



GERMANTOWN FIRE DEPARTMENT - STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURES	
SUBJECT: GENERAL REGULATIONS	S.O.P. 1.01
CATEGORY: PERSONNEL	PAGE: 1 OF 11
APPROVED BY: Chief, Germantown Fire Department	DATE: July 1, 2009

PURPOSE: To establish general rules and regulations intended for the guidance of all members of the Germantown Fire Department so they may be informed on the operations of their department, their responsibilities and the code of ethics they are expected to observe.

I. POLICY

The following rules and regulations are hereby established and shall govern the administration of the Germantown Fire Department and the conduct of all department personnel.

The Germantown Fire Department Standard Operating Procedures (S.O.P.s), policies, orders and rules and regulations are intended to augment the City of Germantown Personnel Policies and establish specific guidelines for Fire Department personnel. Personnel shall adhere to the City Personnel Policies in addition to the S.O.P.s and policies established by the Germantown Fire Department. Any conflict between any Fire Department S.O.P. or policy and a City Personnel Policy is unintended, and in such case the City Personnel Policy shall take precedence.

II. COMPLIANCE WITH REGULATIONS

Disciplinary action may be taken for, but not limited to, violations of the following provisions and/or rules, regulations, policies and orders of the Fire Department.

III. INSUBORDINATION

No member shall attempt to usurp the authority of a superior by words, actions or demeanor.

IV. PENALTY FOR VIOLATION OF DEPARTMENT REGULATIONS

Members shall obey all Fire Department S.O.P.s, rules, regulations, policies and orders. Offenses will result in a disciplinary action in accordance with City policy.

V. AID ANOTHER TO VIOLATE REGULATIONS

A. Members shall not aid, abet or incite another to violate Fire Department rules, regulations, policies or orders.

SUBJECT: GENERAL REGULATIONS	S.O.P. 1.01
	PAGE 2 OF 11

- B. Members of the Department having knowledge of fellow fire fighters violating State or federal laws, municipal ordinances or rules, regulations or orders of the Department or disobeying orders shall report such violation to the Fire Chief.

VI. PERSONAL CONDUCT

- A. No member of the Department shall engage in any conduct, which constitutes conduct unbecoming a member of the Germantown Fire Department or the City of Germantown.
- B. All members shall maintain a loyalty to the City, the Department and their associates as is consistent with state and federal law and the rules, regulations and orders of the Germantown Fire Department.
- C. All members of the Department shall render assistance and take appropriate action toward aiding a fellow fire fighter whose personal safety is actually or potentially threatened.
- D. Members shall at all times, either on or off duty, conduct themselves in a manner that will not bring discredit to the Germantown Fire Department and City of Germantown.
- E. No member shall threaten, strike or otherwise assault any other member of the Department. Verbal and physical abuse shall not be tolerated in any manner.
- F. Members of the Department shall be courteous and civil at all times. All ranks shall be treated with respect and all officers will be referred to by rank during official duties.
- G. No member shall indulge in any type of gambling while in uniform or on duty.
- H. No member shall carry a weapon of any kind onto Fire Department property at any time. Exceptions will be made to those members who are commissioned officers, in uniform and not on duty with the Germantown Fire Department.

VII. ADHERENCE TO LAW

All members shall observe and obey all constitutions, statutes, ordinances, administrative regulations, and the official interpretations thereof, of the United States, the State of Tennessee, the County of Shelby, and the City of Germantown.

SUBJECT: GENERAL REGULATIONS	S.O.P. 1.01
	PAGE 3 OF 11

VIII. DISOBEDIENCE OF AN ORDER

- A. No member shall willfully disobey a lawful command or order, either verbal or written, of a senior officer. Senior officer at emergency incidents shall refer to command officers designated in the command structure to direct the individual.
- B. Due to the nature of our profession, all commands, instructions and directions given by a superior during an emergency situation shall be considered orders.
- C. Willful disobedience of a direct order constitutes insubordination and is a major offense.

IX. DISCLOSURE OF INFORMATION - GENERALLY

- A. Members shall treat as confidential the official communications and business of the City and the Department.
- B. Sources of information shall not be disclosed to anyone outside the Department.
- C. Any information obtained in an official capacity shall not be disclosed, either in writing or orally, to any unauthorized person. No member will divulge any matter which is his/her duty to keep confidential.
- D. This rule is not to be construed so as to interfere with the proper cooperation with regularly constituted law enforcement agencies or such other agencies as may be assisting in an investigation.
- E. In the performance of their duties, every member of the Department shall furnish his/her name, rank and assignment to any person properly entitled to this information, except when such information would tend to jeopardize his/her personal safety or the safety of others.
- F. Members shall have their City of Germantown Fire Department identification available and shall present it to citizens upon request or when deemed appropriate.
- G. Photographs taken by on-duty personnel, or those acting in an official capacity, shall be governed by the Fire Department. They shall not be made available to the public without the approval from the Fire Chief.

SUBJECT: GENERAL REGULATIONS	S.O.P. 1.01
	PAGE 4 OF 11

X. CRITICISM

No member shall make any public statement, written or oral, criticizing the Department or City, or any member thereof, where such expression is (a) defamatory, (b) unlawful, (c) of such a nature that it tends to impair the operation of the City or Department, or (d) made with reckless disregard for its truth or falsity.

XI. RECORDS AND REPORTS

- A. No Department record shall be removed in any case without authorization from a chief officer, proper notation being made as to the name of the person receiving it and the date it was removed.
- B. No member shall make a false statement, falsify any written or verbal report made to a superior officer, or willfully and intentionally withhold material matter from such report or statement.
- C. No member shall make a false official report or knowingly enter or cause to be entered in any Department record any inaccurate, false or improper entries or misrepresentation of facts.
- D. Also see Departmental Policy regarding records and reports.
- E. No record regarded as confidential shall be accessed without proper authorization.

XII. CARE OF PROPERTY

- A. All City property shall be used for official purposes only and in the capacity for which it was designed.
- B. No member shall damage or wrongfully dispose of any property of the City.
- C. Members shall be responsible for compensating the City for lost or damaged property where such property has been lost or damaged as a consequence of malicious or negligent conduct by the member. Such person may also be subject to disciplinary action.
- D. No member shall cause or permit any property or equipment to be modified or otherwise altered, except in accordance with maintenance and repair standards approved by the Fire Chief.

SUBJECT: GENERAL REGULATIONS	S.O.P. 1.01
	PAGE 5 OF 11

- E. No person shall tamper with, remove equipment from, or use any equipment or other items on any apparatus without the prior approval of driver of that apparatus.

XIII. ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES, DRUGS

- A. No member shall bring any alcoholic beverage or alcoholic beverage container or illegal drugs to any building or quarters officially occupied by the Germantown Fire Department, nor shall he/she permit the same to be brought therein.
- B. All members of the Department are strictly prohibited from consuming any intoxicating liquors or illegal drugs while on duty or in uniform.
- C. No member shall use intoxicants while off duty to the extent that there is any evidence of physical impairment or odor of alcohol on his/her breathe when reporting to his/her assigned duties.
- D. No member of the Department shall, while in uniform or on duty, enter any place where intoxicating liquors are sold (excluding those establishments holding a liquor license for a restaurant, or a market selling food products holding a liquor license), except when required in the performance of his/her duties.
- E. No member shall consume any drugs, narcotics or other like substance except as permitted by law, and shall report to his/her immediate supervisor any prescribed drug which may impair an employee from performing his/her normal duties. A physician's statement may be required indicating whether or not an employee can perform his/her regularly assigned duties.

XIV. PERSONAL APPEARANCE

- A. Personnel shall maintain their uniforms in a neat and serviceable condition and shall, by their appearance, set an example of neatness and strict conformity with established standards of personal appearance.
- B. Members shall maintain personal habits of cleanliness and hygiene.

XV. HEALTH

- A. Each member of the Department shall keep himself/herself in such physical and mental condition as will enable him/her to readily perform his/her duties.

SUBJECT: GENERAL REGULATIONS	S.O.P. 1.01
	PAGE 6 OF 11

- B. When a member's condition is such that he/she cannot effectively perform those duties, it shall be his/her duty to notify his/her immediate supervisor.
- C. Each supervisor shall be responsible for assuring that their personnel are capable of performing their duties.
- D. Each member shall agree to submit to psychological and physical examinations as directed by the Chief.
- E. No member of the Department shall feign illness or otherwise abuse sick leave.

XVI. ABSENT WITHOUT LEAVE

No member of the Department shall absent himself/herself from work without proper authorization.

XVII. PUNCTUALITY

Members of the Department shall be punctual in all situations where time is specified or expected.

XVIII. FINANCIAL OBLIGATIONS

Members shall fulfill their financial obligations. It shall be their responsibility to pay in good faith all just debts and legal liabilities incurred by them.

XIX. ENDORSEMENTS, ADVERTISEMENTS

- A. No member of the Department shall permit the use of a photograph of himself/herself which identifies him/her as a member of the Fire Department in connection with any testimonial or advertisement of any commodity or commercial enterprise, without prior approval the of the Fire Chief.
- B. No member of the Department shall endorse or subscribe to any such testimonial or advertisement or authorize the use of his/her title, rank or identification with the Department in this connection, without prior approval of the Fire Chief.

XX. SOLICITATION

No member of the Department, while representing the Department or city, shall under any circumstances solicit subscriptions, sell tickets, or collect donations for any purpose whatsoever without prior written approval of the Fire Chief.

SUBJECT: GENERAL REGULATIONS	S.O.P. 1.01
	PAGE 7 OF 11

XXI. SUGGESTIONS FOR IMPROVEMENT

Any member who wishes to make suggestions for improvement shall have the privilege of communicating in writing to the Fire Chief, Assistant Chief or other appropriate person. Chain of command should be followed whenever possible.

XXII. NEGLECT OF DUTY

- A. Each member, because of both position and assignment, is required to perform certain duties and assume certain responsibilities. Failure to properly function in either or both of these areas constitutes neglect of duty.
- B. A member with supervisory responsibility shall be held in neglect of duty whenever he/she fails to properly supervise subordinates. A pattern of continued or serious neglect of command or supervisory duties will be cause for removal from a position of responsibilities and possible reduction in rank.
- C. Members shall maintain themselves in proper condition, location and readiness to immediately respond to calls and other assignments.
- D. A member who abandons his/her post shall be guilty of neglect of duty.

XXIII. PUBLICATION OF ARTICLES

All members of the Department shall obtain permission from the Fire Chief to publish articles as official representatives of the Fire Department.

XXIV. FIRE DEPARTMENT BULLETIN BOARDS, MAIL BOXES AND MEMO BOOKS

Members shall familiarize themselves daily with official information posted on the Fire Department bulletin boards, their personal mailbox and in the departmental memo books. Personal mailboxes shall be kept neat, clean and orderly and shall not be used for storage.

XXV. UNIFORM RESTRICTIONS WHILE OFF DUTY

Off-duty members are restricted in the use of their uniforms as follows:

- A. They may wear their full uniform when going to and from work.

SUBJECT: GENERAL REGULATIONS	S.O.P. 1.01
	PAGE 8 OF 11

- B. Portions of the uniform shall not be worn with street clothes.

Exception: Germantown Fire Department t-shirts or golf shirts. Also, for the purpose of identification, a member may wear the uniform jacket alone while reporting to, or returning from, a fire station if they have been called in on alert duty because of a working incident.

- C. The uniform shall not be worn while a member is under disciplinary suspension.
- D. The uniform may be worn when acting as a member of the Fire Department.

XXVI. PERSONAL USE OF UNIFORMS AND EQUIPMENT

Personnel shall not convert to personal use any money, vehicles, equipment, buildings or property belonging to the City. This specifically prohibits unauthorized use of City equipment without prior approval of the Deputy Chief, Assistant Chief, or the Fire Chief.

XXVII. ALTERATION OF VEHICLES OR EQUIPMENT

No member of the Department shall make any alteration to any vehicles, equipment, buildings or property belonging to the City of Germantown without the prior approval of the Deputy Chief, Assistant Chief, or the Fire Chief.

XXVIII. USE OF FIRE DEPARTMENT FACILITIES

No social event, club, group, or business meeting shall be held in any Germantown Fire Department building or facility without the specific permission of the Fire Chief.

XXIX. SMOKING PROHIBITED

- A. Per City Policy, smoking shall be prohibited in all Fire Department and other City buildings. Smoking is prohibited on or in any city vehicle. Smoking shall include the use of any tobacco products, including chewing tobacco, snuff, and dip.
- B. Members shall not smoke during fire and/or emergency calls (except when permitted by the Incident Commander), during inspections, while operating Fire Department apparatus, or during public education presentations.
- C. For additional restriction on smoking, refer to the City Smoking Policy.

SUBJECT: GENERAL REGULATIONS	S.O.P. 1.01
	PAGE 9 OF 11

XXX. UNAUTHORIZED PERSONS

Unauthorized persons shall not accompany Germantown Fire Department members on official business. Unauthorized persons shall not be provided access to facilities, areas, information, or materials that require authorization.

XXXI. VEHICLE OPERATIONS

- A. All personnel shall be approved by their Battalion Chief or other chief officer prior to driving any Fire Department vehicles under routine or emergency conditions. Requirements for specific apparatus are detailed in other S.O.P.s.
- B. Seat belts shall be worn by all occupants any time the vehicle is in motion. Failure to wear seat belts is a major offense.

XXXII. TELEPHONES

- A. City Telephones:
 - 1. When answering the City telephones in fire stations, personnel shall state the fire station number or fire department name and their last name. For example "Station One, Smith" or "Germantown Fire Department, Smith".
 - 2. Personal telephone calls shall not be accepted during class time, except for emergency calls.
- B. Long Distance Telephone Calls:
 - 1. Personnel shall not accept personal collect calls on City telephones, except in an emergency. Personnel must reimburse the City for all personal calls so received.
 - 2. Personnel shall not make personal long distance telephone calls on City telephones.
 - 3. Personnel shall not make personal long distance telephone calls on the private wall phones charged to the wall phone, except in an emergency. In such case the member must notify the member handling the wall phone bills by written memo.

SUBJECT: GENERAL REGULATIONS	S.O.P. 1.01
	PAGE 10 OF 11

C. Telephone at Residence:

1. All personnel shall maintain an operable phone by which they can be reached at their residence while off-duty.
2. A current telephone number shall be maintained in Administration and a phone list provided to each station and staff officer.
3. Telephone numbers shall be kept confidential; they shall not be given out to non-department personnel.

D. Cell Phones and Personal Communication Devices:

1. Personal cell phones, pagers, PDAs, and other communication devices shall not be used while personnel are engaged in work or out in public. Examples included but are not limited to being engaged on emergency responses, on inspections, flushing plugs, testing hose, in any type of training, in any meeting, etc.
2. Fire personnel cannot use their personal communication devices while riding to or returning from an emergency response or while riding in fire apparatus going to and from somewhere, such as the shop or another fire station.
3. Personal cell phones and communications devices may be used at the fire stations so long as they are not engaged in a work or training activity and the use does not interfere with Fire Department operations. Cell phones shall be placed in silent/vibrate mode during training, inspections, and similar activities so as to not interfere.

XXXIII.STATION SECURITY

The station Lieutenant is responsible for the security of each station during the shift. Stations shall be locked and secured whenever left unattended or during bedtime. When responding on calls, the doors shall be locked and bay doors shall be lowered after the apparatus leaves the bay, unless other personnel remain at the station.

SUBJECT: GENERAL REGULATIONS	S.O.P. 1.01
	PAGE 11 OF 11

XXXIV.WORK SCHEDULE

- A. Personnel shall work the schedule as designated by the Fire Chief.

- B. The regular work period for suppression/EMS personnel shall be between 0700 hours and 1400 hours on Monday through Friday. Sleeping may be permitted by the Station Lieutenant after this time, if the required work duties have been completed.

- C. Between 0700 hours and 2100 hours each day whenever the station is staffed, at least one member shall be available to monitor the vocal alarm system and City telephones in the station and greet visitors to the station.