



Colorado Springs Police Department General Order

400 Employee Conduct (Sworn and Civilian)

Section 400 –Conduct Standards

Effective Date: 6/12/2025

Supersedes Date: 5/16/2024

.01 Purpose

The purpose of this directive is to assist department employees, both sworn and civilian, in conducting themselves and representing the department appropriately.

.02 Cross-Reference

[GO 402 Orders and Discretionary Judgment](#)

[GO 600 Complaints and Internal Investigations](#)

[GO 1612 Records Security](#)

[GO 1780 Legislative Review](#)

[DL-600-10 IA Findings Notifications](#)

[DL-1020-23 Response to Civil Matters](#)

.03 Discussion

The complex nature of the law enforcement profession makes the agency's success dependent upon the individual character of each employee. Each employee's character determines the character of the department, which is reflected in the services provided to the community. Department personnel must combine personal integrity with commitment to the community and department. This results in the character necessary to maintain ethical standards and to ensure equitable treatment for all citizens.

Law enforcement employees are highly visible representatives of government and have a major impact on the community. Department members will conduct themselves while performing their

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duties in a manner that does not bring discredit on individual law enforcement employees, the department, the City of Colorado Springs, or the law enforcement profession.

.04 Policy

It is the policy of the Colorado Springs Police Department (CSPD) that all personnel conduct themselves ethically and in accordance with all laws, rules, directives, and orders.

.05 Definitions

Concerted Activities: As defined in the Colorado Protection for Public Worker's Act, means organizing activity and other activity for mutual aid or protection among employees.

Direct Reporting Relationship: A relationship in which one of the involved employees has direct oversight over the performance of another (e.g., the employee and the next level of supervisor) to include the immediate oversight and supervision of an employee's day-to-day work and tasks. This includes situations in which a supervisor can directly influence performance and/or administrative recommendations involving another employee (e.g., an employee and a supervisor assigned to the same shift or unit).

Official Directives: any written directives; policies; procedures; bulletins; published manuals; or directive/assignment (both verbal and written) from any CSPD chain of command.

.10 Laws and Directives

Employees will obey all:

- Federal, state, and local laws;
- Lawful orders of superiors (regardless of method of delivery e.g., whether delivered in person, by phone, by electronic communication);
- Official directives of the Colorado Springs Police Department and any of its organizational components to which they are assigned;
- Official directives of the City of Colorado Springs; and
- As applicable, Civil Service Rules.

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Department employees will not fail to perform any acts required, nor commit any acts which violate the regulations listed above.

A conviction for the violation of any law will be prima facie evidence of a violation of this section.

An arrest, prosecution, or conviction is not necessary to find an employee in violation of this section. An administrative investigation will be conducted regardless of the outcome of a criminal investigation.

.12 Conduct Unbecoming an Employee

Conduct unbecoming an employee includes both on and off-duty conduct which:

- Disrupts an employee's duties, City operations, or the delivery of public services, including conduct that impairs employee professional relationships required to perform their duties;
- Breaches legally required confidentiality; or
- Interferes with the department's or City's ability to fulfill its obligations to citizens.

If this allegation is listed in an internal investigation, the Internal Affairs Section will notify the Director of Professional Services via their chain of command.

.13 Departing from the Truth

Employees will not knowingly make an untruthful statement concerning a material fact or knowingly omit a material fact on an official criminal justice record, while testifying under oath, during an internal affairs investigation or administrative investigation, or disciplinary process. The department will report employees who are untruthful in these ways in conformance with DL-600-10 IA Findings Notifications.

.14 Deceptive Acts

Employees will truthfully answer all lawful questions asked of them that are specifically directed and narrowly related to the scope of employment and operations of the department. Being

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dishonest or untruthful includes knowingly or willfully making false statements or intentional omissions of material facts or information.

Employees will not falsify information on any official documents or any official systems.

Employees will not be knowingly or intentionally untruthful in the performance of their official duties, **except that nothing in this policy prevents an officer from properly using deception as a technique in an official criminal investigation.**

Employees will not feign illness, injury, or falsely report themselves ill or injured.

.15 Duty to Report Misconduct

All department personnel are responsible for promptly reporting employee misconduct to the next higher level of authority in their chain of command or to Internal Affairs, and for participating in the investigation of the alleged misconduct. Upon receipt of this information, the supervisor or Internal Affairs will initiate the appropriate level of investigation following [GO 600 Complaints and Internal Investigations](#).

.16 Behavior Toward Other Department Personnel

Employees will not engage in conduct that impairs professional relationships among department personnel that are required to perform their duties.

Employees will not engage in conduct toward other department personnel that materially disrupts another employee's duties, including supervisory authority.

Video or audio recording

Department personnel will not video or audio record conversations with another city employee, with any employee of a local, state, or federal law enforcement agency, or with any employee of a local, state, or federal prosecutor's office without that person's knowledge. This prohibition does not apply to situations in which:

- The person is a suspect, victim, or witness in an authorized criminal or administrative investigation;

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- The employee is engaged in concerted activities or other activities protected under the Colorado Protections for Public Worker’s Act; or
- The employee is recording evidence of unlawful discrimination, harassment, or retaliation.

All recording must comply with Colorado law.

These recordings must be maintained if they are covered by the Colorado Municipal Records Retention Manual, in the manner described in department directives, including submission for inclusion in official department retention systems (e.g., Blue Team).

Nothing in this section prohibits compliance with policy or laws pertaining to body worn camera usage.

.17 Bias toward Other Department Personnel

Department personnel will not express to another employee by word or action any prejudice, bias, or discriminatory behavior on the basis of race, color, ethnicity, national origin, ancestry, sex, gender identity, gender expression, age, pregnancy status, religion, sexual orientation, genetic information, spousal or civil union status, veteran status, disability, or other similar personal characteristics or status protected by applicable law and in accordance with the City of Colorado Springs Policy & Procedure Manuals.

.18 Employees to Accept Assignments

Notwithstanding the assignment of specific duties and responsibilities to department personnel, employees will perform all other duties required of them by competent authority. This will include accepting assignments to respond to and handle calls for service and other duties received either through the Communications Center or through a supervisor.

.19 Knowledge of Conditions

Regardless of assignment, sworn personnel should be sufficiently knowledgeable and prepared to serve in a patrol officer capacity.

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.20 Notification of Criminal Charges, Traffic Charges, Civil Matters

Employees must notify a supervisor in their chain of command when they have been charged with a criminal offense or traffic violation. Employees must also notify a supervisor in their chain of command if they are a restrained party in a protection order or the subject of an order restricting their possession or use of firearms. Because there are outside notification requirements and other time sensitive actions pertaining to sworn personnel, they must make the notification to a supervisor in their chain of command immediately. Civilian personnel must make the notification within five days.

The supervisor receiving such a notification will immediately notify the Internal Affairs section and the remaining members of the employee's chain of command, up to and including the division commander.

Employees must notify a supervisor in their chain of command of the outcome of a case no later than five days after its conclusion.

.21 Civil Cases and Processes

Employees will not serve civil processes or use City resources or their authority as a department employee to assist in civil matters that are not related to their employment.

.22 Confidentiality and Official Business

Under the City's Policies and Procedures Manuals, information is confidential when it is protected from disclosure by law or the department has determined it should be safeguarded from improper disclosure. All official business of the department will be treated as confidential and such information will not be released outside of the department unless specifically authorized by an employee's assigned position or by direction of a supervisor.

Department personnel will not correspond with any person or entity concerning protected or confidential information, except as provided by department directives. Department personnel will not use departmental stationery or forms for any purpose other than the transaction of official business.

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Department personnel will only use their access to department systems and records for official purposes, as described in [GO 1612 Records Security](#).

Nothing in this section is intended to limit employee communications protected by law.

.23 Identities

The identity of complainants, suspects, defendants, victims, witnesses, or friends and families of such persons must be protected to the extent allowed by law. Their identities should not be released to persons outside the department unless necessary or required to do so (e.g., suspect identification pertaining to an arrest). The needless or careless divulgence of the identities of such persons is considered a breach of police responsibility and is neglect of duty.

.24 Information on Operations

Employees will not release information that may delay an arrest, aid a person to escape, destroy evidence, remove stolen or embezzled goods or that may in any other way jeopardize the effective performance of police responsibilities.

.25 Coordination and Assisting Other Personnel

In carrying out the department's mission, employees will coordinate their efforts in a manner that will establish and maintain the highest possible standard of efficiency and conduct. In accordance with their authorized powers and duties, department personnel will act together, assist and protect each other in the maintenance of order, prevention of crime, apprehension of offenders, enforcement of laws, and in performance of other department functions. Any deliberate and unjustified withholding of police information from other authorized department personnel is prohibited.

.26 Interference in Criminal Investigations

Personnel will not interfere with criminal cases being investigated by other department personnel or by any other governmental agency, unless:

- Ordered to intervene by a superior; or

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- The intervening employee reasonably believes a failure to act would constitute a violation of department policy or law (e.g., making an arrest that is not supported by probable cause).

In either situation, the intervening employee will notify those responsible for the investigation of their involvement in the case and they will document their actions in a case report/supplement.

Personnel will not undertake any investigation or other official action not part of their official duties without first obtaining permission from their supervisor unless the situation requires immediate police action.

This subsection only applies to criminal investigations. Nothing in this subsection is intended to be applied to or limit an officer's legal responsibility to intervene in use of force situations.

.27 Professional Relationships

CSPD personnel are responsible for ensuring they maintain consistently professional behavior in their interactions with the public which does not reasonably create an appearance of impropriety or reflect negatively on the department.

The department strictly prohibits officers, staff, and volunteers from developing relationships with community members that are personal in nature for the duration of the community member receiving professional services from the department. This is inclusive of romantic, intimate, and/or personal relationships.

If such relationships exist prior to the community member receiving CSPD services, the employee will make that conflict of interest known to their supervisor and will not participate in the services involving that community member.

CSPD personnel will not be unduly influenced nor allow another to assert control as a result of developing a romantic, intimate, or personal relationship.

Allegations of impropriety determined to be false and malicious in nature will be handled in accordance with [DL-600-02 Handling of False Complaints](#).

.28 Prohibited Relationships

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No department member, whether married or single, will engage in a romantic, intimate, or sexual relationship with another employee when there is a direct reporting relationship.

.29 Allowable Relationships

Employees who have a relationship (e.g., dating/intimate relationship, familial) that does not constitute a direct reporting relationship may work in the same chain of command/section. In such a circumstance, the involved employees will immediately notify the highest-ranking employee's supervisor of the relationship. The supervisor receiving this notification will ensure the relationship does not create a conflict of interest. This can include making alternative arrangements to the approval of performance evaluations, disciplinary review, complaint intake, resource allocation and other supervisory oversight. If it becomes operationally burdensome or impractical to make alternate arrangements to avoid supervisory oversight or a conflict of interest, the employee and/or supervisor may be directed to change schedule, shift, section, and/or division.

.30 Nepotism

Employees are prohibited from making decisions that are improperly influenced by intimate or familial relationships. This includes, but is not limited to, personnel decisions, financial decisions, and the selection to positions within the department.

.31 Public Statements and Appearances

Employees of the department will not publicly comment about the department, its policies, or personnel, by means of written, oral, or other expression, where such expression is defamatory unlawful, or materially disrupts department personnel, department operations, or the delivery of public services.

.32 Engagement with Governmental Bodies and Legislative Processes

Department members will follow department policy and procedure when they are, or may reasonably be believed to be, speaking, or writing on behalf of the department. It is reasonable for someone to conclude a department member is representing the department when they are in

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uniform or other department apparel, when they are identified by themselves or others as a CSPD member, or they otherwise display indications of acting in an official CSPD capacity.

Department members may have an opportunity to represent the department in presentations, written recommendations, or public testimony to governmental bodies and/or as part of legislative processes. Governmental bodies include, but are not limited to, Colorado Springs City Council, the El Paso County Board of Commissioners, school districts' Boards of Education, the Colorado Springs Liquor Board, or the Colorado General Assembly.

Department members, when acting in their official capacity, must seek prior approval before making any comment outside the department on any legislative process. This includes providing live testimony, written opinions, meetings with legislative stakeholders (e.g., lobbyists, council members, senators, etc.), or other forms of communication directed to those associated with the legislative process. The approval procedure to engage in legislative processes is detailed in [GO 1780 Legislative Review](#) and includes approval by the Chief of Police or designee.

When acting in their official capacity, a similar approval process is required before representing the department or making a public statement to governing bodies in matters that are not related to legislative processes. Before independently taking such action, department members will seek approval through their direct chain of command, up to and including the Chief of Police or designee. If a member of Command Staff requests a department member's involvement in such matters, the participation is considered approved.

Nothing in this section is intended to curtail a department member's private, non-departmental participation in any aspect of public processes and issues. Nothing in this section shall be construed to prohibit an employee from testifying in a judicial matter when their testimony has been compelled by a lawfully served subpoena.

.33 Appropriating Property

Personnel will not willfully or knowingly appropriate any personal, found, evidentiary, or department property for their personal use.

.34 Loss of or Damage to Department Property

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Employees will use department equipment and property only for its intended purpose, and in accordance with established procedures. Whether issued to components or to individuals, all equipment and property will be maintained in proper condition. Willful or negligent damage or loss is subject to disciplinary action and may include the employee reimbursing the city for the cost to replace the equipment/property. Any significant damage or loss will be reported by memorandum, through the employee's chain of command to the deputy chief of their assigned bureau. If repayment is required, a copy of the memo will be forwarded to the Fiscal Services Section.

Any command staff officer may require that an offense report be made and/or that an internal investigation be conducted.

.35 Requests for Identifying Information and Department Identification

All employees will provide their title/rank, name, employee number, and duty assignment to any person, internally and externally, who is properly entitled to or who requests the information.

All employees will display or present their CSPD identification card and/or badge upon request.

When speaking with a person or leaving a voice message as part of their employment, employees will verbally identify themselves as officers, detectives, or civilian employees of the Colorado Springs Police Department

EXCEPTIONS: An employee is not required to provide their title/rank, name, display an identification card, or provide verbal identification over the phone, when such an action would jeopardize the employee's safety or a criminal case (e.g., during an undercover operation), or if the person requesting the information is an uninvolved third party whose behavior: a) is aggressive, hostile, confrontational, or antagonistic, either by words or action; b) involves negative actions directed toward the officer or other persons; or c) is an attempt to escalate a situation or insert themselves into actions being taken by the officer.

.36 Requests for Supervisory Personnel

If a person involved in a call for service, police action, or other police-initiated contact with department personnel asks to speak with a supervisor or requests that a supervisor be called to a

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scene, department members will contact such a supervisor at their earliest convenience to facilitate the request. If a supervisor is unavailable, the department member will notify the requestor of that information. The department member will attempt to obtain the requestor's name/contact information for later contact by a supervisor. The department member will also provide the requestor with the supervisor's name/contact information. If provided, the department member will provide the requestor's name/contact information to a supervisor.

The supervisor receiving such a request will make reasonable efforts to immediately respond to the request. If unavailable, the supervisor will be responsible for attempting to contact the requestor as soon as practical.

Department personnel are not required to obtain or facilitate contact with a supervisor upon request of a third party who is not involved in the call for service, police action, or other police-initiated contact with a department member. In instances where an uninvolved third party requests a supervisor, the officer will politely inform the person they are not involved in the police activity and a supervisor will not be summoned. Employees receiving such a request are encouraged to notify an on-duty supervisor of this interaction.

.37 Law Enforcement Officer Code of Ethics

Before earning the privilege of police authority, all officers of the Colorado Springs Police Department are required to take an oath to enforce the law and uphold the Constitutions of the United States and the State of Colorado, as well as to enforce the ordinances of the City of Colorado Springs. In undertaking these solemn responsibilities, officers agree to abide by the terms of the Law Enforcement Code of Ethics:

As a Law Enforcement Officer, my fundamental duty is to serve humankind; to safeguard lives and property; to protect the innocent against deception, the weak against oppression or intimidation, and the peaceful against violence or disorder; and to respect the Constitutional rights of all persons to liberty, equality and justice.

While performing my duties I will maintain courageous calm in the face of danger, scorn or ridicule; develop self-restraint; be truthful; and be constantly mindful of the welfare of others. I will obey the laws of the land and the regulations of my department. Whatever I see or hear of a confidential nature as defined by department policy will be kept confidential unless revelation is necessary in the performance of my duty.

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I will never act officiously or permit personal feelings, prejudices, animosities or friendships to influence my decisions in providing public safety to citizens. With no compromise for crime and with relentless prosecution of criminals, I will enforce the law courteously and appropriately without fear or favor, malice or ill will, never employing unnecessary force or violence and never accepting gratuities.

I recognize the badge of my office as a symbol of public faith, and I accept it as a public trust, to be held so long as I am true to the ethics of the police service. I will constantly strive to achieve these objectives and ideals, dedicating myself, to my chosen profession--law enforcement.

.38 Law Enforcement Officer Oath of Office

Employees take an oath to become a sworn officer, and for each sworn rank they achieve thereafter:

I, (Name), do swear [affirm, swear by the ever living God] that I will support the Constitution of the United States, the Constitution of the State of Colorado, the laws of the State of Colorado, and the Charter of the City of Colorado Springs and will faithfully perform the duties of the Office of Police Officer [Sergeant, Lieutenant, Commander, Deputy Chief, Chief] upon which I am about to enter to the best of my ability.

.39 Constitutional Rights

No person can be deprived of constitutional rights for committing or being suspected of committing a crime. Determining the constitutionality of a statute is the duty of the courts, not of the officer who properly seeks to enforce the law, as it exists. The department will enforce any state statute or local ordinance. In certain special assignments (e.g., task force), officers may be involved in the enforcement of federal law.

An officer who lawfully acts in this capacity is within the scope of their authority and does not deprive persons of their civil liberties. Officers will, within the scope of their authority, make reasonable inquiries, conduct impartial investigations, and make arrests supported by probable cause.

.40 Equality of Enforcement

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It is the responsibility of each police employee, sworn or civilian, to ensure that their actions and behavior interacting with the public are beyond reproach.

Similar circumstances require similar treatment in all areas of the city, as well as for all groups and individuals. Department personnel, therefore, will provide equitable service to all persons in the community.

.41 Enforcement of All Criminal and Traffic Laws

While the primary responsibility for enforcing certain criminal or traffic laws may be assigned to specific department assignments, all officers are responsible for taking prompt and proper police action concerning violations that come to their attention. Proper police action and discretionary judgment are detailed in [DL-1020-23 Responses to Civil Matters](#) and GO [402 Orders and Discretionary Judgment](#).

.42 Cowardice

While law enforcement is inherently dangerous, officers are expected to remain committed to their oath to safeguard life and property. Officers who avoid such dangers or who shy away from their sworn duty will be deemed guilty of cowardice and they will be subject to disciplinary action.

.43 Enforcement Action in Personal Matters

Officers will not take enforcement action in any situation in which they or a family member are personally involved. Self-defense situations or situations that pose a risk to the safety of the officer, their family member, or another person(s) are exempt from this section.

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