



*Kern County Sheriff's Office*  
**Policies and Procedures**

<b>TITLE:</b> RULES OF CONDUCT – LAW ENFORCEMENT PERSONNEL NO: C-100			
<b>APPROVED:</b> Donny Youngblood, Sheriff-Coroner			
<b>EFFECTIVE:</b> August 1, 1990	<b>REVIEWED:</b> 5/25/2023	<b>REVISED:</b> 3/1/2007	<b>UPDATED:</b> 5/25/2023

## **POLICY**

Law enforcement personnel are highly visible representatives of government and are entrusted with the responsibility of ensuring the safety and well being of the community they serve as well as delivery of effective police services. Employment in the field of law enforcement imposes upon persons attracted to it, responsibilities and limitations on freedom of action which do not exist in other callings. It is necessary to hold sworn members of the Sheriff's Office to the highest standard of conduct possible.

Law enforcement personnel, of the Sheriff's Office, shall not engage in any course of conduct which, when viewed in the context of contemporary standards, brings discredit to the member, the Sheriff's Office, or the law enforcement profession.

The conduct of peace officers must be above reproach. Honesty, credibility, and integrity are crucial to the proper performance of their duties as they are the essence of the function. The law enforcement Code of Ethics is therefore included as a goal towards which we should all strive.

## **DIRECTIVE**

Violations of these rules of conduct, as well as the other policies and procedures of the Sheriff's Office, may result in disciplinary action pursuant to Civil Service Rule 1700 et.seq.

## **HONESTY**

Deputies will:

- Speak the truth in all official communications, written or oral, whether under oath or not;
- Not withhold information pertinent to effective law enforcement;
- Not knowingly enter, or cause to be entered, any inaccurate, false or improper information into any Sheriff's Office record or report;

## CONFIDENTIALITY

### Members of the Sheriff's Office will:

- Treat as confidential the official business, reports and records of the Sheriff's Office in accordance with applicable law;
- Not impart any confidential information regarding Sheriff's Office business to any person or entity unless directed by competent authority or legal process;
- Not make public statements concerning the Sheriff's Office business, reports or records unless authorized by a superior or permitted by law.

## GRATUITIES

### Members of the Sheriff's Office will not:

- seek free admission for anyone to any place where admittance is through invitation or payment of a fee;
  - This rule does not preclude the efforts of recognized employee organizations to obtain favorable trade terms for its members.
- solicit any gift or gratuity;
  - Donations to the Sheriff's Office are acceptable following approved procedures.
  - This rule does not prohibit the acceptance of legitimate discounts offered by businesses to county employees.
- knowingly accept, directly or indirectly, any gratuity, loan, fee, reward or gift, from any person, relative or friend of a person, under investigation, in custody, or after being discharged from custody;
- accept from any person any gift, reward, or other compensation, for services rendered in the line of duty;
  - Except such rewards as may be approved by the Sheriff-Coroner.

## CONDUCT WITH CIVILIANS

In all cases of contact with people outside the Sheriff's Office, whether on duty or off duty, officers will not:

- interfere officiously or unnecessarily in the private affairs of any person;

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- request the aid of any person outside the Sheriff’s Office in order to gain advantage in internal departmental matters, i.e. transfers, reassignments, promotions, discipline, etc., except as provided by law or agreement;
- directly or indirectly seek acclaim through the public press for performing their duties;
- recommend, in any official capacity, to any person the employment of a particular attorney in any criminal matter;
- directly or indirectly interfere with another officer or agency’s criminal case;
- recommend to any person the employment of a particular bondsman; Communication will be limited to the legal requirements of notification of the right to post bail;
- knowingly transact any business with, or for, any person in custody or under investigation except in the line of duty or with consent of the Sheriff – Coroner, Undersheriff or a Chief Deputy;
- unlawfully interfere with, or improperly use the influence of, their position in elections;
  - There is no intent to remove from members their rights afforded by the First Amendment;
  - On duty political activity is not allowed;
  - Political activity while in uniform is not allowed;
  - Merely talking about politics while on duty does not constitute political activity.

**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 the Sheriff’s Office. 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.

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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 persecution 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.

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