

CITY OF CULLMAN

RESOLUTION NO. 2024 – 98

WHEREAS, the City of Cullman wishes restructure the work cycle in accordance with the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) for the City of Cullman Fire Rescue Department; and

WHEREAS, this restructuring will serve a conservative, public purpose in reducing the taxpayer burden produced by overtime worked through amending the current work cycle and adding to the executive exempt status of employees; and

WHEREAS, this policy will establish guidelines along with a competitive and comparable work schedule that will ensure the City of Cullman the strongest ability to maintain providing the needed public safety resources, recruit and efficiently train new employees to uphold high departmental standards of excellence and retain qualified employees within Cullman Fire Rescue; and

WHEREAS, employees who work 24-hour shifts within Cullman Fire Rescue will now work under a 28-day cycle with overtime accruing after 201.22 hours; and

WHEREAS, the adoption of this policy does not imply a contract for employment and does not alter At-Will Employment practices of the City of Cullman.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT HEREBY RESOLVED, by the City Council of Cullman that the Council, hereby adopts the following attached Cullman Fire Rescue FLSA Work Cycle Policy effective October 1st, 2024.

ADOPTED BY THE CITY COUNCIL this the 23rd day of September, 2024.

President of the City Council

ATTEST:

City Clerk

APPROVED BY THE MAYOR this the 23rd day of September, 2024.

Mayor



CULLMAN FIRE RESCUE

FLSA 28-Day Cycle

9/11/24

Scope: The Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) is a very definitive document with respect to how organizations provide pay and compensation to employees. This policy is designed to provide information and guidance to all employees regarding how Cullman Fire Rescue (CFR) meets/will meet the standard in operational practice as well as record keeping mechanisms for reporting compliance to the act.

Exempt and Non-Exempt Employees: The FLSA allows for certain positions to be held exempt from the payment of overtime and other positions to be held non-exempt from the payment of overtime. Cullman Fire Rescue has defined the posture of all positions with respect to this status. These are listed below.

Executive Exempt Status:

Fire Chief
Deputy Fire Chief
Division Chief
Battalion Chief
Fire Marshal
Captain of Administration

Non-Exempt Status

Firefighter
Fire Engineer
Fire Lieutenant
Administrative Assistant

Work Cycle Defined: Cullman Fire Rescue works a 28-day cycle under the 7 K exemption defined for fire departments within the FLSA. Under this cycle, shift personnel are due overtime for all hours worked over 212 hours. However, CFR personnel working regular shifts will not work more than 201.22 hours in a 28-day cycle as established.

Overtime: The FLSA provides that departments that use the 28-day cycle can wait until the end of the cycle to “ring up” the total hours to see if overtime has been earned. In our situation, overtime would be earned if the employee has worked more than 201.22 hours in the cycle. This would significantly delay employees getting paid for earned overtime. Our current practice is to pay overtime as it is earned (next payday after earning OT), and to pay it at the time and one-half rate for non-exempt employees. This will remain our practice.

On-Premises Rule: The FLSA states that any leave time taken during the 28-day cycle can be balanced against whether hours worked above 201.22 hours will be paid at the time and one-half rate or the straight time rate. This is known as the on-premises rule. Our practice has been to use the on-premises rule in OT calculations. This will remain our practice.

Overtime at the appropriate rate will be paid for employees that work past a shift, that are called in for active duty to maintain minimum staffing and other miscellaneous situations/incidents where staffing is needed to complete our mission, and employees have to work more hours than his or her normal work schedule.

Schedule Changes/Adjustments: Occasionally, the department will require an employee to attend a training class which is held on a different schedule than the normal 24 hours on-duty and 48 hours off-duty (for example a 40-hour certification course at the AFC). This schedule change by its very nature will change the number of hours worked for the employee. The FLSA allows for time adjustments to be made to balance the hours worked during the work cycle. However, the time adjustments brought about by the schedule changes must be made within the same 28-day cycle so that the total hours worked do not exceed 201.22 hours. This will be the practice of our department.

Employees that request/volunteer to attend training classes do not fall under FLSA requirements with respect to OT or time adjustments. Therefore, compensation/time balance for hours worked beyond the normal cycle is not mandatory. However, one of our established core values is education; therefore, our department will balance time for those approved for training in the same FLSA cycle as well.

Required Record Keeping: The FLSA is fairly clear on its requirements for the keeping of records as they relate to work hours, etc. The FLSA requirements govern records that the fire department maintains as well as the payroll department. Cullman Fire Rescue will have in place, and maintain, a record keeping system that meets the requirements of the FLSA.

The primary instrument for adequately keeping employee time records for the fire department will be the employee time cards that each supervisor completes at the end of each shift. The card has been revised to include required relevant information which relates to the 28-day cycle and the hours worked in each cycle. To be effective, supervisors must follow the below process:

- < Employee leave-time and hours worked must be logged on the day that they actually occur. In other words, if an employee works a 24-hour shift, then 24 hours should show in the square for that particular day. If an employee is attending a 40-hour certification class, then there should be 8 hours showing for each of the five days in attendance. Also, if an employee worked overtime for 2 hours, then 2 hours overtime should be listed on the day that it was earned. If a time adjustment was made due to a schedule change, then this amount of time should be shown as well in the appropriate date square. We must account for each hour worked and the date on which it was worked. The FLSA does not allow exceptions to this fact. This information will be logged before the supervisor leaves the shift to go off duty.
- < The begin date and the end date of the 28-day cycles must be listed on the card in the space provided. These dates will be provided to each unit.
- < At the end of each 28-day cycle the hours worked during the cycle must be totaled by the supervisor and entered in the appropriate space. Kelly days, Time Adjustments (time given off to balance hours) and leave time will not be calculated as time worked. If the employee has worked overtime during the cycle, then this will reflect with an hourly total exceeding 201.22 hours. The employee should have already been paid for the overtime or at least have an overtime card already in process to be paid for the time. It would be advisable to check with the employee to confirm this or check the computerized leave time system to see that OT has been listed for the employee on the appropriate date.

- < After the 28-day cycle has been totaled, the supervisor and employee should review the hours and the employee place his/her initials in the appropriate space if he/she concurs. If there is a discrepancy, the Shift Commander should be involved.
- < At the end of the year, the Shift Commanders will sign the card of their subordinates and turn the card in to the office for historical records purposes.

Shift Commanders will perform a visual audit of the time cards at least on a quarterly basis to make sure that information is being entered in the prescribed fashion to meet the FLSA requirements.

Shift Time Calculation Information

Shift personnel can earn pay based on 100.61 hours bi-weekly (every 14 days). This is the hours (100.61) that is used to calculate the FF base pay per hour. It is also the hourly rate that is used to calculate overtime and holiday time pay.

Example: A firefighter earns \$\$1,873.35 per payday. If we divide this amount by 100.61 hours, we get the hourly rate of \$18.60 This figure is reflected on the current pay matrix.

How does this pay situation relate to the Fire Department's 28-day FLSA work cycle? If we divide the pay period hours (100.61) by 14, we will get the hours that shift personnel are paid for each day. If we then multiply the daily hours paid by the 28 days in our cycle, we can get how many hours shift personnel would be paid in a 28-day period.

Example: 100.61 hours per payday divided by 14 days in the pay period equals 7.1864 hours that would be paid each day. 7.1864 hours per day times 28 days in our FLSA cycle equals 201.2192 hours. This is the exact number of hours that our work cycle is based on. Therefore, shift personnel are working 201.2192 hours in our FLSA cycle and are being paid for 201.2192 hours in our FLSA work cycle.

Based on this information, when changes are made between shifts (transfers, etc.), the only critical factor that has to be reviewed is that each person must work at least 201.2192 hours (28-day cycle), or if their hours exceed 201.2192 hours that a time adjustment due to the schedule change (staffing permitting) be made to reduce the hours to 201.2192.