



SOCIAL MEDIA / NETWORKING SOG

SCOPE

This guideline shall apply to all members of the Stoney Point Fire Department (SPFD) and shall be adhered to by all members.

PURPOSE

The purpose of this standard is to inform all firefighters and to establish guidelines with respect to the use of personal web pages, internet postings and social networking web sites by departmental personnel.

The proper functioning of any emergency services agency relies upon the public's confidence and trust in the individual members as well as the agency to effectively protect and serve the public. Any matter which brings the Stoney Point Fire Department personnel or our department into disrepute has the corresponding effect of reducing public confidence and trust in our department, impeding the ability to work with and serve the public. Professionalism is the most significant factor in providing the highest level of service to the public, which in turn builds the public confidence and trust. While employees and volunteers have the right to use personal/social networking web pages or sites, as members of the Stoney Point Fire Department, they are considered public servants who are held to a higher standard than the general public with regards to general conduct and ethical standards. It is the policy of Stoney Point Fire Department to maintain a level of professionalism in both on-duty and off-duty conduct and employees shall not engage in conduct that contradicts or impedes the mission of our department.

DEFINITIONS

SHALL - Indicates a mandatory requirement.

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STANDARD OPERATING GUIDELINES (SOG) - Documents that help establish how an organization will operate and how its members are expected to carry out specific duties outlined in general terms.

GUIDELINE

1. Employees who have personal web pages, memberships with social networking web sites or other types of internet postings, which can be **accessed by the public**, shall not identify themselves directly or indirectly as an employee/member of the Stoney Point Fire Department.
2. Photographs or other depictions of department uniforms, badges, patches, department vehicles, or any other item or material which is identifiable to this department shall not be used on employee/members internet postings.
3. Employees may not represent their opinions or comments as that of the Stoney Point Fire Department or as an official of the Stoney Point Fire Department.
4. **Employees are prohibited from posting**, or in any other way broadcasting, or disseminating information on the internet, social networking sites or other medium of communication, the business of this department including, but not limited to, the following:
 - **Photographs/images related to any incident** our department responds or participates in and with, or.
 - **Video or audio files related to any incident** our department responds or participates in and with; or
 - **Any other information related any incident or fire investigation of this department.**
5. Employees/members will not discuss or divulge department business on their website or in other medium of communication as addressed in this policy.

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6. Employees/members are prohibited from posting, broadcasting or otherwise disseminating any sexual, violent, racial, ethnically derogatory material, comments, pictures, artwork, video or other references on their websites or through any other medium of communication.
7. **Employees/members shall not post any material on the Internet that brings discredit to or may adversely affect the efficiency or integrity of the Stoney Point Fire Department.**
8. Employees/members should consider the possible adverse consequences of Internet postings, such as future employment and membership, cross examinations in related criminal cases as well as public and private embarrassment.
10. Exceptions to this policy may only be made by the Fire Chief or his Designee.

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