

# **GOSHEN FIRE DEPT.**

## **Foundational Values & Expectations**



**Goshen Fire Department  
Since 1862**

# **Goshen Fire Department**

Life is a series of experiences, each one of which makes us bigger, even though it is hard to realize this. For the world was built to develop character, and we must learn that the setbacks and grieves which we endure help us in our marching onward."

Henry Ford (1863-1947)

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# Introduction

We are attempting to put into words a description for behavior, performance, interactions, attitudes, and a vision for the GFD culture exclusive of rank, seniority, or status.

**This document is not intended to be a new Standard Operating Procedure.**

There is a solid core of universal values at the heart of any community that guide how we interact with each other in society. They provide important ground rules for how we live together. These values underlie the institutions, customs and structures of the Goshen Fire Department and our society. They shape our identity and provide organization and continuity. They provide guidance for our actions and a channel for our passions regardless of rank. They are the foundation that provides us with direction to work for the common good. In sum, they are the foundational values that bind us together as department members.

## Our goal

Promote excellence, encourage self-discipline, and prevent job burnout.

## In Short

Be nice to our customers, be nice to ourselves, and do the right thing because it is the right thing to do.

# Goshen Fire Department

## Mission Statement

*Our mission is to provide a positive workplace with continual training and adequate equipment so that we may give our customers the very best service possible. The importance of our service; fire suppression, rescue, prevention and investigation, paramedic ambulance service, and public education: compels us to perform our duties in a sincere, skillful, dedicated and professional manner*

# **Goshen Fire Department**

## **"Our Values"**

### **TEAMWORK**

Teamwork is the basis of our success. We work as a team because we value each other and the community we serve.

### **INTEGRITY AND HONESTY**

Whenever we make a decision, provide a service or interact with others, we act with Honor and Integrity.

### **TRUST**

The foundation of our success is the trust we earn from the community we serve and the trust we have in each other.

### **ETHICS**

We take pride in maintaining the highest professional standards in all of our actions.

## **PERSONAL RESPONSIBILITY**

We contribute positively to the Goshen Fire Department and the City of Goshen missions and take ownership of our various roles and responsibilities.

## **CARE AND RESPECT**

We treat the community we serve and each other with care and respect.

## **RELIABILITY**

Our commitment to the public we serve is unwavering and consistent.

## **Goshen Fire Department: Our History**

The City of Goshen officially formed its first fire department on December 4, 1862 in response to several devastating fires that occurred in the fall of 1862. The newly formed fire company was called the Reliance German Fire Company #1 and was an all volunteer company. Prior to that, all firefighting efforts were limited to the bucket brigade, where any able bodied man would respond to the call of "fire!" and help pass the buckets of water to pour on the flames.

With the formation of the new fire company, an improvement in firefighting technology came as well. The original fifty (50) members donated \$1200.00 of their own money, then raised an additional \$400.00 through subscriptions in order to purchase Goshen's first piece of firefighting equipment, a hand pump that cost \$900.00, along with two hose carts and hose. On May 4, 1868, a rescue hook and ladder company was organized, and two years later, a seventeen (17) member Reliance Hose Company was formed July 2, 1870.

It was during this era that Goshen suffered its first line of duty death. On January 16, 1872, firefighter John Martin sustained fatal injuries during a fire that destroyed three buildings on Main Street across from the county courthouse. Firefighter Martin and several other men were attempting to remove a safe from one of the businesses when it fell on Martin, crushing him. Two men were able to lift the safe just enough while a third person pulled him free. Unfortunately, several hours later, firefighter Martin succumbed to his injuries.



The Gamewell fire alarm system was put into use in the early 1880's. This system was distributed throughout the city for the citizens to contact the fire department. This system remained in place until February 1, 1994 when the duties of the municipal alarm system, (or box alarm system) were relinquished to outside alarm contractors under control of the county government.

The City of Goshen had grown to four (4) hose companies by 1905. This led to discussion on the need for a Central station along with city owned teams of horses. Prior to this, the fire department would get their horses from the livery barn. Sometimes the livery would not have enough horses available to bring all the equipment. The city entered into a 5 year agreement with Harry A. Butterfield to lease a barn he owned on West Clinton Street and purchased two (2) teams of horses. Renovations to the barn were completed and Central station was opened on August 24, 1906. Additionally, four (4) men; Chief John Snobarger, Arthur Welty, William Wilkinson and Ed Titmore, were hired as Goshen's first full time paid firefighters. Their first fire run from the new station occurred September 14, 1906.

During 1911, the horse drawn fire department responded to the first automobile fire recorded in Goshen's history. Five (5) years after the car fire, Goshen purchased its first motorized fire truck. The truck consisted of two (2) fifty (50) gallon chemical tanks, hose, and ladders. The truck was built by the Peter Pirsch Co. of Kenosha, Wisconsin, and was received June 17, 1916. A team of horses, with a wagon of hose and ladders, were retained in reserve. They were retired in 1918.

By June 1922, the department had enough personnel in order to divide them into a two (2) platoon system of five (5) men each. This type of organization began to phase out the volunteer firefighters in the city of Goshen. The two (2) platoon system existed until 1982. The department then decided to form a three (3) platoon system with thirty four (34) men on three (3) shifts, and two (2) men providing staff functions (Fire Chief and Fire Inspector): a total of 36 members.

Another first for the city of Goshen was the addition of its ambulance service. In 1940, Goshen became one of the first cities of its size to provide an ambulance and trained emergency personnel to staff it.

1949 saw the construction and opening of North Side Station (Station #2) on Middlebury Street. It was built to enable firefighters to respond to calls on the north side of town in a timely fashion without being held up by trains passing through town. It remained in service until May 23, 1988, when construction of the Main Street overpass negated the need for two (2) stations in such close proximity.

A new Central station was constructed in 1965 at its present location on North Third Street. This was also the year that Goshen signed an agreement to purchase its first Snorkel, a 75 foot unit. It was delivered on March 30, 1967 at a cost of \$62,000.

College Avenue station (Station #3) opened in November 1972 to better serve the growing expansion in the southern part of the city. It housed Engine 3, and later, Goshen's second ambulance.

Central and College Avenue stations served the city well for nearly 24 years when expanding city boundaries revealed the need for yet another new station, this time on the west side of the city. Goshen's newest station, Reliance Memorial Fire Station was opened on October 30, 1996, located on Reliance Road. Along with the new station, nine (9) additional firefighters were hired to staff it. Reliance station became home to the first paramedic engine company in the state of Indiana with the delivery of the new Engine 4. It was placed into service in January 1997. Engine 4 served as a paramedic engine for several years until a third ambulance was placed into front line service and housed at Station 4.

July 2002, Goshen received its newest aerial truck, a 102 foot Tower/ladder truck built by Kovatch Mobile Equipment. This replaced the 1967 Snorkel unit which was then retired.

Presently there are three (3) stations. Central Station located at 209 N. Third St., College Ave. Station (Station #3) located at 1203 College Ave., and Reliance Memorial Fire Station (Station #4) located at 1728 Reliance Rd.

## Key Elements

We are a group with selective membership; we have chosen to be members of the Goshen Fire Department. If individuals choose to belong, there are expectations and standards of behavior that are not optional. These expectations and standards serve the common good of our customers and our members.

- We, as a department, exist to provide the best service possible to our citizens. If we lose sight of this fact there is no need for our existence.
- To provide this “best service possible” we rely on our members who are the foundation of great service.
- Membership in our organization requires a commitment to both the department and our citizens.
- Each member is responsible for his or her own performance and is accountable for his or her own actions. We also have a responsibility to the public and other members.
- Corrective discipline that allows a member “a way back.”
- Identify and recognize excellence. “Catch” people doing the right thing.
- Recognize “job burnout” and strive to keep members interested.
- This philosophy will be continually communicated to both existing and new members.
- Provide expectations for treatment, behavior, performance and leadership that all officers will use when interacting with members.

## Responsibilities to Ourselves and our Customers

*“Each individual is responsible and accountable for his or her own actions and to some extent the well being of other members.”*

1. Interactions with Internal and External Customers should include:
  - a. Consideration; be considerate of others' values, ideals, possessions and feelings.
  - b. Discretion: Be discrete in things we say and do to each other.
  - c. Acceptance: accept differences in each other.
  - d. Unity: value and girder the unity of the department. Not only in good times but in difficult times as well.
2. Remember the “Golden Rule” and be nice!
3. Individualism may not be acceptable if: 1) it causes significant distraction; 2) it detracts from professionalism; or 3) it puts other members at a disadvantage in the organization.
4. Our department strives for excellence. If something is preventing you from excelling you must notify an officer at the first opportunity.
5. Realize that there are some things only you can do for yourself.
6. No system can overcome a member's lack of respect for him/herself or others.
7. Each person's stature in the department will be re-enforced by their conduct and performance. *In other words, you will only receive the respect you earn, no matter what your formal position is in the system. Your reputation is precious and starts the day you enter the GFD family, guard and nurture it.*

## Discipline

1. A positive work environment is maintained by COMMITMENT and DISCIPLINE, preferably self-discipline.
2. Members are expected to manage their own behavior in compliance with federal and state law, the department's rules and regulations, SOG, chief's orders and this document. If this is followed very little supervision will be needed.
3. Verbal abuse, malicious acts and physical fighting are not acceptable.
4. Officers' instructions should be followed in a cooperative and positive manner.
5. When self-discipline breaks down discipline will be imposed. The discipline will be designed to correct the situation and return the member to good standing in the department.
6. Disciplinary actions will be corrective, progressive and lawful.
7. Abuse of drugs and alcohol.
  - a. **It is absolutely unacceptable to use illegal drugs on or off duty!**
  - b. Abuse of prescription drugs or alcohol is not appropriate conduct.
  - c. Use of alcohol or the use or possession of illegal drugs on department property is unacceptable.

## **The Officers' Role**

1. Officers are expected to carry out their responsibilities in a considerate and respectful way.
  - a. Positive motivation and reinforcement are the preferred methods of guiding members.
  - b. Positive and in some cases improving behavior/performance should be rewarded. In the same way, unacceptable behavior/performance should never be rewarded!
2. Officers should lead by example and coach/counsel members regularly not just when a problem arises.
  - a. Chronic Unsatisfactory behavior/performance must be documented.
3. The way to help a member back to good standing.
  - a. Be positive after discipline to help manage and direct the member back to good standing.
    - i. Provide guidance/counseling to make the way back successful.
  - b. Absolute solutions to disciplinary problems may have to be dictated from upper-level officers. These instances should be rare.

## **Being Responsible Leaders**

Leadership is THE critical element in maintaining high standards of performance and a positive professional image of the department with the community.

Whether formal or informal, leaders are setting examples ALL the time. On or off duty, consciously or unconsciously, good or bad, it is always there. Someone is always watching!

- a. Leaders should periodically self evaluate their actions and words.
- b. As a leader your actions speak louder than your words.

Leaders articulate their expectations of people they are responsible for and stress accountability.

- a. Problems should be dealt with objectively and not taken personally.

Leaders are also followers in other groups, functions or relationships. Don't do things to your boss that you wouldn't want done to you.

***“Leadership is practiced not so much in words as in attitude and actions.”***

***Harold Geneen***

***“Effective leaders elevate people to a level above that of resources.”***

***unknown***



## **Maintaining the Environment**

**All** members must accept the responsibility of maintaining our positive work culture, exceptional service, and constant improvement!

We assume that our members do not need close supervision and that each individual is highly motivated and self-starting.

A significant part of this organization's excellence is leadership from our Union.

- a. The Union's role is defined in the disciplinary process and it should be a strict guardian of due process in any disciplinary procedure.
- b. An advocate for safety.
- c. A partner in planning

***“Because thinking determines life, it is a common habit to blame life on the environment.”***

***“Environment modifies life but does not govern life.”***

***“The soul is stronger than its surroundings.”***

***William James***

## Establishing Individual Expectations and Roles

***“The greatest discovery of my generation is that human beings can alter their lives by altering their attitudes of mind.”***

***William James***

This philosophy of behavior has been described in specific detail and may be condensed to;

- a. Be Nice
- b. Treat others as you wish to be treated.
  - i. These two simple phrases are more difficult to practice than they appear. They require a constant conscious effort on everyone's part, every day.

This philosophy of behavior is intended to describe and maintain an environment in which the members may be motivated, optimistic, productive and happy.

Remember, you are not just an employee, you are a member of the Goshen Fire Department!

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Prescott Fire Way