CODE OF ETHICS	Policy #100-005
Created: 1/10/2007	Revised: 2/3/2026

PURPOSE

The purpose of this Code of Ethics is to establish clear ethical standards of conduct for all members of the Rescue Fire Department, consistent with:

- Applicable **federal, state, and local laws**
- The **Firefighters Procedural Bill of Rights Act (FBOR)**
- Applicable **Memoranda of Understanding (MOU)**
- **NFPA standards and nationally recognized fire service best practices**
- Principles of **due process, fairness, and professionalism**

This policy is intended to promote public trust, professional integrity, and accountability while protecting the statutory and contractual rights of Department members.

SCOPE

This policy applies to **all Department members**, including:

- Career, reserve, trainee, volunteer, and administrative staff
- Appointed officials and officers
- Paid and unpaid personnel

Nothing in this policy shall be interpreted or applied in a manner that conflicts with:

- The Firefighters Procedural Bill of Rights Act
- Applicable collective bargaining agreements (MOU)
- Federal or California law

In the event of a conflict, **law and MOU provisions shall prevail**.

GENERAL ETHICAL OBLIGATIONS

A. Service to the Public
Members shall serve the community and partner agencies with dedication, professionalism, and respect. All members act as agents of the public trust and shall place the public interest above personal considerations while performing official duties.

B. Integrity and Honesty
Members shall uphold the highest standards of integrity, honesty, and ethical conduct in all official actions. Conduct that undermines public confidence in the Department is inconsistent with these standards.

C. Professional Excellence
Members are expected to maintain competence and pursue ongoing professional development appropriate to their position, consistent with Department training requirements and NFPA best practices.

Approved by: Fire Chief

CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

Members shall not engage in any activity, employment, business, or financial interest that conflicts with, or reasonably appears to conflict with, their official duties or the public interest.

- Members shall not use their position for personal gain.
- Outside employment or activities shall comply with Department policy and applicable law.
- Potential conflicts shall be disclosed through appropriate supervisory channels.

GIFTS, GRATUITIES, AND FAVORS

Members shall not solicit or accept gifts, favors, services, or items of value that could reasonably be perceived as influencing the performance of official duties, consistent with California Government Code and Department policy.
This section shall not prohibit lawful or de minimis items expressly allowed by law or policy.

USE OF DISTRICT PROPERTY AND RESOURCES

District property, equipment, vehicles, and resources shall be used solely for authorized purposes related to official duties, except as otherwise permitted by policy or law.

FAIR AND IMPARTIAL TREATMENT

Members shall treat all persons fairly, equitably, and impartially while performing official duties, consistent with:

- Federal and California anti-discrimination laws
- Department policies on equal employment opportunity and harassment

Discrimination or unequal treatment based on any protected classification is prohibited.

CONFIDENTIAL INFORMATION

Members shall safeguard confidential and sensitive information obtained through their position and shall not disclose or misuse such information except as authorized by law or Department policy.
This provision shall not be applied to restrict lawful protected activities, including but not limited to:

- Union representation
- Protected disclosures
- Rights afforded under FBOR or labor law

POLITICAL ACTIVITY

Members shall not engage in political advocacy or activity while acting in an official capacity or using Department resources, consistent with state law.
This policy shall not be interpreted to restrict members' lawful political activities conducted in a personal capacity, as protected by law.

COMPLIANCE WITH LAWS

Members are expected to comply with all applicable federal, state, and local laws. Unlawful conduct that bears a nexus to employment may be subject to administrative action consistent with due process requirements.

Approved by: Fire Chief

ETHICAL RESPONSIBILITY AND ACCOUNTABILITY

Members shall not knowingly exceed their authority, direct others to violate the law, or engage in conduct that undermines ethical standards.
Concerns regarding ethical issues should be addressed through appropriate supervisory, administrative, or legally protected reporting channels.

DISCIPLINE AND DUE PROCESS

Alleged violations of this Code of Ethics shall be addressed in accordance with:

- The Firefighters Procedural Bill of Rights Act
- Applicable MOU provisions
- Department disciplinary policies
- Due process requirements

Nothing in this policy creates an independent basis for discipline outside of established procedures.

CORE VALUES

- Integrity and Public Trust
  Uphold honesty, avoid conflicts of interest, protect confidential information, and maintain professionalism.
- Professional Excellence
  Commit to continuous improvement, competence, and accountability.
- Community Service
  Serve the public fairly, respectfully, and responsibly while safeguarding public resources.