FIRE DEPARTMENT WASHINGTON TWP
DISTRICT 10
GLOUCESTER COUNTY N.J.

WASHINGTON TOWNSHIP FIRE DISTRICT
TOWNSHIP OF WASHINGTON
GLOUCESTER COUNTY, NEW JERSEY

Board of Fire Commissioners
P.O. Box 653
Turnersville, N.J. 08012-0653

DISTRICT OFFICE
(856) 863-4000
FAX: (856) 589-0239

EMERGENCY
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FIRE DEPARTMENT POLICY # 17-2012
Regarding
QUALIFICATIONS FOR MEMBERSHIP
IN THE FIRE INVESTIGATION UNIT
AND RULES & REGULATIONS FOR UNIT OPERATION

Whereas the Washington Township Board of Fire Commissioners has established a Fire Investigation Unit under N.J.A.C. 5:18-2.1 for the purpose of investigating fires through passage of Resolution Nos. 9-1981 and 13-1981, the Commission hereby sets forth the qualifications for membership and establishes the rules and regulations for operation of the unit as outlined below.

1. Qualification for membership:

A. Age: Each member of the Fire Investigation Unit must be at least 21 years old at the time of appointment as a probationary member.

B. Educational Requirements: Prior to appointment to the Fire Investigation Unit, each member must have completed the following minimum course requirements:

1. Firefighter 1 training course, as specified under "Fire Department Policy # 1-10.

2. Fire Investigation training course: College Level Course, N. J. Criminal Justice Course, IAAI 80-Hour Course or equivalent as approved by the Board of Fire Commissioners.

C. Experience Requirements: Prior to appointment to the Fire Investigation Unit, each member must have completed two or more years of firefighting experience.

D. Other Requirements: Prior to appointment to the Fire Investigation Unit, each member must meet the following additional requirements:

1. The prospective member must be an active member, life member or an employee in good standing with the Washington Township Fire District.

2. A background investigation will be conducted by the Washington Township Fire District on all new Investigation Unit members, with results satisfactory to

the Board of Fire Commissioners.

3. The prospective member must possess a valid New Jersey Driver's License.

E. Each member must meet the requirements of N.J.S.A. 40A:14-9

F. Each member must meet the requirements of the most current edition of NFPA 1033.

II. Procedure for Application for Membership:

A. All prospective members shall submit a completed application for membership to the Fire Official, who will evaluate the application for completeness and conformance with this policy, in addition to arranging for the background investigation.

III. Appointments:

A. Probationary Appointment: A prospective member may be appointed as a Probationary Investigator by the Board of Fire Commissioners based upon evaluation of the following:

1. Membership application
2. Background investigation
3. Compliance with qualifications as described herein.
4. Recommendation of the Fire Official.
5. Recommendation of the District Fire Chief.

Probationary appointments shall be for a period of twelve (12) months and may be terminated for just cause at any time during that period by the Board of Fire Commissioners.

B. Term Appointment: Upon satisfactory completion of the probationary period, the prospective member may be appointed as a Fire Investigator by the Board of Fire Commissioners, based upon the written recommendations of the Fire Official. The appointment shall be for an indefinite period, but at the pleasure of the Board of Fire Commissioners.

IV. Performance Requirements:

A. Each member of the Fire Investigation Unit will be expected to foster continuous professional development and qualification through attendance at seminars and/or

other educational courses pertaining to fire and arson investigation and reporting as may be requested by the Fire Official. Such training courses will be funded by the Fire District.

B. Each investigator must maintain an adequate level of responses to investigation assignments, as determined by the Fire Official.

C. All fire investigators shall perform their duties in a professional and courteous manner at all times.

D. All investigations, details of investigations, and conclusions of investigations shall be considered confidential until authorized for public release by the Fire Official. Authorization for the release of information concerning fire investigations to the press shall be limited to the Fire Official or District Fire Chief. Press releases should be administered through a single source whenever practicable.

E. All fire investigation and reporting shall be in compliance with applicable State and local laws and regulations.

F. The Fire Investigation Unit shall maintain a monthly fire reporting system to aid in identifying and tracking patterns of fire occurrences.

G. While acting in the capacity as a Fire Investigator, all Fire Investigators are direct reports to the Fire Official.

V. Other Operational Regulations:

A. The Fire Investigation Unit shall obtain authorization from the fire department incident commander prior to entering any structure or approaching within a danger zone of a structural fire or other fire scene. The determination of a danger zone is the responsibility of the incident commander. Fire Investigators shall coordinate and communicate their efforts with Incident Commander until such time that the Incident Commander releases the scene to the Fire Investigation Unit.

B. The operations of the Fire Investigation Unit shall comply with all other applicable policies and regulations of the Washington Township Fire District.

This policy was adopted at a regularly scheduled meeting of the Board of Fire Commissioners on June 7, 2012.

BY: **Attest:**

Samuel Micklus, Chairman **Frank Stella, Secretary**

Distribution:

Commissioners
Grenloch Fire Company
Whitman Square Fire Company
Hurffville Fire Company
Washington Township Firemen's Association

Adoption Record:

Original:	**March 24, 1982**
Amended:	**December 1, 1994**
Amended:	**June 7, 2012**