

City of Surprise
Public Safety Personnel Retirement System
Local Fire Board Rules
Adopted Pursuant to A.R.S. § 38-847(F)

A. Definitions

1. "A.R.S." means Arizona Revised Statutes.
2. "Administrator" means the Administrator of the Plan (including any persons authorized by the Administrator to act for the Administrator) acting for the benefit of the Board of Trustees as more particularly described in A.R.S. §38-848(L).
3. "Board of Trustees" has the meaning ascribed to that term in A.R.S. §38-842(8).
4. "Claim" means any request for relief under the Plan involving all questions of eligibility and service credits, which is properly before a Local Fire Board for Decision, pursuant to A.R.S. § 38-847(D).
5. "Claimant" has the meaning ascribed to that term in A.R.S. § 38-842(11).
6. "Decision" means (i) a separate written document setting forth the Local Fire Board's action resolving a Claim; or (ii) any orders issued by a Local Fire Board relating to a Claim, including orders denying a request for Rehearing or further relief. As required by A.R.S. §38-847(G), a Decision shall contain, at a minimum, (a) the name of the member affected by the Local Fire Board's action; (b) a description of the action taken; and (c) an explanation of the reasons supporting the Local Fire Board's action.
7. "Decision on Rehearing" means a Decision issued by the Local Fire Board after a Rehearing.
8. "Employee" has the meaning ascribed to that term in A.R.S. §38-842 (27).
9. "Employer" has the meaning ascribed to that term in A.R.S. § 38-842(28) and means the City of Surprise, Arizona.
10. "Hearing" means the Local Fire Board's initial public Meeting concerning a Claim, which is conducted in accordance with the Open Meeting Law and these Rules.
11. "Initial Decision" means the first Decision on a Claim issued by the Local Fire Board.
12. "Local Fire Board" means the public body described in A.R.S. §38-847.

13. "Meeting" is a gathering of a quorum of the Local Fire Board to conduct business and to hold Hearings and/or Rehearings, which is conducted in accordance with the Open Meeting Law and these Rules.
14. "Member" has the meaning ascribed to that term in A.R.S. §38-842(31).
15. "Minutes" means the written official record of the proceedings, including the testimony of witnesses.
16. "Non-Routine Claim" means any Claim that is not a Routine Claim, including, but not limited to, Claims for the following: (i) a "killed in the line of duty" survivor pension; (ii) an accidental disability pension; (iii) a catastrophic disability pension; (iv) an ordinary disability pension; (v) a temporary disability pension; or (vi) determinations for plan membership concerning whether the Employee is or was regularly assigned to hazardous duty.
17. "Notice" means a written Notice of Hearing or Rehearing, as applicable, which includes, at minimum: (i) a statement of the time, place and nature of the Hearing or Rehearing; (ii) a statement of the legal authority and jurisdiction under which the Local Fire Board will be conducting the Hearing or Rehearing; (iii) a reference to the particular section(s) of the Arizona Revised Statutes (and/or any other applicable rules) involved in the particular matter presented for Decision; and (iv) a short and plain statement of the matters asserted by the Claimant or issues to be considered at the Hearing or Rehearing.
18. "Open Meeting Law" is that body of laws described in Title 38, Ch. 3, Article 3.1 of the Arizona Revised Statutes, which requires public bodies, such as the Local Fire Board, to hold its meetings and conduct its activities in public, except in those limited circumstances described in A.R.S. §38-431.03.
19. "Party or Parties" means the Claimant, Local Fire Board and Board of Trustees.
20. "Plan" means the Public Safety Personnel Retirement System, as described in A.R.S. §38-841 *et seq.*
21. "Pre-Membership Physical" means a medical examination of an Employee before the Employee joins the Plan, for the purpose of identifying physical or mental conditions or injuries, which existed or occurred prior to the Employee's date of membership in the Plan, pursuant to A.R.S. §38-859(A)(1).
22. "Presiding Officer" means the Chair, Vice-Chair, in the absence of the Chair,

or Acting Chair of the Local Fire Board, who presides over any Meeting, Hearing or Rehearing.

23. "Rehearing" means a public Meeting before the Local Fire Board that is conducted in accordance with the Open Meeting Law and these Rules, to consider a Claimant's

or the Board of Trustee's request that the Local Board reconsider its Initial Decision, as provided by A.R.S. §38-847(H).

24. "Routine Claim" means a Claim for any of the following: (i) a normal retirement pension; (ii) an early retirement pension; (iii) a normal survivor pension; (iv) a determination of eligibility for Plan membership other than that involving whether the Employee is or was regularly assigned to hazardous duty; (v) a survivor's pension that is not a "killed in the line of duty" survivor's pension; (vi) request for service credit; and (vii) initiation or termination of Deferred Retirement Option Plan participation.
25. "Secretary" means the person so designated and elected pursuant to A.R.S. §38- 847(M), who is charged with keeping a record and preparing agendas, Minutes and Decisions of all Hearings and Rehearings of the Local Fire Board. The Board Secretary has the authority to accept service of process for the Local Fire Board.
26. "Subcommittee" or "Working Subcommittee" means a group of no more than two Local Fire Board members appointed by the Board Chair to undertake Local Fire Board business.

B. Purpose and Scope of Procedures

1. Board Responsibility. Pursuant to A.R.S. §38-847(D), the Local Fire Board is responsible for deciding all questions of eligibility and service credits, and determining the amount, manner and time of payment of any benefits under the Plan. The Board of Trustees cannot pay any benefits under the Plan without the direction and approval of the Local Fire Board.
2. Scope. These Rules govern all Claims before the Local Fire Board for Decision, effective for any Claims brought, and any Hearing and Rehearing held, after the effective date of adoption of these rules by the Local Fire Board.
3. Conflict. These Rules are authorized by A.R.S. §38-847(F) and supplement all authority of the Local Fire Board specified in that statute. Should any of these Rules conflict with any provision of A.R.S. §38-847 or any other Arizona law, the provisions of Arizona law shall control. If PSPRS promulgates revised Model Rules for Local Boards and a conflict exists with these Rules, the revised Model Rules shall prevail.

4. Amendment. These Rules may be amended by a majority vote of the Fire Board at a public meeting.

C. Composition of the Board and Conduct of Meetings

1. Composition. The membership of the Local Fire Board is set forth in A.R.S. § 38-847(A). Pursuant to statute, the Local Fire Board is composed of the Mayor of the City of Surprise or his/her designee, two members elected by secret ballot by members of the Department, and two citizens who are appointed by the Mayor of Surprise with approval of the City Council. In the event of a tied election during the secret ballot election process, there will be subsequent elections until there is a winner.
2. Chair. The Mayor or Mayor's designee shall serve as Chair of the Board. The Board may elect a Vice Chairperson to serve in the absence of the Chairperson. In the absence of the Chairperson or Vice Chairperson, an acting Chairperson will be elected by a majority vote of the Local Fire Board.
3. Secretary. Pursuant to A.R.S. § 38-847(M), the Local Fire Board shall designate a Secretary who may, but need not, be a member of the Local Fire Board. If a vacancy occurs for the Secretary, the Local Fire Board shall designate a new Secretary at the next Local Fire Board meeting after the vacancy occurs. The Secretary shall regularly participate in training provided by the Arizona Public Safety Personnel Retirement System.
4. Quorum. A quorum for the purpose of doing any business by the Local Fire Board will be three (3) members. The Fire Board requires at least one (1) of the employee members of the Fire Department to be present to have a quorum.
5. Agendas. Any item may be placed on the agenda with the consent of two members of the Local Fire Board. Any agenda items must be received by the Board Secretary no later than five (5) business days prior to the meeting in order to be placed on the agenda so in order to meet administrative deadlines for the City Clerk's Office.
6. Meetings, Minutes and Decisions. Meetings are generally held at 10:00 a.m. on the second Wednesday of the month but can be held at any time upon the call of the Chair, any two members of the Local Fire Board, or the Secretary of the Local Fire Board, with appropriate notice to the members of the Local Fire Board and the public. The Local Fire Board shall meet at least twice a year.
 - a. Meetings are generally held at 16000 N. Civic Center Plaza, Surprise Arizona 85374, in the Council Overflow Room.
 - b. The Secretary shall provide an agenda to the Local Fire Board members in advance of any Meeting, describing the business to be addressed at

such Meeting. The content of the agenda shall comply with the Open Meeting Law.

- c. Notice of all Meetings of the Local Fire Board shall be given, and all Meetings and any executive sessions shall be conducted in conformance with the Open Meeting Law.
 - d. Provided the quorum is present, a majority vote of Local Fire Board members present and eligible to vote shall govern any action taken.
 - e. Local Fire Board members not present in person may attend by telephone or other electronic means permitting meaningful participation in accordance with the Open Meeting Law.
 - f. The Secretary shall cause appropriate Minutes to be taken of Local Fire Board Meetings, and an electronic recording may be made of Meetings to facilitate preparation of such Minutes.
 - g. The electronic recording shall be maintained in accordance with the City of Surprise's record retention schedule.
 - h. The Secretary shall forward to the Board of Trustees (in care of the Administrator) a copy of each Local Fire Board meeting minutes which include the Decision(s) on a Claim no later than twenty (20) business days after the Local Fire Board takes action on such Claim, pursuant to A.R.S. § 38- 847(G). Decisions shall be sent by certified mail to the Administrator as required by A.R.S. § 38-847(H)(2). As required by A.R.S. § 38-847(G), a Decision shall contain, at minimum: (i) the name of the member affected by the Local Fire Board's action; (ii) a description of the action taken; and (iii) an explanation of the reasons supporting the Local Fire Board's action, and (iv) all documents submitted to the Local Fire Board for the action taken including the reports of a medical board.
 - i. The Secretary shall forward all other Minutes to the Board of Trustees, in care of the Administrator, within twenty (20) days after each Local Fire Board Meeting, and forward all necessary communications to the Board of Trustees, in care of the Administrator, pursuant to A.R.S. § 38-847(M).
 - j. Unless the Claimant is present at a Meeting at which the Local Fire Board announces its Decision on a Claim, at the same time that the Secretary forwards the Decision to the Administrator, the Secretary shall forward the Local Fire Board's Decision to the Claimant via certified mail, pursuant to A.R.S. §38-847(H)(1).
7. Documentation. In a location separate from any Personnel or Department files, the Local Fire Board Secretary shall maintain files for each Claimant, containing public and confidential documents presented to the Local Fire

Board.

8. Parliamentary Procedure. In matters of procedure not covered by law or these rules and where no conflict exists, the Local Fire Board shall be guided by Robert's Rules of Order.
9. Independent Legal Counsel. In accordance with A.R.S. § 38-847(N), the Local Fire Board shall be represented by independent legal counsel who shall be independent of the City of Surprise and any employee organization or member. Independent legal counsel shall be selected independently by the Local Fire Board in accordance with Local Surprise Ordinance 2019-34. Independent legal counsel for the Local Fire Board shall be paid by the City of Surprise.

D. **Pre-Membership Physical**

1. Examination. Pursuant to A.R.S. §38-859(A)(l), the Local Fire Board shall contract with a physician or clinic to conduct a Pre-Membership Physical of Employees, for the purpose of identifying physical or mental conditions or injuries, which existed or occurred prior to an Employee's date of membership in the Plan. The physician or clinic conducting a Pre-Membership Physical may be the regular employee or contractee of the City of Surprise.
2. Appointment. The City of Surprise, or the Secretary shall coordinate appointments for the Employee's Pre-Membership Physical.
3. Report. The physician or clinic retained to conduct an Employee's Pre-Membership Physical shall provide a written report of the results of the Pre-Membership Physical to the Secretary within 10 days after the examination. The Secretary shall file the report as a permanent record, as required by A.R.S. §38- 859(E).
4. No Pre-Existing Condition. If the physician or clinic's report on an Employee with respect to his pre-membership condition concludes that the Employee has no pre-existing condition, the Secretary shall file the report as a permanent record, as required by A.R.S. §38-859(E) and the employee will receive a copy of his or her pre-employment physical.
5. Finding of Pre-Existing Condition. If the physician or clinic's report on an Employee with respect to his pre-membership condition concludes that the Employee has a pre-existing condition:
 - a. The Secretary shall notify the Employee by certified mail that the physician or clinic has reported that the Employee has a pre-existing condition. The Employee shall have 30 days to submit additional documentation or comments to the Secretary before the physician or clinic's report is placed on an agenda for the Local Fire Board's consideration.

- b. Reports concerning an Employee's pre-existing condition shall be placed on the Meeting agenda for recognition by the Local Fire Board.
- c. The Secretary shall provide the Local Fire Board with any additional documentation or comments submitted by an Employee regarding a physician or clinic's conclusion that an Employee has a pre-existing condition.
- d. The Local Fire Board shall review the physician or clinic's report and any additional documentation submitted by the Employee at a Meeting. After review of the relevant documents, the Local Fire Board will take any action the Local Fire Board deems necessary and appropriate.
- e. The Secretary shall file all reports concerning an Employee's pre-existing condition(s) as a permanent record, as required by A.R.S. §38-859(E), along with any additional documentation and comments provided by the Employee, and appropriate records of any actions or determinations by the Local Fire Board with respect to the same. In the event a Member whose Pre- Membership Physical revealed a pre-existing condition applies for an accidental, catastrophic, ordinary, or temporary disability pension, all such documentation related to the Member's pre-existing condition will be presented to the Local Fire Board. If the Local Fire Board determines that a Member's disability resulted from a physical or mental condition or injury, which existed or occurred prior to the Member's date of membership in the Plan, the Member shall not qualify for an accidental, catastrophic, ordinary, or temporary disability pension.

E. **Initial Decision**

1. **Submitting Claims.** A Claimant may request that the Local Fire Board issue an Initial Decision by presenting an application for benefits or service credit to the Secretary, using the prescribed Plan forms.
2. **Content of Claims.** If desired, a Claimant may supplement the application for benefits or service credit by submitting a letter to the Secretary. In order for any supplemental letter to be considered by the Local Fire Board, such letter shall set forth: (i) the name and address of the Claimant; (ii) the name and address of the Claimant's attorney, if applicable; (iii) a brief statement of the facts forming the basis of the Claim, including any evidence relevant to the Local Fire Board's Decision on the Claim; and (iv) the precise relief sought by the Claimant from the Local Fire Board.
3. **Routine Claims; Consent Agenda.** A Local Fire Board may authorize its Secretary to determine whether a Claim is to be treated by the Local Fire Board as Routine or as Non-Routine, and to present Routine Claims as a

"Consent Agenda" item. Ordinarily, the Secretary does not provide Notice of a Hearing to Claimants for Routine Claims on the Consent Agenda, because the Local Fire Board generally approves Consent Agenda items summarily. If a Routine Claim on the Consent Agenda warrants discussion by the Local Fire Board, the Claim may be deferred to a future Hearing in order to provide Notice to the Claimant.

4. Non-Routine Claims. All Non-Routine Claims are subject to this Section E concerning an Initial Decision. However, more detailed procedures for certain Non-Routine Claims, specifically disability benefit applications and reexamination of disability recipients, are set forth in Sections F and G of these Rules. Other Non-Routine Claims shall be placed on the agenda for consideration by the Local Fire Board, after appropriate Notice to the Claimant.
5. Deadline for Scheduling a Hearing on Routine and Non-Routine Claims.
 - a. Hearings are held at Meetings as provided by Section C (5) of these Rules.
 - b. Unless the Claimant and all other parties to the Claim otherwise agree, the Local Fire Board shall commence a Hearing on a Routine or Non-Routine Claim within ninety (90) days of its receipt of a Claim, pursuant to A.R.S. §38- 847(D)(3).
 - c. If the Local Fire Board does not commence a Hearing on a Claim within ninety (90) days of its receipt of the Claim:
 - i. The Claimant shall notify the Administrator and Secretary by letter sent by certified mail that the Local Fire Board has failed to convene a Hearing within ninety (90) days of the filing of a Claim.
 - ii. As provided by A.R.S. §38-847(D)(3), the relief demanded by the Claimant is deemed granted and approved by the Local Fire Board. The granting and approval of this relief is considered final and binding unless a timely request for Rehearing or appeal is made, or unless the Board of Trustees determines that granting the relief requested would violate the Internal Revenue Code or threaten to impair the Plan's status as a qualified plan under the Internal Revenue Code. If the Board of Trustees determines that granting the requested relief would violate the Internal Revenue Code or threaten to impair the Plan's status as a qualified plan, the Board of Trustees may refuse to grant the relief by issuing a written determination, sent certified mail to the Local Fire Board and the Claimant. The written determination issued by the Board of Trustees is

subject to judicial review pursuant to Title 12, Chap. 7, Article 6.

- iii. As provided in A.R.S. §38-847(H), the Board of Trustees may request a Rehearing within sixty (60) days after receiving notice from the Claimant by letter sent by certified mail that the Local Fire Board has failed to convene a Hearing within ninety (90) days of the filing of a Claim. However, if the relief deemed granted and approved by the Local Fire Board violates the Internal Revenue Code or threatens to jeopardize the Plan's status as a qualified plan under the Internal Revenue Code, no limitation period for the Board of Trustees to seek a Rehearing applies.

6. Issuance of Decision. When a Hearing is held within the deadlines set forth in Section E(5) of these Rules, the Secretary shall forward the Decision, Minutes and other necessary communications, as provided in Section C(5)(f)-(j) of these Rules.
7. Finality of Decision. Pursuant to A.R.S. §38-847, any Decision that is not inconsistent with the provisions of the Plan and the Internal Revenue Code shall be final, conclusive and binding on the Claimant and the Plan, unless a timely application for a rehearing is filed as provided in Section H of these Rules, or an appeal is filed. However, the Board of Trustees may not implement and comply with any Decision that does not comply with the Internal Revenue Code or that threatens to jeopardize the Plan's status as a qualified plan under the Internal Revenue Code, and under such circumstances, no limitation period for the Board of Trustees to seek a rehearing of a Decision applies. A final decision may be appealed to Maricopa County Superior Court for the State of Arizona within the periods specified in, and the manner provided by Arizona Revised Statutes A.R.S. §12-901 *et seq.* and the rules adopted by the Maricopa County Superior and Appellate Courts of the State of Arizona.

F. **Disability Benefit Applications**

1. Disability Application. Upon presentation of a properly completed application for any of the disability pensions authorized by law, the Secretary will determine whether the Claimant has provided complete documentation supporting the Claim referenced in the application. If the information is incomplete, the Secretary shall request that the Claimant provide additional documentation and may assist the Claimant in identifying deficiencies or incomplete items in the application. The Secretary shall also obtain from the City of Surprise any documentation contained in workers' compensation records. A confidential packet of medical information on the Claimant shall be prepared for distribution to Local Fire Board members. When the Claimant's application

is complete, the Claim shall be placed, as a separate item, on the agenda for a Meeting, pursuant to Section E(5) of these Rules.

2. Initial Hearing. At the initial Hearing on a Claim for disability benefits, the Local Fire Board will determine whether the medical and other documentation submitted is sufficient for the Local Fire Board to conclude that the statutory prerequisites are satisfied by the Claimant. If the statutory prerequisites are satisfied, pursuant to A.R.S. §38-859(A), the Local Fire Board shall direct that a medical board be appointed to conduct an examination of the Claimant and to report to the Local Fire Board the results of that examination. If the statutory prerequisites are not satisfied, the Local Fire Board may deny the Claim based on a lack of evidence, either medical or otherwise, such as the Claimant's continued work status or the Claimant's performance of a reasonable range of duties. In the alternative, the Local Fire Board may continue the Hearing on the matter to a date and time when any additional documentation requested by the Board is available.
3. Independent Medical Board. Pursuant to A.R.S. §38-859(B), medical boards appointed pursuant to A.R.S. §38-859(A)(2)-(5) shall be composed of a designated physician or a clinic other than a regular employee or contractee of the City of Surprise.
4. Mental Examinations. In the event of a psychological disability application, the medical board will consist of a doctor of medicine who is a psychiatrist or has a specialty in psychiatry. The psychiatrist shall issue a report containing his/her conclusions to the Local Fire Board.
5. Prompt Hearing. If a medical board is appointed, the Secretary shall reconvene the Hearing at the first feasible Meeting after the Local Fire Board members' receipt of the medical board's report, unless the Claimant requests in writing otherwise.
6. Disability Findings. Pursuant to A.R.S. §38-859(C), a finding of disability shall be based on medical evidence provided by the medical board appointed by the Local Fire Board. The Local Fire Board shall resolve material conflicts in the medical evidence. If required, the Local Fire Board may employ other physicians or clinics to report on special cases. With the approval of the Local Fire Board, a physician or clinic employed by the Local Fire Board may employ occupational specialists to assist the physician or clinic in rendering an opinion.
7. Approval of Disability Claim. If a Claim for disability benefits is approved by the Local Fire Board, the Secretary will obtain Employer certification of the Claimant's employment termination date and indicate the determination of the Board on the disability pension on proscribed Plan forms. If the Board Secretary cannot obtain certification of the termination of the Claimant's

employment within forty-five (45) days after the Local Fire Board's approval, the Claimant's application for disability benefits will be considered withdrawn. Until such time as the Claimant has terminated employment with the City of Surprise, the Local Fire Board shall not consider any further Claim by the Claimant for disability benefits.

8. Denial of Disability Claim. If a Claim for disability benefits is denied by the Local Fire Board, and the Claimant is not present at the Meeting, the Secretary will notify the Claimant in writing by certified mail of the Decision of the Board, the reasons for the Decision, and the Claimant's rights to a Rehearing.

G. Reexamination of Disability Recipients

1. Catastrophic Disability Benefits Pursuant to A.R.S. § 38-844(F)
 - a. Sixty (60) months after approval of a Catastrophic Disability, the Local Fire Board must undertake a re-evaluation of a Member receiving catastrophic disability benefits to determine whether the Member remains qualified for such benefits, as specified in A.R.S. §38-844(F).
 - b. After the initial sixty (60) month review, the Local Fire Board is empowered to undertake an annual reevaluation of Members receiving catastrophic disability benefits, who, had they remained in employment, would not have attained 25 years of service.
 - c. On an on-going basis, the Secretary will prepare a list of Members receiving catastrophic disability benefits who may be required to undergo an annual reevaluation pursuant to Section G(1)(b) of these Rules.
 - d. At the direction of the Chair, a Subcommittee of the two elected members of the Local Fire Board shall review the list of Members prepared pursuant to Section G(1)(c), and report the Subcommittee's recommendations regarding medical reevaluation of such Members to the Local Fire Board.
 - e. The Secretary shall place the issue of re-examination of a Member receiving catastrophic disability benefits on an appropriate Meeting agenda as a separate item.
2. Accidental and Ordinary Disability Benefits Pursuant to A.R.S. § 38-844(E).
 - a. In its discretion, the Local Fire Board may require Members receiving accidental or ordinary disability benefits to undergo an annual medical examination to determine whether they are still disabled and

therefore, qualified for continued disability benefits.

- b. On an on-going basis, the Secretary will prepare a list of Members receiving accidental and ordinary disability benefits who may be required to undergo an annual medical reevaluation pursuant to Section G(2)(a) of these Rules.
 - c. At the direction of the Chair, a Subcommittee of the two elected Members of the Local Fire Board shall review the list of Members prepared pursuant to Section G(2)(b), and report the Subcommittee's recommendations regarding medical reevaluation of such Members to the Local Fire Board.
3. Medical Boards Appointed Pursuant to A.R.S. § 38-859.
- a. The Local Fire Board shall appoint a medical board to examine any Member required to obtain, or selected for, reevaluation pursuant to Sections G(1), (2) of these Rules. If the Member refuses to submit to the medical board reevaluation, the Member's disability shall be considered to have ceased and the Member's disability pension terminated.
 - b. A formal report of the medical board on the results of the reevaluations referenced in Section G(3)(a) above shall be submitted to the Local Fire Board. The Local Fire Board shall review any such report at the first scheduled Meeting after receipt of the report, and shall take any action warranted, as permitted by the relevant statutes.

H. Rehearings

1. Application for Rehearing.
 - a. A Claimant's application for Rehearing must be filed within sixty (60) days after the Claimant receives notification of the Initial Decision by certified mail, by attending the Meeting at which the Initial Decision is rendered, or by receiving benefits from the Plan pursuant to the Initial Decision, whichever occurs first.
 - b. The Board of Trustees's application for Rehearing must be filed within sixty (60) days after the Board of Trustees receives a copy of the Initial Decision by certified mail.
2. Rehearings Granted. The Local Fire Board will conduct a Rehearing of any matter upon proper and timely application by a Claimant or the Board of Trustees, pursuant to A.R.S. §38-847(H).

3. Preparation of Preliminary Record. Upon receipt of a proper and timely application for Rehearing, the Secretary shall prepare a packet consisting of all documents and other tangible items of evidence made available to the Local Fire Board with respect to the underlying issues. The Secretary may obtain a written transcript of any previous proceedings of the Local Fire Board in connection with the matter, for inclusion in such packet. The Rehearing packet shall be made available to Local Fire Board members and shall be provided to all Parties to the Rehearing. This packet of materials shall constitute the preliminary record for the Rehearing.
4. Scheduling of Rehearing. When the preliminary record is complete, the Secretary will schedule the Rehearing for the next scheduled Meeting or for such other date and time as may be determined but no later than 90 (ninety) days after receipt of either the Claimant's or the Board of Trustees' application/request for Rehearing. Rehearings are not subject to the time limitations set forth in Section E(5) of these Rules.
5. Local Fire Board Action on Rehearing. At or after the conclusion of the Rehearing, the Local Fire Board may vote to uphold, rescind or modify its Initial Decision.
6. Issuance of Decision on Rehearing. When a Rehearing is held, the Secretary shall forward the Decision on Rehearing, Minutes of Rehearing and other necessary communications, as provided in Section C(5)(f)-(j) of these Rules.
7. Finality. Pursuant to A.R.S. §38-847, any Decision on Rehearing that is not inconsistent with the provisions of the Plan and the Internal Revenue Code shall be final, conclusive and binding on the Claimant and the Plan, unless a timely appeal is filed. However, the Board of Trustees may not implement and comply with any Decision on Rehearing that does not comply with the Internal Revenue Code or that threatens to jeopardize the Plan's status as a qualified plan under the Internal Revenue Code. A final Decision on Rehearing may be appealed to the Maricopa County Superior Court for the State of Arizona within the periods specified in, and the manner provided by Arizona Revised Statutes A.R.S. §12-901 *et seq.* and the rules adopted by the Maricopa County Superior and Appellate Courts of the State of Arizona.

I. General Provisions Applicable to All Hearings and Rehearings

1. Review of Medical Records. The Local Fire Board shall review and discuss any confidential medical records in executive session only, unless the Claimant or Member waives the confidentiality requirement with respect to any confidential medical records by completing a confidentiality waiver.
2. Exclusion of Evidence. The Presiding Officer may preclude the presentation of argumentative, repetitious or irrelevant facts or questioning in any

proceeding on a Claim.

3. Informal Proceedings. All Hearings and Rehearings shall be conducted in an informal manner and without adherence to the rules of procedure or evidence required in judicial proceedings. The manner of conducting the Hearing or Rehearing, rulings on evidentiary or procedural objections, and the failure to adhere to rules of procedure or evidence required in judicial proceedings shall not be grounds for reversing a Decision of the Local Fire Board, provided substantial evidence supports such order or Decision.
4. Notice of the Truth of Widely-Known and Accepted Facts. The Presiding Officer may take notice of the truth of certain widely known and accepted facts, including generally recognized technical, statistical, actuarial or scientific facts within the Local Fire Board's specialized knowledge. Parties shall be notified, either before or during the Hearing or Rehearing, of any widely known and generally accepted facts noticed as true, including any staff memoranda or data. Parties shall be afforded an opportunity to contest any material so noticed. The Local Fire Board's experience, technical competence and specialized knowledge may be utilized in its evaluation of all evidence. The Local Fire Board shall be entitled to consider and rely on as true information furnished by the Employer, Administrator, the Local Fire Board's independent legal counsel or the Plan's actuary.
5. Failure to Appear at Hearing. In the event a Claimant (and the Claimant's counsel, if any) fails to appear at a duly noticed Hearing or Rehearing, in its discretion, the Local Fire Board may enter a Decision by default or vacate the Hearing or Rehearing. If a witness fails to appear at a duly noticed Hearing or Rehearing, in his discretion, the Presiding Officer may exclude the witness' testimony or reschedule the Hearing or Rehearing.
6. Limitation of Issues. All Hearings and Rehearings shall be limited to matters referenced in the Claim and any request for Rehearing filed by any Party.
7. Record of Proceedings. All Hearings and Rehearings shall be recorded by electronic means and at the Local Fire Board's expense. A copy of the recorded Hearing or Rehearing will be provided to the Claimant and all other interested Parties upon request. Parties are responsible for obtaining their own transcription of a recorded Hearing or Rehearing, although a Local Fire Board may provide such a transcription in its discretion. In addition to any electronic recording of the proceedings, the Local Fire Board shall include all relevant written records as part of the official record of the Hearing or Rehearing.
8. Evidence on Claims. The Claimant and Administrator shall be afforded equal time to state their positions.
9. Subpoenas and Depositions. To facilitate the collection and presentation of

evidence with respect to any matter before the Local Fire Board, the Presiding Officer may authorize subpoenas and depositions of witnesses.

10. Consultation among Members. The Presiding Officer may consult on the record with the other members of the Local Fire Board. The Local Fire Board may consult in executive session with the Local Fire Board's legal counsel so long as all requirements of the Open Meeting Law are satisfied. The Local Fire Board may also go into executive session for any lawful reason, including the need to preserve the confidentiality of medical information. However, all Decisions of the Local Fire Board shall be made in open, public session of the Local Fire Board.
11. Submission of Evidence. The Claimant must submit to the Secretary within ten (10) working days of the Hearing or Rehearing any documents the Claimant wishes to introduce into the record, including doctor reports and other written evidence. Documents received by the Secretary less than ten (10) working days before a Hearing or Rehearing may cause a delay in the Hearing or Rehearing. Information and documents presented on the date of the Hearing or Rehearing will be reason for the Presiding Officer to call for a motion to continue the Hearing or Rehearing to a later date.
12. Bifurcation of Issues/Hearing. In connection with any Claim, the Presiding Officer is empowered to bifurcate (*i.e.*, separate into two or more) issues presented to the Local Fire Board for resolution, or set multiple Hearings or Rehearings in a single case.
13. Public Participation. The Open Meeting Law governs public participation in Hearings and Rehearings.
14. No Rehearing on Remand. A Hearing before the Local Fire Board on a matter remanded from the Maricopa County Superior Court is not subject to a Rehearing before the Local Fire Board. However, the Local Fire Board may consider new evidence or review items remanded by the Maricopa County Superior Court.

The undersigned Chair and Secretary of the City of Surprise Local Fire Board certify that the foregoing Rules were duly adopted by the Board at a meeting duly called and held on the date specified below.


Chair

05/12/2021
Dated


Secretary

05/12/2021
Dated