
WARREN COUNTY JUNIOR FIREFIGHTERS

BY-LAWS

Warren County, North Carolina
June 2015 (Revised March 2020)



WARREN COUNTY JUNIOR FIREFIGHTERS

Post Office Box 634

Warrenton, North Carolina 27589

WarrenCoJrFireFighters@hotmail.com

www.WarrenCoJrFireFighters.com

(252) 820-0513

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE CHAIR

Fire Chief Walter M. Gardner, Jr.

Warrenton Rural Volunteer Fire Department

SPONSORING AGENCY REPRESENTATIVE

Association President Joey Andrews

Warren County Firemen's Association

JUNIOR FIREFIGHTER CHIEF ADVISOR

Fire Captain John W. Franks

Warrenton Rural Volunteer Fire Department

REFERENCES

These By-Laws are based on best practices and accepted standards relating to junior firefighters. Much of this content and subject matter originates from the following sources:

Fire & Emergency Services Exploring Program Guidelines

Boys Scouts of America
Learning For Life / Exploring
1325 West Walnut Hill Lane
Irving, Texas 75015-2079

Guidelines and Best Practices For A Successful Youth Fire Service Program

International Association of Fire Chiefs
4025 Fair Ridge Drive
Fairfax, Virginia 22033

Junior Fire & Emergency Services Programs

Volunteer Fire Insurance Services
Post Office Box 2726
York, Pennsylvania 17405

Junior Members Standards

North Carolina Fire & Rescue Commission
North Carolina Office of State Fire Marshal
322 Chapanoke Road
Raleigh, North Carolina 27603

National Junior Firefighter Program Handbook

National Volunteer Fire Council
7852 Walker Drive, Suite 450
Greenbelt, Maryland 20770

PREFACE

These By-Laws are intended as a working framework for the proper administrative and organizational functions of the Warren County Junior Firefighters.

These By-Laws are the highest administrative authority and rules of the Organization and apply to all personnel involved in the Organization. However, the Organization may be subject to additional requirements and regulation by the Warren County Firemen's Association.

INTRODUCTION

Over 70% of firefighters nationwide are volunteers. Yet, while call volume has steadily increased, the number of volunteer firefighters has steadily decreased. The need for motivated and skilled firefighters, technical rescuers, and emergency medical personnel has never been greater.

The challenge of any fire department is to recruit and retain aptly trained men and women, who are dedicated to pursuing excellence in the fire service while maintaining its proud traditions.

In response to this challenge, many departments across the country have initiated junior member programs to encourage local youth to get involved in the fire service at an early age.

The challenge of any junior firefighter program is to expose youth in the community to the fire service, offer interesting and relevant educational opportunities, and provide real-life experiences that motivate these young men and women to pursue a career in public safety.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Article I Organization

Purpose, Mission, Sponsoring Agency, Executive Committee, Adult Advisors, Youth Officers, Removal from Office, Officer Vacancy, Committees

Article II Membership

Requirements, Application Process, Members in Good Standing

Article III Business of the Organization

Meetings, Voting

Article IV Conduct

Compliance with Rules & Orders, Disciplinary Action, Probation, Suspension, Expulsion, Authority, Appeals

Article V Elections

Elected Officers, Nomination Committee, Qualified Electorates, Qualified Majority

Article VI Finances

Finances, Dues & Fees, Fundraisers, Expenditures, Dissolution of the Organization

BY-LAWS

Article I. Organization

Section 1.01 Name

- (a) The name of the Organization is the “**Warren County Junior Firefighters.**”
- (b) The Warren County Junior Firefighters program is affiliated with the National Volunteer Fire Council’s (NVFC’s) National Junior Firefighter Program.

Section 1.02 Purpose

- (a) The purpose of the **National Junior Firefighter program** is to:
 - (i) Allow youth to gain insight and interest in becoming long-term members of the fire service
 - (ii) Increase awareness among youth about volunteering and supporting the fire service
 - (iii) Provide departments with additional help in accomplishing non-firefighting or non-emergency tasks
 - (iv) Provide leadership development for America’s youth, who are tomorrow’s leaders
 - (v) Educate parents and mentors on the importance of encouraging volunteerism
- (b) The purpose of the **Warren County Junior Firefighters program** is to:
 - (i) Have a centralized county-wide junior firefighter program
 - (ii) Get youth interested in the fire service at an early age
 - (iii) Train youth members to State and National firefighting standards
 - (iv) Promote the fire service as a worthwhile career and volunteer option

Section 1.03 Mission Statement

The mission of the Warren County Junior Firefighter Program is to prepare its members for a career in the fire service by training to recognized firefighting standards through continuing education and hands-on drills, while maintaining passing grades in school.

Section 1.04 Sponsoring Agency

- (a) The sponsoring agency of the Warren County Junior Firefighter program is the **Warren County Firemen's Association**.
- (b) The sponsoring agency agrees to provide competent adult leaders to the program, adequate meeting facilities, and other needed program resources.

Section 1.05 Executive (Adult) Committee

- (a) The purpose of the Executive Committee is to ensure that the Organization:
 - (i) Achieves its mission
 - (ii) Has a quality program
 - (iii) Has adequate and competent adult leadership
 - (iv) Meets the expectations of the Sponsoring Agency
- (b) The Executive Committee serves as the liaison between the Sponsoring Agency and the Organization, and keeps the Sponsoring Agency aware of and involved with the program.
- (c) The Executive Committee guides the overall direction of the program and makes recommendations for its improvement.
- (d) It is the Executive Committee's responsibility to recruit competent adult volunteers to serve as Advisors, Executive Committee members, and other positions as needed.
- (e) It is the Executive Committee's responsibility to secure needed resources such as, but not limited to, adequate facility for the Organization to meet, required safety equipment, and other needed program resources.
- (f) The Executive Committee shall consist of:
 - (i) Committee Chair

- (ii) Sponsoring Agency Representative
- (iii) Member-At-Large
- (iv) Chief Advisor
- (g) Committee members shall be at least 21 years of age and be qualified for the position.
- (h) The Executive Committee should meet as often as is necessary to conduct the business of the Organization but should meet at least once annually.

Section 1.06 Adult Advisors

- (a) Advisors shall be at least 21 years of age and be duly qualified for the position.
- (b) Advisors shall ensure the safety and well-being of youth members.
- (c) It is the responsibility of Advisors to guide, mentor, and supervise youth members to ensure they acquire the necessary knowledge and skills in a safe environment.
- (d) Advisors shall be present at all youth activities, including, but not limited to, meetings, fundraisers, and trips.
- (e) Fraternalization and maintaining close personal relationships between adult and youth participants, regardless of age differences, is disruptive to discipline and the chain-of-command, and therefore is strictly prohibited.
- (f) Advisor Classifications:
 - (i) **Chief Advisor**

The Chief Advisor is the key adult leader of the Organization and is the primary point-of-contact for the Organization. The Chief Advisor acts as a liaison between the Organization, the Executive Committee and the Sponsoring Agency. The ultimate responsibility for the Organization rests with the Chief Advisor who is the final authority, except as stipulated under Section 4.07.

(ii) **Associate Advisors**

The Chief Advisor is supported by Associate Advisors who serve as additional adult leaders and help with the administration and operations of the Organization. The Organization may have as many Associate Advisors as is deemed necessary.

(iii) **Special Advisors**

The Organization may utilize specialized adult advisors who possess particular knowledge, expertise, or resources that can support the Organization such as, but not limited to, bookkeeping, chaperoning, fundraising, and transportation.

Section 1.07 Youth Officers

- (a) Officers are the youth leaders of the Organization. They work in a spirit of partnership with adult advisors and youth members. They plan and develop activities and ensure that they are conducted within safety guidelines.
- (b) The Organization should elect the following youth Officers annually: (1) President, (2) Vice President, (3) Treasurer, and (4) Secretary.

(i) **President**

- 1) The President is the primary youth leader of the Organization; he or she leads meetings and represents the Organization at activities and functions.
- 2) The President acts as a liaison between the youth membership and the adult advisors.
- 3) The President may delegate some duties and assign tasks to other qualified youth members not specifically assigned to the President.

(ii) **Vice President**

- 1) The Vice President is second-in-command and assumes the duties and responsibilities of the President in his or her absence.
 - a) If the number of youth members is sufficient, the office of Vice President may be divided into the positions of (1) Administrative Vice President and (2) Program Vice President.

- i) The **Administrative Vice President** leads the recruiting and retention efforts of the Organization; and recognizes achievements of members.
 - ii) The **Program Vice President** arranges the program planning process; determines the interests of members; and maintains the calendar or schedule of meetings and activities.
- 2) The Vice President serves as the recruitment and retention officer of the Organization. He or she leads membership drives and contacts prospective members. He or she follows up with youth members who seem to be losing interest in the Organization.
 - 3) The Vice President serves as the training officer of the Organization. He or she plans and coordinates training and educational programs.
 - 4) The Vice President acts as a liaison between the President and Committees, and provides support for appointed committee chairs.

(iii) **Treasurer**

- 1) The Treasurer is third-in-command and assumes the duties and responsibilities of the President in the absence of the President and Vice President.
- 2) The Treasurer is the financial officer of the Organization and works with adult advisors to keep track of the finances, maintain financial records, and monitor the budget, and other financial matters.
- 3) The Treasurer is responsible for overseeing fundraising projects and for collecting funds.
- 4) The Treasurer is responsible for collecting membership dues and fees.

(iv) **Secretary**

- 1) The Secretary is fourth-in-command and assumes the duties and responsibilities of the President in the absence of the President, Vice President, and the Treasurer.
- 2) The Secretary is responsible for writing and maintaining the minutes for meetings of the Organization.

- 3) The Secretary is responsible for maintaining attendance rosters (roll call) and participation records.
 - 4) The Secretary is responsible for creating and maintaining the Organization's membership roster which includes emergency contact information.
 - 5) The Secretary manages the correspondence for the Organization.
 - 6) The Secretary is responsible for notifying members of meeting, activities, and other functions of the Organization.
- (c) No member may hold more than one elected office at the same time, except the offices of Secretary and Treasurer may be combined into one position if the number of members is insufficient to support all elected positions.

(d) **Other Officers**

The President may appoint, with advice and consent from the Chief Advisor, other needed positions that are not elected, such as, but limited to, a Training Officer, and Recruiting Officer.

(e) **Officer Vacancy**

- (i) In the event an Officer vacancy occurs, the President may appoint a qualified member to fill the vacant position for the remainder of the term. Appointments shall be made with the advice and consent of the Chief Advisor.
- (ii) If the vacancy is the President of the Organization, the Vice President shall assume the office of the President for the remainder of the term.

(f) **Removal from Office**

- (i) The Chief Advisor or the Executive Committee can remove from office any Officer for due cause. Examples of due cause include, but are not limited to, conduct unbecoming an Officer, dereliction of duty, dishonesty, disobedience, disrespectfulness, insubordination, excessive unexcused absences, or actions detrimental to the best interests of the Organization.
- (ii) Removal from Office does not necessarily mean removal from the Organization.

(g) Committees

The President may form and appoint, with the advice and consent of the Chief Advisor, Committees and Chairs for special activities or projects. Examples of committees may include, but are not limited to, fundraising, recruitment, training, and trips.

Article II. Membership

Section 2.01 Requirements

- (a) Members must be at least 12 years old but not yet 21 years of age.
- (b) Members should demonstrate good moral character; have no criminal convictions, and no adverse driving history.
- (c) Members should be enrolled in school, unless graduated; should maintain grades of at least a “C” average or higher with no failing classes; and should maintain a satisfactory school attendance record.
- (d) Members must be a junior member of their local fire department, which will provide them with the appropriate gear and equipment. Members are also required to abide by their fire department’s rules and regulations.
- (e) Color, race, religion, gender, sexual orientation, ethnic background, and economic status are not criteria for participation.

Section 2.02 Members In Good Standing

- (a) Only members in good standing are entitled to participate in the activities of the Organization and are eligible to vote. Members in good standing are those members who:
 - (i) Currently meet requirements for membership as stipulated under Section 2.01
 - (ii) Actively participate in a plurality of the Organization’s meetings and activities.
 - (iii) Are not delinquent with dues or fees.
 - (iv) Are not under suspension or expulsion from school.
 - (v) Have not been placed on probation, suspension, or been expelled from the Organization, or have voluntarily withdrawn from the Organization.

Article III. Business of the Organization

Section 3.01 Meetings

(a) Membership Meetings

- (i) Meetings of the Organization should occur at least monthly and may occur more often.
 - 1) The day, time, and location of meetings may be changed by the general membership or the Chief Advisor.
- (ii) The Meetings of the Organization should be conducted using the principles outlined in Robert's Rules of Order.

(b) Officers' Meetings

Youth Officers should meet as often as is necessary to plan and manage the business of the Organization including, but not limited to, setting the agenda for meetings, development of fundraisers, and planning of activities.

(c) Special Called Meetings

The Chief Advisor or President, with the advice and consent of the Chief Advisor, may call a special meeting of the Organization provided proper prior notice is given to the members and the Advisors.

(d) Voting

- (i) Voting on most issues will be by a plurality of members present, except as stipulated below.
- (ii) Voting for Officers of the Organization shall be by a fifty-one percent majority of the members present.
- (iii) The rules of these By-Laws may be *temporarily* waived or suspended by a two-thirds majority vote of the members present.
- (iv) Amendments or revisions to these By-Laws shall require a two-thirds majority vote of the membership, and final approval from the Executive Committee.

Article IV. Conduct

Section 4.01 Compliance to Rules and Orders

- (a) Youth members are held to the same professional standards of conduct and ethical behavior as adult firefighters. This applies to personal lives as well as when officially representing the Organization or their fire department.
- (b) Members should learn and use the chain-of-command and are encouraged to address officers and others by their rank or title. Members shall be respectful to peers, officers, firefighters, advisors, adults, and the public.
- (c) Members are expected to actively participate in meetings, training, fundraisers, projects, and other functions of the Organization unless duly excused. Excused absences include family obligations, extracurricular school activities, and illness. The Secretary should be notified of absences *prior* to the date of the function.

Section 4.02 Disciplinary Action

Members are subject to disciplinary action for violations of these By-Laws as well as other organizational policies and rules. Disciplinary actions may include a warning, probation, suspension, and dismissal from the Organization.

Section 4.03 Probation

- (a) Members may be restricted or excluded from participating in certain activities of the Organization for a specified period of time, such as going on trips, etc. Members on Probation may not vote.

Probation can be used for, but limited to:

- (i) Failure to maintain membership requirements as stipulated under Section 2.01
- (ii) Failure to maintain satisfactory school attendance; suspension, or expulsion from school
- (iii) Poor behavior or conduct which does not rise to the level of Suspension or Expulsion

Section 4.04 Suspension

- (a) Members may be restricted or excluded from participating in *all* activities of the Organization for a specified period of time. If a member is on suspension, he or she is prohibited from participating in *any* activity of the Organization.

Suspension should be used for, but not limited to, the following matters:

- (i) Disrespectfulness or insubordination
- (ii) Repeated infractions of rules or repeated incidents of unacceptable behavior or conduct
- (iii) Any behavior or conduct which does not rise to the level of Expulsion

Section 4.05 Expulsion

- (a) A member may be removed from the Organization for repeated offenses or for matters so contemptible or outrageous that it requires his or her removal for the safety or well-being of members, or the good-standing of the Organization. Matters that are specifically subject to expulsion include, but are not limited to:

- (i) Alcohol or drug use
- (ii) Prohibited or illegal activity
- (iii) Abuse, bullying, harassment, sexual harassment, or hazing
- (iv) Continual infractions of rules, or recurrent incidents of unacceptable behavior or conduct
- (v) Any behavior or conduct which would deem the member unfit to continue with the Organization

Section 4.06 Authority

Only the Chief Advisor or the Executive Committee shall administer disciplinary action to youth members. The youth members are specifically prohibited from administering disciplinary action to fellow youth members.

Section 4.07 Appeals

A member may appeal his or her disciplinary action to the Executive Committee. Said appeal must be in writing and within seven (7) days of the administration of the disciplinary action. The decision of the Executive Board is final.

Article V. Elections

Section 5.01 Elected Officers

- (a) The President, Vice President, Treasurer, and Secretary are elected annually by the youth members in good standing.
- (b) The term of office shall be for one year.

Section 5.02 Nominations Committee

The President should appoint a Nominating Committee annually. The Nominating Committee will recommend and present to the general membership a slate of qualified candidates.

Section 5.03 Qualified Candidates

- (a) Only members in good standing are eligible to run for office.
- (b) Candidates agree to serve the Organization faithfully and to the best to their abilities for a period of one year upon being elected to office.
- (c) Candidates who turn 21 years of age before the next scheduled election are prohibited from running for office.

Section 5.04 Nominations from the Floor

On the day of the election, nominations may be made from the floor by any member in good standing. If the nomination is seconded and the proposed candidate meets the requirements as outlined in Section 5.03, he or she must be included on the ballot.

Section 5.05 Qualified Electorate

Only members in good standing are eligible to vote.

Section 5.06 Qualified Majority

Candidates must have at least 51% of the voting quorum to win the election.

Article VI. Finances

Section 6.01 Assets

- (a) Assets and moneys must be used primarily to further the stated purposes and mission of the Organization.
- (b) The Organization shall not engage in activities that may endanger the non-profit status of the Organization or its Sponsoring Agency.
- (c) Youth members shall not have direct access to bank accounts.

Section 6.02 Income

The Organization may receive monetary contributions from any governmental, business, or private entity, provided there is no conflict of interest.

Section 6.03 Dues & Fees

- (a) Members can be required to pay membership dues and other fees.
 - (i) Said dues and fees may be paid by the individual's fire department, or by the Organization provided there are enough funds available to do so.
- (b) Members delinquent in payments can be removed from the Organization's membership roster.

Section 6.04 Fundraisers

- (a) Money-earning projects must be consistent with the Firefighting Code of Ethics and reflect positively upon the Organization. Projects must be without personal benefits or conflicts of interest for members and the Organization.
- (b) All money-earning projects shall be pre-approved and authorized by the Chief Advisor.

Section 6.05 Expenditures

- (a) Expenditures and disbursements shall be made for the furtherance of the stated purposes and mission of the Organization.

- (b) Moneys and assets shall not be used to benefit or enrich members, Officers, Advisors, Executive Committee members, other organizations, businesses, or private individuals, except to pay reasonable compensation for goods or services rendered.

Section 6.06 Dissolution

- (a) Upon dissolution of the Organization, any assets shall be distributed to the Sponsoring Agency.

~ ~ ~ END OF DOCUMENT ~ ~ ~

* * *