

5.2	Code of Conduct
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This General Order relates to the conduct and the responsibilities of employees. It is the policy of the Sheriff's Office to ensure that all employees maintain an exemplary standard of personal integrity and ethical conduct in their relationship with other employees, the community, and the courts. This code is designed to serve as a professional standard governing employee conduct. The Sheriff's Office also recognizes that employees possess certain basic individual rights. Protection of employee rights enhances the integrity of the Office and further promotes the goal of furnishing to the community and the courts the highest quality of service. This code of conduct prohibits specific behavior and requires the performance of certain duties. These orders are inflexible and apply equally to all employees. Employees are responsible for familiarizing themselves with the following standards.

5.2.1 Conformance to Law

Employees are required to adhere to Sheriff's Office written directives, rules and procedures, Anne Arundel County Personnel Regulations, County Administrative Procedures, and Executive Orders, Anne Arundel County Code, and to conform to all laws applicable to the general public. Employees shall obey all laws pertaining to the civil and criminal code of the United States and of all local, state, and foreign jurisdictions in which they are present.

- A misdemeanor conviction adversely affecting the performance of official duties of any employee in any manner shall be prima facie evidence of a violation of this section.
- A felony conviction for any offense shall be prima facie evidence of a violation of this section.
- The suspension, revocation, cancellation, or refusal of an employee's driver's license shall be immediately reported by the employee to his/her immediate supervisor, and it shall be prima facie evidence of a violation of this section.

Neither the placement of charges nor the entering of a conviction shall be required prior to the commencement of administrative action under this section. The fact that an employee has been charged with and is awaiting trial for a criminal offense involving matters prima facie prejudicial to the reputation and

good order of the Office, in this or any other jurisdiction, shall not prevent the Sheriff or Chief Deputy from taking what action is deemed necessary until the charges are resolved.

An employee is required to notify their supervisor in writing of his/her arrest, or that he/she has otherwise been charged with any criminal offense or cited for any traffic offense that carries four (4) or more points. Deputies will report all traffic offenses. All reports shall be made immediately available upon return to duty.

5.2.2 Authority to Suspend

The Sheriff, Chief Deputy, or any deputy acting in a supervisory capacity may temporarily suspend, with pay, an employee from duty for cause, and/or require the surrender of credentials and/or issued weapons. Emergency suspension with or without pay and subsequent procedures in the case of Deputy Sheriffs will be in accordance with the Law Enforcement Officer's Bill Of Rights.

5.2.3 Compliance with Orders

Employees shall not be willfully insubordinate or disrespectful to any supervisor or other person designated to command, nor shall they willfully disobey any lawful order whether verbal or written. Employees shall also obey a lawful order relayed from a superior by an employee of the same or lesser rank. Should a superior issue an order which conflicts with a previously issued order or directive, the employee will respectfully call attention to the conflicting order, and if not rescinded by the superior, the order shall stand. The responsibility for the order will rest with the issuing superior and the employee shall not be answerable for disobedience of any previously issued order.

Superiors shall not issue any order which they know would require a subordinate to commit any illegal, immoral, or unethical acts. Employees shall not obey any order which they know would require them to commit illegal, immoral, or unethical acts. In such an event, the employee should seek the guidance higher in the chain-of-command.

5.2.4 Abuse of Process

Employees must not intentionally manufacture, tamper with, falsify, destroy, or withhold evidence or information, nor make any false accusations or statements regarding a criminal charge for the purpose of influencing the outcome of any investigation or subsequent trial.

Employees are prohibited from providing confidential information concerning investigations or operations to any unauthorized person.

Employees are prohibited from obtaining any information from any Criminal Justice Information System (CJIS) for a non-law enforcement purpose; this includes all local, state and national systems, including Motor Vehicle Administration information.

Employees are prohibited from disseminating any information obtained through any Criminal Justice Information System (CJIS) or any other source to any unauthorized person, except in the performance of their official duties and in accordance with proper procedure and law.

5.2.5 Abuse of Authority

The lawful authority entrusted to Deputy Sheriffs shall not be used improperly to interfere with the lawful conduct of anyone. All deputies must carry out their duties in a nondiscriminatory manner.

5.2.6 Integrity of the Reporting System

Employees shall submit all necessary reports in accordance with established Office procedures. Reports submitted by employees shall be accurate, complete, timely, and truthful.

5.2.7 Punctuality

Employees shall be punctual in reporting for duty at the time and place specified by their supervisor. No employee will be absent from duty without leave or without authorization from their supervisor.

No employee will leave the work site during the work day, or prior to the end of the scheduled work day without the approval of a supervisor. Any employee who fails to report for duty or who leaves the work site during the work day, or prior to

the end of the scheduled work day without the approval of a supervisor may be considered absent without leave and placed in a non-pay status for the period in question.

5.2.8 Attentiveness to Duty

To ensure each employee's own protection and the protection of citizens and fellow employees, employees shall remain awake and alert while on duty. Members shall not conceal themselves except for some legitimate and authorized purpose. They shall be immediately and readily available to the public during duty hours. No member shall fail to answer any land-wire or radio call directed to him/her, and deputies shall promptly come to the aid of any deputy or police officer who, when carrying out official duties, is in need of assistance.

5.2.9 Alcohol / Drugs

Employees shall not consume or be impaired by any alcoholic beverage while on duty. Further, all employees are prohibited from operating a county vehicle while consuming, or soon after consuming, alcoholic beverages. Alcoholic beverages will not be consumed or purchased while wearing any part of the uniform regardless of duty status.

Employees will not exercise any authority, take any official action, be armed, or represent him/herself as a Deputy Sheriff while impaired by, or under the influence of, alcohol or drugs.

Employees shall not take any narcotic or controlled dangerous substance unless prescribed by a physician. Employees taking prescription medication that could affect the performance of duty prior to or while on duty shall notify their supervisor of the medication prescribed.

No member of this Office shall bring any intoxicating liquor into a Sheriff's building, vehicle, or office, nor shall he/she permit the same to be brought therein, except as required in the performance of his/her duties.

No member of this Office while on-duty, or when off-duty in uniform, shall enter bars, tavern, or liquor establishments, except in the proper performance of his/her duties.

5.2.10 Telephone Requirements

Employees are required to maintain telephones at their residences and inform the Office of their telephone numbers. Any change of telephone number will be communicated to the Office within 24 hours.

5.2.11 Carrying of Credentials

Deputies will carry their Office credentials while on-duty and at anytime when armed. Employees will identify themselves to any citizen, requesting such identification, by displaying their credentials and supplying their full name and identification number.

5.2.12 Gratuities

No compensation, reward, gratuity, loan, fee, gift, or other consideration may be solicited or accepted by an employee without special permission from the Sheriff or Chief Deputy. Employees coming into possession of such items will notify their immediate supervisor of the occurrence. A detailed report explaining the circumstances precipitating the transfer of the property or interest will also be submitted.

Any attempt to bribe an employee should be reported immediately to the employee's supervisor.

5.2.13 Conduct Unbecoming

No employee will commit any act which constitutes conduct unbecoming an employee of the Sheriff's Office. Conduct unbecoming includes, but is not limited to, any conduct that is criminal, dishonest or improper.

Any breach of the peace, neglect of duty, or misconduct on the part of any employee, either within or outside the State of Maryland, which tends to undermine the good order, efficiency, or discipline of the Office, even though these offenses may not be specifically set forth, shall be considered conduct unbecoming.

5.2.14 Soliciting / Endorsements

Employees may not solicit votes or contributions for any prize contest, nor engage in the sale of tickets or the solicitation of advertisements or business of any nature while in uniform or while representing themselves as employees of the Office without prior approval of the Sheriff or Chief Deputy.

Employees shall not authorize the use of their names, photographs or official titles which identify them as employees of the Sheriff's Office in connection with testimonials or endorsements of any product or particular commercial enterprise.

5.2.15 Neglect of Duty / Unsatisfactory Performance

Employees shall maintain sufficient competency to properly perform their duties and assume the responsibilities of their positions. Unsatisfactory performance is demonstrated by an inability or unwillingness to perform assigned tasks, or the failure to take appropriate action in a situation deserving an employee's attention, or failure to conform to work standards established for the employee's rank, grade, or position.

5.2.16 Maintenance of Property

Employees will be held accountable for the proper care, use, and maintenance of all uniforms, vehicles, weapons/firearms, and equipment in their charge. Employees who lose or damage Office property shall report in writing such loss or damage to their supervisor.

5.2.17 Pay Account Withheld for Unreturned Equipment

Upon separation from the Office, employees shall return to the quartermaster all County-issued property within ten (10) days from the date of separation.

5.2.18 Conduct Toward the Public

Members of the Office shall meet the public with professional courtesy and consideration. Questions will be answered civilly and courteously. Members will use proper grammar and English, avoiding slang or facetious expressions while talking to the public.

5.2.19 Untruthful Statements

Employees shall not make untruthful statements, either express or implied, verbal or written, pertaining to official duties.

5.2.20 Courtesy

Employees shall be courteous and discreet to members of the public and other employees, maintain proper decorum and command of temper, and avoid the use of violent, insolent, or obscene language. Any members who aid, abet, or incite any altercation between members of this Office or the public shall be held responsible along with those actually involved.

5.2.21 Meal Periods

Employees are considered "on-duty" while on meal periods during their workday unless otherwise provided for in negotiated labor agreement.

5.2.22 Public Comments

No employee shall publicly criticize or ridicule the official action of a fellow employee, public official, or judge.

5.2.23 Political Activity

Employees are prohibited from engaging in political activity while on-duty during work hours. Employees may not solicit votes or contributions, or engage in the sale of tickets, or participate in efforts of a similar nature while in uniform or while representing themselves as employees of the Office without prior approval of the Sheriff or Chief Deputy. No member of the Office shall jeopardize the impartial position of the Sheriff's Office in any political matter nor will any violation of election laws be tolerated.

5.2.24 On-Duty Status

Deputies are held to be always on-duty, although periodically relieved from the routine performance thereof. They are subject at all times to orders from proper authorities and to call by citizens, and the fact that they may be "off duty" shall

not be held as relieving them from the responsibility of taking proper action in any matter coming to their attention requiring immediate action.

5.2.25 Recommending Attorneys, Bail Bond Services, or Other Services
In the performance of their official duties, employees shall not suggest, recommend, advise, or otherwise counsel the retention of any specific attorney, bail bond service, private process server, towing service, or any other specific service to any person coming to their attention as a result of official business.

5.2.26 Associations

Employees shall avoid regular or continuous associations or dealings with persons whom they know, or should know, are under criminal investigation or indictment, or who have a reputation in the community or in the Office for current involvement in criminal behavior, except as may be necessary in connection with official duties or where unavoidable because of other personal relationships.

5.2.27 Influence on the Sheriff

Any attempt to influence or bear upon the Sheriff for the purpose of securing promotion or transfer, or to avoid the penalties for reprehensible action or conduct shall be considered equivalent to insubordination, and treated accordingly.

5.2.28 Financial Responsibility

All members of the Office shall fulfill their financial obligations and are responsible for the proper support of their families. Personal financial affairs are to be kept in order.

5.2.29 Conduct Toward Other Office Members

No member of this Office shall at any time be insubordinate or disrespectful to any other member of this Office. Members shall treat superiors, subordinates, and associates with respect. They shall be courteous and civil at all times in their dealings with one another. When on duty, and particularly in the presence of other members, employees, or the public, deputies will be referred to by rank. Inclusive in this standard is the obligation of sworn personnel to render a proper military hand salute to a superior. The Office adheres to a modified military

model of protocol. This form of respect to a superior is paid once daily upon initial encounter, as specified below:

The Sheriff, Chief Deputy and Command Staff are due a salute upon initial encounter regardless: (1) of their dress (i.e., in uniform or civilian attire); and, (2) of the presence or absence of "cover" (i.e., in a structure with a roof).

5.2.30 Confidentiality of Office Business

All members of the Office shall treat as confidential the official communications and business of this Office.

5.2.31 Tobacco

Members of the Office in uniform shall not smoke or chew tobacco, except when it is done in an inconspicuous manner.

5.2.32 Impartial Performance of Duties

Employees shall conduct Office business and duties impartially and without prejudice. They shall apply their powers of enforcement equally, and without prejudice, insuring all citizens equal protection under the law.

5.2.33 Physical Fitness for Duty

Deputies shall maintain good physical condition so that they can handle the strenuous physical contacts often required of a law enforcement officer.

5.2.34 Court Appearances

Deputies will appear and testify in court when summonsed. All deputies attending court to testify will wear either a uniform or conservative business attire.

5.2.35 Oath or Affirmation

Deputies will abide by the oath or other affirmation of their sworn office.

5.2.36 Reporting Requirements

Employees will report to their immediate supervisor any violations of Sheriff's Office written directives, Anne Arundel County Personnel Regulations, Administrative Procedures, and Executive Orders, and all laws applicable to the general public of which they have knowledge of and/or have observed.

5.2.37 Exemptions

In certain instances, the Sheriff or Chief Deputy may exempt individuals or units from complying with specific Sheriff's Office written directives. Such exemptions will be made on a case-by-case basis in recognition of individual or unit requirements for the performance of their job.