



SOUTH LYON FIRE DEPARTMENT

Manual of Procedures 100

DIGITAL MEDIA

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Approved: Chief Mike Kennedy

I. SCOPE

The purpose of this policy is to manage digital media, photographs, and electronic images created by employees, in such a way that the privacy rights of employees, patients, fire victims, and the public are preserved; that evidentiary concerns related to such images are protected; and the professional image of the department is maintained.

II. DIGITAL MEDIA DEFINITIONS

- A. Images – photographs, digital photographs, digital images, video recordings, or electronic files containing a graphic image or series of images, as well as any digital reproductions or copies of such photographs, digital photographs, digital images, video recordings, or files.
- B. Digital imaging device – any device capable of producing a digital image, including but not limited to a digital camera or digital camcorder.
- C. On-duty – whenever personnel are being paid by the South Lyon Fire Department, have access afforded to them as an employee of the South Lyon Fire Department, or engaged in official in fire department activities.

III. INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

Information technology e.g. voice mail, email, Internet access is provided by SLFD and assigned to an employee solely for the purpose of conducting fire department business.

IV. INTERNET USAGE

Internet use brings the possibility of breaches to the security of confidential SLFD information. Internet use also creates the possibility of contamination to our system via viruses or spyware. Spyware allows unauthorized people, outside the SLFD, potential access to SLFD passwords and other confidential information.

Under no circumstances may SLFD computers or other electronic equipment be used to obtain, view, or reach any pornographic, or otherwise immoral, or unethical Internet sites. Doing so can lead to disciplinary action up to and including termination of employment.

V. EMAIL

All City of South Lyon email accounts assigned to employees are to be used for SLFD business only. Confidential information must not be shared outside of SLFD, without authorization. Employees are also not to conduct personal business using City of South Lyon email.



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Any emails that discriminate against employees by virtue of any protected classification including race, gender, nationality, religion, and so forth, will be dealt with according to the harassment policy.

The City of South Lyon owns any communication sent via City of South Lyon email or that is stored on city equipment. Command staff and other authorized staff have the right to access any material in individual, department assigned email accounts at any time. Electronic communication, storage, or access is not private if it is created, sent, or stored via a City of South Lyon email account.

The following is a non-exhaustive list of examples of email abuse:

- A. Excess personal use that interferes with City of South Lyon business by burdening the network or systems or by interfering employment obligations.
- B. Interference with other employee's use of email.
- C. Intentional, unauthorized access of other employee's email.
- D. Sending "spams," chain letters, letter bombs or any other type of widespread distribution of unsolicited email.
- E. Forging email.
- F. Giving the impression an employee is representing SLFD unless that employee is authorized to do so.
- G. Use of email for commercial activities or personal gain.
- H. Sending of offensive or abusive messages.
- I. Conducting unlawful activities.

VI. SOCIAL MEDIA

Representing SLFD is an honor and a privilege provided to a select group of individuals. Along with that privilege come a set of expectations and responsibilities. Employees are held to a higher standard and are recognized locally because of their employment. Through social media, employees are now being monitored by more individuals than ever before. Everything employees do in these forums should positively represent SLFD. Used responsibly, social media can be a great way to interact with friends, family, and promote SLFD. Used irresponsibly it can be a quick way to destroy the reputation of the employee and the department.

SLFD strongly recommends employees adopt the below items when using social media:

DO set your security settings so that only your friends can see your account.

DON'T accept friend or follow requests if you are not sure who they are coming from.

DO understand that who you have listed as followers or friends is a reflection on you.

DON'T put anything on social media that you would not want your family, the fire chief, elected officials, those reading the front page of the paper, or the whole world to see.



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DO think before you post, tweet or retweet - Will this positively reflect SLFD?

DON'T post offensive language, personal attacks or racial comments.

DON'T post when you are emotional. You are more likely to say something you will regret.

DO ask questions if you are not sure what you are doing is OK.

VII. POSTING ONLINE COMMENTS ON THIRD-PARTY SITES (RESPONSE TO NEWS ARTICLES, POSTS ON OTHER PEOPLE'S SITES, OR BLOGS)

- A. Employees should consult with the fire chief prior to engaging in communication related to SLFD through blogs or comment sections of materials posted on the Internet.
- B. If employees communicate in the public Internet about SLFD, they should disclose their connection with SLFD and their role at SLFD. Employees should use good judgment and strive for accuracy in their communications; errors and omissions reflect poorly on SLFD and may result in liability for the employee and/or SLFD.
- C. Employees shall use a personal email address (not their City of South Lyon email address) as their primary means of identification. Just as employees would not use SLFD stationery for a letter to the editor with their personal views, they should not use their City of South Lyon e-mail address for personal views.
- D. Employees should be respectful and professional to fellow employees, community partners, co-responder, and patients and avoid using unprofessional online personas.

VIII. PERSONAL BLOGS OR OTHER SOCIAL NETWORKING CONTENT

- A. Employees should ensure that their blogging and social networking activity does not interfere with work commitments.
- B. Where a connection to SLFD is apparent, employees should make it clear that they are speaking for themselves and not on behalf of SLFD. In these circumstances, the following disclaimer is recommended: "The views expressed on this [blog; website] are my own and do not reflect the views of my employer." Furthermore, employees should consider adding this language in an "About me" section of their blog or social networking profile. This disclaimer does not by itself exempt employees from a special responsibility when blogging; employees should remember that their online behavior should still reflect and be consistent with SLFD's established standards of conduct.
- C. Employees may ask the fire chief if they have any questions about what is appropriate to include in their personal blog or social networking profile. Again, employees should remember that if they would not want command staff, elected officials, or others at SLFD to see their comments, it is unwise to post them to the Internet.



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IX. ON-DUTY PHOTOGRAPHY

- A. On-duty employees are prohibited from using a non-department owned camera, video recorder, audio recorder, or the camera/video/audio function of a non-department owned cellular phone, PDA, or any other digital imaging in a manner that may discredit the fire department's reputation or detract from functions the employee is being paid to perform.
- B. A basic condition of any employee using a non-department owned camera, video recorder, audio recorder, or the camera/video/audio function of a non-department owned cellular phone, PDA, or any other digital imaging device while on-duty is that the fire chief or his/her designee may inspect the device at any time while on duty.
- C. On-duty employees shall only take images that are of business related matters and events for purposes of incident documentation, evidence, training, investigation, and/or public relations.
- D. Personnel are expressly prohibited from taking any images of another person in any location where a person has a reasonable expectation of privacy, including a bathroom, bedroom, locker room, changing area, or any other location where a reasonable person would believe that he or she could disrobe in privacy, without being concerned that his or her undressing was being photographed, filmed, or videotaped by another; or a place where one would reasonably expect to be safe from hostile intrusion or surveillance.

X. RESPONDING TO, OPERATING AT, AND RETURNING FROM, INCIDENT SCENES

- A. Employees are prohibited from using a non-department owned cameras, video recorder, audio recorder, or the camera/video/audio function of a non-department owned cellular phone, PDA, or any other digital imaging device while responding to, operating at, or returning from, any incident. Any employee who inadvertently takes such an image at an incident scene shall report the fact immediately through the chain of command to the Incident Commander at the earliest possible opportunity. Employees shall not be disciplined for inadvertent violations that are duly and immediately reported.
- B. On-scene photography/video taken by on-duty personnel shall be for incident documentation, evidentiary, training, investigation, and/or public relations purposes only, and taken by or with the approval of the Incident Commander in charge of the scene, using approved department equipment, or as approved by the fire chief.
- C. The taking of imagery shall not interfere with nor delay operational activities, except to the extent that imagery of a fire's cause and origin may require overhaul to be momentarily delayed.



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- D. All photographs and video containing individually identifiable patient information shall be presumed to be covered by HIPAA and state privacy laws and shall be protected in the same manner as patient care reports and medical documentation.

XI. HANDLING AND PRESERVATION OF IMAGES /

- A. No department owned images may be used, printed, copied, scanned, e-mailed, texted, forwarded, posted, uploaded, shared, reproduced or distributed in any manner, except as provided herein. This prohibition specifically includes the posting of any images on personal Web sites such as, but not limited to: Face Book, MySpace, or YouTube; posting to public safety Websites; or e-mailing to friends, relatives, colleagues, or other third parties.
- B. All fire department digital images as described in this policy shall be downloaded from the digital imaging device as soon as possible after they are taken, and will be cataloged and stored in a secure database with controlled access. After being downloaded and verifying that the downloading is successful, the images on the digital imaging device's memory card shall be erased.
- C. Digital imagery that has evidentiary value, including vehicular accidents involving department vehicles, fire scenes showing evidence of cause and origin, incident scenes showing the locations of victims, fire code violations, etc., require that a Chain of Custody form be initiated by the photographer and forwarded with the imagery.
- D. Digital images in the secured database shall not be accessed by any party, or altered via any software product or utility such as Photoshop, unless express permission is granted in writing by the fire chief. If permission to alter a photo is granted, the original photo shall not be altered in any way, and any copies that are altered shall be appropriately identified and documented as to being an altered copy. The details of the alteration including what was done (cropped, lightened, darkened, etc), the name and rank of the member performing the alteration, and the time and date of the alteration, shall be noted and preserved.
- E. The use of fire department images shall be subject to approval of the fire chief. Prior to the release of any image, the image shall be evaluated by the fire chief to ensure that the release will not result in a breach of patient confidentiality or breach of privacy, and that the release will, in all other respects, be lawful.
- F. The use of unauthorized helmet cams and dash cams is strictly prohibited, and shall be considered a serious disciplinary breach for the employee involved and any officer who permits such use. Employees wanting to use a helmet cam shall contact the fire chief for approval prior to use. Images and video captured on a helmet cam worn by an on-duty employee is considered SLFD property.



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- G. Use of department cameras to take images for personal purposes is strictly prohibited.
- H. Off-duty personnel who respond to incidents to which SLFD responds, who are: in uniform; are identifiable as members of this department by virtue of the clothing they are wearing; or who utilize their credentials or identity as a member of this department to access areas of the incident scene that are not open to the public, shall be required to comply the all of the requirements of this policy for any images they may take.

Approved by
/s/ Chief Mike Kennedy