

# **Curtis J. Cook Member Relief and Education Fund**

## **A. Mission:**

The Ponderosa Volunteer Fire Association, Inc., the Ponderosa Fire Department, and Emergency Services District #28 believe its members are its most important asset, and that the organization(s) can assist its members in the event of an unforeseen tragedy or educational opportunity for the member.

## **B. Purpose**

The purpose of the Fund is to assist active members who have made the decision to support their community by undertaking the hazardous and sometimes deadly endeavor of firefighting and serving on the boards of directors. This Fund will support active members who wish to take educational courses that will improve their knowledge and capabilities while in turn making them more valuable to PFD and consequently the community. In addition, this fund will be available to provide an active member with funds in the event of an unforeseen emergency or tragedy.

## **C. Eligibility**

The Relief Fund Committee will determine member eligibility and fund applicability. The member must be an Active Member or Board/ESD member, and must be a member in good standing for a minimum of one year prior to the request. The member must not have had a disciplinary comment made to his/her personnel file related to participation levels. The Command Staff is the final determination of the good standing status of the member, and may modify the Committee's determinations in any regard.

## **D. Fund Committee**

Upon the submission of a request for disbursement from the Fund, an Ad Hoc committee will be formed (the 'committee') to review the application and member eligibility. This committee will be comprised of four PFD members and be appointed by a chief officer and/or their designee. The committee will consist of the following: (The Chief Officer is an Ex-Officio member and the applicant cannot be a committee member).

- One (1) Chief Officer Coordinator
- The Station Captain of the applicants' home station.
- Three (3) department members, one from each station

The committee will decide if the education or financial assistance the member applied for falls within the parameters and spirit of the Fund. They will determine if the member meets all applicable eligibility requirements of the Fund, and they will determine the level of funding that will be provided to the applicant using applicable Fund guidelines. They will also determine if the assistance is a grant or loan. If it is a loan, the committee will prescribe the loan repayment schedule.

### **E. Funding Support**

The financial support for The Fund will be submitted to the elected officers and the PVFA for approval. Some suggestions are:

- Donations
- Raffles
- Grocery store benefits
- Credit card benefits
- Others as appropriate and agreed to by the PVFA
- Budgeting considerations – PVFA annual donation

### **F. Financial Control and Oversight**

The Ponderosa Volunteer Fire Association Board of Directors or their designee will control the assets of the Fund. The PVFA shall also make changes as needed in the event they decide by majority vote that the overall direction of the Fund should change. As the directing entity of the Fund, the PVFA board will retain the ability to overturn the committee's determination by a majority vote.

A special account will be established that is distinct from other PFD accounts and is designated as non-ESD28 funds. The PVFA shall have the power to review the committee's decision for disbursement and make the final determination of the level of funding the individual applicants may receive based on Fund management requirements. The PVFA shall also have the power to resolve disputes relative to the committee's determinations.

### **G. Fund Reimbursements and Disbursements**

The monies disbursed from this Fund are to be considered a 0% interest loan under normal circumstances. However, the committee retains the right to make a grant from the Fund as well. This option should be used on a limited basis to maintain the Fund with a healthy cash balance.

The **minimum** monthly repayment amount **shall** be \$50.00 unless otherwise set by the Committee. Payments may be made in \$25.00 increments. Failure to reimburse the Fund may result in legal remedies.

1. Emergencies – The Committee is to act as soon as feasible to address the member's needs. In some instances, a preliminary dollar amount may be provided until the individual's insurance company reimburses their claim. In cases where the insurance company pays in full, it will be the responsibility of the member to repay The Fund upon receipt of the money from the insurance company. The Committee may require receipts for most or all expenses by the qualified member.
2. Education – A member may request funds to participate in an education/training program that the member may not be able to afford. The program must be of direct benefit to the PFD. The Committee may, at its discretion, require the member to reimburse The Fund within a reasonable time period.

- a. An example could be to allow a member to attend Emergency Service Training Institute's Recruit Training Program, and upon successful completion the member would have to reimburse the fund (interest free) within one year after completion. In the event the member does not successfully complete a course, the member will be held responsible to repay the fund within the same time period as determined by the Committee's rules set forth at fund disbursement.
- b. Distributions from the Fund shall be directed toward that end. This Fund is not to be used as a replacement for fire department training. It is intended for education beyond that which is normally undertaken in the PFD. Examples of appropriate use of the Fund would be to help defer expenses for classes leading to an accredited degree program in fire science, or attending training for Emergency Medical Technician, or other certifications, although it is not required that the training lead to a certification or degree. This Fund would not be used to take a class on ventilation. It could however be used to attend an accredited fire academy in pursuit of certification in which ventilation is part of the curriculum. Use of money from the Fund must benefit the member who, in turn, must use that knowledge and skill to benefit the PFD.

#### **H. The Requesting Process**

1. To request a disbursement from the Fund, a member must contact the Fire Chief for the required paperwork. Upon filling out the required forms and providing the required documents, the applicant will return the package to the Fire Chief who will then form a committee as soon as feasible to review the application.
2. At this point, the Fire Chief may reject the application based on the criteria outlined in this document. If the request is in order or modified, the Fire Chief will pass to the committee for action.
3. The committee will be appointed by the Fire Chief and meet to provide a written report to the Fire Chief including the approval or denial of the request, as well as the reasons for the decision. This report will also include repayment requirements. In turn, the Fire Chief will advise the applicant of the committee's decision.

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**APPLICATION FORM**

Version 4/16/2015  
Print legibly or type

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Member Since \_\_\_\_\_

Institution providing the training \_\_\_\_\_

Course being taken \_\_\_\_\_

Start and End date of course \_\_\_\_\_

Approximate cost of course(s) \_\_\_\_\_

The reason(s) I am requesting financial assistance from The Fund (add additional sheets if needed):

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How will this benefit PFD and the community? (add additional sheets if needed):

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What level of assistance is being sought? (add additional sheets if needed):

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I may be required to provide training records and participation evidence as part of the application package. Also, I will provide any additional documentation relative to this request as needed by the committee.

I \_\_\_\_\_ attest the above information is true and correct to the best of my knowledge, and I agree to the existing policy document and Committee requirements as provided to me. The PVFA may utilize any method available to recover any funds that are not reimbursed as per the agreement and my signature below.

_____ Signed	_____ Date
_____ Print Name	_____ Date
_____ Committee Approval	_____ Date
_____ Fire Chief Approval	_____ Date
_____ PVFA Agenda Item	_____ Date