

CORTEZ FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT

CASE STUDY Cortez Fire Protection District

Cortez Fire Protection District Manages Employee Schedules with Vector Scheduling

At the start of 2020, Cortez Fire Protection District (Colo.) implemented Vector Scheduling to modernize their employee scheduling tasks. This workforce management application has helped the agency streamline how they plan biweekly schedules, contact employees for open shifts and track hours worked.

With the Vector Scheduling mobile application, they've been able to not only save time, but also increase fairness and keep more accurate records.



Saving Time When Coordinating Schedules

Creating schedules for Cortez Fire used to mean hours of planning around personnel's availability and manually contacting reserve employees to fill open shifts. Since implementing Vector Scheduling, the agency has been able to streamline the process.

Training Coordinator Alex Archuleta explained how his agency was able to transition from checking a spreadsheet schedule in the breakroom to using their own mobile devices. Now, he said, part-time employees can submit their availability through the app and their shifts are auto-filled based on the department's predetermined rules. The system has also helped keep their shift trades organized. Personnel can use the system to request shift swaps between themselves and manage hours worked for each other using the Trade Board. All Cortez Fire has to do is approve or deny the swap and updates are made to the schedule.

In addition to simplifying scheduling for full-time and reserve employees, the application helped Cortez Fire coordinate volunteer shifts. Using the app, volunteers can sign up for ride along shifts and notify the on-duty lieutenant to approve or deny the volunteer's hours.

Amid COVID-19, the agency adapted Vector Scheduling to meet their needs. With this system, they could more easily communicate schedule changes, document hours worked for COVID-19 training and track employee's accrued hours.

Streamlined Employee Recalls

In the case of an employee calling out sick or other sudden schedule change, recalling employees can be done in a few clicks. Rather than individually calling or emailing personnel, Cortez Fire can automatically contact them from lists of qualified individuals for each position.

"Callbacks use our algorithm to help determine who gets the open shift," Archuleta explained. If multiple employees respond to a callback, Vector Scheduling helps ensure fairness with different tiers based on rank, certifications or other qualifications. "Our tie breakers are based on seniority or hours worked," said Archuleta.

Digital Reports for Accurate Records

Cortez Fire is able to run comprehensive employee reports with Vector Scheduling. The agency can use filters to analyze personnel's accrual hours, overtime, time-off and more.

Archuleta explained this feature has been especially helpful for managing part-time employees. The agency can run reports on reserve members and ensure they are meeting their minimum number of hours worked or are least signing up for shifts to fulfill these hours.

About Cortez Fire Protection District

Cortez Fire Protection District is in a unique location. In Cortez, Colorado, they share a border with Utah, New Mexico and Arizona. The agency is made up of a mix of firefighters – including roughly 12 full-time on-shift members, 14 part-time members and 6 volunteers and 5 additional staff (3 full time, 2 part time).

Before adding Vector Scheduling to their suite of solutions, Cortez Fire used TargetSolutions for training management since 2018. With both applications, the agency can ensure personnel are up to date in the training requirements and shifts are adequately staffed with qualified personnel.

With Vector Scheduling, Your Agency Can Do the Following:

Schedule and adjust
employees' shifts in real-time

Streamline overtime
and emergency callbacks

Oversee live roster information
across jurisdictions

Automate shift trades,
time-off requests and more