



Abilene Police Department Operating Procedures

Subject:

Conduct

Issued:

07/30/2021

TBP:

2.02, 2.24

Number:

B-1

Standard of Conduct

The Law Enforcement Code of Ethics is adopted as a guiding philosophy for officers of the Department.

Code of Ethics (TBP 2.02)

“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 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.”

Discretion

Employees must exercise discretion in situations where their rights and liabilities and those of the Department hinge upon an employee’s conduct and judgment. When exercising discretion, an employee must be faithful to his/her oath of office, the principles of professional police service, the goals of the Department, and in the discharge of his/her duty, must not allow personal motives to govern decisions and conduct.

Refusal to Work

The Department will seek the removal and separation from the Department of any officer or civilian employee who promotes or participates in any strike, work stoppage or slow down.



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Commendations

The Department expects a very high level of professional conduct from all employees; however, members of the Department frequently perform their duties in a manner exceeding the highest standards of the Department. Through the commendation process, the Department seeks to provide recognition of those individuals who have brought honor to themselves and the Department.

Discipline

The Department has the responsibility to seek out and discipline those who discredit or impair the effective operation of the Department through personal misconduct. The rights of the employee, as well as those of the public, must be preserved and any investigation or hearing arising from a complaint must be conducted in an open and fair manner with the truth as its primary objective.

License to Carry

Persons licensed to carry a concealed handgun under Texas law will not be unnecessarily hindered in the exercise of that privilege. At the same time, officers will continue to be vigilant towards threats to their safety and to the safety of the public during contacts with persons who are armed and who may or may not be committing a criminal offense. Laws pertaining to the lawful carrying of handguns should be enforced after due consideration of the circumstances faced by the officer.

Civil Disputes

In disputes, the Department will protect the rights of the public and the disputants by enforcing the law and by maintaining order while remaining impartial at all times regarding the parties and issues involved.

Cooperation within the Criminal Justice System

The Department will maintain a close working relationship with all elements of the Criminal Justice System. The cooperative and harmonious working relationships are impaired by unnecessary criticism of others engaged in the administration of criminal justice. Officers should be aware of its effect upon law enforcement or prosecution agencies or individual members of the judiciary. Mutual respect and trust among criminal justice personnel is extremely important in achieving departmental goals. The prime beneficiary of the criminal justice system is the public served.



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Community Relations

The Department recognizes the value of positive community relations. To acquaint the public with the law enforcement task, the Department provides various services such as public information programs, crime prevention services, volunteer programs and various opportunities to observe police operations.

Community Outreach (TBP 2.24)

Supervisors and managers, by their words and actions, are to set the example for their subordinates in establishing and maintaining professionalism when interacting with the public and other employees.

- A. All managers and supervisors should ensure their employees maintain professionalism in their conduct and support them in promoting the respect and cooperation of the community in daily contacts.
- B. Managers and supervisors are expected to keep their subordinates apprised of specific community problems and concerns.
- C. Managers and supervisors should strive to cultivate avenues of communications with individual residents and groups within the community where they are assigned. Whenever practical, managers and supervisors should assign personnel to attend neighborhood watch meetings and civic functions.
- D. Managers and supervisors are responsible to ensure that community feedback is sought by all personnel.
- E. The Chief of Police and all command staff are also expected to attend community meetings and to seek out opportunities to meet with all segments of the community.



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The Department is committed to seeking out constructive community outreach programs that provide opportunities for members of the community and the police department to come together. Department employees are also expected to seek feedback from community members.

- A. Examples of Community Outreach Programs that are endorsed by this Department include, but are not limited to:
 - 1. Connecting Caring Communities
 - 2. Abilene Neighborhood Initiative.
 - 3. Stop the Violence.
 - 4. Noah Project and Regional Victims Crisis Center.
 - 5. Police Academy Advisory Council.
 - 6. National Night Out.
 - 7. Safe Trading Zone
 - 8. Citizens Police and Teen Police Academy.
 - 9. Internship programs with local universities.
 - 10. Partners in Abilene / Taylor County Alliance to End Family Violence.
- B. Seeking community feedback, and just as important – following up on the feedback, is crucial to the success of community relations.
- C. While social media is an effective too for community outreach the Department will not rely solely on this mechanism. It is important for all employees to seek out effective outreach programs that impact all segments of our community.