
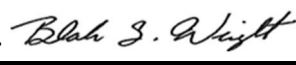




**NORTHERN WAKE FIRE DEPARTMENT**  
**STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURES**

<b>TITLE:</b> Public Information Officer (PIO) Program	<b>SECTION/TOPIC:</b> <b>General Administrative</b>
<b>NUMBER:</b> 100-18	<b>ISSUE DATE:</b> 6/12/2023
<b>REVISION DATES:</b>	<b>APPROVED BY:</b>  Gary Vickerson -  <hr/> <b>PRESIDENT – BOARD OF DIRECTORS</b>  Blake S. Wright -  <hr/> <b>Interim FIRE CHIEF</b>

## 1 PURPOSE

- 1.1 This standard operating procedure addresses the duties and procedures of the Department Public Information Officer and Scene Public Information Officer regarding emergent and non-emergent events. Outlines the communication levels and steps with the public, media, and other organizations to maintain positive working relationships, transparency, and open communication.

## 2 SCOPE

- 2.1 This SOP pertains to all personnel in the Northern Wake Fire Department.

## 3 DEFINITIONS

- 3.1 **Department Public Information Officer (DPIO):** The individual responsible for communicating with the public, media, and/or coordinating with other agencies, as necessary, with department related information.
- 3.2 **Partners:** Public and private entities Northern Wake Fire Department engages in together in the same activity or works together with for the betterment of the citizens served by the Northern Wake Fire Department and surrounding communities.
- 3.3 **Public Information:** The term 'public information' means any information, regardless of form or format, that an agency discloses, disseminates, or makes available to the public.

- 3.4 **Public Relations:** Managing how others see and feel about the Northern wake Fire Department and its partners.
- 3.5 **Scene Public Information Officer (SPIO):** The Battalion Chief or Acting Battalion Chief, On-Duty, at the scene of any emergency and responsible for communicating with the Public, Media, or other agencies as necessary, with department related information.

## 4 PROCEDURE

### 4.1 ***Department Public Information Officer responsibilities. The DPIO shall, at a minimum, execute the following primary responsibilities:***

- 4.1.1 Provide public information by making every effort to keep the media, public and other agencies informed of the emergency and non-emergency operations that they feel may be of interest.
- 4.1.2 Develop public relations through social media sites, press releases and news conferences to develop a network of trust with these groups that relies on honest, accurate and current information.
- 4.1.3 Educate the public and media through social media sites, press releases and news conferences by providing informative safety messages, emergency operations updates, the various services offered by the department, information on recruitment, hiring and graduation of firefighters, promotional ceremonies and any other events deemed of interest.
- 4.1.4 Will coordinate with Scene Public Information Officers as needed to coordinate effective communication with the media, public and other agencies.
- 4.1.5 Always represent the Northern wake Fire Department and its personnel in a positive light.
- 4.1.6 Oversees all social media sites.

### 4.2 ***Scene Public Information Officer responsibilities. The SPIO shall, at a minimum, execute the following primary responsibilities:***

- 4.2.1 Provide public information by making every effort to keep the media, public and other agencies informed on the scene of emergencies.
- 4.2.2 Will use social media as needed to relay pertinent emergency scene information for the public good.

- 4.2.3 Provide a point of contact for media representative(s) on scene or after the event.
- 4.2.4 Always represent the Northern Wake Fire Department and its personnel in a positive light.
- 4.2.5 Has access to social media accounts for notification purposes.

4.3 ***Public Information Officers qualifications and training. It is preferred that the departments PIOs possess the following qualifications and training:***

- 4.3.1 Have Obtained the rank of Lieutenant or higher.
- 4.3.2 Formal PIO training classes. Below is a list of PIO Training. The DPIO and SPIO should have some combination of this training to be effective in their positions as PIOs but will at a minimum have IS-29 Public Information Officer Awareness.
  - 4.3.2.1 IS-29 Public Information Officer Awareness
  - 4.3.2.2 E/L0105- Public Information Basics
  - 4.3.2.3 E/L0388 – Advanced Public Information Officer
  - 4.3.2.4 Master Public Information Officer Program:
    - 4.3.2.4.1 E/K0389 – Master Public Information Officer – Implementing Communications Strategies for Whole Community Leadership
    - 4.3.2.4.2 E/K0393 – Master Public Information Officer – Applying Advanced Concepts in Public Information and Communications
    - 4.3.2.4.3 Master Public Information Officer – Mastering Public Advocacy Plans to Create an Effective Community or Stakeholders.
  - 4.3.2.5 APR: Accredited in Public Relations

**4.4 Department/Scene Public Information Officer Characteristics. The following have been deemed as a highly desirable and sought after characteristics of the department's PIO:**

- 4.4.1 The Northern wake Fire Departments Core Values
- 4.4.2 Honesty
- 4.4.3 The ability to effectively communicate.
- 4.4.4 Complete accuracy, based on known facts with a lack of opinion-based commentary, when providing information to the media and public.
- 4.4.5 SPIO specific: The ability to be accessible to the media, public, and partner agencies based on incident priorities.
- 4.4.6 DPIO specific: Will manage the responsibility of department PIO duties only while on duty unless prior authorization has been granted by the Fire Chief or their designee.