




COLUMBIA POLICE DEPARTMENT

"Policing Excellence through Community Partnerships"

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Subject: <i>Employee Ethics and Law Enforcement Authority</i>		
Amends/Supersedes: <i>Chapter 01, Section 01 Revised, 2008</i>	Chief of Police: 	
Distribution: All Personnel	Reevaluation Date: July 1	# of Pages: 4

1.0 DIRECTIVE

The Columbia Police Department strives to protect constitutional guarantees, maintain public order, prevent and suppress crime, and dutifully respond to the needs of the community. As a City of Columbia employee your personal conduct, even in your private affairs, must be such that it will not reflect poorly or discredit the City, the Department, or fellow employees. Employees shall be required to maintain high ethical standards and present themselves in a professional manner at all times in the execution of their duties.

Supervisors shall utilize the chain of command to immediately notify the Chief of Police of employee behavior and/or performance potentially resulting potentially negative "high-profile" incidents and incidents resulting in serious physical injury, death, or extensive property damage.

2.0 EMPLOYEE IDENTIFICATION

All City of Columbia employees are issued photo identification cards. Non-uniformed employees are required to wear their I.D. cards in a visible location at all times while on-duty. Uniformed officers are required to have their I.D. cards in their possession at all times. Employees shall present their photo identification cards immediately upon request. Police officers involved in undercover or rapidly evolving tactical situations are excluded from this requirement, however these officers shall be required present their I.D. cards as soon as the situation is under control and it is safe to do so.

3.0 CODES OF ETHICS

3.1 All Employees

All Police Department employees must abide by the tenets of the following "Employee Code of Ethics" as adapted from the International City Managers Association:

EMPLOYEE CODE OF ETHICS

I AFFIRM the dignity and worth of the services rendered by the City of Columbia and maintain a constructive,

creative, and practical attitude toward local government affairs and a deep sense of social responsibility as a trusted public servant.

I DEDICATE myself to the highest ideals of honor and integrity in all public and personal relationships so that I may merit the respect of the public.

I RECOGNIZE that the chief function of the City of Columbia is to serve the best interests of the public at all times.

I WILL refrain from all political activities that undermine public confidence in professional administrators and will refrain from participation in the election of the members of the employing legislative body.

I WILL seek no favor, believing that personal aggrandizement or profit secured by confidential information or by misuse of public time is dishonest.

3.2 Law Enforcement Officers

Sworn officers must also abide by the tenets of the following "Law Enforcement Code of Ethics" as published by the International Association of Chiefs of Police:

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 my Department. Whatever I see or hear of a confidential nature, or that is confided to me in my official capacity, will be kept forever 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 police service. I will constantly strive to achieve those objectives and ideals, dedicating myself before God to my chosen profession.

3.3 Ethics Training

Mandatory ethics training for all personnel will be conducted at least every two (2) years.

3.4 Ethics Code and Compliance Reporting

All employees are required to familiarize themselves with the City of Columbia ethics requirements as outlined in Appendix C of the Employee Handbook, located on the T:/ drive.

4.0 LAW ENFORCEMENT OATH OF OFFICE

Prior to assuming sworn status, all police officers shall take and subsequently abide by an Oath of Office to enforce the laws of the State of South Carolina, City of Columbia Ordinances, and uphold the Constitution of the United States.

5.0 LAW ENFORCEMENT AUTHORITY

South Carolina Code of Laws § 5-7-30 allows municipalities to enact regulations, resolutions, ordinances, and the ability to provide police officers with the authority to make arrests, and to execute criminal process within its corporate boundaries.

City of Columbia Ordinance §10-31 authorizes the Chief of Police to supervise all members of the police department and vests police officers the authority to enforce the ordinances of the City of Columbia and the laws of the State of South Carolina on all property within the City limits and on any other property owned or controlled by the City wherever located.

City of Columbia Ordinance §10-32 identifies the functions of the police department.

South Carolina Code of Laws §16-23-20 provides municipal police officers the ability to carry a firearm while performing their official duties.

South Carolina Code of Laws §23-31-215 allows municipal police officers the ability to carry a concealable weapon while on or off duty.

The “Law Enforcement Officers Safety Act of 2004” 18 U. S. C. § 926B entitles qualified law enforcement officers the ability to carry a concealed firearm in any state or political subdivision of the United States under the following conditions:

- Officer must be in possession of their issued City of Columbia Photo ID identifying them as a police officer
- Officer must be released from the Patrol Officer Training Program
- Officers must have current firearms qualification
- Officer is not under the influence of alcohol or another intoxicating/hallucinatory drug or substance

Officers on light duty, suspension, administrative leave, or any other circumstance/condition that prohibits the carrying a weapon are not eligible to carry a concealed firearm under the Law Enforcement Officers Safety Act.

6.0 LIMITS OF AUTHORITY

6.1 Use of Discretionary Judgment

It is recognized that situations will occur in which an arrest may be made but, due to mitigating circumstances (juveniles, individuals with mental illnesses, public drunks requiring medical attention, etc.), an arrest should not be made. Police officers shall be permitted to exercise professional and impartial discretionary judgment in situations involving investigative and arrest procedures.

In the investigation of misdemeanors and city level offenses, officers will be permitted a greater scope of discretionary judgment. However, in felony situations, the use of discretion shall be severely restricted. Should a question occur concerning the use of discretionary judgment in a particular situation, the officer shall confer with his immediate supervisor. Officers will be held accountable for their use of discretionary judgment.

6.2 Alternatives to Custodial Arrest

Police officers are permitted to use several alternatives in lieu of the custodial arrest of offenders that include but are not limited to: referrals to other agencies when circumstances make a custodial arrest inadvisable, giving written warnings, giving verbal warnings, and issuing a Uniform Traffic Ticket under the provisions of S.C. Code of Laws §56-7-10 and §56-7-15.

6.3 Community Service Programs

While it is recognized that Pre-Trial Intervention and Community Service programs provide a valuable alternative to conventional sentencing practices, police officers are reminded that the imposition of such programs are the responsibility of the Judicial Branch of government. Officers of this Department are prohibited from involvement in any informal arrangement that includes the *nolle prosequi* of any traffic citation or criminal case upon the completion of any community service that has not been sanctioned by the Court.