



RUSSELLVILLE FIRE DEPARTMENT  
POLICY MANUAL

Policy Number:  
Section:  
Original Date:  
Revised Date:

## PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to provide guidelines for the ceremonial processes of the Russellville Fire Department ("Department"). Throughout the year, the Department will facilitate both formal and informal ceremonies. These ceremonies shall include but are not limited to:

- Probationary Firefighter Swearing-In Ceremonies
- Probationary Firefighter Standards Graduation Ceremonies
- Engineer Promotional Ceremonies
- Paramedic Promotional Ceremonies
- Captain Promotional Ceremonies
- Battalion Chief Promotional Ceremonies
- Command Staff Promotional Ceremonies
- Retirement Ceremonies
- Annual Awards Ceremony

## POLICY

### Probationary Firefighter "Swearing-In" Ceremonies

Probationary Firefighters are hired when a vacancy exists within the Department. They must complete an initial forty-hour week of training before being assigned to a firefighting company. The following guidelines shall be followed upon the successful completion of their training:

1. Probationary Firefighters will meet with the Fire Chief or a Chief Officer of the Command Staff upon the conclusion of their last day of training.
2. The Fire Chief or Chief Officer will "Swear In" the Probationary Firefighters by having them recite the Firefighters' Oath of Service. The Mayor will be invited to participate in the swearing-in.
3. The Fire Chief or Chief Officer will provide the Probationary Firefighters with the following:
  - a. Company and Shift Assignment.
  - b. Probationary Firefighter Helmet Shield.
4. The Fire Chief or Chief Officer shall wear the Class C Uniform.
5. Probationary Firefighters shall wear the Class D Uniform.
6. The following will be posted on all Department Social Media accounts:
  - a. Photo of the Probationary Firefighters with the Fire Chief or Chief Officer.
  - b. Photo of the swearing-in process.
  - c. Photo of each Probationary Firefighter with their name.
  - d. A brief description of the initial training process that has been completed, along with a description of future training and expectations.
7. The Fire Chief shall invite the Mayor to the "Swearing-In Ceremony."

### Probationary Firefighter Standards Graduation Ceremonies

Probationary Firefighters must complete the Firefighter Standards course within one year of their employment. This is also a requirement for completing the probationary process. Upon their successful completion of the Firefighter Standards course, the following guidelines will be followed:

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1. Probationary Firefighters shall attend a Firefighter Standards graduation ceremony hosted by the training agency. If the Russellville Fire Department provides the training, the Department will facilitate the graduation ceremony.
2. Graduation ceremonies facilitated by the Department shall follow this process:
  - a. All Departmental employees shall be invited to attend.
  - b. On-duty personnel shall attend.
  - c. The Fire Chief shall invite the Mayor and members of the City Council to attend.
  - d. The Department's Public Information Officer shall invite media members to attend.
  - e. The Probationary Firefighters' family, friends, and other guests shall be invited at least one month in advance on formal Department stationery.
  - f. Graduation ceremonies shall be conducted at the Central Fire Station's Training Room.
  - g. The ceremony shall, at a minimum, include the following components:
    - i. Invocation
    - ii. Presentation of the Colors
    - iii. Information Presentation of the Fire Academy Process by the Division Chief of Professional Standards
    - iv. Slide Show or Presentation of Class Activities
    - v. Commemorative Speech by the Fire Chief or Chief Officer of the Command Staff
    - vi. Firefighter Oath of Service
    - vii. Badge Presentation
    - viii. Helmet Shield Presentation\*
    - ix. Conclusion
    - x. Reception
  - h. Probationary Firefighters shall wear the Class B Uniform.
  - i. Command Staff and Battalion Chiefs shall wear the Class A Uniform.
  - j. Firefighters, Engineers, and Captains shall wear the Class B Uniform.
  - k. The following will be posted on all Department Social Media accounts:
    - i. Group photo of the graduates with the Fire Chief or Chief Officer of the Command Staff and Mayor (if in attendance)
    - ii. Photo of the swearing-in process
    - iii. Photo of each graduating Firefighter with their name
    - iv. A brief description of the Fire Standards graduation ceremony
3. Graduation ceremonies hosted by the training agency shall follow this process:
  - a. All Departmental employees shall be invited to attend.
  - b. On-duty personnel shall attend.
  - c. The Fire Chief should notify the Mayor and members of the City Council of the details of their graduation from the Firefighter Standards program.
  - d. The Fire Chief or at least one Chief Officer of the Command Staff shall attend the graduation ceremony.
  - e. Probationary Firefighters shall wear the Class B Uniform.
  - f. Command Staff and Battalion Chiefs shall wear the Class A Uniform.
  - g. Firefighters, Engineers, and Captains shall wear the Class B Uniform.
  - h. The following will be posted on all Department Social Media accounts:
    - i. Photo of the graduates with the Fire Chief or Chief Officer of the Command Staff
    - ii. Class Photo of the graduating class
    - iii. Photo of each graduating Firefighter with their name
    - iv. A brief description of the Fire Standards graduation ceremony

**\*After completing their probationary period, Probationary Firefighters will be recognized by their shift and receive their official Firefighter helmet shields from their Captain and Battalion Chief.**

Approved

Fire Chief



## Engineer Promotional Ceremonies

Firefighters who have completed the requirements to be promoted to the position of Engineer will be promoted using the following guidelines:

1. The Fire Chief will notify candidates being promoted to Engineer within thirty (30) days of the vacancy announcement.
2. Candidates promoted to the position of Engineer will be promoted within sixty (60) days of the vacancy announcement.
3. The Fire Chief may authorize the promotion to take effect immediately upon the position vacancy and before the promotional ceremony.
4. If possible, the promotional ceremony shall occur on the last day of the candidate's current assignment.
5. Engineer promotional ceremonies shall be conducted at the Central Fire Station's Training Room.
6. Engineer promotional ceremonies shall follow these guidelines:
  - a. All Departmental employees shall be invited to attend.
  - b. On-duty personnel shall attend.
  - c. The Fire Chief shall invite the Mayor and members of the City Council to attend.
  - d. The promotional candidate shall invite their family, friends, and guests.
  - e. The ceremony shall, at a minimum, include the following components:
    - i. Invocation
    - ii. Presentation of the Colors
    - iii. Commemorative Speech by the Fire Chief or Chief Officer of the Command Staff
    - iv. Firefighter Oath of Service
    - v. Badge Presentation
    - vi. Helmet Shield Presentation
    - vii. Conclusion
  - f. Promotional candidates shall wear the Class C Uniform.
  - g. Command Staff and Battalion Chiefs shall wear the Class B Uniform.
  - h. Firefighters, Engineers, and Captains shall wear the Class C Uniform.
  - i. The following will be posted on all Department Social Media accounts:
    - i. Group photo of the promotees with the Fire Chief or Chief Officer of the Command Staff and Mayor (if in attendance)
    - ii. Photo of the swearing-in process
    - iii. Photo of each new Engineer with their name
    - iv. A brief description of the Engineer's job description

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Fire Chief



### Paramedic Promotional Ceremonies

Firefighters, Engineers, and Captains who have completed the requirements to be promoted to the position of Paramedic will be promoted using the following guidelines:

1. The Fire Chief may authorize the promotion immediately and before the promotional ceremony.
2. If possible, the promotional ceremony shall occur on the last day of the candidate's current assignment.
3. Paramedic promotional ceremonies shall be conducted at the Central Fire Station's Training Room.
4. Paramedic promotional ceremonies shall follow these guidelines:
  - a. All Departmental employees shall be invited to attend.
  - b. On-duty personnel shall attend.
  - c. The Fire Chief shall invite the Mayor and members of the City Council to attend.
  - d. The promotional candidate shall invite their family, friends, and guests.
  - e. The ceremony shall, at a minimum, include the following components:
    - i. Invocation
    - ii. Presentation of the Colors
    - iii. Commemorative Speech by the Fire Chief or Chief Officer of the Command Staff
    - iv. Paramedic Oath of Service
    - v. Badge Presentation
    - vi. Conclusion
  - f. Promotional candidates shall wear the Class C Uniform.
  - g. Command Staff and Battalion Chiefs shall wear the Class B Uniform.
  - h. Firefighters, Engineers, and Captains shall wear the Class C Uniform.
  - i. The following will be posted on all Department Social Media accounts:
    - i. Group photo of the promotees with the Fire Chief or Chief Officer of the Command Staff and Mayor (if in attendance)
    - ii. Photo of the swearing-in process
    - iii. Photo of each new Paramedic with their name
    - iv. A brief description of the Paramedic's job description

Approved

Fire Chief



### Captain Promotional Ceremonies

The rank of Captain is a critical within the Department because it is the first level of leadership at the Russellville Fire Department. Captains serve as the Company Officers and are responsible for the subordinates under their supervision. For this reason, the promotion to the rank of Captain deserves extraordinary recognition by the Department. Firefighters and Engineers who have successfully completed the requirements to be promoted to the rank of Captain will be promoted using the following guidelines:

1. The Fire Chief will notify candidates being promoted to Captain within thirty (30) days of the vacancy announcement. The candidates will procure all elements of the Class B Uniform with proper insignia and order new Class C Uniforms.
2. Candidates promoted to the rank of Captain will be promoted within sixty (60) days of the vacancy announcement.
3. The Fire Chief may authorize the promotion to take effect immediately upon the position vacancy and before the promotional ceremony.
4. If applicable, the promotional ceremony for Captains shall occur along with the promotional ceremony for Battalion Chiefs, which shall not exceed one per quarter.
5. Captain promotional ceremonies shall be conducted at a venue capable of comfortably accommodating members of the public, dignitaries, Departmental employees, candidates' families, and friends.
6. Captain promotional ceremonies shall follow this process:
  - a. All Departmental employees shall be invited to attend.
  - b. On-duty personnel shall attend.
  - c. The Fire Chief shall invite the Mayor and members of the City Council to attend.
  - d. The Department's Public Information Officer shall invite media members to attend.
  - e. The candidates' family, friends, and other guests shall be invited at least one week in advance on formal Department stationery.
  - f. The ceremony shall, at a minimum, include the following components:
    - i. Invocation
    - ii. Presentation of the Colors
    - iii. Commemorative Speech by the Fire Chief or Chief Officer of the Command Staff
    - iv. Officer Oath of Service
    - v. Badge Presentation
    - vi. Helmet and Shield Presentation
    - vii. Conclusion
    - viii. Reception
  - g. Promotional candidates shall wear the Class B Uniform.
  - h. Command Staff and Battalion Chiefs shall wear the Class A Uniform.
  - i. Firefighters, Engineers, and Captains shall wear the Class B Uniform.
  - j. The following will be posted on all Department Social Media accounts:
    - i. Group photo of the promotees with the Fire Chief or Chief Officer of the Command Staff and Mayor (if in attendance)
    - ii. Photo of the swearing-in process
    - iii. Photo of each new Captain with their name
    - iv. A brief description of the Captain's job description

Approved

Fire Chief



### **Battalion Chief Promotional Ceremonies**

The rank of Battalion Chief is a very crucial position within the Department because this position serves as the Platoon Commander. Battalion Chiefs are responsible for the subordinates under their supervision and all emergency operations during their assigned shift. For this reason, the promotion to the rank of Battalion Chief deserves extraordinary recognition by the Department. Battalion Chiefs will be promoted using the following guidelines:

1. The Fire Chief will notify candidates being promoted to Battalion Chief within thirty (30) days of the vacancy announcement. The candidates will procure all elements of the Class A Uniform with proper insignia.
2. Candidates promoted to the rank of Battalion Chief will be promoted within sixty (60) days of the vacancy announcement.
3. The Fire Chief may authorize the promotion to take effect immediately upon the position vacancy and before the promotional ceremony.
4. If applicable, the promotional ceremony for Battalion Chiefs shall occur along with the promotional ceremony for Captains, which shall not exceed one per quarter.
5. Battalion Chief promotional ceremonies shall be conducted at a venue capable of comfortably accommodating members of the public, dignitaries, Departmental employees, candidates' families, and friends.
6. Battalion Chief promotional ceremonies shall follow this process:
  - a. All Departmental employees shall be invited to attend.
  - b. On-duty personnel shall attend.
  - c. The Fire Chief shall invite the Mayor and members of the City Council to attend.
  - d. The Department's Public Information Officer shall invite media members to attend.
  - e. The candidates' family, friends, and other guests shall be invited at least one week in advance on formal Department stationery.
  - f. The ceremony shall, at a minimum, include the following components:
    - i. Invocation
    - ii. Presentation of the Colors
    - iii. Commemorative Speech by the Fire Chief or Chief Officer of the Command Staff
    - iv. Officer Oath of Service
    - v. Badge Presentation
    - vi. Helmet and Shield Presentation
    - vii. Conclusion
    - viii. Reception
  - g. Promotional candidates shall wear the Class A Uniform.
  - h. Command Staff and Battalion Chiefs shall wear the Class A Uniform.
  - i. Firefighters, Engineers, and Captains shall wear the Class B Uniform.
  - j. The following will be posted on all Department Social Media accounts:
    - i. Group photo of the promotees with the Fire Chief or Chief Officer of the Command Staff and Mayor (if in attendance)
    - ii. Photo of the swearing-in process
    - iii. Photo of each new Battalion Chief with their name
    - iv. A brief description of the Battalion Chief's job description

Approved

Fire Chief



### Command Staff Promotional Ceremonies

Division Chiefs, Assistant Chiefs, and the Fire Chief are the Chief Officers that comprise the Command Staff. The Command Staff ensures that the Department provides “Exceptional Service” and adheres to our Mission Statement. For this reason, the promotion to Command Staff deserves extraordinary recognition by the Department. Command Staff shall be promoted using the following guidelines:

1. The Fire Chief will notify candidates being promoted to the Command Staff within thirty (30) days of the vacancy announcement. The candidates will procure all elements of the Class A Uniform with proper insignia.
2. Candidates will be promoted within sixty (60) days of the vacancy announcement.
3. The Fire Chief may authorize the promotion to take effect immediately upon the position vacancy and before the promotional ceremony.
4. If applicable, the promotional ceremony for Captains and Battalion Chiefs shall occur along with the promotional ceremony for Command Staff, which shall not exceed one per quarter.
5. Command Staff promotional ceremonies shall be conducted at a venue capable of comfortably accommodating members of the public, dignitaries, Departmental employees, candidates' families, and friends.
6. Command Staff promotional ceremonies shall follow this process:
  - a. All Departmental employees shall be invited to attend.
  - b. On-duty personnel shall attend.
  - c. The Fire Chief shall invite the Mayor and members of the City Council to attend.
  - d. The Department's Public Information Officer shall invite media members to attend.
  - e. The candidates' family, friends, and other guests shall be invited at least a month in advance on formal Department stationery.
  - f. The ceremony shall, at a minimum, include the following components:
    - i. Invocation
    - ii. Presentation of the Colors
    - iii. Commemorative Speech by the Fire Chief or Mayor
    - iv. Officer Oath of Service
    - v. Badge Presentation
    - vi. Helmet and Shield Presentation
    - vii. Conclusion
    - viii. Reception
  - g. Promotional candidates shall wear the Class A Uniform.
  - h. Command Staff and Battalion Chiefs shall wear the Class A Uniform.
  - i. Firefighters, Engineers, and Captains shall wear the Class B Uniform.
  - j. The following will be posted on all Department Social Media accounts:
    - i. Group photo of the promotees with the Fire Chief or Mayor
    - ii. Photo of the swearing-in process
    - iii. Photo of each new Battalion Chief with their name
    - iv. A brief description of the Battalion Chief's job description

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## Retirement Ceremonies

Members of the Department who complete twenty (20) years of service will be entitled to have a formal Retirement Ceremony in their honor. The following guidelines shall be followed for these ceremonies:

1. Retirement ceremonies shall be conducted at a venue capable of comfortably accommodating members of the public, dignitaries, Departmental employees, retirees' families, and friends.
2. The ceremony date shall be scheduled on a day of the retirees' choosing. It may be on a duty day, such as their last day of assignment, or within the month after the employee has retired.
3. The retirees' immediate family members will be invited to help plan and facilitate the ceremony.
4. Celebrations shall follow this process:
  - a. All Departmental employees shall be invited to attend.
  - b. On-duty personnel shall attend.
  - c. The Fire Chief shall invite the Mayor and members of the City Council to attend.
  - d. The Department's Public Information Officer shall invite media members to attend.
  - e. The retirees' family, friends, and other guests shall be invited using formal Department stationery as soon as reasonably possible.
  - f. The celebration shall, at a minimum, include the following components:
    - i. Invocation
    - ii. Presentation of the Colors
    - iii. Commemorative Speech by the Fire Chief or Chief Officer of the Command Staff
    - iv. Current Supervisor Speech
    - v. Past and Present Members' Speech
    - vi. Badge Presentation
    - vii. Helmet and Shield Presentation
    - viii. Axe or Plaque Presentation
    - ix. Conclusion
    - x. Reception
  - g. The retiree shall wear the Class C Uniform if on duty and may wear civilian clothes if the ceremony is scheduled after the retirement date.
  - h. Command Staff and Battalion Chiefs shall wear the Class B Uniform.
  - i. Firefighters, Engineers, and Captains shall wear the Class C Uniform regardless of whether or not they are on or off duty.
  - j. The following will be posted on all Department Social Media accounts:
    - i. Announcement that contains the details of the upcoming celebration with a picture of the retiree.
    - ii. Photo of the retiree and their immediate family at the celebration
    - iii. Photo of the retiree and their current fire company
    - iv. Photo of the retiree with the Fire Chief and Mayor (if attending)

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### Annual Awards Ceremony

The Russellville Fire Department desires to appropriately recognize members of the Department, on and off duty, or members of the community who perform an act of distinct heroism or provide "Exceptional Service" to the Department or the community's public safety.

Each December, the Department recognizes these individuals at the Annual Awards Ceremony. The ceremony was created to distinguish fire and civilian personnel who perform their jobs in a manner that exhibits a commitment to "Exceptional Service" and has rendered services beyond the ordinary course of duty. The following guidelines shall be followed for these ceremonies:

1. The Annual Awards Ceremony shall be conducted at a venue that comfortably accommodates dignitaries, Departmental employees, families, and special guests.
2. The ceremony will be held during the first two weeks of December. If possible, a different shift will host it each year.
3. Awards ceremonies shall follow this process:
  - a. All Departmental employees shall be invited to attend.
  - b. On-duty personnel shall attend.
  - c. The Fire Chief shall invite the Mayor and members of the City Council to attend.
  - d. Retirees and special guests shall be invited at least a month in advance on formal Department stationery.
  - e. The ceremony shall, at a minimum, include the following components if applicable:
    - i. Invocation
    - ii. Presentation of the Colors
    - iii. Introduction of Department Command Staff
    - iv. Introduction of the Mayor, City Council Members, and Special Guests
    - v. Commemorative Speech by the Fire Chief or Mayor
    - vi. Recognition of Retirees
    - vii. Recognition of New Firefighters
    - viii. Recognition of Newly Promoted Engineers
    - ix. Recognition of Newly Promoted Captains
    - x. Recognition of Newly Promoted Battalion Chiefs
    - xi. Recognition of Newly Promoted Command Staff
    - xii. Recognition of Years of Service Milestones
    - xiii. Medal of Honor Presentation
    - xiv. Medal of Valor Presentation
    - xv. Medal of Bravery Presentation
    - xvi. Lifesaving Medal Presentation
    - xvii. Civilian Service Award Presentation
    - xviii. Firefighter of the Year Presentation
    - xix. Company of the Year Presentation
    - xx. Conclusion
    - xxi. Reception
  - f. Command Staff and Battalion Chiefs shall wear the Class A Uniform.
  - g. On-duty Firefighters, Engineers, and Captains shall wear the Class C Uniform.
  - h. Off-duty personnel may wear civilian clothes but are encouraged to wear the Class C uniform.
  - i. The following will be posted on all Department Social Media accounts:
    - i. Group photo of award recipients
    - ii. Photo of each award recipient with a description of their award

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Fire Chief