



IAFC Fire Service Professional Code of Ethics

The International Association of Fire Chiefs (IAFC) represents the international fire service - a noble calling, and one which is founded on mutual respect and trust between IAFC, the nation's firefighters and emergency medical service personnel and the citizens they serve. To ensure the continuing integrity of the IAFC to the highest standards of ethical conduct must be maintained at all times.

The purpose of this IAFC Fire Service Professional Code of Ethics* is to establish criteria that encourages personnel to promote a culture of ethical integrity and high standards of professionalism in our field. The broad scope of this recommended Code of Ethics is intended to mitigate and negate situations that may result in embarrassment and waning of public support for what has historically been a highly respected profession. As members of the IAFC, we share a responsibility to project an ethical character of professionalism, integrity, compassion, loyalty and honesty in all that we do, all of the time.

In order to ensure recognition, and clarification of this policy, instruction for this ethics program will be provided during employee orientation sessions and encouraged for all representative fire service agencies. In addition, we will review the ethics management program in required management training experiences. Job descriptions and ethics guidelines will be developed to encourage ethical behaviors in accordance with this Code of Ethics.

As fire service leaders we should endeavor to create and maintain a culture that is consistent with the expectations outlined in this document. In doing so, we can create a legacy that provides validation and sustainability to the IAFC and at the same time ensure that we leave the fire service profession in a better condition than when we arrived.

**(Ethics comes from the Greek word ethos, meaning character. Character is not necessarily defined by how a person behaves when conditions are optimal and life is good. It is easy to take the high road when the path is paved and obstacles are few or non-existent. Character is also defined by decisions made under pressure, when no one is looking, when the road contains land mines, and the way is obscured.)*



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Members of the IAFC and fire service leaders understand that they have the responsibility to conduct themselves in a manner that reflects proper ethical behavior and integrity. In so doing, they help foster a continuing positive public perception of the IAFC and the international fire service community. Members of the IAFC and fire service leaders:

- Always conduct themselves, on and off duty, in a manner that reflects positively on self, family, the IAFC.
- Accept responsibility for their actions and for the consequences of their actions.
- Support the concept of fairness and the value of diverse thoughts and opinions.
- Avoid situations that would adversely affect the credibility or public perception of the IAFC.
- Are truthful and honest at all times and report instances of cheating or other dishonest\unethical acts that compromise the integrity of the IAFC.
- Conduct personal affairs in a manner that does not improperly influence the performance of their duties, or bring discredit to the IAFC.
- Are respectful and conscious of each member's safety and welfare.
- Recognize that they serve in a position of public trust that requires stewardship in the honest and efficient use of human resources, fiscal resources, and all publicly owned resources, and that these resources are protected from misuse and theft.
- Exercise professionalism, competence, respect, and loyalty in the performance of their duties and use information, confidential or otherwise, gained by virtue of their positions, only to benefit those they are entrusted to serve.
- Avoid financial investments, outside employment, outside business interests or activities that conflict with or are enhanced by their official positions, or have the potential to create the perception of impropriety.
- Never propose or accept personal rewards, special privileges, benefits, advancement, honors or gifts that may create a conflict of interest, or the appearance thereof.
- Never discriminate on the basis of race, religion, color, creed, age, marital status, national origin, ancestry, gender, sexual preference, medical condition or disability.
- Never harass, intimidate, threaten, or bully in any manner fellow members of the IAFC, the fire service and/or the public, and stop and/or report the actions of others who engage in such behaviors.
- Comply with all laws and campaign rules when supporting political candidates and engaging in political activities.
- Refrain from endorsing commercial products through quotations, use of photographs, and testimonials for personal gain.
- Responsibly use social networking, electronic communications, or other media technology opportunities in a manner that does not discredit, dishonor or embarrass the IAFC, the fire service and the public. They also understand that failure to resolve or report inappropriate use of this media equates to condoning such behavior.

Adopted by the IAFC Board of Directors, December 2016