

TEXAS A&M TASK FORCE ONE STANDARD OPERATION GUIDELINES

CODE OF CONDUCT

VOLUME 1

REFERENCE NO. 1-01

- 1.01 The conduct of personnel of the National Urban Search and Rescue Response System is of high interest to the Department of Homeland Security/Federal Emergency Management Agency (DHS/FEMA), the Sponsoring Agencies and the Authority Having Jurisdiction (AHJ).
- 1.02 These personnel are perceived as representatives of a well-organized, highly trained group of specialists who have been assembled to help communities in need of assistance. At the conclusion of a mission, system members must ensure that their performance has been positive, and that they will be remembered for the outstanding way they conducted themselves both socially and in the work environment.
- 1.03 As a general definition, a code of conduct consists of the rules of standards governing the demeanor of a person or the members of a profession. The National Urban Search and Rescue Response Systems Operations Manual is concerned with the work environment of its members; this document focuses on the members' code of conduct that governs the social component of USAR activities. This code, which includes human rights, legal, moral, ethical and cultural issues, concerns the relationship between members and those they serve.
- 1.04 Since each system member is a representative of their team and their Sponsoring Agency, a violation of principals or adverse behavior demonstrated will be looked upon as unprofessional. Such behavior may discredit the good work that the resource completes and will reflect poorly on the entire team's performance and its Sponsoring Agency and the National USAR system.
- 1.05 It is the responsibility of the Sponsoring Agency to prepare its system members before deployment regarding conduct expectations. Each deployed member is bound by a regulation regarding professional conduct established by his or her Sponsoring Agency.
- 1.06 It is the responsibility of the USAR IST and TF Leaders to reinforce the Code of Conduct during all planning sessions, meetings and incident briefings and to monitor compliance. Any violation will be addressed and documented, with follow-up action taken by a USAR Task Force Leader, the Sponsoring Agency, or Program Office, as appropriate.

- 1.07 It is expected that ethical conduct will be demonstrated at all times.
- 1.08 Members will strictly adhere to all state and federal laws and regulations, system policies and regulations, system member rules and procedure, and DHS/FEMA policy regarding sexual harassment and equal opportunity for all persons regardless of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability, genetic information or veteran status.
- 1.09 At no time during a mission will system members take personal advantage of any situation and/or opportunity that arises.
- 1.10 All members will be constantly aware that their personal appearance, dress, and demeanor are a direct reflection on the Task Force, their unit and themselves. Personnel shall always present an image of professionalism, pride, and confidence by being properly and neatly attired. Members should routinely inspect their uniforms and other apparel, if worn out, torn, stained, or otherwise unpresentable, they should take corrective action as necessary.
- 1.11 It is the responsibility of each system member to abide by this Code of Conduct.
- 1.12 Issues to be considered: As a basic guide, system members will base all actions and decisions on the ethical, moral and legal consequences of those actions. It is in this manner that positive and beneficial outcomes will prevail in all system events. Accordingly system members will:
- Keep the value of life and the welfare of the victim constantly in mind
 - Remain cognizant of cultural issues including race, religion, gender, and nationality
 - Follow direction of the Chain of Command
 - Abide by all DHS/FEMA regulations and AHJ law enforcement practices and policies regarding weapons
 - Abide by DHS/FEMA regulations regarding handling sensitive information
 - Follow prescribed DHS/FEMA direction regarding dress code and personal protective equipment
 - Not possess or use alcohol or illegal drugs
 - Only procure equipment through appropriate channels
 - Not remove property from an operational work site for personal gain or accept gratuities
 - Demonstrate proper respect for public and private property
 - Demonstrate proper respect for other assigned personnel