

**KCFPD #47**  
**OPERATING GUIDELINES SECTION 6**

**O.G. 6.1**  
**PUBLIC RELATIONS**

The Fire Department exists to protect and serve the citizens who live, work, commute through, and play in their response area. Every fire department is an element of a greater network of the fire protection system. In essence, all firefighters and fire prevention personnel each represent each other as a part of the whole.

Each member of this department who has the opportunity to discuss the role the department has in our community is reminded that the impression they create in any individual citizen often becomes the dominate factor in future relations and attitudes. Always strive to develop positive relationships with the citizens whom we protect and serve! The goal is to work at improving public relations.

Refrain from discussing politics, religion or other controversial issues as a representative of the department.

Do not criticize other fire departments, other fire districts or their personnel.

Do not use profanity or slang.

Be a good listener.

Caustic comments or sarcasm do not add anything meaningful, regardless of the provocation.

Make frequent and judicious use of the term "thank you."

It is often necessary to attempt to eliminate superfluous conversation. This is more of an art than a science. A disservice can be done by not taking sufficient time to hear a citizen's complaint. The public believes that you know all the answers.

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On scene: Only the highest ranking officer of the department shall comment to the media with regard to the call. The following generalities shall be used:

- A. With regard to Cause
  - 1. Under Investigation
  - 2. The investigation is incomplete
  - 3. Not yet determined
  - 4. No comment
- B. With regard to Injuries
  - 1. We had \_ number injured
  - 2. Condition is unknown at this time
  - 3. No comment
- C. With Regard to Damage
  - 1. Light
  - 2. Moderate
  - 3. Heavy
  - 4. No comment

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**O.G. 6.2**  
**STATION VISITORS**

When citizens visit a fire station they are to be greeted by personnel and treated with professional courtesy.

***Tours***

Visitors requesting a station tour are to be given a guided tour of the facilities and apparatus. Members conducting the station tour should accompany the visitors at all times, explaining the department's role and answering any questions to the best of their ability. If the citizen has questions for which they would like answers, but the correct answers are unknown by duty personnel, encourage the citizen to leave their name and telephone number so that a senior officer can determine the answer and report to the citizen.

Visitors who require information or assistance are to be aided or directed to the appropriate resource. If personnel are unable to assist it is appropriate to contact a senior officer.

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**O.G. 6.3**  
**CITIZEN COMPLAINTS**

Members are expected to take the initiative and assume an active, rather than passive, role in obtaining a solution for the problem encountered.

All citizen complaints shall be immediately reported to the Chief or senior officer.

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**O.G. 6.4**  
**TELEPHONE PUBLIC RELATIONS**

Public relations - good, bad or indifferent, begins the moment you answer the telephone.

Courtesy, although difficult to define, consists of a sincere consideration and concern for the feelings of others. All too often some thoughtless, discourteous act or statement on the part of one member becomes the gauge by which the entire department is measured. While these inappropriate comments or actions may seem almost trivial at the time, their negative consequences can be far reaching. We must work at avoiding such encounters.

Give information in a spirit of willingness and with the desire to be helpful. Citizens seeking information or direction require our attention. It will only take a moment to help them. People form positive opinions about those who helped them.