

Organization

Book:	1 Organization
Chapter	II Definition of Terms
Subject	Non-Sexual Language
Code	1-II-3
Revised	1/01/2003

3.01 Purpose

To establish policy and guidelines relative to the use of non-sexual language in Fire Department correspondence, presentations, and publications.

3.02 Policy

- A. Jersey Village Emergency Services correspondence, presentations, publications, etc , shall be written without reference to gender.
- B. The acceptable alternatives to the male only pronoun in order of preference are:
 - 1. Rewording a sentence to eliminate unnecessary gender pronouns whenever feasible. (Example: “The average American drinks his coffee black.” To “The average American drinks black coffee.”
 - 2. Recase the sentence in a plural to eliminate gender pronouns. (Example: Most Americans drink black coffee”
 - 3. Replace the masculine pronoun with “you”. Note: this works best in informal writing or speech. (Example: “If you’re an average American, you drink black coffee.”
 - 4. Use both gender pronouns in the he/she form, alternating he/she with she/he. (Example: Each employee should request the information from his/her supervisor.”)
- C. Women and men should receive the same treatment in all areas. Physical descriptions, sexist references, demeaning stereotypes, and condescending phrases should not be used.
 - 1. Do not assume maleness when both sexes are involved.
 - 2. Do not gratuitously mention family relationships when they have no relevance to the subject at hand.
 - 3. Use the same standard for men and women in deciding whether to include specific mention of personal appearance or martial and family situations.
 - 4. Women should be referred to by their own names rather than in terms of their roles as wife, mother, etc.
 - 5. Use first and last names, then last names only for both sexes instead of last names for men (Smith) and Ms. Smith for women.
- D. Avoid value judgments based on sex:

No	Yes
A man sized job	Sizable, large job
A manly effort	Valiant effort
The weaker sex	Women
Little women, better half	Wife

- E. Avoid attaching suffixes or using special terms which denote sex.
For example:

No	Yes
Policeman, Policewoman	Police Officer
Newsman, Newswoman	Reporter
Businessman, Businesswoman	Executive, Manager
Mailman	Mail Carrier
Foreman	Supervisor
Fireman	Firefighter
Airline steward/Stewardess	Flight Attendant
Crewman	Crewmember
- F. Alternatives for sexist words and phrases

Term	Alternative
Wives/Husbands	Spouses
Manmade	Synthetic, artificial
Manning	Staffing
Manpower	Labor, Staff, People
Personnel	Human Resources
- G. Use Ms. to refer to single and married women unless the individual addressed prefers Miss or Mrs.
- H. Avoid using “girl” or “boy” when referring to employees over 18 years of age.
- I. Use worker’s compensation, workmen’s compensation

3.03 Responsibility

It is the responsibility of all employees and members of the Jersey Village Emergency Services to correctly follow the prescribed policy and procedures relative to the use of non-sexual language.