

# New Durham Fire Department Standard Operating Guidelines (SOG)

SOG 108      Communicating with others, Internet Posting and Social Networking

**PURPOSE:**    To guide members regarding communicating with others, the use of the internet, the world-wide web, cell phone use and social networking as a medium of communication impacting this Department.

**SCOPE:**        All Department members.

**SPECIFICS:**

- Communicating with citizens, using the internet, blogs, Twitter, FaceBook, MySpace, the worldwide web, social networking sites, texting, photographing and any other medium of communications shall not be used in a manner which is detrimental to the mission, function and reputation of this Department.
- Any matter which brings individual members or the Department into disrepute has the corresponding effect of reducing both the trust and confidence of the public we serve and impedes our ability to work with and serve the public.
- Members do have the right to express their opinions, use personal/social networking pages or sites, but as members of this Department they are public servants who are held to a higher standard than the general public with regard to standards of conduct and ethics.
- Members shall maintain a level of professionalism in both on-duty and off-duty conduct that fulfills the mission of the Department and shall not violate this policy through communication or the publication through any medium which is potentially adverse to the operation, morale or efficiency of the Department.
- Members are not to communicate, post, broadcast, text, tweet, post photographs or video files, or any other items or materials which would be detrimental to the reputation of themselves or the Department.
- Members are not to use Department computers for unauthorized purposes including participation in social networking sites.

DATE: 2013-03-17