

February 6, 2007

To: Board of Fire Commissioners

From: Stakeholders Working Group

SUBJECT: Code of Conduct/Rules and Regulations – Preamble

Recommendations:

1. Include the Code of Conduct/Rules and Regulations Preamble as the introduction to the existing Rules and Regulations.
2. Direct the Department to distribute the Preamble department-wide in accordance with the instructions provided in the Implementation of Code of Conduct document (attachment 1).

One of the audit action plan goals states that “The Department will have a Code of Conduct and a Disciplinary Process that is fair, consistent and easily understood by all the members and reflects the Department’s Core Values and Rules and Regulations.” In considering the best way in which to achieve this goal the consensus of the Stakeholders was that our existing Rules and Regulations serve as our Code of Conduct, although it has never been given that title. To clarify the dual purpose of the Rules and Regulations, a preamble has been written to introduce the Rules and Regulations and clarify them as our Code of Conduct for all members.

The Preamble should serve as the introduction to the Rules and Regulations and Code of Conduct so that there is no uncertainty that all members are required to conduct themselves in accordance with the Rules and Regulations and the consequences for not meeting expectations. Further, all managers and supervisors should be required to have a thorough understanding of this concept such that they are able to train all their subordinates and answer any questions that may arise. At the very least they should know where to research this topic and bring back the answer to their employees.

Based on the foregoing, should your Board adopt these recommendations, the Stakeholders’ consider that this audit action goal is accomplished as directed by the Board’s Audit Action Plan.

Respectfully submitted,

The Stakeholders Working Group

DRAFT
DRAFT

draft
draft

RULES AND REGULATIONS

CODE OF CONDUCT

PREAMBLE

Members of the Los Angeles Fire Department are required to maintain certain standards of conduct so that the functions of the Department are carried out in an efficient, fair, and impartial manner. Such standards of behavior ensure that Fire Department employees act with integrity and ethics that maintain the public trust. Labor, management and employee resource groups have agreed that the Rules and Regulations serve as the LAFD's Code of Conduct.

It is the responsibility of each individual to observe the letter and spirit of the Rules and Regulations in the performance of their duties and to remain vigilant to the code of conduct on and off duty. The primary responsibility of all members is to act in the public interest as expressed by the policies promulgated by the City of Los Angeles, the Board of Fire Commissioners, and the Los Angeles Fire Department. You are required to become familiar with your obligations and to comply with this code of conduct. It is expected that you will do everything you can to apply the principles to your decision-making.

While policies, Rules and Regulations, and State and Federal legislation are important, ultimately the decisions you make every day in the performance of your work may have wide-ranging economic, legal, and ethical implications. Making fair-minded decisions requires application of City work ethics including respect for the law, integrity, diligence, and respect for the dignity and human rights of all persons. You are expected to act with these principles in mind at all times. This is a responsibility of working at one of the finest professional fire departments in the world.

While this code of conduct specifies a number of rules and regulations that govern professional behavior, you are also expected to familiarize yourself with the other documents that support integrity, ethics, respect, and legal behavior. The following list informs you of other policies and work rules with which you are expected to comply:

1. The Los Angeles City Charter
2. Manual of Operations
3. Book 53
4. Book 75
5. Book 90
6. LA City Personnel Policy 33
7. All applicable MOU's

Breaches of the code of conduct will be dealt with in accordance with the disciplinary system and guidelines. Enforcement and implementation of the disciplinary process address personal and professional accountability and the reinforcement of ethical behavior. It is expected that in the course of their work every employee exercise self-discipline deserving of the respect and admiration of the citizens we serve and our fellow members. Should there be any question or need for additional information you are urged to direct your inquiry to the Professional Standards Division at (XXX) XXX-0000.

draft
draft

Approved by the Board of Fire Commissioners – X/XX/XX

Implementation of Code of Conduct

Attachment 1
draft
draft

Supervisors and Managers Responsibilities

1. Provide members access to a copy of the Code of Conduct and explain member obligations
2. Model appropriate behavior and manage inappropriate behavior
3. Use constructive conflict intervention strategies
4. Use managerial resolution strategies when necessary
5. Give advice to members about the grievance and complaint processes when conflict intervention strategies have been unsuccessful and support their right to exercise these options
6. Give clear statements of work duties and performance expectations to all employees in your command
7. Give fair and respectful feedback and direction to subordinates
8. Provide members with respectful, accurate feedback on performance and development
9. Provide members with opportunities for appropriate and necessary training and development options
10. Assess and implement appropriate risk management strategies to avoid injury, ethical lapse, and discrimination issues.

In addition, supervisors and managers must make certain that:

1. Worksites have the most updated version of the Rules and Regulations/Code of Conduct readily available and accessible to all members.
2. Worksites have the most updated version of the Department's Disciplinary System documents including the structure of the Professional Standards Division, the Disciplinary Guidelines and all governing documents.
3. Members who have questions about the Rules and Regulations/ Code of Conduct have their questions answered quickly and accurately.
4. Decisions are fair and impartial and comply with respect for the law, demonstrate respect for all persons, integrity and diligence.
5. Breaches of the code are dealt with in accordance with reporting requirements, disciplinary process, and in consultation with Professional Standards Division.
6. Areas of risk are monitored.
7. Reiterate member responsibilities at appropriate intervals.

Members Obligations

1. Required to comply with the Rules and Regulations/Code of Conduct and all other governing documents.
2. Familiarize themselves with the responsibilities included in the Code of Conduct.
3. Familiarize themselves with resources for obtaining guidance and for good faith reporting of suspected misconduct.
4. Model appropriate behavior and prevent any inappropriate behavior.
5. Use constructive conflict intervention strategies.

Essential Elements

Letter from the Fire Chief that sets the tone, defines the significance of compliance and ethical behavior relative to the Core Values, Vision Statement, and Mission. Letter to be distributed with the Code of Conduct/Rules and Regulations

Ethical enforcement of the disciplinary mechanisms as necessary to emphasize accountability and professional behavior

Effective risk management procedures

Accountability and monitoring of executive management such that each is a role model of ethical behavior in compliance with letter and spirit of the Code of Conduct/Rules and Regulations