



Colorado Springs Police Department

General Order

401 Police Officer Conduct

Section 400 – Professional Conduct

Effective Date: 12/3/2020

Supersedes Date: 5/27/2013

.01 Purpose

The purpose of this directive is to set forth the ethical requirements and expectations the department has of its sworn members.

.02 Cross-Reference

[GO 104 Determining Probable Cause](#)

[GO 120 Treatment of the Public](#)

[GO 121 Fair & Impartial Policing](#)

[GO 400 Employee Conduct \(Sworn and Civilian\)](#)

[GO 402 Orders and Discretionary Judgment](#)

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

[DL-409-01 Social Media – Personal Usage](#)

.03 Discussion

Although personal integrity and adherence to high standards of conduct are expected of all police employees, some additional standards are applicable to police officers. As the officer is, in our society, the primary guardian of public safety, they are entrusted with special enforcement powers. It is, therefore, both appropriate and necessary that any community be protected from abuses of police authority.

An additional justification for applying higher standards to sworn officers is that they are highly visible representatives of government and have a major impact upon the community. For these reasons, officers of this department will conduct themselves in a manner that does not bring discredit upon individual officers, the department, the city of Colorado Springs, or the law enforcement profession.

.04 Policy

The Law Enforcement Code of Ethics is a statement of professionalism for police officers. In addition, the code exemplifies the department's concern for preserving the constitutional rights of all persons, as well as protecting the community from those who choose to violate the law. Therefore, the Law Enforcement Code of Ethics is hereby adopted by the Colorado Springs Police Department (CSPD) and serves to remind department personnel and citizens that the objectives of professional law enforcement are of the highest order.

.05 Definitions

This section intentionally left blank.

.10 Law Enforcement 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.

I will keep my private life unsullied as an example to all; maintain courageous calm in the face of danger, scorn or ridicule; develop self-restraint; and be constantly mindful of the welfare of others. Honest in thought and deed in both my personal and official life, I will be exemplary in obeying the laws of the land and the regulations of my Department. Whatever I see or hear of a confidential nature, or that is confided to me in my official capacity, will be kept ever secret unless revelation is necessary in the performance of my duty.

I will never act officiously or permit personal feelings, prejudices, animosities or friendships to influence my decisions. 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, before God, to my chosen profession--law enforcement.

.12 Law Enforcement Oath of Honor

Much like how the Law Enforcement Code of Ethics provides a detailed explanation of each officer's ethical commitment to the community, the Law Enforcement Oath of Honor serves as a condensed, yet powerful, reminder of those same obligations:

On my honor, I will never betray my badge, my integrity, my character, or the public trust. I will always have the courage to hold myself and others accountable for our actions. I will always uphold the Constitution, my community, and the agency I serve.

.20 Constitutional Rights

No person has a constitutional right to violate the law, nor can any person 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, 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.

.22 Equality of Enforcement

It is the responsibility of each police employee, sworn or civilian, to ensure that their actions and behavior, in this respect, 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 equal service to all persons in the community.

.24 Enforcement of All Criminal and Traffic Laws

While the primary responsibility for enforcing certain criminal or traffic laws may be delegated to particular subdivisions of the department, all officers are responsible for taking prompt and proper police action concerning any 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 Judgement](#), respectively.

.26 Knowledge of Conditions

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

.30 Conduct Unbecoming a Police Officer

Officers 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 police officer includes behavior that could bring the department into disrepute, discredit the officer as an officer of the department, or that could impair the operation or efficiency of the department or officer.

.32 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.

.34 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.