

Virginia Department of Fire Programs

Junior Fire Fighter Policy

The occupation of Firefighting has been declared hazardous by the Commissioner of Labor and Industry pertaining to Teenagers.

Code of Virginia Labor and Employment Law reads:

§ 40.1-79.1. Exemptions from chapter generally; local ordinance authorizing participation in volunteer fire company activities.

A. Any county, city or town may authorize by ordinance any person residing anywhere in the Commonwealth, aged 16 years or older, who is a member of a volunteer fire company within such county, city, or town with parental or guardian approval, (i) to seek certification under National Fire Protection Association 1001, level one, firefighter standards, as administered by the Department of Fire Programs; and (ii) to work with or participate fully in all activities of such volunteer fire company, provided such person has attained certification under National Fire Protection Association 1001, level one, firefighter standards, as administered by the Department of Fire Programs.

B. Any trainer or instructor of such persons mentioned in subsection A of this section and any member of a paid or volunteer fire company who supervises any such persons shall be exempt from the provisions of § 40.1-103, provided that the provisions of § 40.1-100 have not been violated, when engaged in activities of a volunteer fire company, and provided that the volunteer fire company or the governing body of such county, city or town has purchased insurance which provides coverage for injuries to or the death of such persons in their performance of activities under this section.

Code of Virginia § 40.1-103 Cruelty and injuries to children states;

It shall be unlawful for any person employing or having custody of any child willfully or negligently to cause or permit the life of such child to be endangered or the health of such child to be injured, or willfully or negligently to cause or permit such child to be placed in a situation that its life, health or morals may be endangered, or to cause or permit such to be overworked, tortured, tormented, mutilated, beaten or cruelly treated. Any person violating this section shall be guilty of a **Class 6 felony**.

Policy

Effective July 1st 2004, VDFP shall enforce the following policy for all Junior Firefighters (16/17 years of age) attending VDFP programs.

- Local jurisdiction shall have adopted an ordinance consistent with Code § 40.1-79.1.
- The Junior Fire fighter shall reside in the Commonwealth of Virginia. Evidence of residency shall be provided by the junior fire fighter.
- The Junior Fire fighter shall present a letter (original, not a copy) of parental (or legal guardian) consent that permits Junior Fire fighter participation.
- The Junior Fire fighter shall have a copy of the locality/department current liability insurance for Junior Firefighters.

Junior Firefighters attending all other VDFP training shall meet the above policy. To progress in VDFP training, the Junior Firefighter must be certified NFPA 1001 Firefighter Level I. All documentation will be submitted to, and retained by, VDFP or authorized instructor prior to commencement of training.