



Carroll County Department of Fire & EMS Standard Operating Procedure

DOCUMENT DETAILS

Standard Operating Procedure: 2.15	Effective Date: June 8, 2023
Subject: Work Shift Exchanges	Section: Human Resources
Authorized: Chief Michael Robinson	Revision Date: May 15, 2026 <i>PJS</i>

Applicability: Volunteer Career

I. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to outline work shift exchanges.

II. DEFINITIONS

Exchange Off employee (EO) – The employee who has arranged for another employee to cover a portion of or the entirety of their assigned shift.

Exchange Working employee (EW) – The employee who has agreed to cover a portion of or the entirety of another employee’s assigned shift.

III. PROCEDURES

- A. An employee of the Department of Fire & EMS (DFEMS) may agree, solely at their option and with the approval of the Shift Commander or designee, to substitute for one another during scheduled work hours in performance of work in the same capacity.
- B. The hours worked shall be excluded by DFEMS in the calculation of the hours for which the substituting employee would otherwise be entitled to overtime compensation.
- C. An employee’s decision to substitute for one another must be made freely and without coercion, direct or implied on the part of DFEMS. It is also clear that DFEMS has no responsibility for tracking substitutions; Shift Commanders, or their designee, must approve all substitutions in advance. An agreement between the employees, approved by the Shift Commander, or their designee, is also necessary to enable substitutions.
- D. Employees shall not exchange off (EO) and then work another assignment during the same hours.
- E. Shift exchanges may be requested at any time so long as the employee’s supervisor approves them.

- F. Employees who are working an exchange (EW) shall not have the option to claim extra hours within the Fair Labor Standards Act. Employees shall be compensated as if they have worked their normal shift assignment when they exchange off (EO). Should the employee be held over on an incident, the exchange work employee will be compensated SOT or FOT, if applicable.
- G. Shift exchanges shall meet the specific operational needs of the stations affected. Under extenuating circumstances, a shift exchange can be approved outside these limits with the approval of the Shift Commander, Deputy Chief, or designee.
- H. Shift exchanges are an agreement between two employees. DFEMS shall assume no responsibility or liabilities for paybacks of shift exchanges. If disputes between employees develop, DFEMS may deny use of this program to specific employees or end the program. An employee who has agreed to perform a shift exchange and who does not report for work shall be considered absent without leave (AWOL).
- I. Employees who exchange off (EO) on a shift when they are on the holdover list the following day are required to:
 - a. be available the day following their shift to fill their hold over responsibility if called upon or;
 - b. have an equally qualified employee agree to cover their holdover position.
 - i. This employee must not exceed 72 hours if held over.
 - ii. This employee must not already be on the holdover list that day.

This agreement must be documented on the Trade of Hold Over form (Policy 2.10). Members who fail to cover their MHO responsibility or complete the Trade of Hold Over form will be subject to progressive discipline.

- J. Employees shall not enter into a shift exchange, Trade of Hold Over or callback if total hours worked will exceed 48 hours, unless approved by the Shift Commander.
- K. The exchanged off (EO) employee shall be charged his/her accrued leave when the employee who has agreed to the exchange (EW) does not fulfill the agreement; otherwise, the employee requesting the exchange (EO) may be required to work his/her normally scheduled shift.
- L. Procedure for requesting a work shift exchange:
 1. The employee desiring a shift exchange must enter the request into VTI for the supervisor's approval.
 2. The employee must submit the Trade of Hold Over form if they are on the Mandatory Hold Over list the following day.
 3. The employee's supervisor who is exchanging off shall determine if the proposed substitute employee meets the qualifications needed to maintain minimum staffing for the station on the date requested.
 4. A shift exchange is not finally approved until approved by the affected shift's supervisor.
 5. In the event a shift is not covered or a gap in coverage is caused, both employees may be subject to disciplinary action.

IV. RECISSION

This Standard Operating Procedure rescinds all directives regarding Work Shift Exchange policy or similar content previously issued for personnel of the Carroll County Department of Fire & EMS.

V. RELATED STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURES / DOCUMENTS

VI. ATTACHMENTS