

## **Chapter 3-3**

### **1. Purpose**

This SOP states PVFD's goal and intention to operate in an ethical and non-discriminatory manner toward the public served and the members of the PVFD.

### **2. Scope**

All members of the PVFD including officers, firefighters, board members, Civilian Corps, and anyone else representing PVFD in an official capacity shall abide by this SOP.

### **3. Introduction**

PVFD is organized to accomplish a mission of fire and life safety protection to the residents and visitors of the Pewee Valley area. In order for PVFD to successfully complete this mission, the public that it serves must place a high degree of trust in the PVFD organization. Therefore, the PVFD and all of its members must behave in a manner that will not cause the public to doubt the goodwill or professionalism of the PVFD. The bond of trust necessary for PVFD to function also exists between the PVFD organization and its members and between the members as well.

### **4. Ethics Policy**

The following statements shall apply to all members of PVFD, or anyone representing PVFD in an official capacity.

1. Members of the PVFD shall conduct themselves in a manner that does not cause a conflict of interest, or perceived conflict, between the PVFD and the public.
2. If a potential conflict of interest arises, the member shall notify the Chief or Board of Trustees of such at the earliest opportunity.
3. The member and the PVFD staff shall work to remedy the conflict or remove the member from the situation.
4. If an officer or director encounters a conflict of interest during an event that they are supervising or controlling, they shall recuse themselves or pass control to another PVFD member.
5. Members shall not demand or insinuate want of gratuity of any sort for performing an official PVFD function.
6. Members may accept gifts for services performed only on behalf of the entire PVFD and only at the insistence of the gift giver. Such gifts shall not be in the form of money, unless the gift giver makes the gift to a charity recognized by PVFD.

7. No PVFD member shall be in possession of cash used for PVFD purposes or collected for charity greater than \$300 without a witness except as follows:
- The member is the Treasurer or his designated agent.
  - The money is known to be in the member's possession and shall be accounted at a later time.
  - The money is being collected for charity and the member has not had reasonable opportunity to deliver the money to a collection point.

8. If a question regarding an ethics situation arises, the Chief and the Board of Trustees shall review the situation and determine the proper course of action.

## **5. Non-Discrimination**

Membership and participation in the PVFD is open to all citizens who meet the requirements for membership. Membership shall not be denied or otherwise based upon a person's race, creed, color, or religion. Members of the PVFD shall serve the public equally, regardless of the race, creed, color, or religion of the public.

Members of the PVFD have a duty to the PVFD and the public to accomplish the mission and goals of the PVFD without undue influence from the member's personal beliefs. If a member holds personal beliefs or convictions that conflict with the mission or tasks of the PVFD, the member must make this known to the Chief. The PVFD shall work to accommodate this situation, while still accomplishing the mission of the PVFD. If a reasonable solution cannot be reached, the member may be asked to resign from the PVFD.

## **6. Sexual Harassment**

PVFD members shall not engage in sexual harassment toward other PVFD members or the general public. Sexual harassment is defined as actions or statements of a sexual nature, knowingly performed that cause another person to suffer embarrassment or feel threatened. This policy and definition applies to members of both sexes.

## **7. Investigation and Enforcement**

The Chief or the Board of Trustees shall receive any questions or complaints regarding this policy or allegations of non-compliance. The complaint must be put forth in writing no more than 2 weeks after the time of occurrence.

The complaint will be read and discussed by the Chief and Board during an executive session at the next regular Board meeting. They shall then investigate the complaint and notify the person filing the complaint of their course of action. The investigation shall allow the accused an opportunity to defend himself and allow both the accuser and accused to submit evidence and witnesses. Both parties may utilize legal counsel for this process. If legal counsel is used, it shall be paid for by the party being represented. Both parties must also acknowledge to the Fire Chief and the Board that they understand this policy.

After the Chief and Board reach a conclusion, they shall make the complaint and their findings public via a presentation at a Board meeting. This presentation shall also be entered into the minutes of the meeting. The Chief and Board shall also announce the actions taken to remedy the complaint. At no time during this process shall the identity of the person filing the complaint or the accused be publicized. Likewise, the Chief and Board shall make all efforts to prevent retaliation against the complaining member or the accused member.

If at any time during this process the Chief, Board of Trustees, complaining member, or accused member think that the complaint warrants formal discipline, they may request that the complaint be addressed as an official charge to be filed according to the rules in KRS 75.130.