

	<p style="text-align: center;">BRIDGEPORT POLICE DEPARTMENT</p> <p style="text-align: center;">POLICY AND PROCEDURE GENERAL ORDER</p>	Distribution	General Order Number
		ALL PERSONNEL	1.01
		Original Issue Date	Reissue/Effective Date
		10/17/17	2/1/19
<p>Order Title:</p> <p>LAW ENFORCEMENT FUNCTION</p>	Accreditation Standard:	Section	
	POSTC 1.6.1, 1.6.2, 1.6.3	1	
		Section Title	
		DEPARTMENT ROLE AND AUTHORITY	
<p>Rescinds:</p> <p>1.1.1.1, 1.1.1.2, 1.1.1.3, 1.1.6, 1.1.7, 1.1.7.1-1.1.7.9, 1.3.38, 1.3.45, 1.3.46</p>	Armando J.Perez, Chief of Police		

This General Order is for departmental use only and does not apply in any criminal or civil proceeding. This General Order should not be construed as creation of a higher legal standard of safety or care in an evidentiary sense with respect to third party claims. Violations of this General Order will only form the basis for departmental administrative sanctions. Violations of law will form the basis for civil and criminal sanctions in a recognized judicial setting

I. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to establish a written directive that requires all officers, prior to assuming sworn status, to take and subsequently abide by an Oath of Office and Code of Ethics. In addition, the department’s role in criminal justice and social service diversion programs shall be specified.

II. POLICY

It is the policy of the Bridgeport Police Department (“the Department”) that all officers shall take an Oath of Office prior to assuming sworn status and shall also abide by the Department’s Code of Ethics. For all sworn employees, the Mayor or his/her designee will administer the oath.

An oath is universally recognized as a solemn pledge that someone makes when they sincerely intend to commit to what they advocate and affirm. The trust and support of the community are essential if the Department is to fulfill its commitment to the citizens and the community. Sincere commitment to an oath can provide vital guidance to officers during their career on most crucial decisions; a moral anchoring that can endure the test of time, and a solid, emotional foundation when facing difficult moments. Officers must always behave in an ethical manner by abiding by this oath to the best of their ability. [\(See G.O. 1.01 B, Standards of Conduct\)](#)

III. PROCEDURE

A. Oath of Office

1. Police officers take risks and suffer inconveniences to protect the lives, defend civil liberties, and secure the safety of fellow citizens. They endure such risks and tolerate such inconveniences on behalf of strangers. Consequently, police work is one of the more noble and selfless occupations in society. Making a difference in the quality of life is an opportunity that policing provides, and few other professions can offer. A public affirmation of adhering to an Oath of Office is a powerful vehicle demonstrating ethical standards.
2. To have continual success at enhancing integrity within an organization, department leaders must ensure the oath is recited frequently and displayed throughout the organization as well as ensuring ethical mentoring and role modeling are consistent, frequent and visible. The following oath is adopted as the official oath of office for sworn members of the Department:

I do solemnly swear that I will bear true faith and allegiance to the United States of America and the State of Connecticut, and will support the constitution and the laws thereof, so help me God.

I do solemnly swear that I will faithfully and impartially discharge and perform all duties incumbent upon me as a police officer of the City of Bridgeport.

I hereby accept the office of Police Officer for the Bridgeport Police Department, and agree to obey and be bound by such rules and regulations as are or may be from time to time, laid down for the government of the Police Department of the City of Bridgeport.

3. Prior to assuming sworn status, all police personnel shall take an Oath of Office and pledge never to betray their badge, integrity or character and never to compromise the public trust. A copy of the Oath of Office is attached to this order as **Appendix A**. A signed copy will be placed in the officer's training and personnel file, as well as maintained with the Office of the City Clerk and Professional Standards Unit.

B. Code of Ethics

1. There is little disagreement among law enforcement administrators that upholding professional ethics is the most critical issue facing our profession. From recruiting and selection, through promotions and assignments, to training and field activities, no other factor weaves such a powerful web

through every aspect of policing. The conduct and behavior of police officers should emphasize the Department's core values and principles, to the extent that they meet or exceed the public's expectations, in the delivery of professional law enforcement services.

2. All employees of the Bridgeport Police Department are required to abide and uphold the highest standards of ethical conduct for law enforcement agencies, and shall share equally in a commitment to its mission, goals and objectives. Thus, all sworn officers shall abide by, and are bound by, the spirit and intent of all adopted codes of conduct. These standards of ethical conduct shall serve as the guide for the conduct for all officers, employees, and citizen volunteers of the Department. Therefore, all officers of the Bridgeport Police Department shall abide by the International Association of Chiefs of Police Law Enforcement Code and Canon of Ethics, a copy of which appears as **Appendix B**.

C. Truthfulness

1. The integrity of police service is based on truthfulness. All employees will always be truthful in their dealings with the public, their supervisors, the court system, and in all of other official duties, both orally and in writing.
2. Employees shall always report accurately and truthfully on all Department documents. No employee shall knowingly or willfully depart from the truth in giving testimony, or in creating a written report, affidavit, or statement about any action or inactions that relates to the member's employment with the Bridgeport Police Department. This section also encompasses the creation of any time sheets, vouchers, or any official document associated with the member's employment.
3. Employees of the Bridgeport Police Department shall truthfully answer all questions related to their scope of employment and operations of the Department. Withholding or embellishing pertinent information in an official Department investigation shall be deemed a violation of this directive.
4. The requirement to be honest and forthright, and not knowingly or willfully departing from the truth, applies to all communications: in person, verbal, written, telephonic, electronic, or via radio.
5. Employees knowing of or suspecting other employees of violating laws, ordinances, Department policy, special orders, or general directives shall report the same to their supervisor. Employees inhibited from reporting violations through the appropriate chain-of-command are required to submit the information directly to the Chief of Police or Internal Affairs.
6. This section does not prohibit use of deception in an appropriate criminal

investigation.

7. Department employees who violate this section may be subject to discipline, up to and including termination and revocation of police officer certification within the State of Connecticut.

D. Discretion

1. All sworn officers of the Bridgeport Police Department are expected to use discretion when exercising their legal authority and carrying out their assigned responsibilities. Discretion is the power of free decision or the latitude of choice, within legal guidelines. When discretionary power is poorly exercised, it may be viewed by the public as bias, favoritism, or even corruption. Therefore, when exercising discretion in the performance of duty, it is imperative that officers take into consideration the intent of the law, the goals and objectives of the Department, the best interests of the community, and any mitigating circumstances surrounding each incident.
2. Bridgeport Police Department officers may exercise discretion except when their decision is unlawful, violates department policy, or conflicts with the instructions of a supervisor. Officers of this agency do not have discretion to disobey a lawful order.
3. A “totality of circumstances” approach should be employed by officers at all times during the performance of their duty, especially when exercising arrest authority. Upon evaluation of the situation and consideration of Department policy and procedure, officers should give thought to possible alternative resolutions.
4. The use of discretion should be carefully reviewed by a supervisor and restricted in certain situations such as Family Violence investigations, DWI investigations, serious motor vehicle crashes, and felonies. Greater latitude of discretionary judgment will be permitted in the investigation of misdemeanors, infractions, or City ordinances. Each officer will be held accountable for the proper use of discretion in any given situation.

E. Courtesy

1. When referring to, or addressing a superior officer, each sworn member of the Department shall use the appropriate rank title of the officer being addressed, or “Sir” or “Ma’am,” as appropriate.
2. **SALUTES**
 - a. Hand Salutes

Hand Salutes shall be rendered by sworn members of the Police Department when in uniform in the following form:

Raise the right hand smartly until the tip of the forefinger touches the lower part of the headdress or forehead above the right eye, thumb and fingers extended and joined, palm to the left, forearm inclined at about 45 degrees, upper arm parallel to the ground, hand and wrist straight. When the salute is answered by the superior officer, return the arm smartly to the side.

b. Salutes to Supervisory Officers

- 1) Sworn members of the Police Department when in uniform, when meeting or passing a supervisory officer of the rank of Lieutenant or above, shall offer the prescribed salute, unless impracticable to do so. It is the duty of the subordinate to offer the salutation and of the higher ranking officer to return it. Sworn members of the Police Department, when not in uniform, are not required to salute.
- 2) Sworn members of the Police Department in uniform shall, before addressing a supervisory officer of a higher rank or being addressed by him/her, will stand at attention during any formal events, such as award/promotion ceremonies, graduations, funerals, etc. They shall remain at attention (unless upon indication that such position need not be maintained) until the orders, instructions, or conversations are completed.
- 3) Prior to entering the office of any ranking officer the Police Department, members shall knock, announce themselves, and ask for permission to enter.
- 4) Upon entering the office of any ranking officer, sworn members of the Police Department when in uniform shall remove their cap or hat, if worn.
- 5) Sworn members of the Police Department lining parade routes, at scenes of active fires, or on other occasions when a large number of police personnel are assembled for a specified purpose, shall not salute supervisory officers of a higher rank unless they address or are addressed by him/her.
- 6) When in ranks or formations, sworn members of the Police Department shall not salute, unless directed to do so by the officer in immediate charge.

F. Flag and National Anthem

1. The flag of the United States of America shall be displayed on a stationary pole at all Bridgeport Police facilities from sunrise to sunset, weather permitting. The colors will be displayed at half-staff only by order of the Chief or the Mayor.
2. For the purpose of ceremonies and special events, on the approach of the colors, members in uniform will face the flag at attention and render a military salute. The salute should be made when the colors approach within six paces, and until they have passed six paces beyond. Members will render the same courtesy in civilian dress, except with the right hand over the heart.
3. Officers who for safety or security reasons or who have been ordered to face the crowd shall not be required to salute.
4. When the National Anthem is played, uniformed members will stand at attention facing the flag and render a hand salute. The salute will be held from the first note of music to the conclusion of the last note. When in civilian dress, members will stand at attention.

Appendix A

Bridgeport Police Department Oath of Office

I do solemnly swear that I will bear true faith and allegiance to the United States of America and the State of Connecticut, and will support the constitution and the laws thereof, so help me God.

I do solemnly swear that I will faithfully and impartially discharge and perform all duties incumbent upon me as a police officer of the City of Bridgeport.

I hereby accept the office of Police Officer for the Bridgeport Police Department, and agree to obey and be bound by such rules and regulations as are or may be from time to time, laid down for the government of the Police Department of the City of Bridgeport.

Appendix B

Bridgeport Police Department Code of Ethics

PERFORMANCE OF THE DUTIES OF A POLICE OFFICER

A police officer shall perform all duties impartially, without favor or affection or ill will and without regard to status, sex, race, religion, political belief or aspiration. All citizens will be treated equally and with courtesy, consideration and dignity.

Officers will never allow personal feelings, animosities or friendships to influence official conduct. Laws will be enforced appropriately and courteously and, in carrying out their responsibilities, officers will strive to obtain maximum cooperation from the public. They will conduct themselves in appearance and deportment in such a manner as to inspire confidence and respect for the position of public trust that they hold.

DISCRETION

A police officer will use responsibly the discretion vested in the position and exercise it within the law. The principle of reasonableness will guide the officer's determinations and the office will consider all surrounding circumstances in determining whether any legal actions shall be taken.

Consistent and wise use of discretion, based on professional policing competence, will do much to preserve good relationships and retain the confidence of the public. There can be difficulty in choosing between conflicting courses of action. It is important to remember that a timely word of advice rather than an arrest – which may be correct in appropriate circumstances – can be a more effective means of achieving a desired end.

USE OF FORCE

A police officer will never employ unnecessary force or violence and will use only such force in the discharge of duty as is reasonable in all circumstances. Force should be used only with the greatest restraint and only after discussion, negotiation and persuasion have been found to be inappropriate or ineffective.

While the use of force is occasionally unavoidable, every police officer will refrain from applying the unnecessary infliction of pain or suffering and will never engage in cruel, degrading or inhuman treatment of any person.

CONFIDENTIALITY

Whatever a police officer sees, hears or learns of which is of a confidential nature, will be kept secret unless the performance of duty or legal provisions require otherwise.

Members of the public have a right to security and privacy and information obtained about them must not be improperly divulged.

INTEGRITY

A police officer will not engage in acts of corruption or bribery nor will an officer condone such acts by other police officers.

The public demands that the integrity of police officers be above reproach. Police officers must therefore avoid any conduct that might compromise integrity and thus undercut the public confidence in a law enforcement agency. Officers will refuse to accept gifts, presents, subscriptions, favors, gratuities or promises that could be interpreted as seeking to cause the officer to refrain from performing official responsibilities honestly and within the law. Police Officers must not receive private or special advantage from their official status. Respect from the public cannot be bought; it can only be earned and cultivated.

COOPERATION WITH OTHER OFFICERS AND AGENCIES

Police officers will cooperate with all legally authorized agencies and their representative in the pursuit of justice.

An officer or agency may be one among many organizations that may provide law enforcement services to a jurisdiction. It is imperative that police officers assist colleagues fully and completely with respect and consideration at all times.

PERSONAL / PROFESSIONAL CAPABILITIES

Police officers will be responsible for their own standard of professional performance and will take every reasonable opportunity to enhance and improve their level of knowledge and competence. Through study and experience a police officer can acquire the high level of knowledge and competence that is essential for the efficient and effective performance on duty. The acquisition of knowledge is a never-ending process of personal and professional development that should be pursued constantly.

PRIVATE LIFE

Police officers will behave in a manner that does not bring discredit to the Bridgeport Police Department or themselves.

A police officer's character must always be exemplary, thus maintaining a position of respect in the community in which he lives and serves. The officer's personal behavior must be beyond reproach.
