



Colorado Springs Police Department

General Order

400 Employee Conduct (Sworn and Civilian)

Section 400 – Professional Conduct

Effective Date: 1/3/2024

Supersedes Date: 1/6/2021

.01 Purpose

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

.02 Cross-Reference

[GO 401 Police Officer Conduct](#)

[GO 402 Orders and Discretionary Judgment](#)

[GO 409 Social Media – Department Usage](#)

[GO 500 Use of Force](#)

[GO 510 Reportable Force](#)

[GO 1056 Protective Orders](#)

[DL-600-02 Handling of False Complaints](#)

.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 a commitment to the community and department. From this union will come the character necessary to maintain the ethical standards necessary to ensure equitable treatment for all citizens and will reflect positively upon the department and the community.

.04 Policy

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

.05 Definitions

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 has the ability to 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 verbal directive/assignment from any CSPD chain of command.

Retaliatory Conduct: Any deliberate, purposeful action or failure to act, directed against a department member that causes or could reasonably be expected to cause, physical harm, property damage, or emotional stress. Such conduct could seriously impair the efficiency, safety or effectiveness of the department member, the department, or both. Such adverse actions may take many forms, including but not limited to, bullying, persistent offensive comments, threats, intimidation, false accusations, isolating, ostracizing, or acts that malign or disparage an individual's reputation.

.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.

Department employees will not omit any acts required of them, 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.

.12 Conduct Unbecoming a Civilian Employee

Civilians will conduct themselves, at all times, both on and off duty, in a manner that reflects most favorably on the department. This includes in person, verbally, and in writing. Conduct

unbecoming a civilian includes behavior that could bring the department into disrepute, discredit the employee as an employee of the department, or that could impair the operation or efficiency of the department or the employee.

.13 Departing from the Truth

Employees will not willfully or knowingly depart from the truth, in giving testimony or in connection with any official duties. Upon being asked by any supervisor, employees will truthfully answer all questions, which may be asked of them that are specifically directed and narrowly related to the scope of employment and operations of the department. Intentional omissions will be considered as departing from the truth.

Pursuant to C.R.S. § 24-31-305(2.5)(a), the Peace Officer Standards and Training (POST) Board will revoke a certification issued to a peace officer if that person knowingly made an untruthful statement concerning a material fact or knowingly omitted a material fact on an official criminal justice record, while testifying under oath, during an internal affairs investigation or administrative investigation, or disciplinary process.

.14 Duty to Report

Upon observing or otherwise becoming aware of a violation under this directive, a department employee is required to promptly report such violation to a supervisor. The supervisor receiving such information will evaluate the information and then confer with their direct chain of command to determine the best course of action, which could include initiating criminal and internal investigations.

.15 Behavior Toward Other Department Personnel

Department members will conduct themselves in a manner that fosters cooperation among members of this department, showing respect, courtesy, and professionalism in their dealings with one another. Department members will not use language or engage in acts that demean, harass, or intimidate other department members.

Department personnel will not record (video or audio) 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.

.16 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, gender, 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.

.17 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.

.18 Knowledge of Conditions

Department personnel are responsible for being thoroughly familiar with conditions that affect their assignments.

.20 Notification of Defendant Status

Anytime a department employee becomes the defendant in a judicial or quasi-judicial proceeding not associated with their employment with the department, they will report the specific circumstances (e.g. – details of the circumstances, outcome of court appearances, etc.) of that status to a supervisor in their direct chain of command within ten 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.

This notification is limited to circumstances when the employee becomes a defendant in any level of judicial proceeding, inclusive of traffic violations. This notification does not include non-work related, civil matters.

If the opposing party involved in a non-work-related civil case attempts to tie municipal liability to the case or threatens the employee's job status, the employee will immediately notify a supervisor within their direct chain of command. The supervisor receiving such a notification will immediately notify the remaining members of the employee's chain of command, up to and including the division commander.

.22 Civil Cases and Processes

Except for civil protection orders received while working for or representing the department, employees will not serve civil processes, nor will they render assistance in civil court cases.

Department personnel will, however, prevent breaches of the peace or quell disturbances growing out of such matters, and advise the parties why police action may not be possible.

CSPD officers should not become involved in serving protective orders issued by Courts outside the State of Colorado. This includes serving military and federal protection orders. Officers will, however, enforce any such written foreign court orders that are already in effect.

This directive does not apply to those situations when the city of Colorado Springs is a party to the case or in preparing information associated with such an action, to include information that is subpoenaed.

.30 Confidentiality

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.

.32 Identities

The identity of complainants, suspects, defendants, victims, witnesses, or friends and families of such persons must be protected. 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.

.34 Information on Operations

Employees will not release, to anyone, 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, hinder the effective performance of police responsibilities.

.36 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.

.38 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
- The intervening employee reasonably believes a failure to act would constitute an injustice or violation of 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 an officer's legal responsibility to intervene in Use of Force situations.

.40 Professional Relationships

CSPD personnel are responsible for ensuring they maintain consistently professional behavior, 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/personal relationships and discussions about personal lives/beliefs/non-work-related activities.

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 over their conditions of employment 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](#).

.42 Prohibited Relationships

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

.43 Allowable Relationships

Employees who have a relationship (e.g., **dating**/intimate relationship, **married**, 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.**

.45 Nepotism

Employees are prohibited from making decisions that subjectively favor those who they have established relationships with (e.g., intimate relationship, familial). This includes but is not limited to personnel decisions, financial decisions, and the selection to positions within the department.

.50 Public Statements and Appearances

Employees of the department will not publicly criticize or ridicule the department, its policies or personnel, by means of written, oral, or other expression, where such expression is defamatory, obscene and unlawful, or tends to undermine the effectiveness of the department or interfere with the maintenance of discipline or is made with reckless disregard for the truth.

.52 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 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.

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.

.60 Appropriating Property

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

.62 Loss of or Damage to Department Property

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.

.70 Official Business

Department personnel will not correspond with any person concerning their official activities, except as provided by department orders, nor will they use departmental stationery nor forms for any purpose other than the transaction of official business.

.80 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.

.82 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 scene, department members will contact such a supervisor at their earliest convenience in an attempt 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.