St. John's Regional Fire Department
Policy and Operational Guidelines

Title: 01-03-15	Respectful Workplace in the SJRFD
Document Type:	Operational Guideline
Status:	
Issued By:	Fire Chief/Director
Index:	01 Organization
Section:	03 Administration
Title	15 Respectful Workplace in the SJRFD

Purpose

To outline the importance of everyone's right to a safe, respectful work place at all times.

Background

It is the commitment of the St. John's Regional Fire Department (SJRFD) to ensure its workplaces are free from negative, aggressive, and inappropriate behaviors, and that the environment is aimed at providing high quality work, training and emergency responses in atmospheres of respect, collaboration, openness, safety and equality. We further commit that all members have the right to be treated with dignity and respect at all times.

All complaints of negative and inappropriate workplace behaviors will be taken seriously and followed through to resolution, and SJRFD members who file complaints or bring forth information regarding said complaints will not be victimized for reporting inappropriate behavior.

Protection from negative, aggressive, and inappropriate behaviors is holistic and extends to senior staff, fellow employees, subordinates, clients, customers and other contacts of this Department, and expands beyond the place of work to off-site and work-related social events. It is the responsibility of all Firefighters, Fire Officers, Employees and Managers of SJRFD to provide a healthy workplace environment for peers and co-workers, where all communication and interactions are marked by dignity and respect.

Procedure

Appropriate Workplace Behaviors Defined

Healthy workplace behaviors are those that promote respect, positivity and civility in our workplace. They include, but are not limited to:

- Being respectful, supportive, and encouraging in all interactions, regardless of subject or importance.
- Questioning another's opinion politely; listening to their position with an open mind and providing feedback, if asked, in a positive and encouraging way.
- Providing direct, non-personal feedback as opposed to criticism when asked.
- Expressing appreciation for actions performed correctly and in a timely manner.
- Respecting others as adults as well as their decision-making abilities.
- Approaching conflict with maturity and true desire for resolution, rather than as a fight or opportunity to belittle a co-worker.
- Maintaining a positive attitude, even when you are having a bad day, someone else may be having a worse one.

Inappropriate Behaviors Defined

Unacceptable behaviors are defined as negative and/or vexatious acts targeted toward one or more individuals and causing hurt, embarrassment, implying incompetence, disrespect, anxiety, or depression. Examples include, but are not limited to:

- Excessive repeated yelling, outbursts, berating others, using a harsh voice
- Degrading others by action, remarks or tone of voice
- Criticizing people in front of a group; using a condescending tone
- Social exclusion or ostracism; silent treatment
- Favoritism
- Soliciting failure by setting impossible to meet deadlines or workloads
- Unnecessary micromanagement
- Arbitrary or punitive punishment without just cause
- Inconsistence with disciplinary measures
- Gossiping or spreading rumors
- Manipulating a person's job content; unwarranted removal of core responsibilities to make them feel bad
- Making threats; using intimidating tactics or coercion
- Any malicious behavior a reasonable person would find unprofessional, disturbing and harmful to their psychological health
- Inappropriate comments, or gestures, or displays of a sexual nature that make a recipient and/or witness feel uncomfortable

These types of behaviors are well-recognized as having damaging consequences for their recipients, the observers of the behavior, and the organization as a whole and therefore shall not be tolerated.

Supervisory Members' Responsibility

Senior Staff, Officers, and Managers, being in positions of authority, have a particular responsibility to ensure that healthy and appropriate behaviors are being exhibited at all times and that complaints to the contrary are addressed speedily. Managerial staff shall:

- Provide good examples by treating all with courtesy and respect.
- Promote awareness of the policy and complaint procedures.
- Be vigilant for signs of inappropriate behaviors at work through observation.
- Immediately intervene in any inappropriate action on any member's part and mitigate any threatening, or perception of a threatening environment in their zone of influence.
- Actively promote a safe and respectful workplace at all times and at any opportunity.

Rank and File Responsibility

As members of the SJRFD, regardless of rank or position, you are responsible for deporting yourselves in a professional manner at all times. If incidents of harassment or discrimination, including word of mouth, printed media, postings, social media, actions and deeds (or lack of them) — even if the behavior is not directed toward you — are witnessed, you have the professional responsibility to call attention to the behavior, and to offer suggestions for more respectful behavior. If the behavior does not change as a result of your suggestions, you are encouraged to report the incident to the appropriate supervisor in the workplace. If a colleague approaches you about your behavior, you have a responsibility to listen to his or her concerns, offer an apology, and change the behavior. Diminishing your colleague's concerns (e.g., saying "I was just joking") is never an appropriate response in such circumstances. All members should:

- Conduct themselves in a courteous and conscientious manner at all times while in the workplace.
- Seek out opportunities to identify and address all forms of harassment and disrespectful behavior in the workplace.
- Maintain their awareness of the tenets of a respectful workplace and their code of ethics and strive to meet those goals.
- Advocate, by word and action, for a mutually respectful work place at all times.

Approvals
Fire Chief/Director

Approval Date
2017-03-08

Responsibility
St. John's Regional Fire Department

POG #01-03-15
Approved By:

Jerry Peach
Fire Chief
Director of Regional Fire and Emergency Services

Feb 28/2017
Date

Appendix/Appendices