

Greer Police Department

General Order 110.2 Oath of Office/Ethics

This order consists of the following numbered sections:

- I. POLICY
- II. OATH OF OFFICE
- III. ETHICAL CONDUCT
- IV. ASSOCIATION
- V. INFORMANTS
- VI. VIOLATIONS OF ETHICS
- VII. EMPLOYEE RESPONSIBILITIES
- VIII. CONDUCT UNBECOMING
- IX. COURTESY
- X. ATTENTION TO DUTY
- XI. FINANCIAL OBLIGATIONS
- XII. TRAINING

By Order of: *Matt Hamby*
Chief of Police

February 20, 2023
CALEA 1.1.1; 1.2.2; 26.1.1

- I. **Policy:** This Department will maintain the highest standard of integrity by never violating the community's trust. All departmental employees must recognize that they are held to a higher standard than the private citizen because, in addition to representing the Department, they also represent the law enforcement profession. Conduct, on and off duty, must be beyond reproach. Agency employees must avoid any conduct that might compromise the integrity, morale, operations or efficiency of the Department. In the context of this policy, ethical conduct means the duty of all employees to conduct themselves at all times in a manner that reflects the ethical standards consistent with the rules and values published by this agency.

II. **Oath of Office**

- A. Each Greer Police Officer, prior to assuming sworn status, shall take and subsequently abide by an oath of office to equally, fairly and impartially enforce the law and to protect and defend the Constitutions of the United States and the State of South Carolina.
- B. A signed copy of the Oath of Office will be placed in the Officer's personnel file.

III. **Ethical Conduct**

- A. All sworn officers shall abide by the Law Enforcement Code of Ethics.
- B. Abuse of position: Employees shall not use their departmental position, identification card, or badge for:
- a. Personal or Financial gain
 - b. Obtaining privileges not otherwise available except in performance of official duty
 - c. Avoiding consequences of illegal acts
 - d. Employees shall not under any circumstance solicit any gifts, service, gratuity, discount, or anything of value where there is any direct or indirect connection between the solicitation and their Departmental membership, without the expressed written permission of the agency head.
 - e. Employees shall not accept any gift, service, gratuity, discount or anything of value, the acceptance of which might tend to influence directly or indirectly their actions in any police business; or which might tend to cast an adverse reflection on the Department or any employee thereof.

- IV **Associating with criminal element:** No employee, except in the discharge of duty, may knowingly associate with persons engaged in unlawful activities.

- V. **Informants:** Employees shall maintain a professional relationship with agency informants and shall not have any social, business or any other relationship beyond that required for purposes of agency business with the informant.

- VI. **Violations of ethical standards:** Ethical conduct violations will be investigated by the appropriate authority to determine the validity of complaints and to report findings as prescribed by existing policies and procedures.

- VII. **Employee responsibilities:** Employees must exercise judgment, initiative, and sound reasoning in all official transactions; strive for efficiency and effectiveness, exercise restraint in difficult situations, seek self-improvement through formal and informal training, and assist fellow officers whenever

possible. In situations where no written directive or supervisory guidance is available, employees are expected to analyze the situation and react in accordance with the mission statement and the core values of this agency.

In the performance of their duty, officers are called upon to make difficult decisions and must exercise discretion in situations where rights and liabilities are affected by conduct and judgment. Decisions are not made easily and involve choices which may cause hardship or discomfort. Police Officers must be faithful to their oath of office, the mission statement of this agency, the principles of professional police service, and the objectives of the Department. In the discharge of duty, they must not allow personal motives to govern decisions and conduct.

- VIII. Conduct Unbecoming and Officer:** The conduct of a public employee, on and off duty, reflects upon the Department. Employees must avoid conduct which might discredit themselves or adversely affect the morale, operations or efficiency of the department.
- IX. Courtesy:** Effective law enforcement depends on a high degree of cooperation between the Department and the public. While the urgency of a situation might preclude ordinary social amenities, discourtesy under any circumstance is indefensible. Employees shall be courteous and civil to the public and others, avoiding harsh, violent, profane, or insolent language or manner, and shall maintain objective attitudes regardless of provocation.
- X. Attention to duty:** As most police work is performed without close supervision, responsibility for proper performance of duty lies primarily with the officer. An officer has a responsibility for the safety of the community and his or her fellow officers, and discharges that responsibility by faithful and diligent performance of duty.
- XI. Financial Obligations:** Employees should avoid incurring financial obligations which are beyond their ability to satisfy.
- XII. Training:** The department will include ethics training no less than biennially. Training may be accomplished through documented classroom, shift briefing, or the monthly training bulletin process.

LAW ENFORCEMENT CODE OF ETHICS

AS A LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICER, my fundamental duty is to serve the community; 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 to liberty, equality, and justice.

I WILL keep my private life unsullied as an example to all and will behave in a manner which does not bring discredit to me or my agency. I will 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 law 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, political beliefs, aspirations, 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 police service. I will never engage in acts of bribery nor will I condone such acts by other police officers. I will cooperate with all legally authorized agencies and their representatives in the pursuit of justice.

I KNOW that I alone am responsible for my own standard of professional performance and will take every opportunity to enhance and improve my level of knowledge and competence.

I WILL constantly strive to achieve these objectives and ideals, dedicating myself before God to my chosen profession...Law Enforcement.

LAW ENFORCEMENT CODE OF CONDUCT

Primary Responsibilities of a Police Officer

A police officer acts as an official representative of government who is required and trusted to work within the law. The officer's powers and duties are conferred by statute. The fundamental duties of a police officer include serving the community; safeguarding lives and property; protecting the innocent; keeping the peace; and ensuring the rights of all to liberty, equality and justice.

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 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 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 officer will consider all surrounding circumstances in determining whether any legal action 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 arrest--which may be correct in appropriate circumstances--can be a more effective means of achieving a desired end.

Use of Control Techniques

A police officer will never employ unnecessary control or violence and will use only such control techniques in the discharge of duty as is reasonable in all circumstances.

Control techniques should be used only with greatest restraint and only after discussion, negotiation and persuasion have been found to be inappropriate or ineffective. While the use of control 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 provision requires 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 any 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 representatives 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 a police officer 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 of 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 their agencies or themselves.

A police officer's character and conduct off duty must always be exemplary, thus maintaining a position of

respect in the community in which he or she lives and serves. The officer's personal behavior must be beyond reproach.