

Community Fire Station Visitation Program

405.1 PURPOSE AND SCOPE

Best Practice

The purpose of this policy is to establish the methods the Department uses to interact with the community, share information about the workings of a fire station and demonstrate the capabilities of various apparatus and equipment through educational activities conducted by the DivisionFireSuppression Division.

405.2 POLICY

Best Practice

The Lansing Fire Department will aggressively promote fire safety and public awareness through a variety of public information and education activities, including a fire station visit program operated by the DivisionFireSuppression Division.

405.3 PROCEDURE

Best Practice

- (a) The fire station visit program is an educational activity intended to allow school groups, service clubs, youth organizations, church groups and other civic-minded organizations to schedule and participate in a tour of a working fire station. The types of groups and organizations appropriate for inclusion in the fire station visit program include, but are not limited to, the following:
 - 1. Pre-school classes or groups (public or private).
 - 2. Kindergarten classes or groups (public or private).
 - 3. Primary and secondary school groups (public, church-based or private).
 - 4. Chaperoned, organized youth groups that generally include persons 17 years of age and under and are sponsored and accompanied by adult representatives of a formal organization (e.g., Girl Scouts, Boy Scouts, Cub Scouts, Indian Scouts, Brownies).
 - 5. Service clubs and organizations that are generally voluntary nonprofit organizations, where members meet regularly to perform charitable work either by direct hands-on efforts or by raising money for other organizations (e.g., Kiwanis, Rotary, Masons).
- (b) The fire station visit program is not intended, nor should it be used, as an entertainment opportunity or for a commercial or for-profit purpose. The following types of groups, entities and activities are not appropriate for inclusion in the fire station visit program:
 - 1. Birthday party groups
 - 2. Social networking groups

Community Fire Station Visitation Program

3. Business networking groups
4. For-profit tour groups, including profit-based foreign student groups
5. Any group, entity or activity that is part of a for-profit enterprise

Neither of the lists above is intended to be all-inclusive; rather, they are general representations of the types of groups that are either appropriate or inappropriate for inclusion in the fire station visit program.

Groups or organizations can request a fire station visit by completing and submitting an application to the Fire Prevention Division. Applications must be submitted prior to the date requested for the fire station visit. Fire Prevention Division personnel will evaluate each application in accordance with this policy. Each evaluation will be considered uniformly and without discrimination as part of the application process. Approved applications will be forwarded to the appropriate DivisionFireSuppression Division Chief for station and crew assignment.

405.3.1 SCHEDULING FIRE STATION VISITS

Best Practice

The DivisionFireSuppression Division Chief may elect to limit the number of station visits assigned to individual crews based on the operational or training activities of that crew. The Division Chief should notify the Fire Prevention Division personnel of the station and crew assigned to conduct each scheduled visit. The Fire Prevention Division personnel should confirm the appointment for the station visit with the applicant and act as the point of contact for the applicant regarding any questions, issues or changes in the scheduled visit.

405.3.2 ADDITIONAL CONSIDERATIONS

Best Practice

The fire station visit program will operate within the following parameters:

- (a) Participating group size will generally be limited to 30 persons, including chaperones and drivers. Larger groups may apply but approval of the application will depend on the availability of a Fire Prevention Division representative to assist with managing the tour on the day of the visit.
- (b) Station visits should be scheduled for a maximum of two hours and generally during regular business hours.
- (c) The crew assigned to manage a station visit should remain in-service and available for emergency calls during the visit. Visiting groups should be notified in advance that the crew may be called away from the station at any time and the visit may then be canceled.
- (d) Station visit participants should not be allowed to enter the private crew sleeping or dressing areas of the station.

Community Fire Station Visitation Program

- (e) The fire crews managing each station visit should ensure that no confidential information or information protected by the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) is visible or accessible to the station visit participants. Specific areas of the station may be closed to the visiting groups as needed to protect confidential and/or protected materials.

405.4 RECORD KEEPING

Best Practice

The Fire Prevention Division should maintain a record of all applications for the station visit program. The records should include:

- (a) The name and contact information for the group or organization applying for a fire station visit.
- (b) The name of the group leader or person submitting the application.
- (c) Information regarding the approval or denial of the application. For denied applications, the reason for the denial should be listed (e.g., non-conforming group, scheduling conflict, no crew availability).
- (d) The scheduled date and time of each approved visit.
- (e) The Battalion Chief, station and crew assigned to manage the visit.
- (f) Confirmation that the group or organization completed the station visit or the reason it was not completed.

These records should be retained in accordance with the Department's established records retention schedules.

Maximum Occupancy - Overcrowding

408.1 PURPOSE AND SCOPE

Best Practice

The purpose of this policy is to establish standards for abating overcrowded conditions in places of assembly. This policy shall apply to all assembly occupancies and other occupancies which may be subject to overcrowding.

408.2 POLICY

Best Practice

It is the policy of the Lansing Fire Department to protect the safety of the public through enforcement of the Fire Code regarding occupancy overcrowding.

408.3 ENFORCEMENT

State

Any member of the Department, upon finding overcrowded conditions beyond the approved capacity of a building or portion thereof, or obstructions in aisles, passageways or other means of egress, or upon finding any condition which constitutes a life-safety hazard, is authorized to order the dangerous condition removed or remedied. The investigating officer shall immediately notify the Lansing Fire Department Fire Marshal any time the decision is made to vacate an occupancy. Whenever practicable, the investigating officer should consult the Lansing Fire Department Fire Marshal prior to requiring that an occupancy be vacated (MCL 29.7a; MCL 29.8; Mich. Admin. Code, R 29.1652; Fire Code, Ch. 20).

408.3.1 COMPLAINTS RECEIVED DURING NORMAL BUSINESS HOURS

Best Practice

All routine complaints of overcrowded conditions shall be forwarded to the Fire Prevention Division for investigation and follow-up. The complaint shall be entered into the complaint management system as soon as practicable and shall be assigned to an available inspector. The inspector should promptly investigate the complaint and notify the appropriate supervisor of the findings. All findings shall be documented in the complaint management system. All overcrowding hazards should be mitigated as necessary, in accordance with this policy.

408.3.2 COMPLAINTS RECEIVED AFTER HOURS

Best Practice **MODIFIED**

All complaints of overcrowding received by Ingham Central 911 after hours shall be routed to the appropriate on-duty Battalion Chief. Depending upon the urgency of the complaint, the Battalion Chief may choose to take any of the following actions, as deemed necessary to investigate the complaint:

- Investigate the complaint and abate the hazard as necessary, in accordance with this policy.

Lansing Fire Department

Policy Manual

Maximum Occupancy - Overcrowding

- Dispatch an engine company to investigate the complaint and abate the hazard as necessary, in accordance with this policy.
- Call for assistance from the Lansing Fire Department on duty Fire Inspector , who should investigate the complaint and abate the hazard as necessary, in accordance with this policy.
- Call for local law enforcement support.

408.3.3 SECOND DOCUMENTED OVERCROWDING OFFENSE

Best Practice

The second and all subsequent documented cases of overcrowding should result in a criminal citation being issued, in accordance with Lansing Fire Department procedures.

408.3.3 FIRST DOCUMENTED OVERCROWDING OFFENSE

Best Practice

Routine overcrowding complaints that do not pose an immediate life-safety hazard should be investigated and abated as necessary, in accordance with established procedures. A warning letter should be issued to the business owner advising that any future overcrowding cases may result in a criminal citation being issued.

Juvenile Firesetter Referrals

409.1 PURPOSE AND SCOPE

Best Practice

The purpose of this policy is to provide Department personnel with resources for helping juvenile firesetters and their families receive the help they need through education, diversion, assessment, and psychological services, in cooperation with local nonprofit organizations.

409.2 POLICY

Discretionary

It is the policy of the Lansing Fire Department to participate in a coordinated effort with local nonprofit organizations to provide appropriate referral or treatment services to juveniles from this jurisdiction.

409.3 PROCEDURE

Discretionary

Entry into a juvenile firesetter program may be recommended by Department personnel following a request from parents, guardians, or caregivers, or as a result of a fire incident. There are multiple types of referrals:

409.3.1 CAREGIVER REFERRALS

Discretionary

Parents or guardians who call the Lansing Fire Department for assistance will be directed to a member trained in juvenile firesetter intervention. When possible, telephone contact should be made with the parents within 48 hours of the Department being contacted. Parents should be provided with information about the program options and should be encouraged to make an appointment with the Department's Fire Prevention personnel. A pre-interview form should be completed during the telephone contact.

409.3.2 WALK-IN REFERRALS

Discretionary

If someone comes to a fire station with a child who may be involved with firesetting, that person should be referred to Fire Prevention. If no Fire Prevention personnel are available, a pre-interview referral form should be completed during the walk-in contact and forwarded to the Fire Prevention Division. When appropriate, a Fire Prevention member should be contacted to advise of the walk-in contact and asked to return to the station, if possible.

409.3.3 FIRE DEPARTMENT REFERRALS

State

If a juvenile firesetter is identified at a fire scene, the Incident Commander (IC) should complete a juvenile firesetter referral form. The form should be forwarded to the Fire Prevention Division.

Juvenile Firesetter Referrals

The IC should be contacted by the Fire Prevention Division confirming the receipt of the referral form and advising what action is being taken with the juvenile and his/her family.

If evidence at a fire scene indicates a juvenile started the fire, the IC must contact law enforcement and report this involvement in a fire incident report. The report should indicate that:

- The person involved in the ignition of the fire was a child or a person under the age of 18.
- The fire was a result of a child experimenting with fire or arson.
- The information known about the juvenile (e.g., name, age, sex, address).
- The parent or guardian information, if known.

A copy of the report should be sent to the Fire Prevention Division.

The IC should call a fire investigator any time there is evidence of arson, when there are witnesses with information that could identify the juvenile firesetter, or when the suspect is still at the scene.

A juvenile who has been referred to the Department by the juvenile justice court will be assigned to a member of the Fire Prevention Division. If the juvenile fails to attend any mandated program sessions, the Fire Prevention member should notify the court or the juvenile's probation officer. If the juvenile successfully attends all required sessions and completes the program, the Fire Prevention member should send a program completion letter on Department letterhead to the juvenile's probation officer.

409.4 PROGRAM COMPONENTS

Discretionary

The following components should be included in any juvenile firesetter program. Depending on the individual situation, some of the steps may not apply.

Assessment - The first step is generally a family interview including a Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) assessment at a location designated by the Lansing Fire Department. Assessments may be conducted at the child's home or living environment of the child and family members are encouraged to attend.

Diversion - Diversion is a process that allows the child to complete all or some of the program after which a citation can be dismissed or not processed. For admission into diversion, the juvenile will undergo a criminal background check. A parent or legal guardian and the child must attend a diversion hearing, where the child will be asked to describe behaviors and to answer questions to assess whether the child is at risk of repeating his/her offense. The child's parents or legal guardians and the child may be asked to sign a contract that requires specific actions to qualify the child for continued participation in the firesetter program. When the child successfully completes the program the Department will process a request to dismiss the citation.

Educational intervention - In this step families attend a fire safety academy. It is recommended that all family members attend. Academies may be conducted several times throughout the year and child/family placement is subject to availability. Academies should be broken into age-

Lansing Fire Department

Policy Manual

Juvenile Firesetter Referrals

appropriate classes for the juveniles. Informational training seminars should be included for parents and guardians.

Counseling - The Department may recommend family counseling. If a child and family have been referred to counseling, it is strongly recommended that the counseling occur concurrently with academy attendance. A list of local organizations and resources should be provided to the family.

Behavioral update - After completing the academy and/or counseling, a representative from the firesetter program may follow up with adults in the child's home to discuss the child's behavior and review any progress.

The Fire Prevention Division should produce regular reports specific to juvenile firesetters and outcomes. Reports should be included in Department training programs as part of awareness and disposition outcomes.