



# WARREN COUNTY FIRE ACADEMY

## Fire Academy Employee Grievance Procedure



### SUBJECT: Fire Academy Employee Grievance Procedure

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### Section 1: PURPOSE

1.1 To establish a clear and consistent procedure for an Academy employee to initiate a grievance or complaint that requires action on part of the Academy Administrative Personnel. Employees and the Academy are best served when maintaining a safe and quality educational environment.

### Section 2: DEFINITIONS

2.1 A complaint is an employee-initiated complaint about the treatment of the employee by a fellow employee, Warren County Employee or contractor of the Academy. The employee Complaint Process can be used when the concern does not fall into the current complaint/appeal categories concerning the Academy Policy regarding Harassment (AP-4).

2.1.1 Complaints regarding intimidation, harassment, bullying, inappropriate sexual conduct or sexual assault shall be **immediately** forwarded to the supervisor or Warren County Community College (WCCC) Human Resources as appropriate.

2.1.2 It is expected that whenever a disagreement arises, both parties will attempt to solve their differences informally before recourse to the grievance procedure.

2.1.3 Complaints pertaining to a Non-Academy Warren County Employee shall be forwarded to the Department of Public Safety Director for investigation and determination.

2.2 A complaint may also be considered a breach of recognized safety protocols or standards, a violation of Academy administrative or operational policies witnessed by an employee and not immediately corrected by an instructor or supervisor during the instructional period.

### Section 3: PROCEDURE

3.1 Due to the varying methods of instruction at the Academy a grievance / complaint shall be submitted in the following formats (In order of importance):



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- 3.1.1 An Academy provided and approved complaint form
  - 3.1.2 An Academy provided and approved memorandum
  - 3.1.3 A letter submitted in a business letter format
- 3.2 The grievance notice may be submitted in person or as an attachment to an email to the Academy.
- 3.2.1 Verbal complaints or Emails will not be accepted as a format to submit a grievance.
- 3.3 All grievances shall contain the following information:
- 3.3.1 Name of grievant
    - 3.3.1.1 This information will not be disclosed, if so, requested by the grievant unless necessary.
  - 3.3.2 Date of the event
  - 3.3.3 Description of the event
  - 3.3.4 Name or names of person/s the grievance is filed against
  - 3.3.5 Where the event occurred if not in description
  - 3.3.6 Name or names of any witnesses
- 3.4 Regardless of the outcome, the grievance notice will become a part of permanent record. The notice shall be as professional as possible in nature. The following is requested to not be included in the grievance and will not be acknowledged by the Academy.
- 3.4.1 Personal opinions
  - 3.4.2 Requests or demands for a specific outcome or disclosure of the result of the ensuing investigation.

### Section 4: **INVESTIGATION PROCESS**

- 4.1 All grievances shall be treated seriously and promptly investigated. The investigation will be as confidential as possible, consistent with the need to investigate. The Academy will immediately undertake or direct an effective, thorough and objective investigation.



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- 4.2 All investigations shall be conducted as soon as is practicable, and reported for appropriate action, if any, pursuant to applicable personnel policies. The investigator shall interview the complainant, the person alleged to have engaged in a violation of this policy and any other persons who witnessed the alleged conduct or similar conduct forming the basis of the complaint. The investigator shall make written factual findings and credibility assessments, and then forward a report to the Academy Coordinator for evaluative assessment. A special emergency session of the Academy Board may be convened to determine appropriate disciplinary and remedial action, if any, subject to applicable notice, personnel policies, procedures and regulations. All investigative materials are deemed confidential and are not subject to disclosure, except as otherwise required by law.
- 4.3 The investigation will be completed and a determination regarding the allegations will be made and communicated to the accused party.
- 4.4 Any disciplinary action rising above the level of a verbal warning shall be forwarded to WCCC Human Resources, the Academy Board of Advisor, the Director of the Department of Public Safety and the sponsoring department Chief or designee as appropriate.

### Section 5: **CONFLICTS OF INTEREST**

- 5.1 At times a grievance may involve a situation where the employee was involved as a member of the department for which he/she is a member. The following shall outline a general policy should this occur.
- 5.2 The Academy shall avoid an employee acting as a supervisor if that employee's department is operating at a department drill.
- 5.3 If the employee is on duty as an instructor or supervisor, he/she shall operate under the provisions of this policy.
- 5.4 If the employee is acting as a member of the department, he/she will operate under policy AP-7.
- 5.4.1 The employee shall not be involved in the investigation process on behalf of the Academy.
- 5.4.2 The employee shall be held to the Academies confidentiality polices and shall not share information with his/her department until or unless approved by the Academy Coordinator.



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### Section 6: **REPEALER**

- 6.1 Any order, policy or directive of a previous administration on this subject matter and in conflict with it is hereby repealed.
- 6.2 Should another order, policy or directive of this administration appear to conflict with this general order it shall be brought to the attention of the Academy Coordinator who shall make the determination and issue amending orders, if needed.
- 6.3 This policy is not in conflict with similar policies set forth by the County of Warren, Warren County Department of Public Safety, or the Warren County Community College.