



POLICY & PROCEDURES

HOLMEN POLICE DEPARTMENT

SUBJECT: **CODE OF ETHICS**

NUMBER: 6.8

SCOPE: ALL DEPARTMENT PERSONEL

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PURPOSE

The Law Enforcement Code of Ethics is hereby adopted as a general standard for all members of the Holmen Police Department. The public, as well as the Department, demands that the personal integrity of all law enforcement officers and employees be beyond reproach. The dishonesty of a single member may destroy public confidence and cast suspicion and disrespect upon the entire Department.

Succumbing to even minor temptations can ultimately destroy an individual's effectiveness and contribute to the corruption of others. A law enforcement officer is the most conspicuous representative of government. He/she is the symbol of authority upon which the majority of citizens rely.

Where his/her actions are found to be excessive, unwarranted or unjustified, the officer and the Department are criticized far more severely than persons in other walks of life. In the same manner, the officers inaction or failure to act during a given situation can also bring severe criticism.

Conduct on or off duty directly reflects upon the officer and the Department; therefore, a member must at all times conduct him/herself in such manner so as not to bring discredit upon themselves or upon the Department. The stresses of law enforcement require an officer to be mentally and physically responsive at all times. Every officer must be constantly aware that, while technically off duty, he/she may be called upon in emergency situations.

An off-duty officer under the influence of an intoxicant and/or drug (medical) if called into service may represent a danger to him/herself or others. If the officer finds him/herself in this situation, he/she should advise the supervisor so that other arrangements can be made. Prolonged or continued conduct of this nature will not be tolerated. An officer found to be under the influence of an illegal substance will be charged and, if found guilty, will be disciplined.

The practice of courtesy when appearing in or dealing with the public as well as with other Department members encourages understanding and appreciation. Such practice is consistent with the firmness and impartiality that characterizes a professional law enforcement agency.

Law enforcement officers are an integral and indivisible element of the public they serve. The law was created by the people themselves to control the behavior of those who seek to interfere with the society's welfare. A Law enforcement officer's activity, being frequently restrictive of individual rights and freedom, often brings police and citizens into contact under circumstances which have a far reaching impact on the lives of the affected parties, the officers and society in general.

Daily contact with citizens is the level which bears the highest degree of significance for strengthening community relations. Each member must strive to make his/her contact one which inspires respect for the

member and for the Department as a whole. No member can allow personal feelings or prejudices to interfere with their decision making process or their contacts with the public.

Public confidence must be maintained in regards to the Department's ability to investigate and dispose of complaints against its members. The Department has the responsibility to seek out and discipline members whose conduct discredits the member, the Department, or impairs either's effectiveness. In addition, the rights of the member and the public must be preserved and any investigation arising from a complaint must be conducted fairly, impartially, and efficiently with truth as its primary objective.

PROHIBITED CONDUCT

To uphold the responsibilities placed upon the Department and its members by the general public, the following rules of conduct expressed as prohibited acts are hereby adopted and pertain to all Department personnel, they are as follows:

1. Knowingly violate any law or ordinance that restricts the officer's ability to perform his/her duties or brings discredit upon him/herself or the department because of its nature.
2. Any action or conduct which impedes the Department's efforts to achieve its goals or brings discredit upon the Department or its members. (These rules apply to the officer both on and off duty)
3. Any failure to promote the Department's efforts to implement or maintain its policies or accomplish its goals. (This rule prohibits any omission or failure to act appropriately by any member of the Department, whether on or off duty.)
4. Any conduct or action taken to use the official position for personal gain.
5. Engaging in any immoral conduct that would impair the officer's ability to perform as a law enforcement officer or cause the officer or the Department to be held in disrepute.
6. Failure to perform any duty either intentionally or through neglect.
7. Disobedience of a lawful order or directive whether written or oral or the failure to follow department policies and procedures.
 - a. When an officer is given a lawful order by a supervisor which is in conflict with a previous order, rule, regulation or directive, the officer shall inform the supervisor issuing the order of the conflict. If the supervisor issuing the order does not alter or retract the order, the order shall stand. Under these circumstances, the responsibility for the conflict falls upon the supervisor and the officer shall obey the last order given and will not be held responsible for disobedience of the order, rule, regulation or directive previously issued.
8. Insubordination or disrespect toward a supervisory officer while on or off duty.
9. Showing disrespect toward any officer while on or off duty.
10. Showing disrespect to or the maltreatment of any person while on or off duty.
11. Engaging in any unjustified verbal or physical altercation with any person while on or off duty.
12. The misuse or the intentional improper handling or display of a firearm by any employee.
13. Failure to take necessary police action in an emergency situation by a sworn officer when equipped to do so, whether on or off duty.
14. Being incompetent or inefficient in the performance of one's duty.
15. Failure to wear the uniform as prescribed when required to do so.
16. Failure to adequately secure or care for Department property.
17. Making a false or intentionally misleading report or statement either written or oral.
18. Drinking alcoholic beverages while on duty or in uniform or transporting alcoholic beverages in a Department vehicle except in the performance of ones duty.
19. Failure to report to a supervisor that any member including one's self is under investigation by another law enforcement agency.
20. Failure to report promptly to the Department any information concerning any crime or other unlawful act committed within ones jurisdiction (a report in most cases will suffice).
21. Sleeping on duty during the officer's regular scheduled tour of duty. (He/she may be authorized to do so in extended emergency situations)
22. Feigning illness or injury, and reporting off sick, or excessive tardiness or absenteeism.
23. Engaging in other employment while on sick leave.
24. Reporting unfit for duty.

25. Failure to provide the Department with a current address and telephone number.
26. Being absent without permission.
27. Recommending a specific commercial or professional service without good reason or in a show of favoritism to any citizen while acting in his/her official capacity, or recommending employment of a specific attorney or law firm to anyone charged with or under investigation for any criminal activity.
28. Engaging in any public statements, interview, activity, deliberation or discussion pertaining to the Police Department which can reasonably be foreseen to impair the discipline, efficiency, service or confidence in the Department or its members by false statements or the use of abusive or defamatory language.
29. Failure of any member to correctly identify him/herself by giving their name, rank and badge number when requested to do so by the public or other law enforcement agency (except when withholding this information is necessary to protect the officer or releasing this information would prevent the officer from performing his/her duties).
30. Failure to inventory or process property or evidence in conformance with Department policy or directives.
31. Disseminating, releasing, altering, defacing or removing any Department record or information concerning police matters except as authorized.
32. Soliciting or accepting any gratuity, gift, present, rewards or other things of value for any service performed or not performed by the officer in his/her official capacity with the exception of those awards and contributions authorized by the Chief.
33. Failure to testify or give evidence before any "John Doe" hearing, medical examiner's inquest, court of law, or before any authorized governmental investigative body when properly called upon to do so, and when there is no properly asserted constitutional privilege or when immunity has been granted.
34. Failure to cooperate when called upon to give evidence or statements by any supervisory officer of the Department when the evidence or statements sought relate specifically, directly and narrowly to the performance of their official duties. (If constitutional privilege is asserted, the member will be required to cooperate if advised that by law any evidence or statements given cannot be used in a subsequent criminal prosecution.)
35. Participating in, encouraging the participation of others in, or otherwise supporting, any strike, demonstration, work slowdown, or other such action against the Department.

DISCIPLINE

1. The Department may take any of the following forms of disciplinary action against a member found guilty as a result of any investigation concerning the violation of any law or the violation of any policy, procedure, rule, regulation, directive or order:
 - Reprimand - verbal or written
 - Suspension
 - Demotion
 - Discharge
2. Though the concept of progressive discipline will normally be applied, in cases where the nature or severity of an offense(s) indicates it, a more severe level of discipline can be applied.

Chief of Police
Shane Collins