

UNIFIED FIRE AUTHORITY BOARD POLICY MANUAL	
Chapter 2 <i>UFA Administration</i>	Section 8 <i>Free Speech</i>

Relevant Information: As public employees, employees of the UFA are entitled to the protections of the First Amendment freedom of speech. An employee therefore cannot be disciplined solely on the basis of speech, subject to certain restrictions and exceptions. Protected speech includes speech made on an employee’s own time while not performing job duties and concerning matters of public concern. However, the UFA may restrict speech that occurs pursuant to an employee’s official duties, speech on UFA matters that are not matters of public concern (based on content, form, and context), or when the UFA’s interests, as an employer, in promoting the efficiency of public service are sufficient to outweigh an employee’s free speech interests. The analysis of the reasonableness of restricting speech by public employers is generally known as the *Pickering/Garcetti* line of jurisprudence.

Policy Statement: It is the policy of the Board that UFA employees are entitled to the full protections of the First Amendment’s freedom of speech, subject to reasonable restrictions consistent with the law.