

## **GENERAL RULES**

- 4-1 The rules of general behavior apply to all personnel within the department. These rules are intended to serve as guides regarding acceptable and unacceptable conduct but are not intended to serve as an all-inclusive list.
- 4-2 Personnel shall be courteous in their dealings with the public and co-workers and shall give them assistance when it is in their power to do so.
- 4-3 Personnel shall not engage in altercations or disruptive activities while on duty, at department functions, or when on county property.
- 4-4 Personnel shall not threaten, intimidate, coerce, or interfere with their superiors, other members of the department, or the public.
- 4-5 On-duty personnel shall not use indecent or profane language in the presence of the public or in the presence of any other department personnel that find such language offensive. Personnel shall not use sexist language, racial or ethnic slurs at any time while on-duty.
- 4-6 Personnel shall not become intoxicated (alcohol/controlled substance) while on duty, when in uniform, or report for duty when under the influence of alcohol or other impairing substances.
- 4-7 Any personnel convicted of a felony or misdemeanor may be subject to immediate discipline up to and including suspension or termination.
- 4-8 Personnel shall not openly and destructively criticize the department or its policies, procedures, guidelines, programs, actions, officers or make any written or oral statements, which tend to bring discredit to the department.
- 4-9 Personnel that have been arrested for a serious crime may be immediately placed on Administrative Leave pending final disposition of their case.
- 4-10 As soon as possible, personnel shall notify the Fire Chief if they have been arrested for any crime, or if they are made aware that there is an outstanding warrant for their arrest. However, in all cases following an arrest or notice of outstanding warrant, no employee shall report for duty until authorization has been granted by the Fire Chief.
- 4-11 Subordinate personnel shall give all ranking officers the reasonable respect due their rank and shall address and refer to those officers by proper title.
- 4-12 Personnel shall maintain a valid driver's license and all other-licenses, training, and certificates required to drive and operate department vehicles. In addition, no employee shall report for duty if his or her driver's license has been suspended,

revoked, or restricted to any extent until authorization has been granted by the Fire Chief.

4-13 Personnel shall familiarize themselves and comply with state laws and department SOGs, policies, orders, and/or directives governing the response of emergency vehicles, and exercise due care while operating department apparatus and vehicles.

4-14 Personnel are subject to emergency recall during their scheduled off-duty time. Personnel shall always monitor their department issued pager and maintain a valid telephone number with the department. Any change of residence or telephone/pager number shall be reported to Fire Administration as soon as possible.

4-15 Personnel shall not present themselves as representing the thoughts, ideas, opinions, or beliefs of the Escambia County Department of Fire-Rescue or its administration before the Escambia County Board of County Commissioners, the Florida Legislature, or any legislative body or media on any matter relative to the department without the prior authorization of the Fire Chief.

4-16 Subject to applicable laws, personnel shall not initiate any direct or indirect contact with any Escambia County Commissioner, the County Administrator, Assistant County Administrator, County Department Director, or the media to provide information concerning the administration of the department, its programs, events, initiatives, or any business of the department and/or its employees without the prior authorization of the Fire Chief.

4-17 Personnel, while in uniform or presenting themselves to be an employee of the department, shall neither directly nor indirectly, in any manner solicit, suggest, or request contributions, subscriptions, discounts, or donations, or engage or take part in any scheme or enterprise intended, or likely to provoke any person or business to provide gifts of money, services, or goods of any description to the department or its employees without the authorization of the Fire Chief.

4-18 No employee shall use the uniform badge, identification, authority, or prestige of the department for the purpose of personal gain or soliciting gifts, discounts, or favoritism.

4-19 Personnel shall not use official fire department channels of communication, including stationary or bulletin boards for personal and non-departmental issues without the prior authorization of the Fire Chief.

4-20 Personnel shall not make malicious false reports or gossip concerning the character and conduct of any employee or the operation of the department to the discredit or detriment thereof.

4-21 No employee shall disclose any information or opinions on any litigation that the department or the county is involved, or the circumstances surrounding the same without the prior authorization of the Fire Chief.

4-22 County owned apparatus, vehicles, tools, equipment, and personal protective gear shall be subject to entry, search, and inspection at any time with the approval of the Fire Chief.

4-23 Neither the department nor the county shall be liable or responsible for any privately owned property or equipment used by personnel while on-duty.

4-24 Personnel shall not knowingly falsify or maliciously alter any department records, correspondence, or reports.

4-25 Personnel shall report to their immediate supervisor any complaint regarding unsafe practices or equipment that might endanger the public or other department personnel.

4-26 Personnel shall not litter or otherwise contribute to poor housekeeping, unsanitary, or unsafe conditions on any department, public, or county premises.

4-27 Personnel not observing the authority of any superior officer by obvious disrespect or by disputing or ignoring such officer's safe and lawful orders or directives shall be guilty of insubordination.

4-28 Personnel shall refrain from exceeding their authority in giving orders and directives.

4-29 Personnel, by lack of prudent judgment, neglect, or carelessness cause or contribute to the damage of county property shall be held responsible for their actions and may be subject to disciplinary action and/or financial restitution.

4-30 Personnel receiving orders or directives from co-workers of equal rank when the authority of an officer has been delegated to such co-workers, shall regard such orders as coming directly from the delegating officer and shall promptly execute said orders.

4-31 Personnel shall not furnish information about current or former employees to anyone not connected with the department or the county unless authorized by the Fire Chief.

4-32 The growing of a beard by suppression personnel is strictly prohibited. Mustaches and sideburns shall be allowed when the same does not encounter the seal area of the SCBA face piece.

4-33 Personnel must be physically fit for the position held, as determined by procedures established by the department. If any personnel do not meet established

physical fitness standards, the employee shall follow a prescribed corrective training program. If any employee refuses or fails to follow the prescribed corrective program, they shall be subject to disciplinary action.

4-34 In accordance with department guidelines, personnel shall maintain a neat, well-groomed, and professional appearance when representing the department.

4-35 Jewelry shall not be worn that may be considered offensive or pose a safety hazard.

4-36 Personnel shall bring any condition that inhibits their ability to safely and/or efficiently perform prescribed fire-rescue tasks to the attention of their immediate supervisor.

4-37 The department retains the right to require an employee to have a physical exam at the County's expense at any time. If, in the opinion of a licensed medical physician, an employee is not medically fit or safely able to perform those duties assigned, they may be temporarily reassigned to other duties within the department pending resolution.

4-38 The display or operation of emergency red lights on/in an employee's private vehicle is strictly prohibited.

4-49 Ignorance of the department's Rules and Regulations, SOGs, policies, orders, or directives will not be accepted as an excuse for any violation thereof.