



General Order 52.1 - Professional Standards Unit (PSU)

PURPOSE: Define the Professional Standards Unit function; define the Professional Standards Unit; define the Professional Standards Unit responsibilities; define investigative authority and responsibility; define the Professional Standards Unit position; describe dissemination of Professional Standards Unit policies; and define notification to employee of investigation.

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ISSUED BY: Sheriff Jeffrey T. Easter

REVIEWED BY: Standard Review Committee

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52.1.1 PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS UNIT FUNCTION

A. The Professional Standards Unit is established to investigate complaints and/or allegations of misconduct against the department or any of its employees. The primary functions of the Professional Standards Unit are:

1. To ensure that its investigations of alleged misconduct are fair, impartial, and complete;

2. To safeguard the rights of all parties involved; and
3. To clear the innocent.

52.1.2 PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS UNIT

- A. The sheriff's office utilizes a specialized unit dedicated strictly to matters of internal affairs.

52.1.3 PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS UNIT RESPONSIBILITIES

- A. The responsibilities of the Professional Standards Unit are to:
 1. Investigate alleged or suspected misconduct within the agency;
 2. Document all such investigations;
 3. Maintain confidentiality of such investigations and records;
 4. Review/investigate "use-of-force" incidents involving departmental personnel;
 5. Maintain records of personnel complaints;
 6. Review personnel complaints ([section 25.1.8](#)); and
 7. Review line supervisor investigations of misconduct.
- B. All allegations of employee misconduct shall be investigated appropriately and adjudicated promptly.
 1. To ensure the integrity of the sheriff's office and all its employees, all reports or accusations made against the department, or any employee shall be investigated completely, regardless of the source.

52.1.4 INVESTIGATIVE AUTHORITY AND RESPONSIBILITY

- A. In order to differentiate between the investigative responsibilities of first-line supervisors and internal affairs, guidelines have been established.
- B. First-line supervisors will investigate minor violations including, but not limited to:
 1. Minor violations of policy, procedures, rules, and regulations;
 2. Insubordination; and
 3. Rudeness to the citizenry.
- C. The Professional Standards Unit will investigate violations including, but not limited to:
 1. Allegations of criminal misconduct (in conjunction with the Investigations Division);
 2. Allegations of brutality;
 3. Allegations of corruption;
 4. Allegations of civil rights violations;

5. Incidents involving any "use of force";
 6. Incidents where an employee is involved in the use of a carry concealed handgun under the Kansas Personal and Family Protection Act; and
 7. Allegations involving moral turpitude.
- D. Alleged or suspected violations on misconduct shall be reported to the Professional Standards Unit by the supervisor who first receives information of the alleged violation. Exceptions to this would be conduct such as, but not limited to tardiness, inattention to duty, improper reports, unsatisfactory performance, abuse of equipment, and improper wearing or care of uniform and equipment.

52.1.5 PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS UNIT POSITION

- A. The Professional Standards Unit shall be filled by deputies with the rank of sergeant or higher.
1. They shall report directly to the sheriff.

52.1.6 DISSEMINATION OF PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS UNIT POLICIES

- A. All written directives concerned with the operation of the Professional Standards Unit shall be incorporated into the Sedgwick County Sheriff's Office Policy and Procedure Manual in Power DMS.

52.1.7 NOTIFICATION TO EMPLOYEE OF ADMINISTRATIVE INVESTIGATION

- A. Employees shall be notified in writing when they become the subject of an investigation. A copy of the notification will be sent to the division and bureau commanders. The written notification shall include:
1. A statement of the allegation(s) against them; and
 2. Information about their rights and responsibilities relative to the investigation.
- B. Notification of the employee may be withheld temporarily if such notification might hinder the investigation, as in the case of alleged ongoing criminal activity.
- C. The written notification of rights and responsibilities of employees may refer them to this section. Rights and responsibilities of employees include the following:
1. The employee must perform the duties and assume the obligations of his/her rank in the investigation of complaints, cooperating fully with personnel of the Professional Standards Unit or any other member of the sheriff's office conducting such investigation.
 2. The employee will not undergo questioning that does not relate to the basic facts of the original complaint unless during questioning concerning the original complaint other information is learned that could lead to additional allegations against the employee.
 3. Upon the request of an employee, prior to any questioning an opportunity may be given for the employee to locate and review any written documents relative to the

complaint being investigated, to be prepared to accurately and thoroughly respond to the questioning.

4. When an employee is to be interviewed as a witness in an administrative or Professional Standards Unit investigation of another employee, the employee may or may not be advised of the circumstances pertaining to the complaint being investigated.
 - a. The "Kalkines Warning" will be given prior to interviewing any employee involved in the investigation.
- D. Any employee who has been investigated will be delivered a written notification of the disposition of the matter or the results of the investigation. A copy of the disposition will be sent to the division and bureau commanders. Investigative reports will be maintained in the Professional Standards Unit and will not be made a part of the employee's personnel file. In the event that administrative action is taken against an employee, the documentation of that action will serve as the written notification.
- E. Any employee under investigation may discuss the investigation with investigators, employees assigned to PSU, and members of the Health and Wellness Unit, and/or Peer Support Members.
 - a. Employees under investigation are encouraged to seek support from the Health and Wellness Unit, and/or Peer Support Members for assistance with the emotional and psychological impact the investigation may have on them.
 - b. Employees under investigation are prohibited from discussing any details or specifics of the investigation with members of the Health and Wellness Unit and/or Peer Support Members.
- F. Any employee under investigation is prohibited from discussing the investigation with any other employees of the Sedgwick County Sheriff's Office, any witnesses, or the complainants; except those listed above unless otherwise directed by the Sheriff or his delegate.