



Manitowoc Fire Rescue Department

Memo

To: MFRD Staff
From: Fire Administration
Date: October 7, 2025
Re: Operations for 48/96 Work Schedule

Purpose

Provide clear, consistent operational expectations for personnel working the 48/96 schedule to ensure apparatus readiness, patient/staff safety, crew wellness, and fair service to the municipality.

Scope

Applies to all personnel assigned to 48/96 hitches, company officers, and Battalion Chiefs.

Definitions

- Day 1: First 24 hours of the 48-hour hitch (on-duty start through next day).
- Day 2: Second 24 hours of the hitch.
- Stand-down time: Period after 1630 (4:30 PM) each duty day during which non-emergency duties are minimized and the primary responsibility is emergency response.

Core Expectations — Inspections, Inventory, Documentation

Vector Check:

- All daily equipment, apparatus, and EMS checks must be entered into Vector Check on each day of the hitch (i.e., both Day 1 and Day 2).
- Entries must be completed by the end of the day or before apparatus is placed into service for the first emergency response after the check.

Day 1 (Thorough Inspection):

- Company officers will conduct and document a thorough inspection of all suppression and EMS apparatus and major equipment.
- Confirm functionality of pumps, ladders, SCBA, Hurst/electric tools, radios, lights, power systems, gas/diesel levels, and all critical life-safety equipment.
- Verify clean, secure, and accessible patient care equipment and supplies.

Day 2 (Basic Inspection):

- Conduct and document a basic operational inspection sufficient to ensure apparatus and essential equipment is ready for response.

- Ensure fuel, fluid levels, batteries, lights, radios, and primary PPE are operational.

Medication Inventory Daily:

- A medication/controlled substances inventory must be completed and documented each day of the hitch (both Day 1 and Day 2) following department medication control policy.
- Discrepancies must be reported immediately to the company officer and documented.

Housekeeping:

- Daily station cleanliness and basic housekeeping must be maintained (bunks, kitchen, apparatus bay, patient-care areas).
- Debris, hazards, or equipment left out of place must be corrected during the shift.

Company Inspections, Training, Public Education:

- Company inspections (checklists, station self-inspections) will be conducted per the published schedule and documented.
- Department training shall be scheduled to meet training requirements. Training or public education activities that cannot be completed during regular work times may occur during stand-down time only as described below.

Stand-Down Time

- Defined as time after 1630 (4:30 PM) each duty day.
- During stand-down time, primary responsibility is answering emergency calls and maintaining apparatus readiness.
- Non-emergency administrative tasks, training, and public education should generally be scheduled during normal daytime work hours.
- From time to time, public education or training may need to occur during stand-down time; when that occurs, the time spent will be scheduled according to department policy and, whenever possible, conducted during the workday on the day of or the day following the activity.

Fatigue Management and Rest Expectations

- Personnel are expected to obtain sufficient rest to perform duties safely.
The Battalion Chief will be notified and will coordinate with the company officer to ensure the crew is afforded appropriate rest opportunities before resuming non-exempt emergency/rescue operations.
Measures may include: adjusting non-emergency assignments, arranging short rest periods at the station. If fatigue is believed to impair safe performance of duties, personnel must notify their company officer immediately. The company officer and Battalion Chief will evaluate and take appropriate action.

Overtime

Overtime (OT)

- OT will be used according to department policy and must be authorized by the designated supervisor.
- Before OT is offered, the shift trade process and voluntary call-back list should be exhausted when feasible.
- Track OT use to identify patterns and mitigate chronic staffing shortages.

Sick Leave:

- Use of sick leave follows department policy. Notify the station and supervisor as early as possible.
- Repeated unscheduled absences will be managed per policy, balancing employee health protections and department operational needs.

Trades:

Establish a clear, simple rule for shift trades under the 48/96 schedule: no trade may result in an employee being scheduled for more than 72 consecutive hours on-duty unless an emergency situation exists.

- Trades must follow the established trade request process and be approved in advance where possible.
- Trades that reduce minimum safe staffing or apparatus capability are subject to denial.
- Trades that increase exposure to consecutive duty hours should be reviewed to avoid excessive fatigue.

Documentation, Accountability, and Exceptions

- All inspections, medication inventories, trainings, housekeeping activities, and exceptions must be documented in the appropriate department systems (Vector Check It, Vector Scheduling or Vector solutions).
- Company officers are responsible for ensuring required documentation is completed and accurate.
- Battalion Chiefs are responsible for monitoring compliance, approving exceptions, and addressing operational impacts.
- Exceptions (e.g., inability to complete a daily task) must be documented with rationale and follow-up plan.

Safety and Service Priority

- Operational safety and patient care are the top priorities. If any crew, apparatus, or equipment condition jeopardizes safe response, remove from service and notify supervisory staff immediately.
- Ensure continuity of service to the community while balancing staff safety and wellness.

Enforcement, Review, and Updates

- Noncompliance with these expectations may result in corrective action per department policy.
- This memo will be reviewed after 9 months and updated as needed based on operational feedback, incident reviews, and staffing data.

Acknowledgment

Company officers will ensure all assigned personnel read and acknowledge receipt of this memo.

Questions or clarifications should be directed to your Battalion Chief or the Office of the Fire Chief.