



## MIAMI-DADE FIRE RESCUE DEPARTMENT

## PROCEDURES FOR

**PROVISION OF PRIVATE FIREWATCH****Definition:**

A firewatch is the action of an on-site person or persons whose **sole** responsibility is to watch for the occurrence of fire.

**Firewatch Requirements:**

Pursuant to NFPA 101, a firewatch may be required for any of the following reasons:

- Fire alarm system fully or partially out of service,
- Sprinkler system fully or partially out of service,
- Fire pump fully or partially out of service,
- Special hazards,
- Other conditions as required by the Fire Department.

If any of these conditions occur and cannot be corrected within four hours, the building owner, or their representative, is required by the Florida Fire Prevention Code to either vacate the building or provide a firewatch until the system is repaired or the hazard mitigated.

**Owner/Representative Responsibilities:**

1. Establish, instruct and maintain firewatch personnel.
2. Notify the Fire Department that the system is out of service and again when the system is placed back in service.
3. **Contact a licensed contractor to repair/replace/upgrade the system in accordance to the applicable code, pull all permits and submit plans as may be required.**
4. Personnel who are to conduct the firewatch are to be hired by the building owner or their representative. Personnel must be State (D) or County (D) licensed security guards unless otherwise directed or approved by the Fire Department.

**Firewatch Duties:**

Persons serving as a firewatch **cannot** have any other duties except the firewatch. Firewatch duties will be consistent with NFPA 601 and include the following:

1. Conduct patrols of the affected areas every 30 minutes.
2. Identify any fire, signs of fire, life or property hazards.
3. The firewatch must have at least one means of direct communication with the Fire Department. (a cell phone is acceptable)
4. If a fire is discovered the firewatch must notify the Fire Department immediately by calling 9-1-1 and give the exact address and location of the fire.



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5. Notify occupants of the need to evacuate. If the fire alarm horns or public address system are still functional, use them to notify occupants.
6. Have knowledge of the location and use of fire protection equipment, such as fire extinguishers and occupant hose lines. (the firewatch will not perform fire-fighting duties beyond the scope of ordinary citizens)
7. Maintain a logbook of the firewatch activity.

### Frequency of Patrols:

Firewatch personnel shall patrol the entire area every 30 minutes. In large buildings, additional firewatch personnel shall be assigned in order to achieve the required frequency. In high-rise buildings, a minimum of one firewatch person is required for every 5-7 floors.

### Record Keeping:

A firewatch logbook must be maintained at the building. The logbook must be available to the Fire Department at all times during the firewatch. The logbook should contain the following information:

1. Address of the building.
2. Date and time of each patrol through the affected area(s).
3. Name of person(s) conducting the firewatch.
4. Records of communications with the Fire Department and licensed contractor doing the repairs.
5. Other information as required by the Fire Department.

It is the responsibility of the owner, or their representative, to contact the Fire Marshal's office once the fire protection systems are repaired or the hazard has been mitigated. After the Fire Inspector has confirmed that the system(s) requiring the firewatch is fully operational, the firewatch requirement will be cancelled. The Fire Prevention Division can be reached at 786-331-4800 from 7:30 am to 5:00 pm Monday–Friday (except for Holidays).

### SAMPLE LOGBOOK ENTRIES

| Time    | Watch Person | Notes                                      |
|---------|--------------|--|
| 3:00 am | John Doe     | Started watch                              |
| 3:00 am | Jane Doe     | Started watch                              |
| 3:30 am | John Doe     | Completed tour of floors 1-5, no problems  |
| 3:30 am | Jane Doe     | Completed tour of floors 6-10, no problems |
| 3:45 am | John Doe     | ABC Alarm Repair Company on scene          |
| 4:00 am | Jane Doe     | Completed tour of floors 1-5, no problems  |



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### **Fire Department Responsibilities:**

1. Provide the building owner/representative with the required firewatch procedures.
2. Provide the building owner/representative with copies of pertinent codes.
3. **Periodically monitor the building under firewatch to assure adherence to requirements of the firewatch. If, at any time, the Fire Department finds that the firewatch is not being conducted as required to satisfy the life safety needs; the Fire Department may revoke the building owner/representative's option for private firewatch and institute firewatch by Fire Department personnel at the building owner/representative's expense.**

## NFPA

**NFPA-1 10.3.1** No new construction or existing building shall be occupied in whole or in part in violation of the provisions of this *Code*.

**NFPA 1: 13.1.9** Where a fire protection system is out of service for more than 4 hours in a 24-hour period, the AHJ shall be permitted to require the building to be evacuated or an approved fire watch to be provided for all portions left unprotected by the fire protection system shutdown until the fire protection system has been returned to service.

## Chapter 633 Florida Statutes

**633.228** Violations; orders to cease and desist, correct hazardous conditions, preclude occupancy, or vacate; enforcement; penalties.--

(1) If it is determined by the department that a violation specified in this subsection exists, the State Fire Marshal or her or his deputy may issue and deliver to the person committing the violation an order to cease and desist from such violation, to correct any hazardous condition, to preclude occupancy of the affected building or structure, or to vacate the premises of the affected building or structure. Such violations are:

(a) Except as set forth in paragraph (b), a violation of any provision of this chapter, of any rule adopted pursuant thereto, of any applicable uniform firesafety standard adopted pursuant to s. 633.206 which is not adequately addressed by any alternative requirements adopted on a local level, or of any minimum firesafety standard adopted pursuant to s. 394.879.

(b) A substantial violation of an applicable minimum firesafety standard adopted pursuant to s. 633.208 which is not reasonably addressed by any alternative requirement imposed at the local level, or an unreasonable interpretation of an applicable minimum firesafety standard, and which violation or interpretation clearly constitutes a danger to lifesafety.

(c) A building or structure which is in a dilapidated condition and as a result thereof creates a danger to life, safety, or property.

(d) A building or structure which contains explosive matter or flammable liquids or gases constituting a danger to life, safety, or property.

(2)(a) If, during the conduct of a firesafety inspection authorized by ss. 633.216 and 633.218, it is determined that a violation described in this section exists which poses an immediate danger to the public health, safety, or welfare, the State Fire Marshal may issue an order to vacate the building in question, which order shall be immediately effective and shall be an immediate final order under s. 120.569(2)(n). With respect to a facility under the jurisdiction of a district school board or community college board of trustees, the order to vacate shall be issued jointly by the district superintendent or college president and the State Fire Marshal.

(b) The State Fire Marshal may seek an injunction in the circuit court of the county in which the building is located to enforce an order issued pursuant to this subsection.

(3) Any person who violates or fails to comply with any order under subsection (1) or subsection (2) is guilty of a misdemeanor, punishable as provided in s. 633.124.

**633.124** Penalty for violation of law, rule, or order to cease and desist or for failure to comply with corrective order.--

(1) Any person who violates any provision of this law, any order or rule of the State Fire Marshal, or any order to cease and desist or to correct conditions issued under this chapter commits a misdemeanor of the second degree, punishable as provided in s. 775.082 or s. 775.083.



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**PROVISION OF PRIVATE FIREWATCH**THIS FORM IS TO BE FILLED IN BY THE OWNER/REPRESENTATIVE  
(PLEASE PRINT)**ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF PROCEDURES  
AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

Occupancy Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Occupancy Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Occupancy Owner/Representative: \_\_\_\_\_

Occupancy Owner/Representative Address: \_\_\_\_\_

In accordance with the South Florida Fire Prevention Code, it has been determined that Firewatch is required at the above named occupancy. The building owner(s) or their legal representative(s) have opted to satisfy the firewatch requirement by the use of private firewatch personnel. The private firewatch will be carried out in accordance with the Department's firewatch procedures.

The Fire Department (the "Department") and the Occupancy Owner/Representative (the "Owner") acknowledge that;

1. The Department provided the Owner with a copy of the Department's *Firewatch Policy*,
2. The Department provided the Owner with copies of applicable sections of code articles;
3. The Owner's failure to maintain firewatch as outlined in the *Firewatch Procedures* could result in revocation of the option to use private firewatch personnel and the installation of fire department personnel to complete the firewatch at the building owner/representative's expense,
4. Firewatch for fire alarm, fire pump or sprinkler systems that are fully or partially out of service should not extend beyond six months. When the owner/representative recognizes the need to extend the firewatch beyond six months, the owner/representative must apply to the Dade County Fire Prevention Appeals Board for approval of the extension. If, at the end of the six months, approval was not obtained, any part of the occupancy still requiring firewatch must be vacated.

Acknowledged on \_\_\_\_\_ by:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Occupancy Owner/Representative\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature\_\_\_\_\_  
Fire Department Representative\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature