



# POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

## MONTGOMERY COUNTY

### DEPARTMENT OF FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICES

NO. 812

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DATE

July 5, 1991

TITLE INJURY INVESTIGATION TEAM PROCEDURES

DIRECTOR APPROVAL

#### PURPOSE

- 1.0 To establish policies and procedures for use by the Injury Investigation Team when investigating incidents where a critical injury or fatality has occurred to a DFRS employee.

#### APPLICABILITY

- 2.0 All DFRS personnel.

#### DEFINITIONS

- 3.0 Critical Injury - An injury sustained by an employee that requires hospitalization and/or an extensive recuperation period.
- 3.1 Injury Investigation Team (IIT) - A unit of DFRS responsible for collecting and reviewing data on critical injury incidents, issuing final reports on probable cause, and making recommendations for policy and procedural changes intended to reduce the possibility of future occurrences.

The Team is comprised of:

- DFRS Safety Officer, who will serve as Team Leader.
- DFRS Deputy Safety Officer, who will serve as Team Leader in the Safety Officer's absence.
- EMS Duty Officer - The on-duty EMS Officer during the time the incident occurred.
- Fire Prevention Officer - A representative of the Bureau of Fire Prevention, as designated by the Fire Prevention Bureau Chief.
- Bargaining Unit - Member of the Health and Safety Committee.
- Bureau Chief - Appointed by the Director.
- Other members, as determined by the Safety Officer.



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## POLICY

- 4.0 The DFRS must investigate critical injuries and fatalities utilizing the Injury Investigation Team (IIT). Incidents where no injury occurred but where the potential for serious injury or death existed, may be investigated by the IIT.
- 4.1 The Safety Officer or in his absence, the Deputy Safety Officer must be notified immediately when an employee suffers a critical injury or a service-connected death.
- 4.2 The IIT will be mobilized immediately when an employee is critically injured or killed in the line of duty. The Team may also be mobilized when notified of an incident where no injury or death occurred, but where a specific occurrence, action, procedure or circumstance indicated that the potential for injury or death existed. The Team Leader, in consultation with the Director, will mobilize as many segments of the Team as needed.
- 4.3 The DFRS Safety Officer or Deputy Safety Officer will serve as the IIT Team Leader.
- 4.4 The IIT must collect and review data on service-connected critical injuries and service-connected deaths.
- 4.5 The IIT must issue final reports to the Director based on conclusions drawn from investigations into incidents of service-connected critical injuries and service connected deaths. The reports may be disseminated to the field as Training or Safety Bulletins.
- 4.6 Recommendations for policy and procedure changes based upon the findings of the IIT must be forwarded to the Director via the Safety Officer.

## PROCEDURE

- 5.0 The Safety Officer will mobilize the IIT when notified by ECC of a service-connected critical injury or death to a DFRS employee.
- 5.1 The Team will meet at the location designated by the Safety Officer, usually the incident scene.



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- 5.2 The first arriving team member must ensure that the incident scene is secured in accordance with FRC, DFRS and police department policies.
- 5.3 At the conclusion of the incident, the team will immediately interview all DFRS personnel involved and take statements which may be reduced to writing. All personnel must cooperate with the IIT during an authorized investigation.
- 5.4 The EMS Duty Officer must establish a liaison with the receiving hospital and request appropriate tests (e.g., blood gases).
- 5.5 The IIT must impound and secure affected protective clothing, SCBA, communication and other records, tapes, dispatch reports, incident reports, and casualty reports as deemed necessary.
- 5.6 The Team must follow provisions outlined in Policies and Procedures No. 525, Critical Injury Guide, and No. 526, Funeral Guide.
- 5.7 The Safety Officer or designee must draft an Injury Investigation Report for the Director. The report should include:
  - A. nature of injuries, their extent, expected outcome, extent of disability, etc.;
  - B. characteristics of the employee involved - length of experience, training, etc.;
  - C. description of the incident;
  - D. characteristics of equipment being used, their suitability and applicability;
  - E. task(s) being performed at the time of injury/death;
  - F. time factors (time of day, time of occurrence, time elapsed on duty during occurrences, etc.);
  - G. protective equipment used/preventive measures taken;
  - H. summary of applicable laws, standards, policies & procedures;
  - I. factors - unsafe acts, hazardous conditions, management failures;
  - J. recommendations to prevent recurrence; and
  - K. weather conditions, if applicable/appropriate.



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- 5.8 At the discretion of the Team Leader, develop area maps, floor plans, and other drawings as needed to indicate location, position, direction of movement, other actions of affected personnel and apparatus, and take photographs and video tape of all aspects of the incident scene.
- 5.9 The IIT must:
- a. Assist the Incident Commander as necessary.
  - b. Recommend the use of the Critical Incident Stress Debriefing Team.
  - c. Utilize land line communication as much as practical to reduce radio traffic regarding the affected personnel.
  - d. Issue no public statements.

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