

## POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

### STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURES

#### Hazing and Bullying

#### SECTION II 13.0 – 13.5

*December 12, 2012*

Approved by R. Dale Horne – Fire Chief

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#### 13.0 POLICY:

- a. The Anderson Fire Department has a zero tolerance policy toward workplace and work related hazing or bullying. Hazing or bullying of members is unacceptable and will not be tolerated for any reason. All personnel should be able to work in an environment free of hazing and bullying.

#### 13.1 PURPOSE:

- a. The purpose of this policy is to prohibit workplace and work related hazing and bullying. Workplace and work related hazing and bullying may cause the loss of trained and talented employees, reduce productivity and morale, and create unnecessary legal risks for the department.

#### 13.2 DEFINITIONS:

- a. **Bullying:** Repetitive acts of aggressive behavior that intentionally threaten, humiliate, intimidate, degrade, or hurt, physically or mentally, another person. Bullying usually involves repeated acts committed by a person or group who has, or is perceived as having, more power than the victim/target of the bullying.
- b. **Hazing:** Ritualized harassment, abuse or humiliation used as a way of initiating a person into a group.

#### 13.3 PROCEDURE:

- a. AFD personnel shall not engage in hazing and bullying other members of the department at any time regardless of the members' willingness to participate or submit to the conduct.
- b. AFD personnel shall not engage in the hazing and bullying of any other person while on duty, while in uniform, while on fire department property, while in or on fire department apparatus, or while representing the fire department, regardless of the person's willingness to participate or submit to the conduct.

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- c. Officers shall ensure that personnel are not bullied or hazed, and are required to intervene to stop any bullying or hazing that is observed. Officers who fail to intervene will be subject to being disciplined at least as harshly as those responsible for the bullying and/or hazing.

#### 13.4 ACTS CONSTITUTING BULLYING:

- a. The following acts are examples of the kind of behavior that if repeated and committed under circumstances of a power imbalance, constitutes bullying:
  - i. Physical violence, hitting, striking, punching, slapping, shoving, tripping, and other acts that hurt people physically, or otherwise result in inappropriately touching
  - ii. Spreading rumors intended to humiliate, embarrass, degrade, or intimidate another
  - iii. Teasing, taunting, harassing, isolating, or excluding another
  - iv. Name calling, verbal abuse, threats, or coercion
  - v. Encouraging others to engage in similar activities intended to humiliate, embarrass, degrade, or intimidate another
  - vi. Engaging in any of the above using telephones, cell phones, emails, text messages, instant messages, online, electronically, or using cyber technology.
  - vii. This can include:
    - a) Sending offensive or threatening text, email, or instant messages
    - b) Posting offensive, humiliating pictures or messages about others in blogs or on Web sites
    - c) Using someone else's user name to spread rumors or lies about someone

#### 13.5 WHAT TO DO

- a. Members who believe they are being bullied or hazed should immediately ask the member or members to stop.

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- b. If after being asked to stop hazing or bullying, a member resists stopping in any manner other than offering an apology and stating that it will not happen again, the target of the hazing or bullying should promptly inform his or her immediate supervisor. If the immediate supervisor is involved in the allegation or the member is uncomfortable with making a report to their immediate supervisor, the member may by-pass the chain of command in order to report the harassment or discrimination to any ranking officer, up to and including the Fire Chief.
- c. All reports of workplace bullying will be treated seriously and investigated promptly, confidentially and impartially.



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