



MEDIA RELATIONS

SCOPE

This guideline shall apply to all members of the Stoney Point Fire Department and shall be adhered to by all members.

PURPOSE

To establish and provide guidance for Stoney Point Fire Department members' interactions with representatives of the media in relation to official Stoney Point Fire Department policies, duties, and operations.

DEFINITIONS

Guideline - a general rule, principle, outline of a policy

Media - public information agency requesting details about an incident

Member – any career, volunteer, staff, and auxiliary personnel affiliated with the department

Public Information Officer – agency communications coordinator and spokesperson

Shall - indicates a mandatory requirement

GUIDELINES

As a public entity that provides emergency services to residents of Cumberland County, Stoney Point Fire Department regularly receives requests by media sources for information about operations and opinions on current events. It is important for members of Stoney Point Fire Department to understand the proper conduct required by all members when interacting with the media to prevent a break down in the public trust. This guideline does not infringe upon the First Amendment Rights of any member of Stoney Point Fire Department. However, the conduct of all members while acting as an official or unofficial representative of the department is controlled to prevent harm to individuals, the organization, or the public trust.

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Programs

Standard Operating Guidelines (SOG)

The following standards shall be adhered to whenever a member interacts with an official or unofficial member of a media organization:

- Statements to the media, news releases, media campaigns, and social media platforms **SHALL** be approved by the Fire Chief or the Deputy Fire Chief except as provided below
- Individual Firefighters and Officers shall not render opinions about the cause or origin of any incident, nor release any protected or sensitive information to the media.
- Incident Commanders are authorized to provide the media with **general** details applicable to an incident. However, all media releases involving high dollar commercial incidents, fire fatalities or obvious criminal activity, such as arson, **SHALL** be released by the Public Information Officer after being approved by the Fire Chief or the Deputy Fire Chief
- The Duty Chief is authorized to provide the media with general details concerning an incident and matters pertaining to department public relations
- On duty Company Officers are authorized to provide the media with a list of incidents. This information shall be limited to **dates, times, and locations** of incidents
- All media requests for information pertaining to an incident that has been turned over to law enforcement for a criminal investigation shall be referred to the appropriate law enforcement agency (Fayetteville PD, Cumberland County Sheriff's Office, State Bureau of Investigation, Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms, etc.)
- All media requests for incidents within the primary response area of the City of Fayetteville will be referred to the relevant Fayetteville Fire Department (FFD) Battalion Chief
- Information relating to personnel matters, department policy, department litigation or other sensitive matters shall be released only by the Fire Chief or Deputy Fire Chief in his absence

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References

NFPA 1035

Garcetti vs. Ceballos