**Volunteer Firefighter Program**

**1.1 PURPOSE AND SCOPE**

The Montezuma Fire Protection District (MFPD) utilizes full-time staff and volunteer firefighting personnel to deliver a high level of professional service to the community. This policy describes MFPD’s volunteer firefighter program.

**1.2 VOLUNTEERS**

Under this program, a “volunteer” is an individual who performs service for MFPD for civic,

charitable, or humanitarian reasons, at his or her own election, without coercion, and without

promise, expectation, or receipt of compensation for services rendered.

**1.3 VOLUNTEER DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

Volunteers may assist department personnel in staffing the engine and performing all emergency response functions as a firefighter, including but not limited to, emergency response, fire suppression, search and rescue, wildland firefighting, hazmat, and technical rescue activities. Volunteers may assist with conducting inspections and code enforcement of laws and regulations. Volunteers may also assist the Department in its public education efforts and/or in other areas within the Department as needed.

All volunteers shall comply with all orders and directives, either oral or written, issued by MFPD. A copy of the policies and procedures will be made available to each volunteer upon appointment, and he/she shall become thoroughly familiar with these policies.

Volunteers serve MFPD at-will, and their volunteer status may be terminated at any time without

cause or reason. Volunteers are not eligible for any benefits provided to employees of MFPD,

and are not covered by any Memorandum of Understanding applicable to full-time employees.

**1.4 VOLUNTEER POSITIONS**

MFPD maintains volunteer opportunities within the following positions: Resident Volunteer

Firefighter, Reserve Volunteer Firefighter, Support Volunteer and Fire Explorers.

**1.4.1 RESIDENT VOLUNTEER FIREFIGHTER**

The Resident Volunteer Firefighter shall live within the geographic boundaries of the City of

Rio Vista or the Montezuma Fire Protection District. This position receives training and performs all functions in emergency response as a Resident Volunteer Firefighter. The MFPD Volunteer Description outlines the specifications for this position.

Training: Complete a Montezuma Fire Protection District Firefighter I task book, It is expected that Resident Volunteer Firefighters will maintain skills by attending three training drills each month, which are regularly held on the first, second and fourth Tuesday of each month. If a Resident Volunteer Firefighter does not attend enough drills to maintain necessary skills, the ability to volunteer may be impacted.

Shift Participation: Resident Volunteer Firefighters may participate by filling either: 3 each 12-hour shifts each month or maintaining a 25% call volume.

Volunteer Coordination Meetings: Attend monthly Volunteer Coordination meetings on the 3rd Tuesday of each month.

**1.4.2 RESERVE VOLUNTEER FIREFIGHTER**

The Reserve Volunteer Firefighters shall live within a 30 mile air radius of the main fire station. There are specific certificate and training requirements for this position. This position receives training and performs all functions in emergency response as a Reserve Volunteer Firefighter. The MFPD Job Description outlines the specifications for this position. Participation: Be an active member within the Montezuma Fire Protection District, Volunteer Firefighters Association and the community. Support public education activities.

Training: Complete a Montezuma Fire Protection District Firefighter I task book, It is expected that Resident Volunteer Firefighters will maintain skills by attending three training drills each month, which are regularly held on the first, second and fourth Tuesday of each month. If a Resident Volunteer Firefighter does not attend enough drills to maintain necessary skills, the ability to volunteer may be impacted.

Shift Participation: Reserve Volunteer Firefighters are expected to maintain a minimum of three shifts each month. This can be achieved in the form of 12-hour shifts.

Volunteer Coordination Meetings: Attend monthly Volunteer Coordination meetings on the 3rd Tuesday of each month.

**1.4.3 SUPPORT VOLUNTEER**

The Support Volunteer shall live within the geographic boundaries of the City of

Rio Vista or the Montezuma Fire Protection District. There are no certification and/or training requirements for this position. This is a non-safety position that provides administrative support functions within the district. The MFPD Volunteer Description outlines the specifications for this position.

Training: N/A

Explorer Coordination Meetings: Attend monthly Explorer Coordination meetings on the 1st

Wednesday of each month

Volunteer Coordination Meetings: Attend monthly Volunteer Coordination meetings on the 3rd

Tuesday of each month.

**1.4.4 STUDENT FIRE EXPLORER**

The Student Fire Explorer shall be a current student in the River Delta Unified School District.

This is a non-safety position and is only intended for educational and training purposes. Student

Fire Explorers are prohibited from actively engaging in emergency operations and emergency medical care.

Participation: Attend a scheduled training program that includes an educational curriculum, skills

development, and team building. Under the direction of a Fire Captain, a Student Fire Explorer

may participate in a Ride Along, with approval of Human Resources, parent or guardian, and the Fire Chief.

Training: Lecture and manipulative skills-based training will be provided.

Explorer Coordination Meetings: Attend monthly Explorer Coordination meetings on the 1st

Wednesday of each month

Volunteer Coordination Meetings: Attend monthly Volunteer Coordination meetings on the 3rd Tuesday of each month.

**1.5 VOLUNTEER MANAGEMENT**

Volunteer Management will be under the direction of the Fire Chief and/or their designee.

**1.5.1 VOLUNTEER RANKS**

Resident and Reserve Volunteers may have the ability to achieve and maintain the ranks of Firefighter, Engineer, and Captain levels only. Volunteers within these ranks are solely volunteer positions and provide the opportunity to be mentored and develop training and skills necessary to perform these functions within the MFPD.

**1.5.2 RECRUITMENT**

Volunteers should be recruited on a continuous and ongoing basis consistent with department

policy on equal opportunity and non-discrimination. A primary qualification for participation in the

application process should be an interest in, and an ability to assist the Department in serving the public for civic, humanitarian, and charitable reasons with no expectation of monetary payment or other compensation. The following requirements also apply:

• Be at least 18 years of age for all positions other than Explorer.

• Be at least 14 years of age for an Explorer position.

• Possess a valid California driver license if the position requires vehicle operation.

• Be able to deal effectively and courteously with the general public.

• Be willing to commit to approximately 12 hours per week, so that the district

 can do further volunteer outreach as needed.

• Complete training as determined to be appropriate by the district.

• Possess any other qualifications specific to the volunteer assignment.

**1.5.3 SCREENING**

All prospective volunteers should complete the volunteer application form. The Volunteer

Coordinator or the authorized designee should conduct a face-to-face interview with an applicant under consideration. A documented background investigation shall be completed on each volunteer applicant and should include, but not necessarily be limited to, the following:

1. Fingerprints
2. Drug Test
3. Traffic and criminal background check
4. Employment history
5. References

**1.5.4 SELECTION AND PLACEMENT**

Service as a volunteer with the Department shall begin with an official notice of acceptance or

appointment to a volunteer position. Notice may only be given by an authorized representative of the Montezuma Fire Protection District. No volunteer should begin any assignment until they have been officially accepted for that position and completed all required screening and paperwork. At the time of final acceptance, each volunteer should complete all required enrollment paperwork and will receive a copy of their position description and agreement of service with the Department. All volunteers shall receive a copy of the volunteer handbook and shall be required to sign a volunteer agreement. Volunteers should be placed only in assignments or programs that are consistent with their knowledge, skills, abilities, and the needs of the Department.

**1.5.5 TRAINING**

Volunteers will be provided with an orientation program to acquaint them with the Department,

personnel, and policies and procedures that impact work assignments.

Volunteers will receive position-specific training to ensure they have adequate knowledge and

skills to complete tasks required by the position and will also receive periodic ongoing training as deemed appropriate by their assigned Captain. Training should reinforce to volunteers that they may not intentionally represent themselves as, or by omission infer that they are, employees of the Department. They shall always represent themselves as volunteers.

**1.5.6 DRESS CODE**

As representatives of the Department, volunteers are responsible for presenting a professional

image to the community. Volunteers shall dress appropriately for the conditions and performance of their duties. Volunteers shall conform to department-approved dress consistent with their assignment. The uniform or identifiable parts of the uniform shall not be worn while off-duty except volunteers may choose to wear the uniform while in transit to or from official district assignments or functions.

Volunteers shall be required to return any issued uniform or department property at the termination of service.

**1.6 SUPERVISION OF VOLUNTEERS**

Each volunteer who is accepted for a position with the Department must have an identified Captain who is responsible for direct oversight of that volunteer. This supervisor (or his or her designee) will be responsible for day-to-day direction and guidance of the work of the volunteer and should be available to the volunteer for consultation and assistance. Volunteers will be assigned to a designated Captain upon acceptance. A volunteer may be assigned as, and act as, a supervisor of other volunteers provided that the supervising volunteer is under the direct supervision of a Captain.

**1.7 DEPARTMENT INFORMATION RESTRICTIONS**

At times, volunteers will acquire confidential medical information while responding to and providing assistance at the location of an emergency. All medical-related information a

volunteer encounters shall be considered confidential. Unauthorized disclosure of any confidential information, verbally, in writing or by any other means, will not be tolerated.

Volunteers shall not address public gatherings, appear on radio or television, prepare any article for publication, act as a correspondent to a newspaper or other periodical, release or divulge any information concerning the activities of the district without obtaining advance permission from the Fire Chief or the Fire Chief’s designee.

**1.8 PROPERTY AND EQUIPMENT**

Volunteers will be issued an identification card that must be worn at all times while on duty. Any fixed and portable equipment issued by the district shall be for official and authorized use only. Any property or equipment issued to a volunteer shall remain the property of the district and shall be returned at the termination of service.

**1.9 STIPEND**

Volunteer firefighters are bona fide volunteers volunteering their services freely for civic,

charitable, or humanitarian reasons. As such, volunteer firefighters shall not receive any compensation or benefits for their services to the Montezuma Fire Protection District. However, so as not to deter volunteers due to expenses involved with being a volunteer, MFPD shall pay volunteers / reserve a $35.00 stipend per each 12-hour shift. The stipend is intended to provide reimbursement for uniform cleaning and maintenance (including boot polish, supplies, and repair), as well as meal, fuel, and cell phone expenses. These per-shift expenses are estimated as set forth below:

**Estimate of Expenses per 12-hour Shift**

o Uniform Cleaning Expense- Shirt $ 5.00

o Uniform Cleaning Expense- Pants $ 5.00

o Boot Polish Supplies / Repair Cell phone $ 5.00

o Meal Expense\* Up to $ 15.00

o Fuel Expense $ 5.00

\*Based on Federal GSA Published Per Diem Rates

\*\*Cell Costs due to receiving FD messages via text message related to emergency incidents,

recall, training notices and other FD related communications.

Because the reimbursement is not being provided pursuant to an accountable plan (for which

receipts would be required to substantiate expenses), the stipend will be paid and taxed as wages in compliance with federal income tax requirements. Volunteers will receive W2 forms at the conclusion of the tax year. This treatment for tax purposes does not change volunteer status under the FLSA. Firefighters remain volunteers at all times and for all purposes.