

**Tempe Fire Department Policies and Procedures**  
**Communications**  
**104.11**  
**Rev 8-5-10**

**PURPOSE**

To identify approaches to maintaining and enhancing effective communication within our organization. The intent is to have effective and supportive communication between all levels and all positions in the Department.

**GUIDELINES**

Effective communication is the responsibility of each member in the organization. It is important to recognize that effective day-to-day communication between all members is crucial to organizational effectiveness for service delivery and in providing a professional and supportive working environment.

**COMMUNICATION**

Communication effectively helps our organization share information, build trust and respect, foster learning and accomplish goals. While communication and feedback is critical to our Mission, it is a major challenge in any organization. Often when something does not go as expected, it is a problem in communication that played a role. The following principles will assist in narrowing the communication gap within the Tempe Fire Department:

- Supervisors and managers shall promote, by both attitudes and actions, an open communication climate both vertically and laterally with counterparts
- All supervisors and managers are readily available to members
- Operational, communication, and action plan goals will be developed, published in the Six Five Year Strategic Plan and Operational Guide and current Self Accreditation Manual
- Members will develop joint annual goals with their supervisors through the Member Development Program
- All members ideas, suggestions, and complaints will be acknowledged in a reasonable time frame
- At any time a member has a question, problem, or new idea, they are encouraged to immediately communicate with their immediate supervisor

**Departmental strategies for enhancing communication include:**

- Hiring of members committed to the Mission and Values of both the City and the Department
- Responsive and supportive supervisors at all levels of the organization
- Open door policy throughout the entire organization,
- Supervisors should routinely meet with staff
- Workgroup meetings
- Employee forums as necessary
- Effective use of communication tools to include Internet, media, e-mail, mail, telecommunications and face-to-face communication

- Quarterly Management using goals and objectives
- Training in all facets of the Department
- An effective working relationship with the Tempe Chapter of Firefighters Local 493, and SEIU
- Monthly Labor Management meetings with Local 493
- Bi-weekly Staff Briefing and monthly Assistant Chief/Deputy Chief meeting minutes
- Minutes from City or established Labor Management Teams of the department, i.e. Research and Development Team, City Safety Team

**Expectations for effective communication within the Fire Department include:**

- All members being good listeners
- All members having respect for the opinions and ideas of others
- Supervisors and managers providing the reasons for decisions particularly when the decisions are unpopular
- Embrace and engage the diversity and talent of all members by listening to their ideas and encouraging them to reach out
- Instill pride, confidence, and commitment in our members because they are trusted as important contributors to the Department's success
- Effective utilization of the Member Development Program

**ACCESS TO THE FIRE CHIEF**

Any member may take a question, problem, or new idea to the Fire Chief. The member should use appropriate judgement for an issue which should be processed through the chain of command.