

BECKWORTH PEAK

FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT

Agenda Brief

MEETING DATE: August 6, 2025

FROM: Board President Curtis

RE: Policy Review and Possible Adoption

REASON FOR RECOMMENDED BOARD ACTION:

The following policies have been drafted and are now ready for board review, input and possible adoption. These policies are necessary to ensure consistency in handling reimbursements.

POLICY BACKGROUND:

- Policy 1025 Claims Against the District – This policy currently exists as Lexipol policy and was approved by the Board on August 7, 2024. Now that the District has secured GSRMA for insurance coverage, the policy needs review for adherence to the process to be followed for filing a claim and processing a claim.

This is a first reading for revisions to this policy to ensure the process for directing a claim to GSRMA is in alignment with insurance deductibles and with the board's financial limitations for in-house remediated claims.

Based on feedback from staff and the board, any revisions to this policy will be brought back to the board for a second reading at the October 1, 2025, meeting.

- Policy 2125 Expense Authorization – This is a new and first reading of this drafted policy. The policy is necessary to ensure expense authorization and reimbursement processes are in place and consistently applied. The draft policy includes the option for using a "petty cash" account for immediate need purchases and reimbursements. This option may not be needed as the district utilizes district credit cards issued to staff for these purposes and an immediate reimbursement to a board member is generally not needed as staff manages miscellaneous purchases.

Based on feedback from staff and the board, this policy may, with approved edits, be adopted in this first reading or a second reading if necessary.

- Policy 4125 Education, Training and Conferences – This is a new and first reading of this drafted policy. This policy is needed to provide a consistent and informed way board members are approved for and reimbursed for educational, training and conference activities. Note that policy 2125 and 4125 go hand in hand as it relates to reimbursable expenses.

Based on feedback from staff and the board, this policy may, with approved edits, be adopted in this first reading or a second reading if necessary.

IMPACTS TO THE CUSTOMER:

Ensuring the district has consistent application with reimbursements enhances internal controls and eliminates confusion with how reimbursements are handled.

FISCAL IMPACT: No negative fiscal impact identified.

RECOMMENDATION:

Policy 1025 – provide feedback and bring back for a second reading on October 1, 2025.

Policy 2125 – review, provide input and possibly adopt and waive the second reading.

Policy 4125 – review, provide input and possibly adopt by waive the second reading.

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~~101.4~~ Policy #1025 CLAIMS AGAINST THE DISTRICT – ALEXIPOL POLICY

The purpose of this policy is to provide direction to District staff for processing and resolving (if possible) account adjustment requests and property damage claims against the District. Inherent in this policy is the recognition that every adjustment request or claim will be unique, and that guidelines cannot be written to accommodate every case. Therefore, staff must use discretion and good sense in handling each claim.

Property (Land and Improvements) Damage Claims

In the course of the District's operations - [Fire protection, medical aid] - damage to land and improvements thereon occasionally occurs due to the proximity of the District's facilities to the private property. When District employees are aware that property has been damaged in the course of their work, restorative measures are to be taken to return the property as close to its original condition as possible. When a property owner informs a District employee of damage to their property (by telephone or in person), the employee receiving the claim will document in writing the time and date, and a description of the stated circumstances and allegations.

Employees should respond to questions, be cordial and respectful, but refrain from commenting on liability questions as soon as possible after information about the damage has been received, it shall be given to the appropriate Chief. The Chief, or his/her designee, shall investigate the property owner's allegations. If the owner of damaged property informs a member of the Board of Directors, the information will be given to the Chief. Directors should not independently investigate claims; but claims but may go with staff to observe.

Investigations shall be done in a timely fashion and documented with a written report, including photographs and/or interviews, when appropriate. A copy of the report shall be submitted to the Chief.

If the investigating staff person is convinced that the damage was caused by District personnel, equipment, or infrastructure, he/she shall prepare a work order to have the damage repaired, subject to the following conditions:

- (a) Property owner agrees that the proposed repairs are appropriate and adequate;

(b) Property owner agrees to allow District personnel access to their property to perform the repair work; District personnel have the necessary tools, equipment, and expertise to perform the necessary work;

Repair work can be accomplished within a reasonable amount of time; and, cost of material for the repairs will not exceed \$500.

If the cost of material for repairs is stated by claimant or estimated by staff to exceed \$500, the owner will be asked to submit their claim in writing on ~~a District claim form~~ a claim form provided by the District's insurance carrier, attached hereto as (Appendix A):

The Chief shall review the damage claim and the proposed repair work. If he/she determines that the damage is the District's responsibility and that the proposed repair work is appropriate, he/she may authorize the work if the cost of the material for the repairs will not exceed \$1,500. A report shall be submitted to the board describing the damage claim, including a description of the manner in which it was resolved.

If the cost of material for repairs is stated by claimant or estimated to exceed \$1,500, the claim will be submitted to the Board of Directors for its consideration. The Board will consider the claim during a closed session for anticipated litigation of a regular or special meeting. Action to accept or reject the claim may be taken in open or closed session. The claimant shall be notified of the Board's action regarding their claim. Notification that a claim has been rejected shall be accompanied by proof of service.

The Board will not consider a claim of an amount in excess of the insurance deductible, including the cost of investigation, without prior written approval of the District's insurance company.

Claims in excess of the District's insurance deductible shall be forwarded to the insurance company, and the claimant shall be advised of this action. Claims for personal injury/wrongful death shall not be investigated by District staff or directors but shall be immediately forwarded to the District's insurance company.

Property (Vehicles and Unsecured Property) Damage Claims

All claims of damage to vehicles or other unsecured property shall be submitted to the ~~Deputy~~ Chief. He/she shall review the damage claim and the requested restitution. If he/she determines that the damage is the District's responsibility, he/she may authorize repairs or reimbursement of expenses to an amount not to exceed \$1,500. A report shall be submitted to the board describing the damage claim, including a description of the manner in which it was resolved.

The claim will be processed as described above if the cost of material for repairs is estimated to not exceed \$1,500.

Property Damage Claims

Except for damage to land and improvements estimated to cost less than \$500, all damage claims must be submitted in writing. This will ensure that a claim is valid and protect important rights of the District.

Commented [CC1]: Is this an appropriate dollar threshold?

Commented [CC2]: Need to determine the District's deductible amount is less than \$1,500.

Commented [CC3]: Need to determine deductible amount for GRSMA. Suggest anything over deductible amount be handled as an insurance claim.

Commented [CC4]: Verify GSRMA deductible amount based on incident type

If an individual does not wish to file a claim on the District form, he/she may present the claim by letter if it conforms to Section 910 and Section 910.2, California Government Code. Section 910 specifies that a claim needs to show all of the following:

- (a) The name and post office address of the claimant.
- (b) The post office address to which the person presenting the claim desires notices to be sent.
- (c) The date, place, and other circumstances of the occurrence or transaction which gave rise to the claim asserted.
- (d) A general description of the indebtedness, obligation, injury, damage or loss incurred so far as it may be known as the time of presentation of the claim.
- (e) The name or names of the public employee or employees causing the injury, damage, or loss, if known.
- (f) The amount claimed if it totals less than ten thousand dollars (\$10,000) as of the date of presentation of the claim, including the estimated amount of any prospective injury, damage, or loss, insofar as it may be known at the time of the presentation of the claim, together with the basis of computation of the amount claimed. If the amount claimed exceeds ten thousand dollars (\$10,000), no dollar amount shall be included in the claim. However, it shall indicate whether the claim would be a limited civil case.

The claim shall be signed by the claimant or by some person on his behalf. Claims against local public entities for supplies, materials, equipment or services need not be signed by the claimant or on his behalf if presented on a billhead or invoice regularly used in the conduct of the business of the claimant.

If the filed letter/claim does not meet the requirements of the California Government Code §910 and §910.2, then a letter shall be sent to the claimant informing them of this fact.

District staff shall provide no assistance to the claimant in filling out the claim form. Claimant must fill out the claim form in its entirety and submit it via mail, FAX, or personal delivery to the District office. Upon receipt, office staff shall date-stamp the document.

BECKWOURTH PEAK

FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT

POLICY TITLE: Expense Authorization

POLICY NUMBER: 2125

2125 Expense Authorization

2125.1 All purchases made for the District by staff shall be authorized by the Fire Chief and shall be in conformance with the approved District budget.

2125.2 Any commitment of District funds for a purchase or expense greater than \$5,000 shall first be submitted to the Board of Directors for approval or shall be in conformance with prior Board action and/or authorizations.

2125.3 Any expense incurred by a member of the Board of Directors must first have expense approval from the Fire Chief or by Board action.

2125.4 A "petty cash" fund shall be maintained in the District office having a balance-on-hand maximum of \$200.00.

a) Petty cash may be advanced to District staff or Directors upon request and the execution of a receipt for the same, for the purpose of procuring item(s) or service(s) appropriately relating to District business. After said item(s) or service(s) has been obtained, a receipt and district reimbursement form for same shall be submitted to the Fire Chief or his/her designee, and any remaining advanced funds shall be returned. The maximum petty cash advance shall be \$50.00.

b) No personal checks shall be cashed in the petty cash fund.

c) The petty cash fund shall be included in the District's annual independent accounting audit.

2125.5 Whenever employees or Directors of the District incur "out-of-pocket" expenses for item(s) or service(s) appropriately relating to District business as verified by valid receipts, said expended cash shall be reimbursed upon request from the District's petty cash fund or by warrant request if needed. The District has established a reimbursement request form and no reimbursement will be made without submission of a request on that form.

2125.6 In those instances when a receipt is not obtainable, the requested reimbursement shall be approved by the Fire Chief before remuneration.

Commented [CC5]: Is this a necessity and if so, is the amount correct?

2125.7 Requests for reimbursement to the District must have a good faith basis. Submission of a request for a reimbursement without such a basis shall subject the requestor to appropriate sanctions, up to and including termination of employment and referral to an appropriate law enforcement agency for prosecution.

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POLICY TITLE: Training, Education and Conferences

POLICY NUMBER: 4125

4125 Training, Education and Conferences

4125.1 Members of the Board of Directors are encouraged to attend educational conferences, seminars, trainings, and professional meetings when the purpose of any such activity is to improve District operation. There is no limit as to the number of Directors attending a particular activity when it is apparent that attendance is beneficial to the District, as long as a majority of the members of a body do not discuss issues related to their local agency's business. Directors shall not attend conference or training events when it is apparent that there is no significant benefit to the District. Directors shall not attend or engage in any tour or journey for pleasure at public expense (e.g. "junkets") or other such events that are not beneficial to the District.

4125.2 It is the policy of the District to encourage Board development and excellence of performance by reimbursing actual expenses incurred for tuition, travel, lodging and meals as a result of training, educational courses, participation with professional organizations, and attendance at local, state and national conferences associated with the interests of the District. Cash advances, use of the District's Petty Cash or use of District credit cards for these purposes is not permitted.

4125.2.1 The Fire Chief shall reimburse Directors for conference tuition and registration expenses, and for per diem expenses. Per diem expenses, when appropriate, shall include meals, lodging, and travel. All expenses for which reimbursement is requested by Directors, or which are billed to the District by Directors, shall be submitted to the Fire Chief, together with validated receipts. All reimbursements shall be made in accordance with applicable State and federal law, including but not limited to Internal Revenue Service Guidelines.

4125.2.2 Attendance by Directors at seminars, workshops, courses, professional organization meetings, and conferences shall be approved by the Board of Directors prior to the District incurring any reimbursable costs.

4125.2.3 Expenses to the District for Board of Directors' training, education, and conferences should be kept to a minimum by utilizing recommendations for transportation and housing accommodations recommended by the Fire Chief and/or Board, and by:

- a) Utilizing hotel(s) recommended by the event sponsor in order to obtain discounted rates.

- b) Directors traveling together whenever feasible and economically beneficial.
- c) Requesting reservations sufficiently in advance, when possible, to obtain discounted air fares and hotel rates.

4125.3 A Director shall not be reimbursed for expenses incurred at any educational conference, seminar, training, or professional meeting event if such an event occurs after the District has announced that Director's pending resignation, or if such event occurs after an election in which it has been determined that the Director will not retain his or her seat on the Board.

4125.4 Upon returning from educational conferences, seminars, trainings, and professional meetings where expenses are reimbursed by the District, Directors will either prepare a written or verbal report for presentation at the next regular meeting of the Board. Said report shall detail what was learned at the session(s) that will be of benefit to the District. Materials from the session(s) may be delivered to the District office to be included in the District library for the future use of other Directors and staff.