
**Ocean City Fire Department
Standard Operating Guidelines**

General Policies

Subject: Performance of Duty and Conduct
Revised: 10.20.2019
Effective: 02.01.2020
Approved: 01.10.2020
Section: 201.00

201.01 Purpose

To outline the basic standards of personal conduct expected of the members during their performance of duty.

201.02 Policy

- A. All members are expected to operate in a highly self-disciplined manner.
- B. Members shall abide by the standard of personal conduct outlined within this policy.

201.03 Responsibility

Every member of the Fire Department is responsible to regulate his or her own conduct in a professional and respectful manner.

201.04 Professional Courtesy:

- A. Members shall obey any lawful order, which has been relayed to them by a superior officer. Members shall obey a lawful order, which has been relayed from a superior officer by a member of the same or lesser rank.
- B. Members shall not be insubordinate or disrespectful to superior officers, nor shall they disobey any lawful command or order, verbal or written.
- C. Members who are given an order, which conflicts with a previous order, shall respectfully and immediately inform the officer of the conflict. If the officer issuing the conflicting order does not alter or retract the order, the order shall stand. The responsibility of the order will rest with the issuing officer and the member will not be answerable for disobedience of any previously issued conflicting order.
- D. An officer shall not issue any order, which he knows would require a subordinate to commit any illegal, unconstitutional, immoral, or unethical acts. An officer shall not issue any order, which he knows would require a subordinate to commit any act, which has been deemed unsafe.

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- E. Members of the department shall not obey any order, which they know, would require them to commit illegal, unconstitutional, immoral, or unethical acts. Members of the department shall not obey any order, which they know, would require them to commit an act that has been deemed unsafe. If there is any doubt as to the legality or safety of an order, members shall request the officer to clarify the order or to confer with higher authority.

201.05 Performance of Duty

- A. Members of the department shall report for duty at the time and place required by assignment or order and shall be physically and mentally fit to perform their duties.
- B. No member shall be absent from duty without approved leave or without authorization from his supervisor.
- C. All members are required to report to their supervisors a condition of health, which may affect the ability to perform their duties.
- D. Members shall not feign illness or injury to obtain or take leave.
- E. Members will not make untruthful statements, either verbal or written, pertaining to their duties.
- F. Members shall be responsible for the proper performance of their duties, maintain sufficient competency to perform their duties, and assume the responsibilities of their position.
- G. Members shall courteously and promptly record in writing any complaint made by a citizen concerning any member of the department or of the department itself. The complaint shall be submitted to their supervisor on the same day the complaint was taken.
- H. Members shall not mistreat or misuse any equipment or property.

201.06 General Conduct

- A. Members shall adhere to all Town of Ocean City policies and procedures.
- B. Members shall adhere to all the Orders, Guidelines and Policies of the Department.
- C. No member will commit any act which constitutes conduct unbecoming a member of the department. Conduct unbecoming, includes, but not limited to, any breach of the peace, neglect of duty, any criminal act, dishonest or improper action which tend to bring the department in disrepute. Conduct unbecoming a member of the department applies to members on duty or off duty.
- D. Members shall be courteous and tactful in performing their duties. Members of the department shall control their tempers, exercise utmost patience and discretion, and shall not engage in argumentative discussions even under extreme conditions.

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- E. Members of the department shall not use coarse, profane or insulting language or gestures. Members of the department shall not express any prejudice, harass, or use derogatory language or gestures, in referring to any other member or citizen concerning race, religion, ethnic origin, politics, lifestyle, or other personal characteristics.
- F. Members of the department are prohibited from providing confidential medical, personnel, training, and investigative information to unauthorized persons.
- G. Members of the department shall not purchase or consume alcoholic beverages while on duty. Alcoholic beverages shall not be consumed by a member of the department, while wearing any part of the department's uniform.
- H. Members shall not perform any fire department duties while impaired by drugs and/or under the influence of alcohol. Members shall strictly adhere to the Town of Ocean City's Drug and Alcohol Free Workplace Policy.
- I. Members shall not engage in political activities on duty, or when acting in an official capacity, or when in uniform, except to vote.
- J. Members shall not publicly criticize or ridicule the Department, its policies or employees, by speech, writing, or other expression, when such action can undermine the effectiveness of the Department, interfere with discipline, or be taken with disregard for the truth.
- K. Members shall not make untruthful, misleading, inaccurate or incomplete statements, either verbal or written, pertaining to their official duties. Employees shall answer truthfully and fully all questions directed to them by other members of the Department in an official capacity.
- L. Members shall obey all laws of the United States and of any state, local or foreign jurisdiction in which they are present.
 - (i) A conviction for a violation of any law shall be prima facie evidence of violation of this section.
 - (ii) Neither the placement of criminal charges nor the entering of a criminal conviction shall be required prior to the commencement of departmental action under this section against an employee.
 - (iii) The suspension, revocation, cancellation or refusal of an employee's driver's license shall be immediately reported by the employee to his/her immediate supervisor and shall be prima facie evidence of a violation of this section.
 - (iv) All personnel shall report to their immediate supervisor the fact that they have been arrested and/or cited for any criminal and/or traffic violation immediately upon return to duty.