

Sugar Loaf Fire Department – Standard Operating Procedure			
Subject: Disciplinary Procedures		SOP#: 1.2.5	Revision: A
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1. Purpose

This document describes the Disciplinary Policy of the SLFPD.

2. Terms of Relationship

Volunteers and employees of SLFPD operate in an at-will work environment, in which SLFPD is free to terminate employees at any time, without cause, explanation, or prior warning, provided it does not violate state and federal anti-discrimination laws. Similarly, volunteers and employees can quit at any time without reason or notice.

SLFPD personnel are subject to standards of performance not only for their specific job functions but also for their general conduct. The public nature of their service requires that all personnel adhere to high standards of ethical and moral behavior in their job functions and in their personal conduct.

Personnel are expected to exercise sound judgment while carrying out their duties, and to do them in a professional manner for the betterment of the community and the department as a whole. They are expected to comply with all policies, procedures, and standards set forth by the SLFPD, as well as all laws of Boulder County and the State of Colorado. If the behavior or actions of any member of the volunteer fire department compromises their own safety or the safety of others, interferes with the ability of the department to perform, or discredits the department and/or its volunteers, appropriate disciplinary action will be taken.

The standards set forth in these policies and procedures are not exhaustive of all appropriate behavior or every possible situation. These policies shall provide personnel guidance about the principles and standards they should strive for in every situation. These rules are not all inclusive; disciplinary actions including termination may be administered for behavior or conduct not specifically discussed in this policy.

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3. Causes for Disciplinary Action

Disciplinary action may be taken either when a member's work performance is unsatisfactory, or when the member has engaged in misconduct. Examples of actionable behavior may include, but are not limited to, the following:

- harassment, including any based on racial, skin shading, sex/gender (including pregnancy), nationality, age, religion, physical/mental ability, hereditary status, or medical condition;
- creating an unfriendly or hostile workplace, including bullying, tormenting, provoking, threatening, obscene or threatening gestures through verbal, written, or body language;
- alcohol or illegal drug use while performing SLFPD duties;
- insubordination - willfully disobeying an order by someone in authority, and freelancing - acting without the knowledge and consent of an officer or incident commander.
- deliberate conduct or gross incompetence or negligence in performing assigned duties that endangers the safety of oneself or others;
- discourteous treatment of the public, other members of SLFPD, or personnel from other agencies;
- dishonesty;
- theft of SLFPD property, or the property of others at a scene;
- conviction for civil or criminal activity;
- willful or negligent violation of department Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) and protocols; and/or
- recurring unresolved issues that persist despite actions by the department which consume disproportionate amounts of staff time.

4. Goal of Discipline

The objective of discipline is to help individuals understand expected behavior and motivate them to modify inappropriate behavior.

The SLFPD uses a progressive discipline model, with the intent of encouraging personnel to fully understand the importance of their actions

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as a representative of the department. The exact actions taken will depend on the specific violation, the extent of the infraction, and the circumstances surrounding the violation. Extreme violations that are considered severe may result in immediate termination from the department.

The following steps provide a guideline to ensure that the discipline policy is enforced fairly and consistently.

5. Discipline Procedure

Except where more severe action is warranted, most infractions will be handled using the procedure outlined here.

Level 1 - Verbal Comment. The ideal time to draw attention to a deviation from District standards or procedures is when the failure occurs, or if it occurs during an incident, during the incident cleanup or demobilization. This would ideally be done by a person who witnessed it, in a kind and constructive manner. The tone should be informative, not critical. The intent of this level is to inform another member of something they may not have known or may have forgotten.

Level 2 - Verbal Warning. The member's direct supervisor or ranking officer initiates a conversation regarding the problem and presents instructions to correct it. This conversation should include raising the possibility of formal disciplinary actions if the problem continues. The supervisor or officer who had the conversation will inform the chief of the discussion, and may monitor the member to verify they modify their behavior in similar situations in the future.

Level 3 - Written Warning. For repeat or more serious infractions, a written reprimand will be issued by a ranking officer (Chief, Assistant Chief, Medical Chief, or Battalion Chief). The written statement will include an explanation of the violation, required corrective action, an expected time frame for corrections to be made, and consequences of future disciplinary actions. Copies go to the member, his/her personnel file, and the Chief. Written

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warnings will be discussed at a high level at the Officer's meetings so that all officers are aware of the general nature of the violations and can assist in monitoring corrective actions by the volunteer.

Level 4 - Suspension. For serious or flagrant violations, the member may be suspended from all departmental activities including both emergency and non-emergency events. A suspension may be issued only by the Chief or their designee. The time limit for the suspension will be determined by the Chief, though as a guideline, suspensions are expected to last between 15 and 90 days. The board will be notified of any member suspension so they will not be caught unawares if there is any public discussion of the suspension.

Level 5 - Termination. Termination represents the highest level of internal disciplinary action. In most cases, the volunteer under consideration for termination has clearly demonstrated unwillingness, inability, or refusal to conform to the recognized standards of conduct. Termination may follow a progression of lesser disciplinary actions, but certain violations may be serious enough to warrant dismissal on the first. In the event of termination, the former member will be immediately discharged from all duties for the department and must return all SLFPD property within one week of dismissal. Except to drop off their equipment, the former member is forbidden from entering SLFPD buildings, using SLFPD social media, group email or chats or similar SLFPD communication, and accessing password protected areas of the SLFPD web site, wiki, or other electronic spaces.

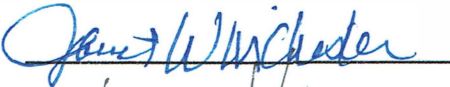
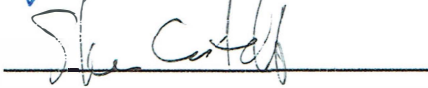
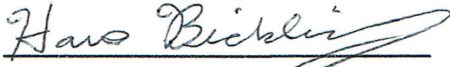

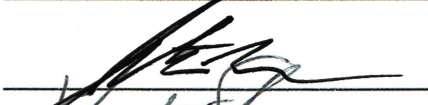
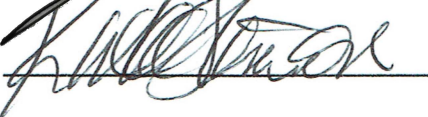
The Chief, or the Assistant Chief while acting as the chief, is the only member authorized to terminate a member, though this may be after discussion with other officers. The Board will be notified of the termination within 48 hours. While SLFPD does not discuss personnel issues with those not involved, firefighters-at-large will subsequently be notified that the person is no longer a member of SLFPD to minimize the possibility of misinformation and/or rumors.

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While Level 5 is the highest level of internal discipline, SLFPD may file civil charges or refer the former member to law enforcement for possible criminal charges if the situation warrants even more severe consequences. The decision to pursue civil or criminal charges will be made as a group by the Chief and/or Assistant Chief and the Board.

Approval

SLFPD Standards require signatures by the Chief, Assistant Chief, all three of the Battalion Chiefs, and the Chief Medical Officer.

<u>Name</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Position</u>
<u></u>	<u>8/6/22</u>	Chief
<u></u>	<u>08/05/22</u>	Assistant Chief
<u></u>	<u>8-3-22</u>	Battalion Chief
<u></u>	<u>8.6.22</u>	Battalion Chief
<u></u>	<u>8/5/22</u>	Battalion Chief
<u></u>	<u>8/8/2022</u>	Chief Medical Officer