

Allegany County Emergency Services Length of Service Awards Program

Section 1 Purpose

A Length of Service Award Program (LOSAP) is hereby established to reward volunteer service and retain those volunteer members of the Allegany County Emergency Service Organizations which provide Fire, Rescue and Ambulance services to the residents of Allegany County. The effective or starting date of the LOSAP is January 1, 2009.

Section 2 LOSAP Administrative Committee

The Length of Service Awards Program (LOSAP) Administrative Committee is a committee appointed by the Emergency Services Board and will periodically report to the Board during their regular meetings. The committee will consist of two representatives of the Fire Service Committee, two representatives of the EMS Committee, and two representatives of the Emergency Services Board. These positions will be recommended from their respective groups and approved by the Emergency Services Board. The seventh member of the committee will be the Department of Emergency Services EMS Chief or designee who will serve as the chair of the committee.

Section 3 Eligibility

Any active member 18 years of age or older of an Allegany County Volunteer Fire Department/Company, Ambulance Company, or Rescue Squad (hereafter referred to as an Emergency Service Organization) shall be eligible to participate in the Length of Service Award Program. The requirements for eligibility are:

- 3.1 The member must have been an active volunteer member on December 31, 2008, or must have joined an Emergency Service Organization in Allegany County since January 1, 2009.
- 3.2 The volunteer member must complete one Year of Service which is defined as a twelve month calendar year (January to December) and the member must accumulate a minimum of fifty (50) points per calendar year, in accordance with the point system set forth in this document. Points shall not be transferable from one year to the next. Classification as an active member by an individual organization by-laws is not sufficient to be eligible.
- 3.3 Any person who discontinued active volunteer service prior to January 1, 2009 is not eligible. If a member does not earn a Year of Service for two (2) consecutive years, the participant will be terminated from the plan.
- 3.3 A participant who had a 0% vested interest in his Accrued Benefit when he ceased participation shall receive credit for prior Years of Service when he resumes participation in accordance with the following: All prior Years of Service shall be restored only if the total of the Participants qualified Years of Service credited at the time he ceased to be a

participant was equal to or exceeded the number of Point System Years during which he failed to be credited with a qualified Year of Service between the date of that his participation ended and subsequently resumed.

- 3.4 Any person who has completed ten (10) years of certified service (beginning on or after January 1, 2019) is considered to be vested and qualified to receive benefits once they attained the age of sixty (60). After a person is vested and qualified, failure to remain active or to maintain membership in an Allegany County Emergency Service Organization will not disqualify or otherwise affect any person from receiving benefits at the age of sixty (60).

Section 4 Benefits

Any Volunteer that has completed Ten (10) years of certified service within an Allegany County Emergency Service Organization, upon reaching the age of sixty (60), shall be eligible to receive a payment of \$7.00 multiplied by Years of Service completed after the effective date of the plan, with such future years of service not to exceed 15 years.

Therefore, ten years of service will provide seventy dollars (\$70.00) per month for life. An additional payment of seven Dollars (\$7.00) per month shall be added to the benefits for each full year of active volunteer service in excess of ten (10) years, with a maximum of One Hundred Five Dollars (\$105.00) per month for a total of fifteen (15) years service.

The volunteer member must complete a Request for Benefit form when ready to begin receiving benefits. If years of service and or age are reached between July 1 and December 31 of that year, payment will begin in January of the next year. If years of service and age are reached between January 1 and June 30 of that year, payments will begin in July.

Section 5 Disability and Death Benefits

- 5.1 In the event that a certified active volunteer (i.e., a volunteer with at least one certified year) shall become disabled and the disability is of a permanent nature as determined and approved by any competent board (e.g., Workman's Compensation Commission, Social Security Administration, Railroad Disability Commission, etc.), then the volunteer is entitled to receive a lump sum distribution of the Actuarial Equivalent of the Accrued Benefit. This subsection shall not be applicable to any volunteer not insured by either Allegany County or any other Emergency Service Organizations Workman's Compensation Insurance carrier.
- 5.2 In the event that any vested volunteer shall die before reaching the entitlement age, the participants designated beneficiary shall receive the present value of the participants Accrued Benefit.

Section 6 Periodic Adjustments

Periodically the LOSAP Administrative committee of the Allegany County Emergency Service Board shall review the benefits prescribed in this act and recommend to the Allegany County Commissioners an increase or decrease of these Benefits for approval.

Section 7 Certification Procedure

It is the responsibility of each participating Volunteer Emergency Service Organization to maintain detailed and accurate records for each volunteer member on forms prescribed by the Allegany County Emergency Service Boards' LOSAP Administrative committee.

- 7.1 Beginning January 1, 2009, and each January 1 thereafter, the Board of Directors of each Volunteer Emergency Service Organization shall furnish the Allegany County Emergency Service Board LOSAP Administrative committee a statement under oath certifying a list of all volunteers of the organization. Each list shall contain each member's full name, current address, date of birth, beginning service date, end service date if applicable, credits earned and other information as may be required by the LOSAP Administrative committee and/or by the Commissioners of Allegany County. This report shall be presented to the Allegany County Emergency Service Board LOSAP Administrative committee by February 28th of each year.
- 7.2 Upon receipt of this statement, the Allegany County Emergency Service Board LOSAP Administrative committee shall review the list of each Emergency Service Organization. After the LOSAP Administrative committee approves the certified list, they shall forward an annual statement to the Emergency Service Organization concerned by April 1st of each year. An individual statement of benefits will be provided on an annual basis to each emergency service provider by VFIS.
- 7.3 A person whose name does not appear on the certified list, or who is denied credit for the past calendar year has the right to appeal. The member shall in writing to his organization, ask for a review of his credit points by his organization Board of Directors or officers. If a satisfactory agreement cannot be reached, the member shall have the right to file a grievance with the Allegany County Emergency Service Board LOSAP Administrative committee by April 15th. Accompanying the request for a grievance shall be a copy of the written request previously filled with the member's company. Appellant has a right to counsel at his/her own expense and of his/her choosing. Between April 15th and April 30th, inclusive, the Review Board shall conduct a hearing and make a decision, which decision shall be final and binding for all parties concerned.
- 7.4 The Allegany County Emergency Service Board LOSAP Administrative committee shall by May 1, annually, submit to the Allegany County Emergency Services Board a statement certifying all volunteers of the Emergency Service Organizations who have qualified during the current year and those eligible for benefits under this act, on forms prescribed by the County or by the Allegany County Emergency Service Board.

Section 8 Point System

Allegany County will utilize the same point system as the Maryland State Firemen's Association Income Tax Subtraction Modification System. Should the point's definitions or values of that system change, so shall the point system below. In order to qualify for the benefit, points shall be credited to each volunteer in accordance with the following standards:

- 8.1 Formal Training - One half (1/2) point shall be credited for every hour of attendance in a recognized training course, provided that not more than twenty-five (25) points may be credited for all training courses attended per year. (a recognized training course shall be conducted by: MFRI; MIEMSS; MEMA; Municipal and County training academies; County Fire Association Training Committees; National Fire Academy; Emergency Management Institute; Colleges and Universities.)
- 8.2 Drills - One (1) point shall be credited for each two (2) hours of in-service type training conducted by the local department of training academy, provided that not more than twenty (20) points may be credited for all drills attended per year.
- 8.3 Meetings - One (1) point may be credited for attendance at each business or committee meeting of the Emergency Service Organization, county fire or EMS organization or a state fire or EMS organization, provided that not more than twenty-five (25) points may be credited for all meetings attended per year.
- 8.4 Alarms - One (1) point may be awarded for attendance at each emergency alarm response or station standby up to a maximum of forty (40) points.
- 8.5 Elected/Appointed Position - Twenty-five (25) points shall be credited for completion of one full year term as an appointed or elected officer in an emergency service organization, provided that not more than one (1) office shall be counted in any calendar year. Since many organizations operate on other than a calendar year schedule and since there is frequently a turnover of personnel during the year, points will be credited at three (3) points for December and two (2) points for any other month.
- 8.6 Collateral Duties - One (1) point shall be credited for every three (3) hours of acceptable collateral duties including but not limited to, fund raising, fire prevention duties, administrative work, equipment and apparatus maintenance, and work details, etc., providing that no more the twenty-five (25) points may be credited for all collateral duties preformed per year.
- 8.7 Sleep In/Standby - One (1) point shall be credited for each full night of sleeping in the station and being available to respond to an alarm. One (1) point shall be credited for each four hours of standby either in the station or as part of a rostered duty crew and available to respond to an alarm. Credit for standby can only be given if no credit is received for an alarm. No more the twenty (20) points may be credited for all collateral duties preformed per year.
- 8.8 A volunteer member who serves in a military reserve unit of the Armed Forces of the United States and is deployed under a federal mandate shall be eligible to receive credit

at the rate of five (5) points for each month served providing that not more than fifty (50) points be credited for any calendar year. A maximum of up to four (4) years creditable service may be acquired in this manner. Official government documentation must be presented to the committee for approval prior to award of points.

Section 9 Insufficient Records

It shall be the responsibility of each Emergency Service Organization to submit complete records for all members of their organization by the date established. Failure to do so will result in all funding (appropriations, gaming, Senator Amoss Fund, Grants, Etc.) to the department be suspended and an investigation to be initiated by the Emergency Services Board. In the event that sufficient records are unavailable to prove service during a calendar year for a member(s) of an emergency service organization, no credit will be given. Individual members can request that the Emergency Service Board LOSAP Administrative committee review records submitted by that member to determine their eligibility.

Section 10 Severability

If any provision of this act or the application thereof to any person or circumstance is held invalid by a Court of Law for any reason, the invalidity shall not affect any other provisions of any other application of this act, which can be given effect without the invalid provision or application, and to this end all the provisions of this as are declared to be severable from and independent of every other provision herein.

Section 11 Administration

The program shall be administered by the Allegany County Department of Emergency Services in accordance with the standards and procedures established by the Allegany County Emergency Services Board and its LOSAP Administrative Committee. Payments shall not be made until department payment lists have been approved by the Allegany County Emergency Services Board and its LOSAP Administrative Committee. The Emergency Services Board shall have the authority to audit records of volunteer participation in addition to any other audits required by law.

Section 12 Funding

This program is to be funded from the General Fund of the county. Funding of this program shall be reviewed not later than the fifth (5th) year after initiation and every fifth (5th) year subsequent to determine if any changes should be made in the method of funding or any phase of operation.