds under the direction of the Board of Fire Commissioners.
- **Apparatus Safety:** The Chief of the Department oversees fire apparatus and on-board firefighting and EMS equipment for operational readiness. The Chief may remove unsafe equipment or apparatus from service, provided the District Manager is notified immediately and the Board is promptly advised in writing. The District Manager has the same authority for District vehicles and equipment under administrative control.
- **Equipment Repairs:** When District assets are removed from service, the District Manager shall coordinate prompt repair and return to service, subject to procurement rules and Board authorization where required.
- **Asset Loaning:** District property or equipment may be loaned outside the District only during true emergencies or when specifically authorized by the Board. Emergency loans require explicit permission from both the Chief of the Department and the District Manager whenever practicable.
- **District Mechanic:** The District Mechanic operates under the direction of the District Manager. In the District Manager's absence, the mechanic takes direction from the Chairman of the Board of Fire Commissioners or the Chairman's designee.

2-3: Public Messages and Property Displays

- **Prohibited Modifications:** Personnel may not alter, display, or affix any decal, sticker, flag, banner, sign, or similar item to any District-owned vehicle, building, or property without prior approval from the Chief of the Department and the Board of Fire Commissioners.
- **Penalties:** Non-compliance may subject the member or employee to disciplinary action, up to and including termination where legally applicable, at the discretion of the Board and consistent with due process requirements.

2-4: Vandalism and Property Damage

- **Police Reports:** Any act of vandalism resulting in damage to District property, apparatus, equipment, or Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) shall be immediately reported to the Suffolk County Police Department for investigation.
- **Legal Action:** The District will pursue appropriate criminal, civil, or administrative remedies against any individual who maliciously damages District assets.

2-5: Headquarters Parking Regulations

- **Restricted Zones:** Parking is strictly prohibited in the four marked stalls located directly in front of the Headquarters Dispatch area during normal operations.
- **Permitted Zones:** Routine vehicle parking is limited to the marked stalls within the north and south parking fields.
- **Emergency Exceptions:** During active alarms, responding members may temporarily park in front of the Dispatch area. Vehicles must not block the front entry doors or extend past the base of the radio tower.

2-6: Bulletins and Informational Postings

- **Prior Approval:** No posters, notices, informational notes, bulletins, or similar postings may be displayed anywhere on District property without prior authorization from the Board or its designee.

2-7: Seasonal and Holiday Decorations

- **Safety Protocols:** All holiday and seasonal decorations must be flame-retardant. Electrical components must be UL-approved. Decorations may not be placed on roofs or gutters. Live trees are prohibited.
- **Community Neutrality:** To respect the diverse backgrounds of the community and the non-sectarian structure of volunteer fire service, public displays on District property should feature secular, seasonal themes rather than specific religious symbols. Stations must be restored to their original condition immediately after decorations are removed.

SECTION 3: HOUSE

3-1: Clean Air and Smoking Restrictions

- **Statutory Compliance:** In compliance with New York State Public Health Law Sections 1399-n through 1399-x, smoking and vaping are prohibited inside all District buildings, enclosed workspaces, and vehicles, including offices, hallways, restrooms, stairwells, maintenance bays, meeting rooms, and apparatus bays.
- **Scope of Restriction:** This directive covers any natural, synthetic, or tobacco product that produces smoke, vapor, aerosol, or tobacco odor, including e-cigarettes, vaping devices, herbal blends, and smokeless or chewing tobacco.
- **Designated Areas:** Outdoor smoking is permitted only in designated areas established by the District: Headquarters east-side patio and south side of the building at least 25 feet from the community room lobby entrance; Station 1 south-side patio; Station 2 east-side patio; and Station 3 north-side patio.
- **Waste Disposal:** All smoking waste, including butts, matches, and packaging, must be fully extinguished and disposed of in dedicated outdoor containers provided by the District.

- **Enforcement:** Station officers and managers shall ensure compliance. Violators may receive an initial warning and request to move to a designated area; subsequent infractions may result in formal disciplinary action.

3-2: Terry Farrell Hall Rental Policies

- **Application Timeline:** Requests to reserve Terry Farrell Hall must be submitted to the District Secretary at least thirty (30) days before the event date.
- **Eligible Applicants:** The Board permits rentals by Department members, their spouses, parents, siblings, or children. External requests require special Board approval.
- • Financial and Insurance Requirements: A $500.00 refundable security deposit payable to the Dix Hills Fire District; a $200.00 non-refundable consumables fee (waived for Dix Hills Fire Department members and Fire District employees pursuant to Board directive); and a certificate of liability insurance providing $1,000,000.00 in coverage for the event date, naming the Dix Hills Fire District as an additional insured.
- **Board Discretion:** The Board retains discretion to adjust or waive requirements under special circumstances when legally permissible and in the best interest of the District.

3-3: Turnout Gear Restrictions

- **Health and Safety Protections:** To maintain facility hygiene, protect District assets, and reduce contamination exposure, structural turnout gear is prohibited in non-apparatus areas of any firehouse unless specifically authorized for training, inspection, or emergency operational needs.

3-4: On-Duty Employees as Emergency Responders

- **Emergency Staffing:** At the discretion of the District Manager, any qualified District employee currently on duty may be cross-utilized as a firefighter or EMT to support active emergency operations, provided the employee is properly qualified, equipped, and operating within District procedures.

3-5: Restricted Access Areas

- **Security Zones:** Unauthorized personnel, including non-assigned firefighters, visitors, and guests, are prohibited from entering the mechanics' repair bays and the dispatch communications office.

3-6: Alcoholic Beverages

- **Underage Drinking:** The sale, service, distribution, or consumption of alcoholic beverages by any individual under the legal drinking age is strictly prohibited on District property or during Department functions.
- **Oversight:** The Chief's Office is responsible for monitoring compliance during Department functions and enforcing applicable New York State law and District policy.

3-7: Blackout Dates During District Voting

- **Operational Restrictions:** To avoid political conflicts, congestion, and disruption of public voting activity, no Department or individual company function may be held on District property during any District public vote unless approved by the Board.

3-8: Unauthorized Furniture and Equipment

- **Facility Standardization:** For health, liability, and insurance compliance, only furniture, fixtures, and equipment provided or approved by the Dix Hills Fire District may be placed or stored within District structures. Third-party items require explicit prior Board approval.

3-9: Time Clock System

- **Duty Tracking:** All applicable personnel must record their on-duty and off-duty shifts using the District time clock system. Administrative questions or troubleshooting must be directed to the District Manager.

SECTION 4: EQUIPMENT

4-1: Separation of District Funds and Benevolent Association Business

- **Funding Prohibitions:** District public funds, materials, equipment, facilities, and staff time may not be used to support, subsidize, or conduct the operations of the Department Benevolent Association unless specifically permitted by law and approved by the Board.
- **IT Infrastructure:** The use of District-owned computers, email accounts, software, or digital assets for Benevolent Association operations is prohibited unless specifically authorized by the Board after legal review.

4-2: Structural Firefighting Equipment Standards

- **NFPA Compliance:** Only equipment meeting applicable National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) standards may be used during interior structural firefighting operations. Future District procurements must meet applicable NFPA standards and certifications.
- **Personal Equipment:** Personally purchased tactical or protective equipment must be formally evaluated and approved by the District before field deployment.
- **Equipment Loaning:** District equipment may not be loaned to external municipal, private, or nonprofit agencies without prior Board approval, except for true emergencies as addressed in Section 2-2.

4-3: Procurement, Purchasing, and Asset Distribution

- **Purchasing Approvals:** All procurements must receive prior Board authorization unless otherwise permitted by District procurement policy. Upon approval, the District Manager shall obtain competitive pricing from three independent vendors whenever practicable before executing a purchase order.
- **Consolidated Logistics and Delivery:** All incoming orders shall be processed through the District Manager. Upon delivery, verification, and receipt logging, the District Manager shall notify the Board and transfer tactical operational inventory to the Chief's Office. The Chief's Office maintains authority over field distribution and shall provide reasonable estimated distribution dates to personnel.

4-4: SCBA Maintenance and Testing

- **Sanitation and Inspection Protocols:** All Self-Contained Breathing Apparatus (SCBA) shall be inspected, safety-checked, cleaned, and maintained in accordance with manufacturer guidance, applicable NFPA standards, and District procedures. Required maintenance and verification actions must be logged in the District tracking system.

4-5: Third-Party Apparatus and Hardware Appraisals

- **Compliance Appraisals:** Fire hoses, pumps, and ground or aerial ladders shall undergo annual safety testing by an independent third-party agency consistent with applicable NFPA standards and insurance/ISO expectations. Apparatus weighing shall also be conducted by a third party as required.
- **Record Keeping:** Certified copies of formal performance results shall be submitted to the Board for official records retention.

SECTION 5: VEHICLES

5-1: Emergency Vehicle Response Safety Guidelines

- **Operational Intent:** Safe arrival at an emergency scene is the priority. Warning devices request the right-of-way; they do not guarantee it. Drivers must use defensive driving practices and maintain a high standard of care for the public.
- **Circle of Safety:** Before starting or moving any emergency vehicle, the driver must complete a physical walk-around to inspect all sides and overhead clearance, confirm compartment doors are latched, and identify obstacles. Clearances must be confirmed with the officer or spotter when applicable.

- **Safe Following Distances:** Maintain at least one second of following distance for every 10 feet of vehicle length at speeds under 40 mph, and add one additional second for every 10 mph traveled over 40 mph.
- **Maximum Emergency Speeds:** During emergency responses, vehicles may not exceed 10 mph over the posted speed limit. Drivers must reduce speed below the posted limit during adverse weather, slick roads, poor visibility, heavy traffic, sharp curves, or other hazardous conditions.
- **Intersection Operating Regulations:** Drivers shall slow, scan, cover the brake, change siren cadence as appropriate, and proceed only when it is safe. Vehicles must come to a complete stop for red traffic lights, stop signs, stopped school buses with flashing lights, blocked visibility, and other conditions requiring a full stop. Proceed lane-by-lane only after confirming traffic has yielded.
- **Railroad Crossings:** At unguarded railroad crossings, drivers shall bring the vehicle to a complete stop, silence sirens and air horns, open windows, listen for train horns, and proceed only when safe.
- **Non-Emergency and Routine Travel:** When responding to non-emergency calls or during routine operations, vehicles shall be operated without audible or visual warning devices and in full compliance with traffic laws. Aggressive driving may result in immediate suspension of driving privileges.
- **Seat Belt and Riding Restrictions:** Every person riding in apparatus must be seated in an approved position and secured by a seat belt whenever the vehicle is in motion. Riding on tail steps, running boards, side steps, or any exposed position is prohibited. Medical personnel performing patient care while the vehicle is moving must remain secured by an approved safety harness or seat belt whenever practicable.
- **Backing Procedures:** Backing should be avoided whenever possible. When backing is necessary, a spotter should be used. If no spotter is available, the driver must complete a circle of safety before backing and must stop immediately if visibility or conditions become unsafe.

5-2: Motor Vehicle Record (MVR) Driver Selection Criteria

To ensure public safety, driver records will be monitored through the NYS DMV LENS program and annual medical evaluations. If an MVR shows violations within a three-year period, the following actions apply:

Violation Class	Condition Within 3-Year Window	Action Taken / Penalties
Class A Violation	Any single conviction	Immediate 18-month suspension of District driving privileges. Driver must complete the driver training program and pass recertification.
Class B Violation / Chargeable Accident	Combination of two (2) infractions	Formal written warning issued by a Chief or Administrative Officer.
Class B Violation / Chargeable Accident	Combination of three (3) infractions	Mandatory 90-day suspension of District driving privileges.
Class B Violation / Chargeable Accident	More than three (3) infractions	Mandatory one-year suspension of District driving privileges. Completion of an approved driver improvement course and formal recertification required.

5-3: Response in Privately-Owned Vehicles (POVs)

- **Legal Compliance:** Volunteers responding in personal vehicles must obey all state motor vehicle laws. POVs are not emergency vehicles and are not exempt from traffic laws. Members may not exceed speed limits, drive against traffic, or proceed through red lights or stop signs without stopping and obeying the law.
- **Courtesy Blue Lights:** Blue courtesy lights are a visual request for cooperation from other drivers; they do not grant emergency vehicle privileges or demand the right-of-way. All courtesy lights require a written permit issued and approved by the Chief.
- **POV Requirements:** Members must maintain personal automobile liability insurance with coverage limits sufficient to protect the volunteer and the District from unnecessary exposure.
- **SOP Acknowledgment:** Aggressive POV driving may result in disciplinary action, suspension of response privileges, and loss of courtesy light permits. This policy shall be included in new-member orientation, and members shall sign an acknowledgment of receipt.

5-4: Non-Emergency Out-of-District Vehicle Use

- **Travel Mandates:** Use of District vehicles for off-property trainings, drills, parades, standbys, or firematic events requires prior Board approval unless the activity is an emergency mutual-aid response or otherwise authorized by existing Board policy.
- **Minimum Staffing:** When approved, travel should include a minimum occupancy of three (3) Department members unless the Board or Chief authorizes a different staffing level for operational reasons.
- **Return Conditions:** Vehicles must be cleaned, inspected, and refueled immediately upon return to the District facility.

5-5: Public Image and Traffic Violations

- **Organizational Conduct:** No employee or member may operate a District vehicle in a manner that brings discredit to the individual, the Department, or the District.
- **Civilians in Emergency Vehicles:** Responding to an active emergency with a non-member inside a District vehicle is prohibited when it creates unnecessary risk to that civilian or interferes with emergency operations.
- **Traffic Violations and Automated Tickets:** If an employee or member receives a red-light camera ticket, automated citation, parking citation, or moving violation while operating a District vehicle during non-emergency travel, the driver is personally responsible for the fine unless otherwise directed by the Board after review. A copy of the paid receipt must be submitted to the District.
- **Administrative Enforcement:** The District Manager enforces this directive for paid staff; the Chief of the Department enforces it for volunteer members, subject to Board review where appropriate.

5-6: Use of Chiefs' Command Vehicles

- **Authorized Operators:** District-issued Chief vehicles may be driven only by the assigned Chief or by Department members explicitly authorized by that Chief and approved under District driving requirements.
- **Geographic Boundaries:** Use of command vehicles is restricted to Nassau and Suffolk counties unless responding to mutual aid, attending approved District business, or otherwise authorized by the Board.
- **Commercial Prohibitions:** Command vehicles may not be used to conduct personal commercial business or private employment endeavors.
- **Civilians in Command Vehicles:** Non-firematic passengers are permitted only when the Chief remains fully available to respond immediately to alarms and the passenger's presence does not interfere with emergency operations.
- **Scope:** All rules in this section apply equally to the Chief of the Department and all Assistant Chiefs using District-owned vehicles.

5-7: Tactical Safety Requirements for Brush Truck 2-8-12

- **Regulatory Compliance:** All operations must follow current District SOPs and applicable NFPA and OSHA standards.
- **Required Dress:** Members operating with or around Brush Truck 2-8-12 must wear PPE appropriate for the hazard, assignment, weather conditions, and applicable District procedures. Structural turnout gear may be required where conditions warrant.
- **Riding Restrictions:** No personnel may stand or ride on the exterior of the vehicle while it is in motion. All crew members must be seated inside the cab with seat belts secured. Secondary support firefighters must travel in separate support vehicles.
- **Tactical Fire Suppression:** Personnel shall operate defensively from safe positions when appropriate and use brush firefighting tactics consistent with training, supervision, and incident command direction.
- **Personnel Rotation:** Crews operating with 2-8-12 must be rotated as needed to prevent heat exhaustion, fatigue, and overexertion.
- **Mandatory Certification:** Firefighters must attend and complete formal brush fire training approved by the Dix Hills Fire Department before operating on or with vehicle 2-8-12.

5-8: Heavy Towing Operations

- **Command Authority:** Towing of any District apparatus or vehicle must be directed and authorized by the District Manager, District Mechanic, or Board designee.
- **Dispatch Communication:** Dispatchers shall contact the District Manager or District Mechanic immediately if a District vehicle becomes disabled and requires a tow.

5-9: Medical Certification Requirements

- **Employment Conditions:** All District employees assigned to first-responder emergency vehicles, excluding dedicated District Mechanics, must hold and maintain a valid New York State EMT-B certification or higher as a condition of continued assignment to emergency response duties.
- **Certification Maintenance:** Employees covered by this section must provide proof of current certification upon hire, renewal, or request by the District Manager. Failure to maintain required certification may result in reassignment, suspension from response duties, or further employment action consistent with applicable law and personnel policy.

SECTION 6: MEMBERS

6-1: Mandatory Code of Ethics Sign-Off

- **Statutory Compliance:** All full-time and part-time employees shall review and sign an acknowledgment of the District Code of Ethics during onboarding and whenever the Code is materially revised. Signed records shall be maintained by the District Secretary.

6-2: Applicant Processing and New Member Training

- **Orientation Attendance:** All newly voted applicants or prospective employees must attend the scheduled Board of Fire Commissioners meeting during the month their application undergoes first reading, unless excused by the Board.
- **Medical Clearances:** The Board will not approve or sign membership applications until the applicant provides an official statement from the examining medical facility certifying that the applicant has passed the required physical and medical evaluation.
- **Probationary Training Window:** All newly appointed structural firefighters and rescue squad personnel must complete an 18-month probationary training period unless modified by the Board or otherwise required by Department bylaws.

6-3: Qualifications for Chief and Assistant Chief

Chief of the Department

- **Minimum Service:** Must have served a minimum of one (1) full year as an active Assistant Chief.
- **Underlying Eligibility:** Must continuously satisfy all underlying Assistant Chief eligibility criteria.
- ~~**Mandatory Command Certification:** Effective January 1, 2028, must successfully complete New York State Fire Officer III (FO-3), unless the Board grants an extension or recognizes an equivalent credential after review.~~ **Removed 8/12/2026**

Assistant Chief

- **EMS Certification:** Must hold a valid, current New York State EMT-B certification or higher.
- **Membership Standing:** Must be a member of the Dix Hills Fire Department in good standing for at least five (5) consecutive years.
- **Company Captain Service:** Must have served as an active Company Captain for at least one (1) full year.
- **Line Office Experience:** Must have held a company line office position for an aggregate minimum of twenty-four (24) months.

- **Residency:** Must reside within the legal boundaries of the Dix Hills Fire District, or no farther than one-half (0.5) mile outside its borders.
- **Bylaw Compliance:** Must meet all additional qualifications for Company Fire Officers outlined in the Dix Hills Fire Department Bylaws.
- ~~**Mandatory Command Certification:** Effective January 1, 2028, must successfully complete New York State Fire Officer III (FO-3), unless the Board grants an extension or recognizes an equivalent credential after review.~~ **Removed 8/12/2026**

6-4: Qualifications and Executive Approval of Company Line Officers

- **Board Ratification:** All elected line officers, including Fire Police officers, Rescue Squad officers, and Company Officers, must be reviewed and approved by the Board of Fire Commissioners before taking office.
- **Mandatory Certification Prerequisites:** Effective January 1, 2028, to be eligible for nomination, election, or service in a company-level fire command position, members must hold the required certifications: Company Lieutenant - NYS Fire Officer I (FO-1); Company Captain - NYS Fire Officer II (FO-2).

6-5: Qualifications for Rescue Squad Officers

- **EMS Command Prerequisites:** Effective January 1, 2028, Rescue Squad Officers, including Rescue Captain and Rescue Lieutenants, must successfully complete the Suffolk County Fire Academy EMS Officer Training Class or a Board-approved equivalent.

6-6: Officer Election Enforcement and Compliance

- **Documentation Submissions:** Pursuant to Article IV, Section 2b of the Department bylaws, any member nominated for a Department, company, or special squad officer position must submit copies of all required certifications to the Election Committee immediately at the conclusion of nominations.
- **Penalties for Non-Compliance:** Failure to produce verified proof of required NYS or Suffolk County Fire Academy certifications may result in disqualification from the ballot or forfeiture of the position, subject to Board review and applicable due process.

SECTION 7: FINANCE AND TRAVEL

7-1: Use and Restrictions of District-Issued Credit Cards

- **Authorized Issuance:** District-issued credit cards are allocated only to personnel approved by the Board of Fire Commissioners and must be used in compliance with New York State General Municipal Law, District procurement policy, and Board authorization.
- **Prohibited Uses:** Cards may not be used for personal items, entertainment, alcoholic beverages, cash advances, unauthorized gratuities, or unauthorized third-party expenses.
- **Receipt Reconciliation:** Cardholders must secure a detailed, itemized receipt for every transaction and submit an expense reconciliation form to the District Treasurer within five (5) business days of purchase.
- **Personal Liability:** Any unapproved, non-itemized, or personal transaction is the financial responsibility of the cardholder, who must promptly reimburse the District unless the Board determines otherwise after review.

7-2: Budget Expenditures and Voucher Oversight

- **Pre-Approval Rules:** All expenditures using public funds must fit within approved District budget lines and require pre-authorization through signed purchase requisitions or other approved District procedures.
- **Double-Payment Audits:** To prevent duplicate payments, invoice vouchers may be paid only after being matched against verified delivery slips and cross-referenced in the central accounting ledger.
- **Emergency Expenditures:** Emergency repairs or operational purchases exceeding standard budgetary thresholds require immediate verbal or written consent from the Chairman of the Board, or another authorized Commissioner if the Chairman is unavailable, before public funds are committed.

7-3: Firematic Educational Conferences and Travel Accommodations

- **Attendance Approval:** Travel to out-of-state training, firematic conventions, or professional conferences using District funds requires a formal written request submitted to the Board at least forty-five (45) days before departure unless waived by the Board.
- **Per Diem Allowances:** Reimbursable lodging, meal per diems, and travel rates are capped at applicable federal General Services Administration (GSA) guidelines unless otherwise authorized by the Board.
- **Reporting Mandates:** Members traveling at District expense must submit a written summary of educational workshops attended to the Chief of the Department and the Board within two weeks of returning.

SECTION 8: OPERATIONS

8-1: Freedom of Information Law (FOIL) and Document Destruction

- **FOIL Management:** Public access to official District records is managed by the designated Records Access Officer under the New York State Freedom of Information Law (FOIL).
- **Records Retention:** No legal, physical, financial, administrative, or operational records may be discarded or destroyed unless they meet the applicable lifecycle retention requirements of the New York State records retention schedule for local governments.
- **Board Authorization:** A certified ledger detailing all documents scheduled for destruction must be approved by the Board during a regular public session before disposal.

8-2: Electronic Incident Logging and System Integrity

- **Real-Time Data Entries:** Firefighters and rescue personnel must complete electronic incident reports, patient care records, and run logs within twenty-four (24) hours of clearing an emergency scene unless operational or system conditions prevent timely completion.
- **Log Integrity:** Altering, deleting, falsifying, or knowingly entering false information into any official electronic record is prohibited and may result in immediate suspension from field duties and disciplinary action.
- **Security Clearances:** Logging accounts and dispatch system terminals must remain secured when unattended to prevent unauthorized access.

8-3: Board of Fire Commissioners Public Meetings

- **Schedule Transparency:** The Board of Fire Commissioners meets in public session on scheduled dates to manage District property, audit financial expenditures, and address personnel, operational, and administrative matters.
- **Executive Sessions:** Executive sessions closed to the general public may be convened only in accordance with the New York State Open Meetings Law.
- **Public Participation:** Residents within the Dix Hills Fire District boundaries may speak during the dedicated public comment portion of the meeting, subject to reasonable, non-discriminatory time limits set by the Chairman.

8-4: Knox Box Key Security and Access Protocols

- **Operational Custody:** High-security Knox Box master keys must remain locked inside automated, PIN-coded vehicle retention docks whenever not actively in use at an emergency scene or authorized inspection.
- **Audit Tracking:** Docks shall record the user identity and timestamps of key removal and return. Any mechanical failure or missing key must be immediately reported to the District Dispatcher, who shall notify the District Manager and the Chief.
- **Prohibited Duplication:** Attempting to duplicate, forge, remove, or tamper with a District Knox Box key is a serious security breach and may result in criminal referral, suspension, dismissal, and other discipline.

SECTION 9: POLICIES

Section 9 has been expanded and clarified. The sexual harassment section now references New York Labor Law Section 201-g and the New York State Human Rights Law. Confirm final wording with District counsel and the District's adopted NYS model complaint form/training materials.

9-1: Anti-Harassment and Sexual Harassment Prevention Policy

- **Purpose and Statutory Reference:** The Dix Hills Fire District prohibits sexual harassment, harassment based on protected status, hostile work environment conduct, discrimination, and retaliation. This policy is intended to meet or exceed the minimum requirements of New York Labor Law Section 201-g, the New York State Human Rights Law, and applicable federal, state, and local law.
- **Zero Tolerance:** The District maintains a zero-tolerance standard for sexual harassment and discriminatory harassment involving employees, volunteers, applicants, interns, contractors, vendors, visitors, or any person conducting business with the District.
- **Protected Categories:** Harassment or discrimination is prohibited based on sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, transgender status, race, color, creed, religion, national origin, age, disability, marital status, military or veteran status, domestic violence victim status, pregnancy-related condition, genetic information, or any other status protected by law.
- **Scope of Conduct:** Prohibited conduct includes unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, sexually explicit or derogatory comments, jokes, gestures, displays, offensive physical contact, threats, intimidation, stalking, digital communications, or any verbal, physical, visual, or electronic conduct that affects a person's work or volunteer environment.
- **Complaint Form and Reporting:** The District shall maintain a complaint form consistent with New York State requirements. Any person who experiences or witnesses harassment may report it to the District Manager, any Commissioner, the Chief of the Department, an Officer, or any other designated reporting official. Reports may be verbal or written.
- **Investigation Process:** All complaints shall be reviewed promptly, fairly, thoroughly, and as confidentially as practicable. The process shall provide due process for all parties, document findings, and present appropriate recommendations to the Board for action.
- **Annual Training and Notice:** The District shall provide sexual harassment prevention training annually to employees as required by New York Labor Law Section 201-g and shall provide the District's policy, complaint form, and training materials at hiring and during annual training as required by law.
- **Retaliation Prohibited:** Retaliation against any person who reports harassment, participates in an investigation, testifies, assists in a proceeding, or opposes unlawful conduct is prohibited. Retaliation may result in discipline independent of the underlying complaint.
- **Discipline:** Sexual harassment and retaliation are forms of misconduct. Sanctions may be imposed against individuals who engage in prohibited conduct and against supervisory or managerial personnel who knowingly allow such behavior to continue.
- **External Remedies:** Nothing in this policy limits a person's right to seek relief through the New York State Division of Human Rights, the United States Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, a court of competent jurisdiction, or any other forum available by law.

9-2: Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) Policy

- **Fair Workplace:** All employment, membership appointments, assignments, promotions, and operational advancement decisions within the District shall be based on individual qualifications, merit, performance, and organizational needs.
- **Protected Classes:** The District prohibits discrimination based on race, creed, color, religion, national origin, sex, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, age, marital status, military or veteran status, disability, domestic violence victim status, pregnancy-related condition, genetic information, or any other status protected by law.

- **Accommodation Standards:** Reasonable accommodations shall be provided to qualified individuals with documented disabilities, religious needs, pregnancy-related conditions, or other legally protected needs, provided the accommodation does not create an undue hardship or compromise field safety.

9-3: Fire District Code of Ethics

- **Public Trust:** All personnel must maintain the highest standards of professional integrity and avoid conduct that creates a conflict of interest or compromises public trust.
- **Gift Prohibitions:** No employee, volunteer, officer, or Commissioner may solicit, accept, or arrange any gift, service, favor, or loan that could reasonably influence official duties or create the appearance of improper influence.
- **Confidentiality Rules:** Personnel may not disclose or exploit confidential operational data, sensitive medical records, personnel information, investigative records, or proprietary District information for personal gain or private commercial interests.

9-4: Procurement and Best Value Purchasing Policies

- **Public Bidding Rules:** Commodities and services exceeding statutory financial thresholds must be procured through formal competitive bidding under New York State General Municipal Law Section 103 unless a lawful exception applies.
- **Best Value Methodology:** For procurements where best value is legally authorized and adopted by the District, the District may consider long-term lifecycle cost, technical capability, warranty, reliability, vendor responsibility, and operational suitability rather than price alone.
- **Conflict of Interest:** No employee, chief, officer, or commissioner may participate in the evaluation or selection of a vendor if they possess a direct or indirect financial interest in that vendor's business or otherwise have a conflict of interest.

9-5: Investment Policy for Fire District Capital Reserve Accounts

- **Core Principles:** The investment of District funds and excess operational capital is guided by safety of principal, liquidity for operational needs, and competitive financial yield.
- **Permitted Placements:** Public funds may be deposited only into authorized banking institutions and collateralized or invested as permitted by applicable New York State law and District investment policy.
- **Capital Reserve Segregation:** Capital reserve accounts established by voter approval or Board action must be maintained separately from general operational accounts and used only for their legally authorized purposes.

9-6: Drug-Free Workplace and Personnel Drug Testing Policy

- **Absolute Ban:** The District requires a drug-free operational environment. Possession, distribution, use, or impairment from illicit drugs, controlled substances, or unprescribed narcotics while on duty, responding, operating District vehicles, or on District property is prohibited.
- **Testing Conditions:** Personnel may be subject to drug and alcohol screening under District policy, applicable collective bargaining agreements, civil service rules, and law, including pre-employment, reasonable suspicion, post-incident, or other legally authorized testing circumstances.
- **Refusal Penalties:** Refusal to submit to a lawful required drug or alcohol screening may result in removal from duty, suspension, discipline, and other action consistent with applicable law, due process, and personnel policy.

9-7: Length of Service Award Program (LOSAP) Administration

- **Point Allocations:** Volunteer active members earn service credits toward LOSAP through the District's standardized point system for emergency alarms, drills, meetings, training, and other qualifying activities.
- **System Verification:** All active service points must be tracked, cross-verified against sign-in sheets or electronic records, and reviewed by the Chief of the Department before being uploaded into the electronic logging database.

- **Annual Posting:** The certified annual LOSAP service roster shall be posted within station houses for at least thirty (30) consecutive days each year, allowing members to review points and file clerical appeals before records are transmitted to the program administrator.

9-8: Social Media, Network, and Information Technology Security

- **Network Restrictions:** District-owned computers, email accounts, servers, software, and data plans are provided exclusively for official District firematic, EMS, administrative, and operational business.
- **Prohibited Online Behavior:** Personnel may not post text, photographs, audio, or video online that contains patient medical information, active emergency scene information, confidential investigation details, non-public personnel information, or official District logos without authorization from the Board or its designee.
- **Public Representation:** No member or employee may publish online statements that falsely claim to represent the official position, policies, or administrative views of the Dix Hills Fire District or the Chief's Office.
- **Password Security:** Network passwords must meet District complexity standards and be changed as required by District IT policy. Sharing login profiles, passwords, or access credentials with unauthorized individuals is prohibited.

9-9: Mobile Cellular Device and Tablet Data Regulations

- **Authorized Field Allocations:** District-issued cellular phones and mobile data tablets are distributed only to authorized officers and operational staff to improve field communications and support incident management.
- **Data Caps:** Device users must monitor usage to avoid excessive data, roaming, or other charges. Fees caused by unauthorized personal usage may be billed directly to the user.
- **Physical Asset Security:** Mobile hardware must remain secured in protective cases. If a District device is lost, damaged, or stolen, the user must report the incident to the District Manager within twenty-four (24) hours so the District can initiate security measures, including remote wipe where appropriate.