

## **Rule 513-7-1-.08. Volunteer and Part-Time Firefighter Requirements and Affidavits**

- (1) A volunteer fire department shall have an active volunteer program as outlined in (a), (b) and (c) below in order for its members to be eligible to earn pension credit. Volunteer firefighters shall meet a minimum standard of 50% of the aggregate of creditable department drills or meetings and creditable calls for the calendar year using a point based system. One point shall be earned for each eligible call, and one point for each completed hour of designated department drills or meetings held as a group.
  - (a) A volunteer fire department shall hold at least 8 hours of drills or meetings per month for 10 months (or more) in a calendar year. If the department fails to hold the required hours of drills and meetings, no member of the department shall be able to earn creditable service for that year.
  - (b) Creditable department drills or meetings shall take place as a group, at the department level. If a department has multiple stations, drills and meetings as a group at the station level may count as department drills and meetings. There shall be no sub-groups within a station for the purpose of calculating annual department drills and meetings for Pension Fund credit. Of regular department drills, and meetings offered annually, each member of the department shall attend a minimum of 25%. In addition, creditable service shall not be earned if the member attended less than 24 hours of department drills and meetings for the year. Drills and meetings must be documented on forms that contain the following:
    - (i) Date of training/event
    - (ii) Actual beginning and actual end times
    - (iii) Location
    - (iv) Brief description of training/activity
  - (c) Creditable calls are calls specific to the department being called. If a department has multiple stations, the calls may be specific to the station. Fire calls shall be counted towards pension credit. A fire call is defined as fires on property subject to insurance coverage under O.C.G.A. 47-7-61, including, but not limited to structures, vehicles, boats, planes and motorcycles. Structures include commercial and residential properties, whether occupied or not. In addition to fire calls, it shall be pre-determined annually by the chief, if, and what other types of calls are also counted as creditable. This may include but is not limited to motor vehicle accidents, and vegetation, crop, and open land fires. Awarding of, or denying of credit for a particular type call shall be consistent throughout the year. Members shall meet a minimum of 25% of creditable calls annually. In the event the 25% calculation does not result in a whole number, the calculation may be rounded down to the nearest whole number. Firefighters from departments with one or more creditable calls, cannot earn creditable service if no calls were attended.
- (2) Additional pension eligible points may be earned for Additional Training and Station Duty.
  - (a) One point may be earned for each hour of organized training attended which shall take place outside the department's regularly scheduled station activity. Additional training points are not required to be earned within the member's department, but shall require the approval of the member's chief. Additional training credit shall not account for more than 25% of the members total annual pension eligible points.
  - (b) Additional points may also be earned by performing pre-scheduled, pre-approved Station Duty. Station Duty, performed in two hour blocks, shall earn one point of additional credit per completed two hour block. Work shall take place during the time in which credit is being earned. Station Duty Credit shall not account for more than 25% of the members total annual pension eligible points.

- (c) Station duty credit and additional member training credit shall not be earned concurrently. The department shall maintain documentation of station duty, and additional training where credit is being applied towards annual pension credit. Documentation shall be on forms provided, and prescribed by, the Board of Trustees.
- (3) The Chief or Chief's designee shall determine if a Volunteer has earned pension creditable service for the period under report by summarizing the points earned relative to points available to determine if the "50%" standard has been met in accordance with O.C.G.A. [47-7-81](#).
- (a) The Chief or Chief's designee shall add all points earned by a Volunteer for Station Activity and Fire Calls, plus any approved points earned for Station Duty and/or Additional Training (under 513-7-1-.08 (1) and (2) above) to determine Total Points Earned.
  - (b) The Chief or Chief's designee shall add all points offered by the station or department for Station Activity and those Fire Calls for which the Volunteer and his/her volunteer unit is responsible to determine Total Points Available.
  - (c) For each Volunteer unit, the total of points offered and responsible, i.e. the Total Points Available should be the same for all Volunteers.
  - (d) The Chief or Chief's designee shall divide Total Points Earned by Total Points Available for each pension participating Volunteer to determine if pension creditable service has been earned.
- (4) Volunteer Service Affidavits for each active volunteer shall be filed promptly after the end of each calendar year by the chief of each department with which volunteer firefighters are enrolled attesting to the attendance of the volunteer firefighters for the prior calendar year.
- (a) The Required Annual Affidavit Packet shall be provided by the Fund, and is to be completed and returned in its entirety by the chief of their respective fire department.
  - (b) A list of active members will be provided to the department. Individual Volunteer Service Affidavits shall be completed for each person listed. Each Volunteer Service Affidavit must be signed by the member and the chief.
  - (c) The annual Volunteer Service Affidavits, along with any requested or specified backup documentation for each member listed, shall be properly addressed and mailed in its entirety to the Pension Fund office, by first class mail, postage prepaid, and bear a postmark not later than February 15<sup>th</sup> of each year.
  - (d) Volunteer Service Affidavits received without required backup documentation, for each member listed, will be considered incomplete and shall be returned to the department for completion. Required Reporting Documentation received after February 15<sup>th</sup> shall not be accepted without the approval of the Board of Trustees. In addition, each member listed will be assessed a \$25 late fee if their Volunteer Service Affidavit is received after February 15<sup>th</sup>.
  - (e) Creditable service extended to volunteer firefighters based on the Chief's Affidavit is provisional, and subject to audit and verification by the Fund.
  - (f) Records of calls, training, drills, meetings and station duty shall be maintained by the Department for a minimum of 10 years. Such records shall be made available for inspection by the Fund, upon request.
- (5) Part-Time Firefighters are state certified firefighters, employed in a permanent compensated position, working at least 20 hours per week on average, (1040 hours annually).
- (a) The annual Part-Time Affidavit, prepared by the Fund and completed by the chief, attesting that the requirements in 513-7-1-.08 (5) above have been met, shall be filed promptly after the end of each

calendar year. The completed affidavit shall contain the number of hours worked for each member listed, and be signed by the chief for the member to receive credit.

- (b) The annual Part-Time Affidavit shall be properly addressed and mailed to the Pension Fund office, by first class mail; postage prepaid, and be postmarked no later than February 15<sup>th</sup> of each year.
- (c) Any Part-Time Affidavit received after February 15<sup>th</sup> shall not be accepted without the approval of the Board of Trustees. In addition, each member listed on the affidavit will be assessed a \$25 late fee if the "Part-Time Affidavit" is received after February 15<sup>th</sup>.
- (d) Creditable service extended to part-time firefighters based on the Chief's Affidavit is provisional, and subject to audit and verification by the Fund.

**Authority: O.C.G.A. § 47-7-23.**