

TITLE: OATH AND CANON OF ETHICS

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PURPOSE

The purpose of this directive is to ensure that department personnel are aware of the actions and attitudes expected of them and to provide members of the public with a general standard by which they can measure the performance of the Santa Fe Police Department.

DISCUSSION

New Mexico Statute mandates that officers take and subscribe to the Oath of Office, prior to appointment and before undertaking the duties of office.

It is equally important that officers observe the principles as set forth in the Canons of Law Enforcement Ethics.

POLICY

It shall be the policy of the Santa Fe Police Department to comply with State and Federal Law and to preserve and protect the constitutional rights of the community. It shall further be the policy of the Santa Fe Police Department that all sworn personnel will abide by the Canon of Ethics as set forth in this directive.

PROCEDURE

2.1.01 The following oath must be executed by each officer prior to being assigned to any law enforcement duties:

Oath of Office

I, do hereby solemnly swear to support the Constitution of the United States of America, and the State of New Mexico, to enforce the Laws of the State of New Mexico and the ordinances of the City of Santa Fe; and to perform all other duties of a Police Officer of the City of Santa Fe, to the best of my ability, so help me God.

CODE OF ETHICS

2.1.02. Sworn personnel of the Santa Fe Police Department shall abide by the following Code of Law Enforcement Ethics.

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 life unsullied as an example to all and will behave in a manner that 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 both in my personal and official life, I will be exemplary in obeying the law and 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 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 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 corruption or 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 reasonable 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

PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITY OF JOB

2.1.03 The primary responsibility of the law enforcement service, and of the individual law enforcement officer, is the protection of the people of the United States through the upholding of their laws; chief among which is the Constitution of the United States and its amendments. The law enforcement officer represents the whole of the community and its legally expressed will and is never the arm of any political party or clique.

LIMITATION OF AUTHORITY

2.1.04 The first duty of a law enforcement officer, as upholder of the law, is to know the bounds the law established for its enforcement. The law enforcement officer represents the legal will of the community, be it local, state, or federal. The law enforcement officer must, therefore, be aware of the limitations and proscriptions which the people, through law, have imposed as a primary responsibility. Law enforcement officers must recognize the genius of the American system of government, which gives no person, group, or institution, absolute power. Law enforcement officers must ensure that they, as prime defenders of that system, do not pervert its character.

DUTY TO BE FAMILIAR WITH THE LAWS AND WITH RESPONSIBILITIES OF SELF AND OTHER PUBLIC OFFICIALS

2.1.05 Law enforcement officers shall vigorously apply themselves to the study of the principles of the laws which they are sworn to uphold. Law enforcement officers will ascertain their responsibilities in the particulars of their enforcement, seeking aid from superiors in technical matters or principles when such are not understood. Law enforcement officers will make special effort to fully understand their relationship to other public officials, particularly in matters of jurisdiction, both geographically and substantively.

UTILIZATION OF PROPER MEANS TO GAIN PROPER ENDS

2.1.06 Law enforcement officers shall be mindful of their responsibility to pay strict heed to the selection of means in discharging the duties of their office. Violations of law or disregard for public safety and property on the part of an officer are intrinsically wrong; they are self-defeating in that they instill in the public mind a like disposition. 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.

COOPERATION WITH PUBLIC OFFICIAL IN THE DISCHARGE OF THEIR AUTHORIZED DUTIES/PRIVATE CONDUCT

2.1.07 Law enforcement officers shall be mindful of their special identification by the public as upholders of the law. Laxity in enforcing the law or seeking to gain special privilege will negatively reflect upon the law enforcement officer and the police service. The community and the service require that the law enforcement officer lead the life of a decent and honorable person. A law enforcement career gives no person special privileges. 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 so conduct their private lives that the public will record them as examples of stability, fidelity and morality.

CONDUCT TOWARD THE PUBLIC

2.1.08 Law enforcement officers, mindful of their responsibility to the whole community, shall deal with individuals of the community in a manner calculated to instill respect for its laws and its police service. Law enforcement officers shall conduct their official lives in a manner such as 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 nor a right to command them. Officers will give service where they can, and require compliance with the law. They will do so neither from personal preference or prejudice but rather as duly appointed officers of the law discharging a sworn obligation.

CONDUCT IN ARRESTING AND DEALING WITH LAW VIOLATORS

2.1.09 Law enforcement officers shall use powers of arrest strictly in accordance with the law and with due regard for the rights of the citizens concerned. Their office gives them no right to judge the violator nor to mete out punishment for the offense. They shall, at all times, have a clear appreciation of responsibilities and limitations regarding detention of the violator.

2.1.10 They shall conduct themselves in such a manner as will minimize the possibility of having to use force. To this end, they shall cultivate a dedication to the service of the people and the equitable upholding of the law, whether in the handling of the law violators or in dealing with the law-abiding citizens.

GIFTS AND FAVOR

2.1.11 Law enforcement officers, representing government, bear the heavy responsibility of maintaining in their own conduct the honor and integrity of all government institutions. They shall, therefore, guard against placing themselves in a position in which any person can reasonably assume that special consideration is being given. Thus, they should 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.

PRESENTATION OF EVIDENCE

2.1.12 Law enforcement officers shall be concerned equally in 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 so doing, they will ignore social, political, and all other distinctions among the persons involved, strengthening the tradition of reliability and integrity of an officer's word.

2.1.13 Law enforcement officers shall make a concerted effort to increase perception and skill of observation, mindful that in many situations theirs is the sole impartial testimony to the facts of a case.

ATTITUDE TOWARD PROFESSION

2.1.14 Law enforcement officers shall regard the discharge of their duties as a public trust and recognize their responsibilities as a public servant. By diligent study and sincere attention to self improvement, they shall strive to make the best possible application of science to the solution of crime, and in the field of human relationships strive for effective leadership and public influence in matters affecting public safety. They shall appreciate the importance and responsibility of their office, and hold police work to be an honorable profession rendering valuable service to their community and country.

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APPROVED: 
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