

Baker City Fire Department Cadet Handbook



Baker City Fire Department
Adopted: December 5, 2025



BAKER CITY, OREGON
 P.O. Box 650, Baker City, OR 97814-0650
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1. Letter from the Chief

Dear New Member,

As the Fire Chief for the Baker City Fire Department, I would like to take this opportunity to welcome you as a Cadet member of the Baker City Fire Department! For many, this program will be the first step in the career to the fire service, whether volunteer or paid. I honestly believe that you, as an active participant in this program are the future of this fire department, and a hero of tomorrow.

When people do not know where to turn for help, quite often their response is to call the local fire department. They expect us to fix their emergency, or to at least make things better for them. Therefore, the firefighter has traditionally performed many tasks other than just fighting actual fires and is held in high esteem by many people. As a member of the Cadet Program, people will look to you as a representative of this department. Therefore, it is important to follow the code of conduct and to be courteous and respectful to all, especially when wearing your uniform.

As a new member of the Cadet Program, you will be required to participate in training, meetings, drills, station projects, Public Education, and other community service events. There are also many other activities and opportunities available to you, that I hope you will take advantage of.

As a member of this department, I take a great deal of pride in it and the community that surrounds it. You will be expected to do the same. As a member, strive for excellence; be the best that you can; be proud of what you are doing it for; promote department pride by example; and most of all have fun and be safe. Again, myself, my staff, and the entire department want to WELCOME YOU!

Sincerely,

Michael S Carlson

Michael S Carlson
Fire Chief
Baker City Fire Department



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2. Introduction

- 2.1. **Purpose:** To educate youth about fire and emergency services through interaction with fire department personnel and community members, primarily via ride-alongs, training, public events, and community outreach.
- 2.2. **Definition:** A Firefighter Cadet is a high school youth interested in a career in fire and emergency services. Cadets volunteer time through the Baker School District 5J and the Baker City Fire Department Fire Cadet Program to participate in public functions and tasks assigned by the Fire Department.
- 2.3. **Relationship:** Cadets are representatives of the Baker City Fire Department. They should model the department's code of conduct, safety standards, and professional behavior while wearing a uniform.

3. Mission, Vision, and Values

- 3.1. **Mission:** Safeguard lives, property, and the environment through all-hazard emergency response, fire prevention, public education, and community partnerships.
- 3.2. **Vision:** Inspire and develop leaders through education, high-quality training, professional development, and mentorship.
- 3.3. **Core Values:**
 - Integrity:** Ethical conduct, trust, accountability.
 - Compassion:** Empathy and service-minded action.
 - Professionalism:** Excellence, ongoing skill/knowledge improvement.
- 3.4. **Commitment to the Community:** Cadets serve the community, treat people with respect, remain accountable, communicate openly, educate others on fire safety, and help provide a safe youth activity environment.

4. Code of Conduct and Core Expectations

4.1. Rules of Conduct

1. Do not misuse department equipment.
2. Obey all department policies, SOGs (Standard Operating Guidelines), traffic and criminal laws.
3. Follow all instructions from the Cadet Advisor.
4. Behave professionally and courteously; maintain appropriate demeanor at all times.
5. Uniforms, badges, and insignia must be worn only for approved department activities; misuse can lead to discipline or termination.
6. All activities and information at the department are confidential; keep files and records off-limits to Cadets.



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7. Cadets must be authorized by the Cadet Advisor and approved by the on-duty Shift Officer for any activity.
8. The Baker City Fire Department rules apply to Cadets.

4.2. Failure to Comply

- If you fail to comply with the above code of conduct and program rules you will be issued an administrative disciplinary notice. Some circumstances may result in immediate expulsion from the program. Once an administrative disciplinary notice is issued it will require the cadet to review it with a parent and both the cadet and parent to sign the notice indicating they have reviewed the notice and the cadet agrees to forego such behaviors moving forward. A copy of the notice will be emailed to the parent or guardian listed on file. Failure to return a signed notice will result in the cadet being unable to attend the program until the Cadet advisor has received the notice.
- While all students are being supervised and participating in the Cadet program it is at the forefront of the Fire Department and the City to maintain a safe environment for all participant, and we believe certain behaviors fail to allow that desired environment to remain if they are not reviewed with the Cadet in a professional manner.
- For more information regarding requirements of Cadet review the ***Cadet Rules and User Responsibilities*** section
- Review ***Attendance, Participation and Discipline, Section 8.3 Discipline*** for more details regarding Administrative / Disciplinary Notices. (**Appendix 13**)

5. Cadet Rules and User Responsibilities

- Suspension from school results in suspension from the Cadet Program.
- Expulsion from school results in expulsion from the Cadet Program.
- Cadets must conduct themselves professionally at the Fire Department and during all activities.
- A cadet participating in illegal activities made know to the Fire Cadet program Advisor may result in expulsion from the Cadet Program.
- Use of alcohol or drugs by Cadets is prohibited and may result in permanent expulsion.
- Equipment issued to Cadets is the Cadet's responsibility to maintain; do not loan to non-members.
- Attendance at scheduled training and meetings is required; exceptions allowed for sickness, excused school absences, or work schedule with officer notification.
- Cadets will not respond to any emergency calls unless on a scheduled ride-along.
- Cadets may ride in the apparatus during routine calls only as part of a ride-along, properly seated with seat belts.
- Cadets must report all injuries to an Officer.
- Overnight stays at the Fire Station are forbidden.



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- Cadets may not participate in Fire Department functions during school hours.
 - Unless function is sanctioned by and in cooperation with the school district prior to the event.
 - Notice and permission slips will be supplied and must be signed by school staff and parents.
- Cadets may be dismissed at any time if performance or conduct does not meet guidelines.

6. Eligibility and Entrance Requirements

- Currently enrolled in high school.
- Age: 14–18 years old while enrolled in the program.
- Academic: Maintain a minimum 2.0 GPA (no failing grades); pass the school's sports physical for entry, and annually thereafter.
- Willingness to volunteer time to complete activities as assigned.
- Grades below 2.0: Cadets will receive a letter with one term to raise GPA to 2.0 or higher. Persistent GPA below 2.0 may result in suspension and removal of uniform/equipment, with possible reapplication later.
- Application: Supplemental Questions #1 – Governing Rules for Disqualification.
 - No applicant who has received a charge of a Class A misdemeanor or higher will be allowed to participate in the program.
 - No applicant charged with a moving violation where the applicant was charged with violating the posted speed in an excess of 20mph, will be allowed to participate in the program.
 - No applicant charged with a crime related to a controlled substance (MIP, Drugs, Alcohol, etc.) will be allowed to participate in the program.
 - No applicant being charged with a criminal violation that would reduce or vacate public trust in the applicant will be allowed to participate in the program.
 - Additional criminal charges may be subject to restrictions from the program. If an applicant is deemed unqualified on a basis of past criminal activity the applicant and the parent/guardian will be notified based on the decision.

7. Program Structure and Organization

- **Cadet Advisor:**
 - The primary point of contact for questions, scheduling, and program guidance. The Cadet Advisor coordinates with Fire Department Officers and school staff.
- **Companies:**
 - Cadet units are organized into Companies for operational and training purposes. Cadets are assigned to a Company upon joining and typically remain in that



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Company, though reassignments may occur as needed. Each Company has a Cadet Company Officer (lead). If the Company Officer is unavailable, another approved member leads that event.

- **Cadet Ride-Alongs and Training:**
 - Cadets participate in ride-alongs and training under supervision. Cadets are observers on ride-alongs and may assist with select tasks only when trained and directed.

8. Attendance, Participation, and Discipline

8.1. Attendance

- Cadets must attend scheduled meetings and trainings; excused absences are allowed.
 - An email is to be sent to the advisor email. The email should indicate the cadet's inability to attend giving a brief reason.
 - If an absence is for a planned reason the Cadet should inform the advisors as soon as they know of the planned absence so it can be documented in the program calendar.
- Failure to communicate is considered an unexcused absence. Four unexcused absences may result in removal from the program.
 - Occurrence with extenuating circumstances will be considered as an excused absence.
 - Such instances parents will be expected to send a follow-up communication to the program advisor.

8.2. Participation

- Cadets volunteering for department activities must complete the activity.
 - This program is a proactive program designed to educate cadets and create the opportunity for cadets to explore new opportunities and participate in their community in a structured and beneficial way.
- Cadets failing to participate will receive an Administrative / Disciplinary Notice.
 - The issuance of this notice in this circumstance will be to make sure the cadet truly wishes to participate in the program.
 - Failure to participate is reason to be dismissed from the program.

8.3. Discipline

- Administrative / Disciplinary Notice (**Appendix 13**): This form will be given to cadets in all instances where a behavioral, or academic issue arises. The form will explain the reason for its issuance and will require review between the parent and the cadet. Both will sign and the form will be returned to the advisor.
- Progression of Behavioral Discipline:



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- 1st issuance: Cadet will receive the notice to be reviewed with a parent or guardian.
- 2nd issuance: Cadet and parent will meet in person with the fire chief and the cadet advisor.
- 3rd issuance: Cadet may be removed from the program.
- Progression will only occur in this outline if the documented behavior or discipline is concerned with the same problem.
- If a cadet exhibits unsafe behavior in violation of this handbook at anytime that presents a danger to themselves or others, the cadet may be immediately removed from the program. The department also has the right to start the discipline progression at any phase listed.
- If a student receives an Administrative / Disciplinary Notice for academic reasons it will also require the student to make sure the school counselor signs off on the slip indicating passing grades.
 - Our goal is to support the growth of each cadet, but their academic success comes first. This program is an extra circular and will not be allowed to interfere with a student's academic career.

9. Dress Code, Uniforms, and Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

- Badges, insignia, uniforms, and patches are property of the Baker City Fire Department and must be returned upon exit for administrative or disciplinary reasons.
- Hair: Reasonable length and acceptable style per Fire Department regulations.
- Cadets must be properly attired in uniform at the department and at any related functions.
 - Red Shirt – Provided by the School
 - Black work pants – Not provided
 - Black work boots – Not provided
- Uniforms and boots must be clean, polished, and well-maintained.

10. Ride-Alongs: Rules and Best Practices

- Cadets will request ride-alongs through the Cadet Advisor and be placed on the ride-along log. **(Appendix 14)**
- Cadets should arrange rides with shifts pending advisor and officer approval; avoid riding exclusively with one shift. Complete ride along request form. **(Appendix 14)**
 - Ride alongs must be scheduled at least 2 weeks in advance.
 - Ride along will be in 4 hour increments 8:00am - 12:00pm and 1:00pm - 5:00pm.
 - Cadets are eligible to earn ride along hour through program participation.
 - Ride along opportunities will be limited to 4 ride alongs (16 hours) per cadet.
- Cadets may not ride along with only a single FD personnel (no one-on-one ride-alongs) member.
- Ride-alongs end no later than 1800 hours (6:00 PM) any time of year.



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- Cadets must be well-groomed and in uniform for ride-alongs and training.
- Cadets are observers during ride-alongs and will not participate in firefighting actions unless directed by a supervisor.
- Cadets should not use the radio unless authorized by an Officer.
- Cadets must comply with all ride-along rules and any additional policies set by the Cadet Advisor.

11. Activities Cadets Will Be Involved In

- Public functions and community events.
- Fundraising activities.
- Physical fitness routines and training.
- Ride-alongs (ages 16–18).
- Fire and EMS training, with exposure limitations to BBP (Blood Borne Pathogens) and non-IDLH environments until properly trained (ages 16–18).
- External – Trip Events
 -
- Other functions assigned by the Fire Department.

12. Training Academy and Skill Development (Overview)

- Cadets will participate in structured training covering:
 - PPE, SCBA/Respiratory Protection
 - Fire behavior and fundamentals of firefighting
 - Tools and equipment
 - Water supply systems
 - Ladders, ropes and knots
 - Hazardous materials awareness and regulations
- Training is delivered through a phased program, with written and hands-on evaluations. Cadets must complete required training before performing more advanced tasks.

13. Communication and Records

- Event notices are communicated at trainings, meetings, emails, and newsletters. Cadet Advisor or Fire Department communications handle changes or cancellations.
- The Cadet Program Advisor will communicate all important updates and may notify parents/guardians via text or phone call as needed.
- Points and achievements: Cadet points are posted on the Cadet Program bulletin board (tracking and recognition system).



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14. Program Documentation

- Each cadet will have a file in the HR data base the following documents must be completed prior to a cadet being able to participate in the program.
 - Application (**Appendix 5**)
 - Emergency Contact and Medical Information Form (**Appendix 7**)
 - Current Medical Insurance Card – Provided by parents
 - Current Sports physical
 - Liability Waivers (**Appendix 4**)
 - Parental and Cadet: Program Consent Form (**Appendix 6**)
 - Privacy Agreement: (**Appendix 17**) (Ages 16 – 18)
- Cadet Background Release Form (**Appendix 15**)
 - This form will be required of cadets to participate in certain activities.
 - For all cadets looking to participate in a protected activity the Fire Chief and City HR manager will meet with the Cadet and the parents to explain why a background check is needed.
 - Parents can refuse a background check to be completed on their child prior to the need. If the parent chooses to restrict a background to be complete the cadet will just not be allowed to participate in the defined activity.

15. Medical, Safety, and Confidentiality

- Cadets must adhere to safety rules and PPE requirements during trainings and activities.
- Cadets are not permitted to be exposed to IDLH environments without appropriate training and authorization.
- All department information observed or received is confidential, no sharing of sensitive information.
 - Each Cadet will be provided with a file in the HR management system and access to documents will be restricted to the Fire Chief and the HR manager.
 - Cadet files are the property of the cadet and the parent; at any time a cadet or a parent may request their file.
 - To request the personnel file for a cadet a Records Request Form must be submitted. (**Appendix 16**)

16. Key Contacts

- Cadet Advisor: Primary contact for questions, scheduling, and conflict resolution.
- Fire Chief: Strategic oversight and support.
- Baker High School Career Counselor: Additional resource for conflicts or questions.



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- City Human Resources Manager: Involved for disciplinary actions, investigations, and formal processes.

17. Quick Reference: Frequently Asked Questions (Summary)

1. Activities include training, social events, field trips, film nights, dinners, fundraising, public service projects; Cadets do not fight fires as part of the program.
2. Parades: Yes; uniform issued required before participation.
3. Event notifications: Through trainings, meetings, emails, newsletters; parental contact as needed by Cadet Advisor.
4. Points tracking: On the Cadet Program bulletin board.
5. Firefighter/EMT eligibility: 16th birthday to test/apply for EMT through NREMT; certification typically at age 18 in Oregon.
6. Participation: Required for program goals; non-participation may impact privileges.
7. Ride-along purpose: Observational experience; safety-focused; not training to fight live fires.
8. Observations on injuries and exposure: Cadets should avoid violent scenes; safety director directs cadets toward safety.
9. More information can be found on the FAQ flyer. **(Appendix 3)**

18. History of the Baker City Fire Department

How it Began

Prior to the organization of the paid Baker City Fire Department, the city had an all-volunteer fire department. The fire organizations included the McCord Hose Company and Kangaroo Hose Company. All that the city owned was a chemical wagon. The city would pay \$10 to the first delivery man, or teamster as they were called, who got to the livery stable after the fire call was sounded. It was the teamster's job to hook onto the chemical wagon and take it to the fire. It was not uncommon for the chemical rig to be late getting to the fire because of the disagreements back at the fire station over who was the first to arrive and get the \$10 fee. Therefore, on March 19, 1909, the Baker City Fire Department was organized. The first chief was Frank Grabner, and he was paid \$70 per month. The Assistant Chief was paid \$65 per month, and two firemen were paid \$60 per month. They worked 24 hours a day, six days a week and they had 1% off for lunch. The fire horse team, named Brig and Eagle, were always bridled and ready to go. They were trained to take position so that the prepared harnesses could drop down and all that the firemen would have to do is snap the bit and away they would go to the fire.

In 1908 Brig and Eagle were used to pull the fire wagon above, Brig being the one bridled on the right of the team, and Eagle on the left. They were so well trained by Frank Grabner, that when



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the alarm sounded, Brig and Eagle would move forward from their stalls and be in position for the pre-assembled harness, which lowered down and the only action remaining for the teamster was to snap the bit.

Brig and Eagle served from 1908 to 1913, with Baker City purchasing its first motorized fire engine in 1912. Brig and Eagle continue to serve with Baker City Fire, now as part of our department patch. We proudly look back on them as a figure of strength and unity while they served.

In 1912 Baker City Fire Department purchased the first motorized fire truck. It was a Webb Truck, and it cost \$5,350.00. Brig and Eagle retired in May of 1913.

Baker City Fire Department purchased its first American LaFrance fire truck in 1928. The cost was \$7,800.00. The firemen continued to use the old chemical tank' carrying it under one of the seats. This truck is now at Burns' Oregon with chemical tank in the same position. The Truck still has "Baker Fire Department" on the side.

In 1931 the Mack Pumper was purchased. It was the first pumper truck.

In 1936, Baker City fire Department began operation of a First Aid Car.

In 2002 the Baker City Fire Department received a FEMA grant to purchase the equipment needed. New turnouts for all members, a breathing air compressor and cascade filling system for SCBA bottles. At the same time the county EMS and Fire Departments came together to approve a plan for renumbering the stations and apparatus in Baker County. Baker City Fire Station was designated as Station 24 along with the personal and apparatus.

In January of 2005 Baker City Fire Department started a Cadet pilot program. The first year was a success. In the second-year interest dropped and the program ended. Throughout the first half of the 2000's Baker City Fire Department continued the process of upgrading all areas of service and training including taking our EMS services to the ALS level with over 50% of the paid department being Paramedics. As well as several EMT B, and EMT I trained personnel in the On Call department.

No history was recorded between the first half of the 2000's through June 2022.

June 2022, the Baker City Council decided to stop providing ambulance service to the residents of Baker City and the Baker County Ambulance Service Area (ASA).



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October 2022, the Baker County Commissioners awarded an ambulance contract to Metro West Ambulance, known as Pioneer Ambulance, is based out of Hillsboro, Oregon. This resulted in a downsizing and restructuring of the Fire Department.

Since 2022, the department has been in transition since and is currently as seen today.

19. Final Information

This handbook is not a complete list of all information governing the Cadet program supervised and managed by the Baker City Fire Department. The handbook is meant to be a guide and a source of information to provide the cadets with program information along with cadet expectations. For more information, please review all information referenced in the appendix library. For all documents you are able to go to the Fire Departments webpage on the Baker City website and look under the Cadet Program.

<https://www.bakercity.com/2351/Cadet-Program>



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20. Appendix Library

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Appendix 3: Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) Flyer

Appendix 4: Liability Waivers

Appendix 5: Baker City Fire Cadet Application

Appendix 6: Parental and Cadet: Program Consent Form

Appendix 7: Emergency Contact and Medical Information Form

Appendix 8: Sign in Roster

Appendix 9: Cooperation Agreement (MOU)

Agreement between the Baker City Fire Department & Baker School District 5J

Appendix 10: Fire Cadet Program Advisor Duty Description

Appendix 11: Assistant Fire Cadet Program Advisor Duty Description

Appendix 12: Cadet Academy Schedule

Schedule is for general purpose – dates not reflected

Official schedule will be distributed with accurate dates as applicable

Appendix 13: Administrative / Disciplinary Notice

Appendix 14: Ride-along Request Form

Appendix 15: Cadet Background Release Form

Appendix 16: Personnel Records Request Form

Appendix 17: Privacy Agreement

Appendix 18: Program Acceptance Letter