

Narragansett Police Department

40 Caswell Street, Narragansett, RI 02882

EFFECTIVE
March 16, 2008

LAST REVISED
October 3, 2023

SCHEDULED REVIEW
October 3, 2026

Policy 100.03

ETHICS IN THE WORKPLACE

01 Purpose

It is the purpose of this written directive to establish the department's Mission Statement, Core Values and to identify the Code of Ethics for all personnel of this department to follow.

02 Policy

It is the policy of the Narragansett Police Department to encourage all personnel to strive towards the highest ideals by providing them with a Mission Statement, a Statement of Core Values and the Code of Ethics.

03 Procedures

A. Mission Statement

1. The mission of the Narragansett Police Department is to enforce the laws and ordinances of our state and town with commitment to core values of honesty, integrity, dignity and excellence to promote a feeling of safety and security for all members of our community. We strive to be known as a true partner and stakeholder in our desire to make Narragansett a vibrant town supporting families, culture, tourism, academics, the arts, and our environment.

B. Statement of Core Values

1. Respect: for all persons within and outside our police agency. We will inspire confidence and public trust by performing all duties impartially and respecting the dignity of all citizens and fellow employees.
2. Integrity: in all that we say and do is a virtue against which all else is measured.
3. Dignity: for all members of our community so that we may live with self-respect and to safeguard individual rights guaranteed by the Constitution.
4. Partnership: to a level of synergy that will exceed the sum of the individual roles.
5. Excellence: that can be attained only through a commitment to hard work, learning from failure, loyalty, and persistence.
6. Flexibility: that is essential in our evolving world of technologies and the opportunities and concerns that a fast paced world brings.
7. Commitment: to the Law Enforcement Code of Ethics.

C. Oath of Office

1. Prior to assuming sworn status, trainees of the Narragansett Police Department shall take an oath of office to uphold and defend the State and Federal Constitutions, adhere to and abide by its Code of Ethics and Canons of Police Ethics, and faithfully perform all of the prescribed duties of a Rhode Island police officer, as enumerated in the Rhode Island General Laws.
2. Each sworn officer shall take the following oath of office before a person authorized to administer such an oath:

“I, (Name of Officer), do solemnly swear that I will support, preserve, and defend the Constitution of the United States and the State of Rhode Island; that I will execute my duties as police officer, to the best of my ability; faithfully and impartially enforcing all laws and ordinances; zealously guarding the constitutional rights of all persons; and promptly obeying the orders of the officers appointed over me, all in accordance with the rules and regulations of the Narragansett Police Department, so help me God.”

D. Law Enforcement Code of Ethics

As a Narragansett police officer, my fundamental duty is to serve mankind; to safeguard lives and property; to protect the innocent against deception, the weak against oppression or intimidation, and the peaceful against violation or disorder; and to respect the Constitutional rights of all citizens.

I will keep my private life unsullied and as an example to all, maintain courageous calm in the face of danger, scorn and ridicule. I will develop self-restraint and be constantly mindful of the welfare of others. I will be 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 rules and regulations of the department. Whatever I see or hear of a confidential nature or whatever is confided in me in my official capacity will be kept confidential, unless revelation is necessary in the performance of my duty.

I will never 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.

E. Canons of Police Ethics

Article 1 – Primary Responsibility

The primary responsibility of the police service and of the individual officer is the protection of the people of the United States by upholding their laws; chief among these is the Constitution of the United States and its amendments. Narragansett police officers always represent the entire community and its legally expressed will, and are never the arm of a political party or clique.

Article 2 – Limitations of Authority

The first duty of Narragansett police officers, as upholders of the law, is to know the restraints placed upon them in enforcing it. Because they represent the legal will of the community, be it local, state or federal, they must be aware of the limitations and prescriptions which the people, through law, have placed upon them. They must recognize the genius of the American system of government, which gives no man, group of people or institution, absolute power. Narragansett police officers must ensure that, as a prime defender of the system, they do not distort its character.

Article 3 – Duty to be Familiar with the Law and with Responsibilities of Self and other Public Officials

The Narragansett police officers shall diligently apply themselves to the study of the principles of the laws, which they are sworn to uphold. They will make certain of their responsibilities seeking aid from their superiors in matters of principle when these are not clear; they will make a special effort to fully understand their relationship to other public officials, including other law enforcement agencies, particularly on matters of geographic and substantive jurisdiction.

Article 4 – Use of Proper Means to Gain Proper Ends

Narragansett police officers shall be mindful of their responsibility to pay strict heed in discharging the duties of their office. Violations of law or disregard for public safety and property on the part of officers are intrinsically wrong; they are self-defeating in that they instill a like disposition in the public mind. The employment of illegal means, no matter how worthy the end, is certain to encourage disrespect for the law and its officers. If the law is to be honored it must first be honored by those who enforce it.

Article 5 – Cooperation with Public Officials in the Discharge of their Authorized Duties

Narragansett police officers shall cooperate fully with other public officials in the discharge of authorized duties, regardless of party affiliation or personal prejudice. They shall be meticulous in assuring themselves of the propriety, under the law, of such actions and shall guard against the use of their office, whenever knowingly or unknowingly, in any improper or illegal action. In any situation open to question, they shall seek authority from their superior officers, giving them a full report of the proposed service or action.

Article 6 – Private Conduct

Narragansett police officers shall be mindful of their special identification by the public as upholders of the law. Carelessness of conduct or manner in private life, expressing either disrespect for the law or seeking to gain special privilege cannot but reflect upon police officers and the police service. The community and service require that law enforcement officers lead the life of decent and honorable persons. Following the career of a police officer gives no person special basics. It does give the satisfaction and pride of following and furthering an unbroken tradition of safeguarding the American Republic. Officers who reflect upon this tradition will not degrade it. Rather, they will conduct their private life so that the public will regard them as examples of stability, fidelity, and morality.

Article 7 – Conduct toward the Public

Narragansett police officers, mindful of their responsibility to the entire community, shall deal with individuals in a manner calculated to instill respect for its laws and the police service. Law enforcement officers shall conduct their life in a manner that will inspire confidence and trust. Thus, they will be

neither overbearing nor subservient, as no individual citizen has an obligation to stand in awe of them. Officers will give service where they can, and require compliance with the law, without prejudice, as duly appointed officers of the law.

Article 8 – Conduct in Arresting and Dealing with Violators of the Law

Narragansett police officers shall use their powers of arrest strictly in accordance with the law and with due regard to the rights of the citizens concerned. Their office gives them no right to prosecute the violator, or to meet out punishment for the offense. They shall, at all times, have a clear appreciation of their responsibilities and limitations regarding detention of the violator, and conduct themselves in such a manner to minimize the possibility of having to use force. To this end, they shall cultivate a dedication to the service of the people and to the equitable upholding of their laws, whether in the handling of violators or in dealing with law-abiding citizens.

Article 9 – Gifts and Favors

Narragansett police officers bear the heavy responsibility of maintaining the honor and integrity of all government institutions. Therefore, they shall guard against placing themselves in a position where a person can expect special consideration. Thus, officers shall be firm in refusing gifts, favors, and gratuities, large or small, which can, in the public mind, be interpreted as capable of influencing their judgment in the discharge of their duties.

Article 10 – Presentation of Evidence

Narragansett police officers shall be equally concerned about the prosecution of the wrongdoer and the defense of the innocent. They shall ascertain what constitutes evidence and shall present such evidence impartially and without malice. In doing so, they will ignore social, political, and cultural distinctions among the persons involved, strengthening the tradition of the reliability and integrity of the officer's word. Narragansett police officers shall take special pains to increase their perception and skill of observation, mindful that in many situations, they will provide the only impartial testimony regarding the facts of the case.

Article 11 – Attitude toward Profession

Narragansett Police officers shall regard the discharge of their duties as a public trust and recognize their responsibilities as a public servant. They shall appreciate the importance and responsibilities of their office and hold police work to be an honorable profession rendering valuable service to their town, state, and country.

F. Civilian Code of Ethics

“As an employee of the Narragansett Police Department I regard myself as a member of an important and honorable profession. I will recognize the positive relationship between good physical and mental conditioning and the performance of my job. I will perform my duty with efficiency and to the best of my ability.

I will be truthful at all times. My conduct and the performance of my duties will be accomplished in an honest manner, contributory to my fellow workers, and observant of the laws of the town, state and country.

I will adhere to the confidentiality of the Law Enforcement profession. I will not, in the performance of my duty, work for unethical advantage or profit. I will recognize at all times in my duty that I am a public safety employee, and that ultimately I am responsible to the public.

I will give the most efficient and impartial service at all times. I understand the importance of courtesy and will maintain it as a reference point in all my duties. I will regard my fellow employees with equality, dignity and respect.

I share a reciprocal affinity and obligation with my fellow employees, my administration, and my agency. I will accept responsibility for my actions. I will strive for those values which will reflect honor on my fellow employees, my agency, and myself in the pursuit of excellence.”

G. Ethics Training

On a biennial basis all personnel will receive ethics training.

By Order Of:

Chief of Police