

**AGREEMENT FOR EXCHANGE OF AUTOMATIC AID  
BETWEEN WESTERN EMERGENCY SERVICE AREA AND  
HOMER VOLUNTEER FIRE DEPARTMENT**

This Automatic Aid Agreement (the "Agreement"), dated this \_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 2021, is made by and between the Kenai Peninsula Borough on behalf of the Western Emergency Service Area (WESA) and the City of Homer on behalf of the Homer Volunteer Fire Department (HVFD) (sometimes referred to herein as the "Parties").

**1. Response to Automatic Aid Requests.**

- a. Both parties to this Agreement provide structure fire, wildland fire and explosion protection services within their jurisdictions.
- b. In return for the services to be provided by WESA, HVFD agrees to provide a designated fire response, as determined by the Fire Chief of HVFD.
- c. In return for the services to be provided by HVFD, WESA agrees to provide a designated fire response, as determined by the Fire Chief of WESA.

**2. Emergencies – Information Provided.**

Upon receipt of a structure fire, wildland fire or explosion alarm through a 9-1-1 Call Center within the automatic aid response area of either service area, WESA or HVFD will automatically dispatch its nearest available and appropriate designated fire response to that incident alarm location. The automatic aid response areas are determined by the Fire Chiefs of WESA and HVFD and are set forth in the Annual Operational Plan.

**3. Jurisdiction.**

"Jurisdiction" is defined to be that political and geographical boundary designating the respective service areas of the parties to this Agreement.

**4. Authority to Establish the Automatic Aid Agreement.**

- a. Alaska State Statute, AS 18.70.150 authorizes the borough to organize or enter into mutual aid agreements to go to or extend aid to another city or borough.
- b. Automatic Aid is automatic mutual aid.

**5. Command Authority.**

- a. When the aiding department arrives before the jurisdictional department, the aiding department will take the necessary action dictated by the situation.

- b. Upon arrival of the jurisdictional department, the operational responsibility for the situation will be immediately assumed by the jurisdictional department.
- c. The aiding department personnel will be under the direction of the Officer in Charge (OIC) of the jurisdictional department.
- d. The aiding department will be released from the scene as soon as practical by the OIC of the jurisdictional department.

**6. Withdrawal of Resources or Assignment Turndown.**

- a. If, after arrival at the emergency scene or staging area with the resources as identified in the Annual Operational Plan, it becomes necessary to withdraw a portion or all of such resources in order to address an emergency situation in the jurisdiction served by the aiding department, such withdrawal may be initiated at the sole discretion of the OIC of the aiding department.
- b. Such withdrawal may also be made at the sole discretion of the OIC of the aiding department if it is determined that the aiding department's resources are being subjected to unnecessary or unreasonable danger.
- c. In either case, the OIC shall coordinate the withdrawal with the aiding department's OIC in a manner that avoids endangering the personnel of either department.
- d. It is mutually understood and agreed that this Agreement does not relieve either party from the necessity and obligation of using its own resources to provide fire protection within any part of its own jurisdiction.

**7. Responsibility for Costs & Liability.**

- a. Each party desires to provide to the other a reasonable, professional and reciprocal exchange of fire response services on a day to day basis at no additional cost.
- b. Each party shall bear its own costs for responding to an automatic aid request.
- c. Each responding agency shall be responsible for its own liabilities incurred traveling to the scene, at the scene and returning to the station of origin.
- d. In rendering emergency services, each agency will bear the responsibility for its own acts and any liability incurred by such acts.

**8. Annual Operational Plan.**

- a. It is in the best interests of the citizens of WESA and HVFD to be provided the most expeditious and professional response to suppress fires. The details as to amounts and type of assistance to be dispatched, response

areas, methods of dispatching, communications, training programs and procedures, methods of requesting aid, and the names or ranks of persons authorized to send and receive such requests, lists of personnel and resources which will be utilized, shall be developed by the Fire Chiefs of WESA and HVFD.

- b. Such details shall be recorded in an Operational Plan.
- c. The Operational Plan shall be approved and signed by the agencies, the Borough Mayor and the Homer City Manager, dated and attached hereto within thirty (30) calendar days of the approval of this Agreement. The failure to attach an Operational Plan to this Agreement shall render this Agreement automatically null and void.

#### **9. Mutual Aid Agreement Not Affected.**

It is mutually understood that this Agreement will in no way affect or have any bearing on other existing area mutual aid agreements.

#### **10. Liability.**

- a. There shall be no liability imposed on any Party or its personnel for failure to respond to an incident due to resource limitations or as a result of any act or omission in good faith.
- b. For purposes of this Agreement, each Party's employees shall be deemed to be the employees and agents of that Party only, and under no circumstances shall any employee be deemed to be an employee or agent of any other entity or the other Party.
- c. All damages or repairs to any equipment or apparatus shall be the responsibility of the Party that owns such equipment or apparatus, provided however, that compensation for damages to equipment or apparatus that occurs during a natural disaster, a state of emergency, as declared by a local, state or federal governing authority, or any other incident for which state or federal aid is provided to the Party requesting aid, shall be distributed to the Party providing aid in proportion to the level of actual damage incurred while providing automatic aid.
- d. Nothing contained in this Agreement shall be construed to be a waiver of either Party's qualified immunity, official immunity, or any other immunity or exemption from liability provided for by law.

#### **11. Release of Claims.**

Except as provided in 10(c) above, and to the extent permitted by law, each of the Parties agrees to hold harmless and release the other Party from any and all

liabilities, suits, claims, judgments, costs or demands for damage to its own property whether directly existing or indirectly arising out of the use of any vehicle, equipment or apparatus being used by either Party during the provision of service pursuant to this Agreement.

**12. Injuries to Personnel.**

Any damage or other compensation which is required to be paid to any fire department employee or volunteer by reason of his/her injury occurring while his/her services are being utilized pursuant to this Agreement shall be the sole liability and responsibility of the Party regularly employing that person.

**13. No Benefit to Third Parties.**

This Agreement shall not be construed as, or deemed to be, an agreement for the benefit of any third party or parties, and no third party or parties shall have any right of action hereunder for any cause whatsoever.

**14. Term of Agreement.**

- a. This Agreement shall commence upon the date of the Kenai Peninsula Borough mayor's signature and shall continue until December 31, 2026. This Agreement may be renewed by the Parties via written request, approved by both parties, no later than November 1<sup>st</sup> of each year. This Agreement cannot extend beyond fifteen (15) years. Renewals may be for five (5) years each.
- b. Notwithstanding the above, either Party to this Agreement may terminate the Agreement by giving no less than thirty (30) days written notice to the other Party and upon the running of thirty (30) days from such written notice, this Agreement shall be terminated.

**15. Counterparts.**

This Agreement may be executed in any number of counterparts, each of which shall be deemed an original, but all of which together shall constitute one and the same instrument.

**WESTERN EMERGENCY SERVICE  
AREA (WESA)**

\_\_\_\_\_  
Jon Marsh, Chief

Date:\_\_\_\_\_

**HOMER VOLUNTEER FIRE  
DEPARTMENT (HVFD)**

\_\_\_\_\_  
Mark Kirko, Chief

Date:\_\_\_\_\_

**WESTERN EMERGENCY SERVICE  
AREA BOARD**

\_\_\_\_\_  
Dawson Slaughter, Chair

Date:\_\_\_\_\_

**CITY OF HOMER**

\_\_\_\_\_  
Rob Dumouchel, City Manager

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**ATTEST (City of Homer)**

\_\_\_\_\_  
Melissa Jacobsen, City Clerk

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**KENAI PENINSULA BOROUGH**

\_\_\_\_\_  
Charlie Pierce, Mayor

Date:\_\_\_\_\_

**APPROVED as to form & legal  
sufficiency**

\_\_\_\_\_  
Patty Burly, Deputy Borough Attorney

**ATTEST (for Kenai Peninsula Borough)**

\_\_\_\_\_  
Johni Blankenship, MMC, Borough Clerk