



**Colorado Springs Police Department
General Order 1655**

**Section 16: Police Officer Conduct -- Professional Ethics and
Discipline**

Active Date: 5/30/2013

Supersedes Date: 1/12/2004

Approved
Peter Carey
General Order

.01 Purpose

To set forth special ethical requirements for sworn officers as the policy of the Colorado Springs Police Department.

.02 Cross Reference

[GO 601, Enforcement Guidelines](#)

[GO 1301, Treatment of the Public](#)

[GO 1605, Orders and Discretionary Judgment](#)

[GO 1650, Employee Conduct \(Sworn and Civilian\)](#)

[Civil Service Rules](#)

.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, s/he is 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 and serves to remind Department personnel and citizens that the objectives of professional law enforcement are of the highest order.

.05 Definitions

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.10 Law Enforcement Code of Ethics

Before being invested with 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 mankind; 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 men 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.

.15 Law Enforcement Oath of Honor

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 Enforcement of All Criminal and Traffic Laws

Although 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, as described in [GO 601, Enforcement Guidelines](#), and [GO 1605, Orders and Discretionary Judgment](#), permits reasonable discretion in the manner of enforcement.

.22 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 federal, state or local statute. An officer who lawfully acts in this capacity is within the scope of her/his 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 arrest on probable cause.

.24 Equality of Enforcement

People throughout the City need, and deserve, fair and impartial law enforcement. Every member of the public must be able to expect a consistent police response to the person's behavior, wherever it occurs, and whoever the person may be. Unequal enforcement creates resistance and leads to loss of respect for the law itself and those who are its guardians. Under no circumstances will discriminatory attitudes or procedures be allowed to influence the impartial enforcement of any law or the treatment of any person. It is the responsibility of each police employee, sworn or civilian, to insure that her/his actions and behavior, in this respect, are beyond reproach.

The element of even-handedness is implicit in the uniform application and enforcement of law. The amount of force, or the method employed to secure compliance with the law, is governed by the particular situation. 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.

.30 Conduct Unbecoming a Police Officer

Officers of the Colorado Springs Police Department, whether in person, in written form, or on social networking sites, shall conduct themselves, at all times, both on and off duty, in a manner that reflects most favorably on the Department. Conduct unbecoming a police officer includes

behavior that could bring the Department into disrepute or discredit the officer as an officer of the Department, or that which could impair the operation or efficiency of the Department or officer.

No officer, whether married or single, will date or be in a romantic, intimate or sexual relationship with his/her subordinate or supervisor or any employee within his/her chain of command.

.32 Cowardice

Officers, who shrink from danger, responsibility, or their sworn duty, will be deemed guilty of cowardice and subject to disciplinary action.

.40 Arrests in Personal Quarrels

Officers shall not make arrests in any quarrel in which they are personally involved, or in which any member of their family is involved, except under grave circumstances such as would justify using measures of self-defense. Officers shall not apply for a warrant for an assault upon themselves, or make complaint for damages, without the knowledge of the Chief of Police, or designee.