


2009.02	HFD Internal and External Memorandum Formatting	
<i>This procedure is for internal use only and does not enlarge an employee's civil liability in any way. The procedure should not be construed as creating a higher duty of care, in an evidentiary sense, with respect to third party civil claims against employees. A violation of this procedure, if proven, can only form the basis of a complaint by this department for non-judicial administrative action in accordance with the laws governing employee discipline.</i>		
Related Documents: County of Hawai'i Department of Information Technology Employee Policies		
Major policy affecting employee relations: No	Union(s) to consult: (N/A)	
Responsible for Update: Fire Chief's Private Secretary		

I. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to provide clear guidelines regarding the usage of different letterhead formats within the Hawai'i Fire Department (HFD). It is meant to clarify when and how to use different formats for both internal and external communications, ensuring a consistent and professional approach across the department.

II. APPLICABILITY

This policy applies to all HFD personnel, whether they are part of paid staff or volunteer teams. It encompasses all written communications issued on behalf of HFD, regardless of whether they are intended for internal departmental use or external distribution.

III. POLICY

This policy stipulates that all HFD communications must be carried out using the appropriate letterhead format and follow the specified approval procedures. The county letterhead is to be used for official external communications, while the internal memorandum format is intended for internal communications. Approval signatures should correspond to the officer of the next higher rank in the chain of command, with additional signatures added as required based on the importance and nature of the document.

This policy promotes responsibility, operational efficiency, and respect for the chain of command, allowing for seamless communication flow and avoiding unnecessary bottlenecks. It is expected that all personnel comply with these guidelines in all their written communications on behalf of the HFD.

IV. PROCEDURES

A. Use of Letterhead

1. County Letterhead Format:

The county letterhead is typically reserved for official and formal communications that represent the HFD's activities or the official stance of the County of Hawai'i or its departments. It is particularly used in the following instances:

- **Official Correspondence:** The county letterhead is used when corresponding with other government entities, businesses, organizations, or the general public on behalf of the county or the department. This includes official notifications, policy statements, interdepartmental memos, and written directives.
- **Community Outreach:** When issuing communications to the community, such as public service announcements, emergency updates, or event invitations, the county letterhead helps ensure the authority and legitimacy of the message.
- **Legal Documents:** The county letterhead is also used for documents that have legal significance, like contracts, agreements, and formal reports,

Implemented: August 2025	Revised: N/A	Next Review: August 2030
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demonstrating that the document is officially sanctioned by the county or the department.

- **Acknowledgment Letters:** For official recognition of employees for their service, or expressing gratitude towards local businesses, organizations, or individuals for their support, the county letterhead adds a formal touch that underscores the importance of the recognition or appreciation.
- **Grant Applications:** When applying for state, federal, or other external funding grants, the county letterhead is used to show that the request is made by an authorized representative of the county or the department.

2. Internal Memorandum Format:

The internal memorandum format is primarily used for internal communications within HFD. It is more formal than an email but less so than an official letter. Here are instances where the memorandum format should be utilized:

- **Policy Changes or Reminders:** Memorandums are ideal for communicating changes in policies or procedures that impact a large group of staff, or if staff need reminders of existing policies.
- **Updates and Announcements:** Important updates or announcements, like changes in staffing, organizational updates, upcoming events, training sessions, and equipment upgrades can be disseminated using memos.
- **Requests for Action or Input:** If an action needs to be requested from a group of employees or their input on a particular topic is required, a memo is a fitting way to make the request.
- **Interdepartmental Communication:** When different units or departments within HFD need to coordinate on issues, projects, or operations affecting multiple parties, a memorandum can help ensure everyone has consistent information.
- **Project Updates or Reports:** For reporting progress on specific projects or sharing brief reports or summaries of findings, memorandums serve as an efficient medium.
- **Documenting Meetings or Decisions:** Memorandums can be used to summarize key points from a meeting or to document decisions made, ensuring there is a formal record.

B. Signatures on Communications

1. As a means to ensure fluid operations and adherence to the chain of command, the signature of the division supervisor for the branch responsible for a document, or the branch supervisor for the section responsible, will replace the past practice of having the Fire Chief's signature on almost every document.
2. Memorandums or notices initiated by an individual should bear the approval signature of the officer of the next higher rank in the chain of command, empowering responsibility at every level.
3. When an HFD member wishes to send out a memo, their immediate superior's signature will serve as approval. For memos of critical importance, additional signatures from the Deputy Fire Chief and the Fire Chief can be added as necessary.
4. The chain of command should not be bypassed. For instance, if a memo is issued by the Battalion Chief of Training, it should first be approved by the Assistant Fire Chief

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of Support Services. If the memorandum impacts the Operations Division, the Assistant Fire Chief of Operations should review before release. In certain critical scenarios, additional approval from the Deputy Fire Chief and the Fire Chief may be required.

5. For memorandums produced by a collaboration between two sections, signatures from both sections and their respective supervisors should be affixed.

C. Consultation with the Union

HFD is committed to maintaining open, transparent, and cooperative relations with the Union (HFFA). Recognizing the importance of the union's role in representing the interests of its members, the HFD will consult with the union on changes that could impact working conditions.

1. Changes Affecting Working Conditions

In line with applicable labor laws and our collective bargaining agreements, HFD shall consult with the union before implementing changes that affect working conditions. These can include but are not limited to changes in shift patterns, duty assignments, health and safety measures, equipment use, and training requirements.

2. Procedure for Consultation

Any proposal to make changes that might affect working conditions should be communicated to the union as early as possible through the chain of command to the Office of the Fire Chief. This communication should include the memorandum and details of the proposed changes, the reason for the changes, and any expected impacts on personnel.

Documents will be sent to the Union (HFFA) at which time the Union will then have the opportunity to review the proposed changes, discuss them with their members, and provide feedback, concerns, or suggestions.

HFD management will consider the union's input before finalizing any decisions. In situations where agreement cannot be reached, HFD will follow the dispute resolution procedures outlined in our collective bargaining agreement.

This consultative approach aims to promote a sense of ownership and inclusivity among all members of the HFD. By ensuring that the perspectives of our personnel are considered when making changes to working conditions, we can maintain a healthy and productive working environment.

All HFD personnel who participate in crafting memorandums are expected to adhere to these guidelines. Any questions or areas of confusion should be directed to the relevant supervisor. This policy underscores our commitment to the principles of responsibility, operational efficiency, and respect for our organizational hierarchy.

V. TYPES OF INTERNAL DOCUMENTS

This section will elaborate on the different types of internal documents used within the HFD. These internal documents serve a variety of purposes, and their usage will depend on the



specific context or nature of the communication. The four types of internal documents to be discussed are general memorandums, Chief's Memorandums, Training Notices, and Personnel Orders.

A. Memorandums

Memorandums are the most general type of internal document. These are used for a wide range of internal communication that does not fall into one of the categories below. When a memorandum is intended for all personnel, the "TO" line should be addressed to "ALL PERSONNEL". For communications to specific units, the "TO" line should specify that unit, such as "ALL OCEAN SAFETY PERSONNEL". If the document is to be sent up the chain the "TO" line shall have the intended recipient and a "VIA" line shall be added for each level of the chain of command that needs to review and comment on the memorandum.

For general information being disseminated to the department, these Memorandums can be sent from Fire Administration, as opposed to a specific person if they are purely to inform and no further communication as a result of said Memorandum is expected.

B. Chief's Memorandums

Chief's Memorandums are a specific subset of the general memorandums. These documents convey messages from the Fire Chief, often regarding significant changes or updates. Subjects can include changes to rules, regulations, policies, or procedures, and other topics of particular importance such as promotional assessment scheduling. These communications will be labeled as 'Chief's Memorandums' to denote their significance. They will only come from the Fire Chief, or in their absence, the Deputy Chief. They shall be numbered by year then sequential number. In determining whether a document should be a regular Memorandum, or a Chief's Memorandum, if there is a need for the Fire Chief's signature to be on the bottom of the Memorandum, then it is probably important enough to be a Chief's Memorandum.

C. Training Notices

Training Notices are used to announce training events or to disseminate important information related to training. They may cover a range of topics, including the announcement of upcoming training sessions, changes to training protocols, or updates on training requirements. These will generally come from the BC of Training and be approved by AC2.

D. Personnel Orders

Personnel Orders are documents that announce personnel changes within the HFD. These changes can include personnel movements, promotions, or other changes related to positions within the department. These will come from Human Resources and be approved by the Deputy Fire Chief.

E. Administrative Notices

These are the only internal documents that will lack a sender. These will be generally pass through messages about events, fundraisers, and other general notices that originate

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outside the department. These will be processed by our clerical staff in administration. They are denoted by the lack of a sender.

For the latter three types of internal documents (Chief's Memorandums, Training Notices, and Personnel Orders), they will be numbered for later referencing. The numbering format will follow a YEAR-## format. For example, the fourth Training Notice issued in 2023 would be labeled as 'Training Notice No. 2023-04.' This numbering system helps to keep track of documents and makes referencing easier in the future.

This differentiation between types of internal documents aids in quickly identifying the nature and significance of the communication, thereby ensuring efficient and effective internal communication within the HFD.

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VI. EXAMPLE MEMORANDUM FORMATS

INTERNAL MEMO FORMAT

HAWAII FIRE DEPARTMENT. COUNTY OF HAWAII.
HILO, HAWAII 96720

DATE: June 8, 2022

Memorandum

TO : ALL OCEAN SAFETY PERSONNEL

FROM : AFC DARWIN OKINAKA, EMERGENCY OPERATIONS DIVISION

SUBJECT: **NOTICE OF UPCOMING WSO PERSONNEL TRANSFERS**

The department is planning to conduct Ocean Safety personnel transfers that will take effect on August 1, 2022.

If you have already submitted a Transfer Request for the 2022 calendar year and have not been transferred, you *do not* need to resubmit a new Transfer Request form. However, personnel who wish to update their current request or have not yet submitted one and would like to do so, are to complete the Transfer Request form in All Battalions and submit it prior to the above mentioned deadline.

Personnel are to utilize the *updated* transfer request form in All Battalions which has been revised as of 12/15/21 with the expiration date of December 31, 2022. Click link [HERE](#) to access it.

Deadline to submit transfer requests is *July 1, 2022 (close of business)*.

Ocean Safety Captains and Lieutenant (including temporarily assigned-TA officers) are to ensure personnel under their command who are on leave are also aware of this memo.


Thank you,

Darwin Okinaka
DARWIN OKINAKA
Assistant Fire Chief
Emergency Operations Division

COUNTY LETTERHEAD FORMAT

Mitchell D. Roth
Mayor

Lee E. Leoi
Managing Director


County of Hawaii
HAWAII FIRE DEPARTMENT
25 Aupuni Street • Suite 200 • Hilo, Hawaii 96720
(808) 932-2900 • Fax (808) 932-2928

Kazuo S. K. L. Todd
Fire Chief
Eric H. Miller
Deputy Fire Chief

April 3, 2023

Honorable Kimball, Council Chair
and Members of the Hawaii County Council
Hawaii County Council
25 Aupuni St.
Hilo, HI 96720

SUBJECT: BUDGET AND PROGRAM REVIEW

By means of this communication, I've enclosed a Powerpoint presentation for the Hawaii Fire Department's Meeting with the Hawaii County Council on April 11, 2023 at 1:30 p.m.

Should you have any questions, please contact me at (808) 932-2900 or by email at kazuo.todd@hawaiicounty.gov.

Sincerely,

Kazuo Todd
KAZUO S.K.L. TODD
Fire Chief
Hawaii Fire Department

HAWAII FIRE DEPARTMENT

COUNTY OF HAWAII. HILO, HAWAII 96720

DATE: July 30, 2025

NO. 2023-00

One Space

Personnel Order

Memorandum (Type)
OPTIONS: Memorandum,
Chiefs Memorandum, Training
Notice, Personnel Orders.

Two Spaces

TO : ALL PERSONNEL / SPECIFIC PERSONNEL / INDIVIDUAL / CHIEF

One Space

VIA : F-NAME L-NAME, RANK, DIV/BRANCH/SEC/STN SHIFT
F-NAME L-NAME, RANK, DIV/BRANCH/SEC/STN SHIFT
F-NAME L-NAME, RANK, DIV/BRANCH/SEC/STN SHIFT

VIA included when sending up
the chain of command

One Space

FROM : F-NAME L-NAME, RANK, DIV/BRANCH/SEC/STN SHIFT

One Space

SUBJECT: MEMORANDUM SUBJECT

One Space

Content of memorandum. Content of memorandum. Content of memorandum. Content of memorandum. Content of memorandum. Content of memorandum. Content of memorandum. Content of memorandum. Content of memorandum. Content of memorandum.

One Space

Content of memorandum. Content of memorandum. Content of memorandum. Content of memorandum. Content of memorandum. Content of memorandum. Content of memorandum. Content of memorandum. Content of memorandum. Content of memorandum.

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Signed,

Four Spaces

F-Name L-Name, Rank
Hawaii Fire Department

All text is 12pt Times New Roman,

Except

**HAWAII FIRE DEPARTMENT, &
Memorandum (Type)**

Which are 24pt Times New Roman and
Bold.