



Ohio Administrative Code

Rule 4123:1-21-07 Fire department occupational safety and health.

Effective: [September 1, 2026](#)

(A) Incident management.

- (1) An incident management system shall be established with written standard operating procedures applying to all employees involved in emergency operations.
 - (a) All employees involved in emergency operations shall be trained in the system.
 - (b) The incident management system shall be used at all emergency incidents.
 - (c) The incident management system shall be applied to drills, exercises, and other situations that involve hazards similar to those encountered at actual emergency incidents and to simulated incidents that are conducted for training and familiarization purposes.
- (2) The incident management system shall use risk management based on the following principles:
 - (a) Activities that present a significant risk to the safety of employees shall be limited to situations where there is potential to save endangered lives.
 - (b) Activities that are routinely employed to protect property shall be recognized as inherent risks to the safety of employees, and actions shall be taken to reduce or avoid these risks.
 - (c) No risk to the safety of employees shall be acceptable when there is no possibility to save lives or property.
- (3) The employer shall establish and ensure the maintenance of a fire dispatch and incident communication system.
- (4) Each crew operating within the hazardous environment shall be provided with communication equipment capable of communicating with the incident command.

(B) Accountability.

- (1) The employer shall establish written standard operating procedures for a personnel accountability system that provides for the tracking and inventory of all employees operating at an emergency incident. The system shall provide a rapid accounting of all personnel at the incident scene.



4123:1-21-07

2

- (2) The employer shall consider local conditions and characteristics in establishing the requirements of the personnel accountability system.
- (3) Employees operating at an emergency incident shall actively participate in the personnel accountability system.
- (4) The incident commander shall be responsible for overall personnel accountability for the incident. The incident commander shall initiate an accountability and inventory worksheet at the beginning of operations and shall maintain that system throughout the operations.

(C) Operating at emergency incidents.

- (1) The employer shall provide an adequate number of personnel to safely conduct emergency scene operations. Operations shall be limited to those that can be safely performed by the employees available at the scene. No employee shall commence or perform any firefighting function or evolution that is not within the established risk management principles as specified in paragraph (A)(2) of this rule.

- (2) Employees operating in hazardous environments at emergency incidents shall operate in teams of two or more.

Employees operating in hazardous environments shall be in communication with each other through visual, audible, or physical means, in order to coordinate their activities. Employees shall be in close proximity to each other to provide assistance in case of an emergency.

- (3) In interior structural fires a minimum of four employees shall be required, consisting of two employees working as a team in the hazardous atmosphere, who shall remain in voice or visual contact with each other; and two employees who are located outside the hazardous atmosphere, who shall be responsible for maintaining a constant awareness of the number and identity of those operating in the hazardous atmosphere and be prepared to perform rescue of those employees if required. Interior structural firefighting means the physical activity of fire suppression, rescue, or both, inside of buildings or enclosed structures which are involved in a fire situation beyond the incipient stage.
- (4) Initial attack operations shall be organized to ensure that, if upon arrival at the emergency scene, the initial attack employees find an imminent life-threatening situation where immediate action could prevent the loss of life or serious injury, such action shall be permitted with less than four employees. No exception



4123:1-21-07

3

shall be permitted when there is no possibility to save lives. Any such actions taken shall be thoroughly investigated by the employer.

(D) Operating at traffic incidents.

- (1) The employer shall establish written standard operating procedures regarding emergency operations for traffic incidents.
- (2) Fire apparatus shall be positioned in a blocking position to protect employees and other persons at the incident scene. When acting as a shield, fire apparatus emergency/warning lights shall remain on.
- (3) All additional responding vehicles, when arriving on the scene, shall position beyond the traffic barrier unless their function requires placement before the barrier.
- (4) At least five fluorescent orange traffic cones shall be used to warn oncoming traffic of the emergency operations and the hazards to employees operating at the incident.

The traffic cones shall not be less than twenty eight inches (71.1 centimeters) in height, each equipped with a six inch (15.2 centimeters) retro-reflective white band no more than four inches (10.2 centimeters) from the top of the cone, and an additional four inch (10.2 centimeters) retro-reflective white band two inches (5.1 centimeters) below the six inch (15.2 centimeters) band.

- (5) When employees are operating at a traffic incident and their assignment places them in potential conflict with motor vehicle traffic, the employees shall wear garments that meet the requirements of the most current edition of American national standards institute and international safety equipment association ("ANSI/ISEA") 107, Class 2 or 3 "Standard for High - Visibility Safety Apparel," or public safety vests that meet the most current edition of ANSI/ISEA 107, "Standard for High - Visibility Public Safety Vests," with fluorescent and retro-reflective material.

(E) Risk management.

The employer shall develop and adopt a comprehensive written risk management plan. The risk management plan shall consider all fire department policies and procedures, and it shall include goals and objectives to ensure that the risks associated with the emergency and non-emergency operations of the fire department are identified and effectively managed.

(F) Employee fitness.



4123:1-21-07

4

- (1) The employer shall establish and provide a health and fitness program that meets the requirements of the most current edition of NFPA 1583 to enable employees to develop and maintain a level of fitness that allows them to safely perform their assigned functions.
- (2) It shall be the responsibility of all employees to actively participate in the fitness and wellness program.
- (3) The employer shall adopt written protocols to address occupational exposure to atypical stressful events that employees may experience in the course of their job duties.

(G) Infection control.

The employer shall operate an infection control program that meets the requirements of the most current edition of national fire protection association standard ("NFPA") 1581.

- (1) Universal precautions shall be observed to prevent contact with blood or other potentially infectious materials. All body fluids shall be considered potentially infectious materials.
- (2) The employer shall establish a written infectious and contagious disease "Exposure Control Plan" that includes universal precautions.
- (3) Engineering and work practice controls shall be used to eliminate or minimize employee exposure.
- (4) The employer shall make available, at no cost to the employee, the hepatitis B vaccine and vaccination series, including booster doses, to all employees who have potential occupational exposure.

(H) Hazardous materials.

The employer shall establish written plan that defines the employer's hazardous materials handling capabilities.

- (1) The plan shall cover all hazardous material operations with all other responding agencies and their roles and capabilities.
- (2) Employers shall develop and require use of a written plan covering the safe use, limitations, care, inspection, maintenance, and replacement of the hazardous materials equipment, and all affected employees shall be trained in accordance with the plan.



4123:1-21-07

5

(I) Technical rescue.

The selection, care, and maintenance of personal protective equipment and associated technical equipment for technical rescue operations shall be as specified in the most current edition of NFPA 1855.

- (1) Technical rescue operations are defined by the employers according to their risk management plan as defined in paragraph (E) of this rule.
- (2) Employers shall develop and require use of a written plan covering the safe use, limitations, care, inspection, maintenance, and replacement of the equipment utilized in technical rescue operations, and all affected employees shall be trained in accordance of such plan.