**BEST OPERATING PRACTICES**

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Disclaimer: All Best Practices are provided as a guide for departments by the Pennington Co. Fire Service Board. These are for general guidance and should be modified by each department based on their own individual rules or standard operating guidelines/policies. Each department within Pennington Co. is ultimately liable for its own operations and practices.

**PREMISE:** Firefighters have a responsibility to the people they serve, themselves and fellow firefighters, to insure they will respond with the utmost due regard for public safety and that firefighters have a valid driver's license and a driving history free of major driving offenses.

**PURPOSE:** The purpose of this BOP is to establish the necessary guidelines to insure that all prospective firefighters in Pennington County have been "appointed" in accordance with SDCL 62-1-5 and that the driving record of those firefighters has been duly reviewed.

**SCOPE:** The BOP shall apply to all people who desire to become volunteer firefighters in Pennington County and who expect to be insured under Pennington County's vehicle liability and/or workman compensation insurance coverage.

**HISTORY:**
- Original Issue: August 11, 1993
- Revised: July 10, 2013

**OPERATIONAL PROCEDURES:**

1. All Fire Chiefs of Pennington County who wish their firefighters to be insured by Pennington County's workman's compensation shall submit the following information to the Fire Administrator, upon acceptance of the firefighter membership in their fire department.
   - Full name
   - Firefighter's mailing address
   - Date of birth
   - Driver's license number (State of issuance)

2. The Fire Administrator, after receiving the above information, shall:
   A. Submit the information to the South Dakota Department of Commerce & Regulation, Drivers Licensing, Pierre, SD, or the Pennington County Sheriff to obtain "license status" and "drivers history” of the individual. The "license status” and "drivers history” information shall be returned to the Fire Administrator.
   B. The Fire Administrator shall review the "driver’s history” and "license status” in accordance with this BOP.
3. The following description shall be used to determine "major" or "minor" offenses:

   A. Major offenses may include, but are not limited to:
      
      - Reckless driving;
      - Driving under the influence;
      - Leaving the scene of an accident;
      - Speeding more than 20 MPH over the posted limit; and
      - Eluding a police officer.

      Any firefighter or prospective firefighter who has one or more "major" offenses on his/her driving history during the past three (3) years will not be provided vehicle liability insurance coverage under Pennington County's policy.

   B. Minor offenses may include but are not limited to:
      
      - Speeding with no points assessed;
      - Accidents;
      - Failure to stop at stop or signal, etc.

      1. Any firefighter or prospective firefighter who has four (4) or more "minor" offenses on his/her driving history during the past three (3) years will not be provided vehicle liability insurance coverage under Pennington County's policy.

      2. Any firefighter or prospective firefighter who has less than four (4) "minor" offenses on his/her driving history may be informed by the Fire Administrator that any additional offenses will be grounds for denial of vehicle liability insurance coverage. The firefighter's fire chief shall also be notified.

4. The denial of vehicle liability insurance coverage shall not have any effect on providing workman compensation insurance to any firefighter or prospective firefighter.

5. In the event the prospective firefighter does not have a current and valid driver's license, or there are grounds for denial of insurance coverage as per 3-A or 3-b.i above, the Fire Coordinator shall inform the fire chief and firefighter of the "license status and/or driving history" and of the denial of vehicle liability insurance coverage.

   A. The Fire Administrator shall inform the fire chief and firefighter by letter and include and "acknowledge of deliver" from the US Postal Service.

   B. The letter of denial of vehicle liability insurance coverage shall state the reason(s) for denial, that the firefighter will still be insured by Pennington County's workman compensation insurance, and include a copy of this BOP.

6. In the event that a firefighter is denied driving privileges, the fire chief and/or firefighter may request, in writing, that the Fire Administrator and/or Fire Service Board reconsider the denial.

7. If it comes to the attention of the Fire Administrator or any fire chief of a change, or possible change, in the "license status or driver history", then the fire chief may request the Fire Administrator to review the license status and driving history in accordance with this policy.