

FRANKLIN TOWNSHIP FIRE DISTRICT #1

CAMERA, RECORDING, SOCIAL MEDIA USE POLICY

Purpose: To provide clear direction on the use of cameras, iPods and/or other recording devices during the course of an emergency response or during the course of an employee's work day. Additionally, to set a policy for the use of social media including but not limited to Facebook, Twitter and MySpace.

This policy does not apply to Fire District/Fire Company issued cellular phones or personal cellular phones used to conduct Fire District/Fire Company related business. In addition, this Policy does not pertain to the "I AM RESPONDING" Emergency Responder Reply System.

Scope: This policy applies to all members and employees of FTFD #1.

Definition(s):

On-duty Status:

1. For District employees, on duty status will be defined as the time during your normal work hours, or at times that you're working overtime.
2. For Volunteer personnel, on duty status will be defined as the time from when the pager activates and you are responding to an incident until the end of the incident and you have been released by the Officer in charge; during special assignments or special details; training sessions; or company meetings.

Employee:

1. For FTFD1 personnel, an employee will be anyone employed by FTFD #1. Those individuals who are independent contractors/vendors or who have separate professional services agreements with the District shall not be considered a District employee when interpreting this policy.
2. For Volunteer personnel, an employee will be anyone who is a member of a Department/Company within FTFD #1.

FTFD #1 or District:

1. For FTFD #1 or District it shall mean Franklin Township Fire District #1, Somerset County, New Jersey.

Company or Department:

1. The terms Company and Department shall be used interchangeably to refer to any District #1 Fire Company or Fire Department.

Policy:

1. Camera & Ipod Use

- a. Personnel are only permitted to use cameras or other picture taking image generating devices authorized or issued by FTFD #1/Departments while on duty. The Department/District issued devices are intended to be used for purposes only such as to document an incident, the position of the vehicles and patients at the scene of an accident for the mechanism of injury, for use by the receiving facility to assist in guiding treatment, training programs and incident analysis. Any other picture taking devices, including personal electronic devices, PDAs, cameras, or other personal computers (not issued FTFD #1) shall not be used by personnel on duty, unless given specific permission by a Chief Officer or Incident Commander.
- b. All on scene photography shall be for clinical, training programs, incident analysis and/or documentation purposes only and conducted only at the direction of FTFD #1 personnel in charge at the scene/Chief Officers or by medical command.
- c. Any photographs containing individually identifiable information are covered by the HIPAA Privacy Rule and must be protected in the same manner as patient care reports and other such documentation.
- d. Any on scene images and any other images taken by an employee in the course and scope of their employment are solely the property of FTFD #1 and *not* the property of the individual member. This includes any images

inadvertently taken with a member's personally owned cell phone camera or other digital imaging device.

- e. No images taken by an employee in the course and scope of their employment may be used, printed, copied, scanned, emailed, posted, shared or distributed in any manner without the express approval of a Chief Officer or Commissioner. Example: This prohibition includes posting photos on personal websites, such as Facebook or MySpace, or on other public safety agency websites, or emailing images to friends, colleagues or others in the Fire and EMS service.
- f. All FTFD #1 digital images will be downloaded as soon as possible, and will be cataloged and secured in a secure database with controlled access by a chief officer. After being downloaded, images on memory cards will be erased.
- g. Personal use of department/district cameras is strictly prohibited.
- h. The appointed fire company/district photographer is approved to photograph all activities but must go through the screening process as detailed above prior to disseminating such photos. Additionally, the fire company/district webmaster must go through the screening process as detailed above prior to posting photos on the fire company website.
- i. iPods or similar devices are not permitted when actively involved in performing emergency duties/operations.
- j. Refusal to permit inspection of any device covered by this policy may result in disciplinary action.

2. **Recordings Use**

- a. No personnel shall record any fire company/district related private meeting without the knowledge of those present at the meeting; and must have permission from the person running the meeting. This section shall not apply to all "public" meetings within the definition of the Open Public Meetings Act. N.J.S.A. 10:4-6 *et seq.*
- b. No personnel shall record any fire company related training without the permission of the instructor presenting the training.

- c. No personnel shall record any incident without permission of a Chief Officer.
- d. No personnel shall use recorded radio transmissions without the authorization of a Chief Officer or Commissioner.
- e. The use of helmet mounted recorders shall be approved by a Chief Officer. Such use shall only be for fire ground activities which include interior/exterior fire attack, rescue and training. No recordings of patient care shall be permitted.
- f. A Commissioner must approve any distribution of the content of all recordings. District/Company issued cameras and recorders as well as pictures and recordings for investigative purposes are exempt from this rule.
- g. Refusal to permit inspection of any device covered by this policy may result in disciplinary action.

3. Social Media Use

- a. Personnel of FTFD #1 shall not criticize or ridicule the Fire District or Fire District Departments, its policies, its officers or other members by speech, writing or other expression, when such speech, writing or expression:
 - i. Is defamatory, obscene, slanderous or unlawful; and/or
 - ii. Is created on District/Department resources or during on-duty status time.
- b. Personnel of FTFD #1 are never authorized to use, print, copy, scan, email, post, share or distributed any Fire District/Fire Company related images/pictures or recordings in any manner without the express approval of a Chief Officer or Commissioner. Example: This prohibition includes posting photos on personal websites, such as Facebook or MySpace, or on other public safety agency websites, or emailing images to friends, colleagues or others in the Fire and EMS service.