

**Firefighter's Parade Rules and Regulations  
Of The  
Hudson Valley Volunteer Firefighters Association**

1. The judges will be instructed to judge the parade over its entire length, from the start line to the finish line, except no judging shall be in the immediate area of where the Members of the Firefighter's Home are viewing the parade. The judges should avoid judging on hills and corners when possible. The Judges will turn their backs when the parade comes to a stop and will not judge any fire unit while they are at parade rest. All judges must be dressed alike and must be visible to the fire units in the parade. All judges must be on the street. (Not on any sidewalks, driveways or lawns).

**The Judging Association will be decided by the HVVFA Association and will be scored with the scoring system that is used by the Judging Association.**

**The decisions that are made by the judging association are final. Any fire unit may request their scores in writing to either the Parade Rules Chairperson or the Secretary of the judging association.**

2. To compete for awards, the Fire Units **must have at least six (6) members in the line of march.** Members who are operating or riding in a fire department vehicle shall count towards the total number of marchers in the unit's line of march.

Auxiliary Units must have (5) members to compete for awards and march as a separate unit.

3. Competing Fire Units will be judged on four (4) components:

- a) Color Guard
- b) Uniform
- c) Marching
- d) Apparatus

Units may compete without Fire Apparatus without penalty. Auxiliary Units will be judged on two (2) components:

- a) Marching
- b) Uniforms

4. Apparatus will be judged separately and scored separately, and trophies for apparatus will be assigned separately. Members of the parading fire unit are permitted to ride on each of the fire apparatus in the parade provided they are seated in a proper seat. Any member riding in what is considered an unsafe position as determined by the Chief Judge may cause that fire unit to be disqualified. There is no specific number of personnel required on an apparatus.

5. The use of emergency lighting and sirens by any Fire Company or Department that is attending the Convention is prohibited while being operated in the Village, Town or City of the host department. Any Fire Department or Fire Company who violates this rule will be disqualified from winning any awards in both the Dress and Mardi Gras Parades.

6. Fire Apparatus is not required to be eligible for trophies. The use of **EMERGENCY LIGHTS ONLY** during the Dress and Mardi Gras Parades is permitted but is not mandatory.

The use of **SIRENS AND OR AIRHORNS** during the Dress and Mardi Gras parades is prohibited. Any unit sounding sirens or using Airhorns may be disqualified.

7. Hose beds on all apparatus shall be exposed so the judges can determine cleanliness and neatness of hose pack and associated equipment. Judges will not open compartments or doors or otherwise touch apparatus while in the line of march.
8. Apparatus shall be operated by personnel duly qualified and authorized by the participating fire unit and shall be operated in a manner consistent with these rules and the laws of the state of New York.
9. All apparatus and vehicles in the line of march shall be cleaned and polished, and all equipment shall be in place and in working order. No equipment or articles shall be carried on any apparatus and vehicles other than equipment used in fire, emergency and first aid services. The carrying of alcoholic beverages on any apparatus or fire vehicles shall result in disqualification.
10. Any personnel riding in vehicles must be wearing the proper seat restraints, if so equipped. This includes private vehicles being used in the parade. Personnel not properly wearing seat restraints shall be demerited per occurrence.
11. Any, and all vehicles belonging to a fire unit's band may not fall into the parade line of march. Band units doing so will result in the fire unit being demerited.

12. Units arriving after the parade has started must fall in at the end of the parade regardless of the division to which they were assigned. In the event a unit falls into a division while the parade is in progress, they shall be marked on the judge's sheet as "**Out of Position**" and shall receive demerits.
13. Respect must be shown for the decorations in the City, Town or Village that is entertaining our organization. In the event the membership of a Fire Unit is found destroying or damaging private and public property, the offending organization will be disqualified from winning any awards and the individual(s) may be prosecuted. Always respect the colors of our Country, and the property of our host as well as the citizens and merchants of the community we are guests in.
14. The parade shall be judged based on appearance of marchers and apparatus from the standpoint of cleanliness, neatness, orderliness and sobriety. The rules of this parade shall apply regardless of the ages of apparatus or type of uniform by marchers. The decision of the judges is final. **(We will use the scoring system of the Judging Association that is judging the parade).**
15. Should there be a tie for any unit or Auxiliary award; the tie shall be broken by awarding to the unit with the most members in the line of march (Including uniformed members in all vehicles). If a tie still exists, then the Chief Judge of the parade shall use other established and accepted methods to break the tie. In all cases the decision of the Judges will be final.
16. The convention dress parade of the HVVFA shall be judged with the rules herein set forth and judges accordingly using the scoring and demerit system of the judging association that is judging the parade.
17. It is the responsibility of each marching unit to guard their equipment against damage or loss at all times. Neither the LLC nor the HVVFA assume any liability for damage or loss suffered by any parade participant.

18. If any member(s) of a fire department or fire company that are participating in the convention are caught damaging or tampering with another fire department's apparatus or equipment, such members fire department may be disqualified from winning any awards.

## **UNIFORM CLASSIFICATIONS**

- 1. BLOUSED:** Blouse uniform of any style or color, including Regulation, adopted by a unit for any use including parades. The trousers shall be of uniform color, plain or striped, matching or contrasting the color of the blouse. The hat shall be of matching or contrasting color and be either a eight point or box design, with the unit hat badge on the riser. Officers may wear white hats if they desire. Accessories, including shirts, ties, shoes and socks must be worn throughout, excepting Officers may display insignia of office. Gloves are optional, but use must be uniform throughout. It is permissible for the Chief to wear a Regulation uniform when the unit is attired in a non-regulation bloused uniform.
- 2. DRESS:** Un-bloused uniform of any style or color, adopted by a unit for any in use, including parades. Accessories must be uniform throughout, except for Officers who may display an insignia of office. It is permissible for the Chief to wear a Regulation uniform when the unit is attired in dress uniform.
- 3. SPECIAL UNIFORMS:** When the members of a special squad, such as a Fire Police or Rescue, are not issued parade uniforms of the unit, they may wear the uniform issue to them for special duty, but must parade as a separate unit at the rear of the unit's marchers and must not intermingle with the marchers of the main unit.

4. It is permissible to wear an American Flag Patch on the shoulder of any of the above-mentioned uniform classifications.
5. There will be no demerits for the length of service indicator on any uniform regardless of classification. Positioning of the indicators on the uniform shall be uniform throughout the unit.
6. It is permissible for a career driver to wear their work uniform while driving an apparatus in the parade. As a safety consideration, all drivers will be exempted from wearing gloves but may wear them if they desire.
7. In all uniform groups the presentation of the unit pertaining to design, color style, patch, and accessories shall be uniform except as noted. Demerits will result in instances where uniformity is not constant. Non-Uniform patches shall also result in demerit. No jewelry other than fire service badges and awards shall be worn on the uniform or person exposed to view. Wedding and engagement rings as well as Medic Alerts are excepted. All hair (including facial hair) shall be neat in appearance.
8. Municipal Officers and clergy may march at the head of their unit in civilian clothes. Fire Chiefs with uniforms different from their unit may march at the head of the unit. The forgoing items will not be subject to demerits.

### **PARADE MARCHING**

1. Any movement by a marching unit or the marching unit's band other than forward, which shall delay the forward progress of the parade will subject the department to a 10-point demerit. The entire unit includes the Color Guard, Fire Unit, Auxiliary Unit, Apparatus and Musical Unit.

2. In the event an alarm of fire or ambulance call while the parade is in progress, all units of the parade shall move to the right side of the roadway on the approach of the responding apparatus or ambulance and remain halted until the vehicle(s) have proceeded past.

The following formations will be allowed in the line of march,

Single File – 10 or Less in the Line of March

Two (2) Abreast – 11 into 30 in the Line of March

Three (3) Abreast – 31 and above **must be three (3) abreast**

Units pulling parade carriages or antique apparatus are exempt from these requirements.

3. There shall be no disorderliness during the parade such as, smoking, chewing gum or tobacco, carrying or drinking beverages, etc. Any unit conducting themselves in such a manner during the parade as to bring discredit to themselves or the Volunteer Fire Service shall be disqualified from winning any parade awards.
4. Incapacitated and/or life members of a fire unit will be permitted to ride in private cars directly in the rear of the unit column (see parade unit formation). They may wear civilian clothing but must wear a uniform hat to be counted as members in line for the Most in Line award.
5. In judging for the Most in Line Award, all members of the fire unit must pass over the start and finish lines to be counted by the parade judges.
6. Fire personnel of local units, auxiliaries, and those involved with the presentation of the parade will be counted as personnel in the line of march for their respective marching unit. The HVVFA shall provide a list of individuals who are participating in the parade to the Chief Judge by 12:00pm on the day of the parade. This may be in writing, email or text message form.

7. Where the last rank of marchers has one or more open files (position), the marchers in the rank shall fill the files from the right.
8. The Chief Officer in the Line of March shall render a hand salute to the reviewing stand. If all three Chiefs are all in the same row then all three Chiefs must render a hand salute.

### **Color Guard**

1. Any Fire Unit without a guarded American Flag will be **disqualified**. One or more persons shall constitute a color guard however if one person is used, the guard must march to the right of the American flag. The American Flag shall always be carried to the right of any other flags, such as fire department or fire company flags. The American flag is to be guarded at all times.
2. In all instances where eagles are displayed on flagstaffs, such eagles must face forward at all times.
3. The United States Flag and its guard must directly precede the Fire Unit in the line of march. The Fire Unit Banner or flag may precede an accompanying musical (or similar) unit if so desired.
4. American Flags must be unfurled at all times, except during rainy or inclement conditions. The American Flag is not to be dipped or lowered at any time.

### **AUXILIARY UNITS**

1. Auxiliary Units shall march to the rear of the fire unit, and they shall not intermingle with the fire unit while parading.

2. The uniform worn by the Auxiliary Unit must be uniform throughout as to style, color and accessories. Hats and/or gloves, if part of the uniform, shall be worn, with hats at the same angle. No jewelry other than an Auxiliary Badge or Pin may be worn. Wedding and Engagement rings as well as Medic Alerts are excepted.
3. If carried, the American Flag must be guarded. (see color guard section).
4. Shoes shall be of similar style and of the same color. Hosiery, if worn, must be worn by all marchers and uniform in color.
5. Hair shall be neat in appearance.
6. The length of uniforms shall conform within each unit.
7. Incapacitated members and Life Members of the Auxiliary Units will be permitted to ride in private cars directly at the rear of the unit column (see Parade Unit Formation). Auxiliary Members may wear civilian clothing but must wear some type of unit identification other than a badge (i.e., hat, etc.) to be counted with the unit member for the Most in Line Award.
8. All rules that apply to Fire Units shall also apply to auxiliaries, except where noted above.

## **Mardi Gras Parade Rules**

1. Any unit that discharges water on spectators, on members of other units or of the marching unit itself, in any manner, will be disqualified from all awards in the Mardi-Gras Parade.
2. All motorized vehicles and equipment must be operated by a qualified person and in a forward gear for entire parade or disqualification will result for any Mardi Gras Awards.
3. Marching units shall not throw candy or gifts to the spectators along the parade route. The handing or placing candy and gifts into the hands of children and spectators is allowed.
4. There will no alcoholic beverages carried on any float or displayed during the Mardi-Gras Parade. A violation of this rule will result in the disqualification of your fire unit from both the Mardi-Gras and the Dress Parade.

**Disqualification from the Mardi-Gras Parade will be at the discretion of the LLC.**

## **PARADE UNIT FORMATION**

The following chart shall be used by all Fire and Auxiliary Units that are participating in the DRESS PARADE. It should be noted that not all components apply to all marching units. The Officer in charge of the marching unit should review this chart for the best presentation of the unit. The indicated distance in feet represents maximum separation between components. Marching units should maintain a maximum separation of 100' feet between units and divisions.

### **PARADE UNIT FORMATION**

Unit identification (Banner/Flag) (Optionnel Position)

10 Feet

Musical Unit

20 Feet

Color Guard

10 Feet

Unite Identification (Banner/Flag) (Optional Position)

10 Feet

Chief – Assistant Chiefs

10 Feet

Chaplains – Officials – Commissioners – Past Officers

10 Feet

Unit Officers (Captains, Lieutenants)

10 Feet

Special Unit Members

15 Feet

Auxiliary Unit Color Guard (Optional)

10 Feet

Auxiliary Banner

10 Feet

Auxiliary Officers

10 Feet

Auxiliary Unit

20 Feet

Explorers/Junior Members

20 Feet

Cars – Incapacitated & Life Members (Firefighters & Auxiliary)

20 Feet

Chief Vehicles

20 Feet

Apparatus