



# GENERAL ORDER

Loudoun County Sheriff's Office

**Chapter:** Administration

**Section:** 205

**Subject:** Employee Conduct

**Topic:** Principles of Conduct

**Accreditation:** PER.09.01

**Revised:** 01/14/2019

**Reaffirmed:**

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## I. PURPOSE

The effectiveness of the LCSO depends upon community respect and confidence. Conduct which detracts from this respect and confidence is detrimental to the public trust and is prohibited. The purpose of this General Order is to provide guidance to employees by identifying specific standards of conduct.

## II. POLICY

Employees are expected to follow a prescribed code of conduct and to act responsibly while on and off duty. The agency holds its employees accountable for all actions which reflect adversely on the Sheriff or this agency. The policy of the Sheriff is to investigate circumstances suggesting an employee has engaged in unbecoming conduct, and impose disciplinary action when appropriate. Conduct not mentioned under a specific rule, but which violates a general principle, is also prohibited.

## III. DEFINITIONS

### A. Ethical Conduct

Employees of the agency shall at all times conduct themselves in such a manner as to reflect favorably on the agency. Deputies shall conduct themselves, whether on or off duty, in accordance with the Constitution of the United States, the Constitution of Virginia, and all applicable laws, ordinances and rules enacted or established pursuant to legal authority. No conduct that brings the agency into disrepute or which reflects discredit upon the employee as a member of the agency shall be acceptable. Deputies shall conduct their duties pursuant to a grant of limited authority from the community. Therefore, deputies must understand the laws defining the scope of their enforcement powers.

1. Deputies may only act in accordance with the powers granted to them.
2. Deputies shall not knowingly exceed their authority in the enforcement of the law.
3. Deputies shall not knowingly disobey the law or rules of criminal procedure in such areas as interrogation, arrest, detention, searches, seizures, use of informants and preservation of evidence.

4. Deputies shall not knowingly restrict the freedom of individuals, whether by arrest of detention, in violation of the Constitutions and laws of the United States and the Commonwealth of Virginia.
5. Deputies, whether on or off duty, shall not knowingly commit any criminal offense under any laws of the United States or any state of local jurisdiction in which the officer is present, except where permitted in the performance of duty under proper authority.
6. Deputies shall carry out their duties with integrity, fairness and impartiality.
7. Deputies shall not knowingly make false accusations of any criminal or traffic ordinance, or other violation of law. This provision shall not prohibit the use of deception during criminal investigations or interrogations as permitted under law.
8. Deputies shall truthfully, completely and impartially report, testify and present evidence, including exculpatory evidence, in all matters of an official nature.
9. Deputies shall take no action knowing it will violate the constitutional rights of any person.
10. Deputies shall not express, whether by act, omission or statement, prejudice concerning race, color, creed, religion, national origin, sex, marital status, or status with regard to public assistance, disability, sexual orientation or age.
11. Deputies shall not allow their law enforcement decisions to be influenced by race, color, creed, religion, national origin, sex, marital status, or status with regard to public assistance, disability, sexual orientation or age.

B. Unbecoming Conduct

Each employee shall conduct himself/herself at all times, both on duty and off duty, in such a manner as to reflect favorably on the agency. Conduct unbecoming an employee shall include any conduct which may bring the Sheriff or the Sheriff's Office into disrepute, or which reflects discredit upon the employee as a member of the agency, or that which may impair the operation or efficiency of the agency or the employee.

C. Immoral Conduct

Each employee's conduct concerning personal and business affairs shall be maintained in keeping with the highest standards of the law enforcement profession. No employee shall participate in any incident involving moral turpitude that may impair the employee's ability to perform his/her duties, or which may cause the agency to be brought into disrepute.

D. Unsatisfactory Performance

Employees will maintain sufficient competence to properly perform their duties and assume the responsibilities of their positions.

Employees will perform their duties in a manner that will maintain the highest standard of efficiency in carrying out the functions and objectives of the LCSO. Unsatisfactory performance may be demonstrated by a lack of knowledge of the application of laws to be enforced; unwillingness or inability to perform assigned tasks; the failure to conform to work standards established for an employee's position; the neglect of duty; the display of cowardice, absence without leave, or the physical or mental inability to perform the essential functions of the position and required duties.

E. Association

Employees of the Sheriff's Office are prohibited from regular or continuous associations or dealings with persons known to be under criminal investigation or indictment, or with persons in the community with a reputation for involvement in felonious or criminal behavior, except such association as shall be necessary in the performance of official duties, or when unavoidable due to certain personal or family relationships. Employees shall not engage in a personal relationship with any inmate or former inmate. Employees may seek relief from this prohibition upon approval by the Sheriff or his/her designee.