CARVER FIRE DEPARTMENT

Standard Operating Guidelines

Section 1.21 –Social Media Policy **February 8, 2019**

1.0 PURPOSE

The purpose of this guideline is to establish guidelines for the use of social media sites with respect to the Carver Fire Department and its activities.

1.1 SCOPE

All Fire Department members

1.2 OVERVIEW

No member of the Fire Department shall post any patient information, incident photos or make inappropriate comments pertaining to the operations and activities of the Fire Department on any social media site, including, but not limited to Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, Snapchat, or any other blog, without permission from the Fire Chief. This list of social networking sites is not intended to be exhaustive, and shall be deemed to include any social networking sites in existence. Statements made by employees pursuant to their official duties are not insulated from discipline because they occurred on a social networking site

1.3 DEFINITIONS

Spokesperson for the department: an employee/member who makes a statement

- On behalf of the department
- In his/her capacity as a member of the department
- In such a way that it may ***reasonably be attributed*** to the department

Harassment: The systematic and/or continued unwelcome actions of one party or group intended to demean, threaten, intimidate, or alarm another party or group.

Hate Speech: Speech that attacks a person or group on the basis of attributes including race, ethnic origin, national origin, skin color, gender, religion, disability, age, or sexual orientation, indicating a level of intolerance or hostility that is incompatible with a commitment to serve all members of the community. Included is speech that:

- Threatens violence or harm or encourages others to commit violence directed toward any person or group; or

- Threatens to or encourages others to withhold public safety services from any person or group.

1.4 Four Key Points for Our Social Media Policy

1. No member, while speaking as a ***private citizen*** on a ***matter of public concern***, shall speak in such a way as to cause actual harm or disruption ***to the missions and functions of the department.***
2. Members may speak on a matter of public concern as a spokesperson for the department only with permission through the chain of command. ***Members shall not hold themselves out as a spokesperson for the department except when duly authorized.***
3. Members are prohibited from publically discussing fire department matters that are not of a public concern.
4. Members shall not engage in speech that is false, deceptive, libelous, slanderous, misleading, or causes harm to others, including speech that constitutes hate speech, or harassment; nor shall members discuss protected or confidential matters of the department.

1.5 Digital Imagery Policy

1. All photos taken by members while on-duty are the property of the Carver Fire Department.
2. All photos taken during fire department official activities are public record.
3. Photos depicting the likeness of the Carver Fire Department, *(including but not limited to insignias, logos, apparatus, property, or fire stations)* are prohibited from being used in obscene, lewd, or immoral purposes, or for unauthorized commercial purposes.