

Grand Forks Fire Department

Standard Operating Procedures

SOP# 102.01	Section Rules and Regulations	Title Code of Conduct
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1. As a basic condition of employment, all employees have an obligation to conduct their official duties in a manner that serves the public interest, upholds the public trust, and protects the department's resources. It shall be the policy of the Grand Forks Fire Department to ensure that employees perform the duties delegated to them in the manner prescribed by law, ordinance, or by the rules and regulations contained in Department directives. To this end, all employees have the responsibility to govern themselves and their co-workers by the following:
 - A. Demonstrate integrity, honesty, and ethical behavior in the conducting of all department business.
 - B. Perform their duties to the very best of their abilities and in a manner that is efficient, is cost-effective, and meets the needs of the public.
 - C. Every fire department employee is required to maintain a working knowledge of State Law, City Ordinance, rules, regulations, and directives of the Department and of their respective divisions. In the event of improper actions, it will be presumed that the individual was familiar with the law or directive in question.
 - 1) Obedience to laws, ordinances, rules, regulations, directives and orders.
 - a. All fire department employees shall obey all laws, ordinances, rules, regulations, and directives of the Department.
 - b. All fire department employees shall perform their duties as required or directed by laws, ordinances, rules, regulations, directives or by order of a supervisor.
 - c. All lawful duties required by competent authority shall be performed as directed, notwithstanding the general assignment of duties and responsibilities.
 - d. Employees shall not publicly criticize instructions or orders they have received.

- e. Supervisors shall not knowingly issue an order that is in violation of any law, ordinance, rule, regulation, or Department directive.
 - f. Employees who are given orders they feel to be unjust or contrary to Department directives shall first advise the supervisor that the order may be unjust or contrary to Department directives. If the order is not withdrawn, the employee will comply with the order to the best of their ability and then may appeal the order as indicated in paragraph j, below.
 - g. Obedience to an unlawful order is never a defense for an unlawful action, therefore, no employee is required to obey any order which is contrary to Federal or State Law or local ordinance. Responsibility for refusal to obey the order rests with the employee, who shall be strictly required to justify their actions.
 - h. Upon receipt of an order conflicting with any previous order(s) or instructions, the employee affected will advise the person issuing the order of this fact. Responsibility for countermanding the original instruction then rests with the individual issuing the second order. If so directed, the latter command shall be obeyed first. Orders will be countermanded or conflicting orders will be issued only when reasonably necessary for the good of the Department.
 - i. Orders from a supervisor will be reasonable and in a clear and understandable language and must pertain to Department business.
 - j. An employee receiving an unjust or improper order shall, at first opportunity, report the details in writing to the Chief of the Department through the chain of command. This report shall contain the facts of the incident, and actions taken. The Chief of the Department or his designee may conduct additional departmental investigation(s) regarding the order given.
 - k. Failure or deliberate refusal of any employee to obey lawful orders given by a supervisor shall be deemed insubordination.
 - l. Employees shall not deride a supervisor's order, whether in or out of their presence.
- D. Ensure that personal interests do not come in conflict with official duties and avoid both actual conflicts of interest and the appearance of conflicts of interest when dealing with vendors, customers, and other individuals doing business or seeking to do business with the department.
- 1) Except as may be specifically authorized by the Fire Chief for use in a special function or unit within the Department; employees shall not solicit any gift, gratuity, loan, or fee from the public where there is any direct or indirect relationship between such solicitation and their obligations to provide prompt and fair service by the Department.
 - 2) Except as may be specifically authorized by the Fire Chief; employees shall not accept either directly or indirectly any gift, gratuity, loan, fee, or other things of value arising from or offered because of any fire department activity connected with the employee.

- 3) Employees shall not accept any gift, gratuity, loan, fee or other things of value, the acceptance of which might tend to influence directly or indirectly the actions of the employee in any matter of fire department business, or in which might tend to cast an adverse reflection on the Department.
 - 4) Except as may be specifically authorized by the Fire Chief; employees shall not accept any gift, gratuity, or reward in money or other consideration for services rendered in the line of duty from any person, business, or agency in the community.
 - 5) Employees shall not solicit any gift, gratuity, loan or fee from the public for any other person where there is any direct or indirect relationship between such solicitation and their Department obligations.
- E. Ensure that all department resources, including funds, equipment, vehicles, and other property, are used in strict compliance with department policies and solely for the benefit of the department.
- 1) The distribution or posting of written or printed Departmental matters in public access shall be by approval of the Fire Chief.
 - 2) A supervisor must approve all material posted in the Fire Department with the exception of the Union bulletin board at Central Fire Station.
 - 3) Posted material will not be marked on or defaced, with the exception of a date, draft, or other departmental stamp.
 - 4) Employees shall not knowingly falsify an official report or knowingly enter or cause to be entered any inaccurate, false, or improper information on the books, records, or registers of the Department.
- F. Conduct all dealings with the public, city employees, and other organizations in a manner that presents a courteous, professional, and service-oriented image of the department.
- G. Treat the public and departmental employees fairly and equitably.
- 1) Employees shall treat the public, departmental personnel and other city personnel and the employees of other organizations fairly and equitably, without regard to age, color, disability, ethnicity, national origin, political affiliation, race, religion, gender, sexual orientation, or any other factor unrelated to the department's business.
 - 2) Employees shall treat supervisors, peers, and subordinate employees with respect.
 - 3) When on duty, uniformed personnel shall be referred to by their rank.
 - 4) Employees shall not use coarse, profane, or insolent language toward other department employees or the public.
 - 5) Employees will conduct themselves in such a manner so as not to bring discredit upon themselves or the Department.

- H. Avoid any behavior that could fall under the definition of misconduct in the disciplinary section of the Civil Service Code.
- I. Prohibited activities/conditions while on duty:
 - 1) Purchasing, consuming, or being under the influence of alcohol or a controlled substance.
 - 2) Bringing into or onto fire department property or consuming in or on fire department property, any intoxicating alcohol or controlled substance.
 - 3) Using prescribed medication that would adversely affect body motor movements, reaction time or judgment.
 - 4) Use of tobacco products are prohibited when acting in an official capacity, in direct contact or view of the public.
 - 5) Being unavailable to respond to calls without reason or permission.
 - 6) Failing to turn in or complete departmental reports when required.
 - 7) Leaving their assigned duty station without reason or permission from their supervisor.
 - 8) Reporting late for duty, unless authorized by their supervisor.
- J. Security
 - 1) Employees shall not enter any office, desk, locker, or room without the authority from the occupant or the Fire Chief.
 - 2) Employees shall not discuss any incident with non-departmental personnel without supervisory approval and then only with that person having a right or a need to know.
 - 3) Employees shall not discuss any proposed plan, procedure or project with unauthorized personnel without supervisory approval.
 - 4) Fire employees who have information regarding an incident that was responded to may discuss only the portions that are not governed by confidentiality laws. Those portions covered by confidentiality may be discussed only with supervisor approval and only with those with a right or need to know.
 - 5) Employees shall not give out other employee's telephone number(s) or address to the general public. The Fire Chief or designee may release this information to other agencies for official purposes only.
 - 6) Employees shall not remove Department files from the Department unless authorized by a supervisor or by court order.
- K. Report for duty at the appointed time and place fully equipped, fit, and able to perform assignments.
- L. Uniforms, equipment, and personal appearance.
 - 1) Uniformed employees of the Department shall maintain their regulation uniforms in good order.
 - 2) All articles of the uniform shall conform to the Department's uniform regulations.

- 3) Uniformed personnel will comply with directives governing dress and equipment.
- 4) Civilian clothes may be worn if authorized by the Fire Chief.
- 5) Uniforms shall be kept neat, clean, and well pressed.
- 6) While wearing the uniform, employees shall maintain a military bearing.
- 7) Employees shall not wear uniforms while under suspension.
- 8) Uniforms will be disposed of through departmental process.

M. Minor Infractions

- 1) Employees who violate infractions listed in “3” may be recommended for disciplinary action. These infractions do not require a complaint register entry or a subsequent detailed investigation, unless requested by the Fire Chief.
 - 2) Any supervisor may impose immediate corrective measures. When repeated violations occur, an internal investigation may be initiated.
 - 3) The infractions covered in this provision include, but are not limited to, the following:
 - a) Tardiness in reporting for duty.
 - b) Insubordination to a superior.
 - c) Failure to shave or maintain a proper haircut.
 - d) Failure to keep uniforms clean, pressed, and repaired.
 - e) Failure to wear proper badges, nameplates, shoulder patches or other insignia.
 - f) Failure to keep clothing properly buttoned.
 - g) Failure to keep shoes/boots clean and in good repair.
 - h) Failure to wear and maintain personal protective equipment.
 - i) Failure to provide prompt and courteous service.
 - j) Taking excessive time off while on duty.
 - k) Failure to remain in assigned work area unless properly relieved or authorized by to leave by a supervisor.
 - l) Misuse of Department equipment or supplies.
 - m) Reporting unfit for duty for reasons that would justify action under provisions of this order.
2. Officers and supervisors shall set an example for other members and have a responsibility to ensure that their activities and decisions pertaining to community services, personnel actions, and the management of public funds are consistent with the department's policies and practices.