



# Douglas County Fire District No. 2

COMMISSIONERS: Dave Fennell, Danny Johnson, and Ettore Castellente

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## NOTICE OF DISCIPLINE

To: Joshua Bollinger

Date: October 27, 2021

### **Findings of Fact**

1. You are currently a firefighter with Douglas County Fire Protection District No. 2 and a member of IAFF Local 453.
2. On Wednesday October 20th, you admitted, of your own volition, to Local 453 President Rigelman and Battalion Chief Phillips that you had obtained a forged vaccine card from Walgreens in East Wenatchee.
3. You previously (October 10<sup>th</sup>) submitted a copy of that card to Terri Woods as evidence of compliance with the WA Governor's Proclamation 21-14.1 and the DCFD#2 COVID Vaccine Policy.
4. On October 26, 2021, you attended a pre-disciplinary hearing and responded to the above allegations.
5. In your response at the October 26, 2021, hearing you acknowledged making a mistake and explained some of your background circumstances but did not provide any specific evidence or explanation that refuted the findings set forth above.
6. Under Article 26 of the Collective Bargaining Agreement employee members of Local 453 may be disciplined and discharged only for Just Cause.
7. Article 26 provides that disciplinary action shall be consistent with the principle of progressive discipline.

### **Conclusions**

1. I have determined that the conduct referenced above is a serious violation of the following District policies and expectations:
  - 1.1. Vision, Values, and Expectations: Have integrity:

“Do what's right, legally and morally. It is expected that everyone will do the right thing, take the high road even when no one is looking. Without integrity, our peers

and our community will not trust us. We are held to a higher standard, and we must always defend and maintain our integrity. Do not be that member who is acting foolish off duty while representing the District or wearing District identifying clothing. People remember your lack of integrity.”

#### 1.2. Code of Ethics:

“I recognize the badge of my office as a symbol of public faith, and I accept it as a public trust to be held so long as I am true to the ethics of the fire service.... As a member of the Douglas County Fire Protection District 2, I accept this self-imposed and self-enforced obligation as my responsibility.”

#### 1.3. Policy 1011.3 Professional Conduct:

“All members should be governed by the ordinary and reasonable rules of behavior observed by law-abiding and self-respecting citizens and should conduct themselves at all times in such manner as to reflect favorably on the District. Conduct unbecoming a member shall include that which discredits the District or the person as a member of the District or which impairs the operation or efficiency of the District or its members.”

“All members should conduct themselves in a manner that will not impair the good order and discipline of the District.”

“All members of the District should be familiar with the expected standard of behavior, both on- and off-duty.”

#### 1.4. Policy 1011.6 Conformance to laws

“Members shall obey all laws of the United States and of any state and local jurisdiction in which the member is present.”

Your admitted conduct in submitting a falsified vaccination card was dishonest and delivered with the intent to deceive the District. Such conduct potentially violates 18 U.S.C §1017 and §1018 and RCW 9A.60.020.

Your conduct constitutes unprofessional conduct as defined under RCW 18.130.180(1).

Your conduct exposed the District to potential violations of Proclamation 21-14.1, which, but for your actions being reported prior to October 19, 2021, would have occurred once you began working as an unvaccinated employee.

Your conduct violated the requirement in Section 3 of Proclamation 21-14.1 that Health Care Providers provide proof of full vaccination.

### **Discipline**

Pursuant to my authority under Article 5.1 of the collective bargaining agreement to discipline or discharge with just cause, I have determined that, based on the foregoing facts and conclusions, that progressive discipline is not appropriate due to the serious and potentially criminal nature of the conduct. The intentional dishonesty, and the intent to deceive the District on a significant matter of public health demonstrated a complete lack of concern for the potential impact that the deceptive act could have on the public, your co-workers and the District. Accordingly, you are terminated from employment with the District effective immediately.

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Brian Brett, Fire Chief