

# ***Bethel Township Fire Department***

<b>GENERAL ORDER:</b> 100 <b>SUBJECT:</b> Standard Operating Procedures <b>ADOPTED:</b> 01/01/2016 <b>REVISED:</b> 02/13/2019, 09/20/20	<b>SECTION:</b> General <b>AFFECTS:</b> All Personnel <b>SUPERSEDES:</b> All Previous
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## **GENERAL ORDER:**

### **A. Code of Ethics (NFPA)**

Every fire department member shall remember the importance of a good department, and shall learn and practice "The Eight Rules of Code of Ethics."

1. As a member, I shall regard myself as a member of an important and honorable profession.
2. As a member, I shall keep myself in the best physical condition so that I may always do my duty with efficiency and, if necessary, defend my uniform with honor.
3. As a member, it is my duty to know my work thoroughly and to inform myself on all other fire department work. It is my further duty to avail myself of every opportunity to learn more about my work.
4. As a member, I shall be exemplary in my conduct, edifying in my conversation, honest in my dealings, and obedient to all laws of my State and Nation, and I shall regard my oath as I regard my sacred honor.
5. I shall, at all times, recognize that I am a public servant, obliged to give the most efficient and impartial service of which I am capable, and in all my contacts I shall be courteous.
6. As a member, I shall regard my brother firefighter with the same standard as I hold for myself. It is my duty to guard his honor and life as I guard my own.
7. As a member, I shall be loyal to my superiors who determine my policies and accept responsibility for my actions. It is my duty to do only those things, which will reflect honor upon them, upon me, and upon my profession.
8. I will recognize the badge of my office to be a symbol of public faith, and I accept it as a public trust to be held so long as I am true to the ethics of the fire service.

### **B. Personnel Rules, Regulations, and Discipline**

- a. **Standard of Conduct** - Personnel shall conduct their private and professional lives in such a manner as to avoid bringing discredit to themselves or to the Bethel Township Fire Department.
- b. **Loyalty** - Loyalty to Bethel Township, the Fire Department, and the officers, and personnel thereof is an important factor in department morale and efficiency. All officers and personnel shall maintain such loyalty at all times.

- c. **Chain of Command** - The chain of command concept shall be adhered to on all Fire Department matters. The chain of command will start with Company Officers and proceed to Chief Officer's level.
- d. **Duty Responsibilities**
  - i. Personnel shall perform all duties delegated to them, in the manner prescribed by law or ordinance, or by the rules and regulations and standard operating procedures contained herein.
  - ii. All personnel of the Bethel Township Fire Department must be certified for their position and keep current on all certifications/protocols.
- e. **Insubordination**
  - i. Failure or deliberate refusal of any person to obey a lawful order given by a superior shall be considered as an act of insubordination.
  - ii. Ridiculing an officer or his orders, whether in or out of his presence, shall be considered as an act of insubordination.
  - iii. Personnel in doubt as to the nature or detail of an order or assignment shall request an explanation to avoid unintentional insubordination.
  - iv. Insubordination shall result in disciplinary actions as provided in the Bethel Township Personnel Policy Manual.

### **C. Knowledge of Laws and Regulations**

- a. **General** – Personnel are required to establish and maintain a working knowledge of regulations, standard operating procedures, and policies of the Department. In the event of improper action or breach of discipline, it will be presumed that the employee was familiar with the law, rule, procedure or policy in question.
- b. **Reporting Violations** - Personnel aware of other personnel violating laws, ordinances, rules, regulations, procedures or policies of the Department or disobeying orders shall report same in writing through chain of command. If the employee feels the information is of such gravity that it should be brought to the immediate personal attention of a Chief Officer, official channels may be bypassed.
- c. **Performance of Duty** - Personnel shall perform their duties as required or directed by law, ordinance, Department regulations, procedures, policies, or by order of a superior officer. All duties required by competent authority shall be performed promptly as directed.
- d. **Conduct toward Superior Officers, Subordinates & Associates** - Personnel shall treat superior officers, subordinates, and associates with respect. They shall be courteous and civil at all times in their relationship with one another.
- e. **Criticism of Orders** - Personnel shall not publicly criticize instructions or orders they have received to anyone inside or outside the department.
- f. **Manner of Issuing Orders** - Orders from a superior to a subordinate shall be reasonable, in clear and understandable language, civil in tone, and issued in pursuit of Department business.
- g. **Unlawful Orders** - No employee shall knowingly issue an order, which is in violation of any law, ordinance, rule procedure or policy of the Department. Personnel that receive an order that they know or believe is unlawful, shall immediately announce that to the person giving the order.
  - i. **Obedience to Unjust or Improper Orders** - Personnel who are given an order that is felt to be unjust or contrary to rules, procedures or policies, must first obey the order to the best of his ability and then proceed to appeal. Personnel are not to be compelled to comply with an unlawful or

unsafe command. Personnel receiving an order he feels to be unjust or improper shall, at first opportunity, report such order in writing through the chain of Command.

- h. **Conflicting Orders** - Upon receipt of an order conflicting with any previous order, affected personnel will advise the person issuing the second order of the facts of the initial order. Responsibility for countermanding the original order will then rest with the person issuing the second order
- i. **Inspections** - At any time, the Chief Officers or the Company Officer may call for an inspection of equipment, including personal department issued equipment, gear, and uniforms. Lockers and personal storage areas located on fire department property may also be subject to inspection. Officers and personnel are directed to attend such inspection shall report at the designated time and location with the equipment and/or gear and uniforms specified.

**D. Return of Fire Department Property**

- a. **General** - Personnel shall surrender all Fire Department issued items including uniforms, gear, and equipment and department identification cards at the time of separation from the Fire Department within 48 hours of the effective time. Failure to comply may result in criminal charges.
- b. **Reporting** - Personnel shall immediately report to the quartermaster any loss of or damage to, issued uniforms, gear, or equipment. Personnel are responsible for and shall replace at their expense any equipment lost or damaged due to neglect.

E. **Correspondence** – Personnel shall not use Fire Department letterhead and/or mailing address for conducting private business and purposes.

F. **Communication/Telephones** - Fire Department telephones shall be answered by identifying the location and name of personnel answering (i.e. Bethel Township Fire Department, Firefighter Jones).

**G. Public Interaction**

- a. **Approval** - Personnel may not make public statements to representatives of the press without prior approval of an officer.
- b. **Endorsements** - Personnel shall not permit their names or photographs to be used to endorse any product or service which is in any way connected with firefighting or EMS, nor shall they allow their names or photographs to be used in any commercial testimonial which alludes to their position or employment with this Fire Department, without the permission of a Chief Officer.
- c. **Conduct Toward the Public** - Personnel shall be courteous and orderly in their dealings with the public. They shall perform their duties quietly, avoid harsh, profane, violent or insolent language and remain calm. Upon request, personnel will supply their name and rank in a polite manner.
- d. **Personal Preferment** - Personnel may not seek the influence or intervention of any person outside the Department for purposes of personal preferment advantage, transfer, or advancement.
- e. **Impartial Attitudes** - Personnel shall remain completely impartial in their dealings with other fire department personnel or any person in need of attention by the fire department. All persons are guaranteed equal protection under the law regardless of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, or age. Exhibiting partiality

for any reason, or unwarranted interference in the private business of others when not in the interest of justice, is unprofessional conduct.

- f. **Conduct Under Suspension** - Personnel shall not wear any uniform, badge or patch of the Fire Department while under suspension.
- H. **Cell Phones (including text messaging)** - Cell phones are an effective means to communicate and enhance fire department operations. Proper usage and etiquette shall be followed while on duty.
- a. Cell phones may be used on a limited basis while driving a staff car. The staff car should be pulled to the side of the road when possible.
  - b. Cell phone use by the driver of Fire Department Vehicles is prohibited with the exception of utilizing Active 911.
  - c. Cell phones shall not be used during emergency incidents except for emergency communication.
  - d. Personal cell phone calls will not be made or received while on emergency incidents.
  - e. Personal cell phone calls will be limited as not to interfere with assigned work and with proper etiquette to others.
  - f. All cell phones shall be left on vibrate or silent during trainings and meetings.
  - g. No cell phone camera use while on duty without permission from an officer.
- I. **Visitors to Fire Department Facilities** - Any person who enters the premises of Bethel Township fire station who is not a Bethel Township employee shall be defined as a visitor.
- a. All visitors to the fire department, having the desire to view the station and apparatus or wishing to see any personnel on business or otherwise, shall be received courteously. Any extended stay should be discouraged except under extenuating circumstances.
  - b. An officer may prohibit the entrance to or cause any person to leave the fire station when, in the opinion of that officer, such presence may interfere with fire department operations.
  - c. **All station visitors shall not be permitted before 0730 hours and must leave the premises before 2100 hours, unless approved by an officer.**
  - d. No personal visits shall be allowed during trainings and/or meetings.