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## Ames Fire Department Standard Operating Guidelines

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Book: 1 – Organization

Section: IV – Fire Department Administration

Chapter: 2 – **Rules of Conduct**

Date Approved: 6-8-2010 Revision No.: New Approved by: 

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### **PURPOSE:**

The City of Ames is a values driven organization. A city mission and values statement is promoted by the City Manager and adopted by employees to provide the framework for how each member should conduct their efforts to serve our customers. To fulfill the City mission, members of the Ames Fire Department (AFD) shall be dedicated to providing a quality work environment and to providing effective training, leadership, and services that make Ames a safer place to work and live. All persons shall be served with respect, fairness, and compassion. The department shall nurture public trust by holding its members to the highest possible standards of performance and ethics.

### **POLICY:**

These departmental policies are a means to document long-standing departmental expectations. This policy enhances, but *does not supersede*, City policies and procedures found within the guidelines of the City of Ames Personnel Policies and Procedures. The following rules of conduct shall govern the conduct of every member of the Department while engaged in the official performance of AFD duties, functions, and/or AFD activities. Violations of any rule(s), whether written or verbal, may result in disciplinary actions, up to and including termination of employment with the City of Ames.

### **PROCEDURES:**

#### **Conduct**

To capture and maintain the public's trust is one of the most important functions that a fire department can perform. In the performance of his or her duty to serve society, an employee may be called upon to make difficult decisions. Discretion must be exercised in situations where rights, liabilities, and the reputation of the department may hinge upon your conduct and judgment. Therefore, members should attempt to adhere to the following:

- Conduct official duties with a positive attitude and in a manner which reflects favorably on the Department. This pertains to the perceptions of fellow City employees and the public.
- Exhibit courteousness to fellow City employees and the public by:
  - always showing tactfulness, maintaining temper control, and exercising the utmost patience and discretion.
  - not engaging in argumentative discussions, even in the face of extreme provocation.

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- not using vulgar, violent, profane, or disrespectful language or gestures toward the public or fellow City employees.
- not expressing prejudices or using language which might be insulting or demeaning to the public or fellow City employees concerning race, creed, color, religion, gender, national origin, ancestry, age, disability, sexual orientation, or gender identity.
- not unlawfully discriminating against or harassing fellow City employees or others present at our facilities (e.g., supervisors, co-workers, members, vendors, clients, or customers of the AFD).
- not partaking in or contributing to the disobedience of orders, directives, policies, and procedures, or the disrespect of authority or department supervisors whether they are considered temporary supervisors or permanently appointed supervisors.
- Members shall not receive, seek, solicit, or share in any fee, reward, or other reimbursement for the performance of departmental duties (or the disregard of duties), and should immediately report abuse to the Fire Chief.
- Members must not allow personal motives to govern their decisions or conduct or represent their personal opinion(s) as those of the City of Ames.

### **Communication**

- When in the course of official AFD duties and/or activities, members should not orally, by written or other expression, criticize or ridicule the Department.
- Members should not address a public gathering, radio, television, prepare any article for publication, or act as a correspondent to a newspaper/periodical as a departmental representative without permission of the Fire Chief.
- Members should secure the permission of their commanding officer before filling speaking engagements as official representatives of the department.
- Members should safeguard and avoid non-essential disclosure of confidential information protected by federal, state, or local law, or commonly recognized as privileged or confidential information.

### **Off-Duty Conduct**

Fire Department employees, both uniformed and non-uniformed, are one of the most conspicuous representatives of government, and to the majority of the people, they are a symbol of stability and authority upon whom they can rely. A Fire Department employee's conduct is closely scrutinized, no matter what their job title may be, and when his or her actions are found to be excessive, unwarranted, unjustified, or generally unacceptable, they are criticized far more severely than comparable conduct of persons in other professions or areas of employment.

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- Since the conduct of Fire Department employees, on or off duty, may reflect directly upon the Department, members must, at all times, conduct themselves in a manner which does not bring dishonor or disrespect to themselves, the Department, or the City.
- Conduct unbecoming a member would include, but not be limited to actions which may:
  - disgrace the Department or a representative of the Department.
  - impair the operation or efficiency of the Department or its members.
- Members shall not belong to or participate in activities of any organization, association, society, or group whose activities or purpose conflict with or adversely influence the employee in the performance of his or her duty.

### **Lobbying**

- Members shall refrain from lobbying the Ames City Council or state legislature under the name of the Ames Fire Department, unless approved by the Fire Chief and/or Ames City Manager.

### **Commitment to Continued Improvement**

- To ensure the best delivery of service, AFD will commit itself to continuous review, evaluation, and if necessary, modification of existing departmental programs, operations, and policies.

### **REFERENCES:**

Ames Police Department Policy and Procedures Manual  
City of Ames Personnel Policies and Procedures