

### **Criterion 9C: Administrative Support Services and Office Systems**

Administrative support services and general office systems are in place with adequate staff to efficiently and effectively conduct and manage the agency's administrative functions such as organizational planning and assessment, resource coordination, record keeping, reporting, business communications, public interaction, and purchasing.

#### **Summary:**

The Meridian Fire Department's Administrative Services operate as a separate division under the direction of the fire chief and an administrative services division manager, and provide support and administrative services to the Community Risk Reduction, Operations, and Administrative branches within the fire department. The administrative services division provides support for the department's programs and projects, acts as a central point of contact for the public, manages records, manages grant applications, and participates in the creation and execution of the department's strategic plan.

## **Performance indicators:**

**CC 9C.1      The administrative support services are appropriate for the agency's size, function, complexity, and mission, and are adequately managed.**

### **Description**

The department's administrative services division includes a division manager, two administrative assistants, and a records clerk. The administrative services division provides support to the three other department branches: Community Risk Reduction, Operations, Administration. Branches are further broken down into divisions. A Public Safety PIO is shared between the fire department and the Meridian Police Department. In total, the Meridian Fire Department employs 126 personnel including 106 suppression personnel.

### **Appraisal**

The department has increased personnel by 40 percent since 2021, with no corresponding growth in the administrative services branch. The Administrative Support Division Growth Plan indicates that administrative tasks have increased 84% in the last ten years and are expected to increase in the future. The administrative support services personnel have been able to manage the department's critical administrative needs, however, with the immense growth of the department, the staff has had to drop some secondary and tertiary duties such as taking meeting minutes for less-critical department committees. Inadequate staffing at all levels was a weakness addressed in the department's strategic plan. An additional administrative assistant was requested during the FY23 budget cycle but was denied.

### **Plan**

The department will continue to request additional administrative personnel through the City of Meridian budget process, with the goal of adding two additional personnel by 2028. The chief will work with the administrative division manager to update and amend the Administrative Services Division Growth Plan as needed.

### **References**

- <https://www.ktvb.com/article/news/local/208/meridian-fire-to-expand-manpower-by-40-percent-staff-two-new-stations/277-a82e6b49-62f5-4543-94d1-f6285845f07a>

- MFD Organizational Chart 2023
- Admin Support Division Growth Plan, pg. 11
- Administrative Services Division Manager Job Description
- Administrative Assistant I Job Description
- Administrative Assistant II Job Description
- Meridian Fire Department Strategic Plan 2022-2024, pg. 18

9C.2 Public reception, public information, and electronic communications components support the customer service needs of the agency.

### **Description**

The department's administrative offices, located in Meridian City Hall, are staffed Monday through Friday with personnel available to answer phones and greet walk-in citizens. A general information email is monitored by administrative staff. The department website includes an extensive Frequently Asked Questions section, customer satisfaction surveys for different branches of the department, and an "Ask the Chief" question section for citizens. The department also shares a public information officer (PIO) with the police department. Public records requests are processed by the city clerk's office and then directed to the department records clerk, where they are generally processed within 24 hours. The City of Meridian conducts a city-wide survey every three years with questions specific to fire and rescue services.

### **Appraisal**

Customer satisfaction surveys have consistently shown that the Meridian Fire Department meets or exceeds the expectations of the citizens 100 percent of the time. "Ask the Chief" questions are answered within 48 hours. All records requests are addressed within 24 hours. The addition of a PIO to the department has expanded the department's outreach both in traditional news media and on social media, as well as created an internal and external branding guide, and has provided media training to members of the department.

### **Plan**

The department will continue to strive for excellent customer service through a variety of communications tools. The department will continue to use the PIO to expand its outreach into the community. The administrative division manager will monitor and address any changing customer service needs. The administrative services division manager and PIO will analyze the use of the current outreach means including the "Ask the Chief" query and determine if other forms of outreach are needed.

### **References**

- Public Information Officer Job Description
- Social Media Audit

- Total Customer Survey Ratings
- Ask the Chief Screenshot
- Media Training Leadership
- MFD Branding Guide
- City of Meridian Citizen Survey Findings Report 2020

**CC 9C.3      Organizational documents, forms, standard operating procedures or general guidelines, and manuals are reviewed at least every three years and updated as needed for all agency programs.**

**Description**

Organizational documents, forms, emergency operation guidelines (EOGs), standard operating guidelines (SOGs), policies, and manuals are reviewed on an as needed basis by appropriate administrators or committee members. All department forms, including policies, EOGs, SOGs, and training documents and manuals are available to all employees via the intranet. Documents contain the date they were last modified. Policies are reviewed and updated as needed during regular policy committee meetings. Organizational forms and department specific (e.g. training manuals) documents are updated by the appropriate department heads as needed. Administrative standard operating guideline (SOG) for program appraisals states that each department must review all relevant documents, forms, manuals, and standard operating policies and procedures annually as part of their program appraisal, and update them as necessary.

**Appraisal**

All organizational forms and documents have been reviewed at least every three years and updated on an as-needed basis. All documents contain a section with the date the document was most recently updated, and most documents contain a review data as well. The department's program appraisal SOG was implemented this past year as part of the new program appraisal process, and as a result some documents have yet to be reviewed.

**Plan**

The deputy chief of administration will be responsible for monitoring compliance with the program appraisal SOG, including document review and updates. Each deputy chief will be responsible for reviewing documents within their branches, and assign roles and responsibilities to division chiefs as needed. The department will add a "review date" section to all department documents to help better track document updating, as well as create a document tracking system by the end of 2024.

**References**

- Intranet Screen Shot

- ASOG – Program Appraisals

9C.4 Public records are maintained, available and disposed of in accordance with local, state/provincial and federal legal mandates. Record retention and destruction are documented in accordance with an adopted procedure.

### **Description**

The department maintains, manages and disposes of public records in accordance with Idaho Statute 50-907, City of Meridian resolution 22-2357, Meridian Fire Department Administrative Standard Operating Guidelines (ASOGs), and City of Meridian Standard Operating Policy. The department employs a records clerk who is responsible for managing all department records including fire investigations and subpoenas. The City of Meridian sets a records retention schedule which the department follows. Patient Care and EMS records are managed in accordance with the Joint Powers Agreement with Ada County Paramedics.

### **Appraisal**

The department has operated an efficient records management system. The department has complied with all appropriate laws, statutes, department policies, and city policies. Public records requests have an average turnaround time of less than 24 hours. The records clerk has improved the workflow for tracking subpoena requests using an internal tracking document.

### **Plan**

The department will continue to abide by all state, local and jurisdictional records management policies and statutes. The records clerk will be in charge of managing the records system and addressing any future needs, including adapting to any changing laws, statutes, or internal policies.

### **References**

- Idaho Statute 50-907, Certification and Retention of Municipal Records
- Ada County/City Emergency Services System Joint Powers Agreement, Appendix A, pg. 1-5
- City of Meridian Resolution 22-2357, Records Retention Schedule, pig 1, 33-36
- ASOG – Public Records Requests Standards



- ASOG - Public Records Request – Structure Fire Report
- Subpoena Tracking Yearly Form