

Cottonwood Heights Police Department

Cottonwood Heights PD UT Policy Manual

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 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 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.

The Cottonwood Heights City Police Department believes that it is important for our officers have clear advice and counsel available to assist them in performing their duties consistent with these standards, and has adopted the following ethical mandates (from the International Association of Chiefs of Police) as guidelines to meet these ends.

- **Primary Responsibilities of a Police Officer** - A police officer acts as an official representative of government who is required and trusted to work within the law. The officer's powers and duties are conferred by statute. The fundamental duties of a police officer include safeguarding the community, safeguarding lives and property, protecting the innocent, keeping the peace, and ensuring the rights of all to liberty, equality, and justice.
- **Performing the Duties of Police Officer** - A police officer shall perform all duties impartially, without favor of affection or ill will and without regard to status, sex, race, religion, political belief or aspiration. All citizens will be treated equally with courtesy, consideration and dignity.
- Officers will never allow personal feelings, animosities or friendships to influence official conduct. Laws will be enforced appropriately and courteously. In carrying out their responsibilities, officers will strive to maintain maximum cooperation from the public. They will conduct themselves in appearance and demeanor in such a manner as to inspire confidence and respect of the position of public trust that they hold. Officers will not use their official position as a mechanism for personal benefit such as attempting to develop a personal relationship with a victim.

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- **Discretion** - A police officer will responsibly use the discretion vested in the position and exercise it within the law. The principle of reasonableness will guide the officer's determinations and the officer will consider all surrounding circumstances in determining whether any legal action shall be taken. Consistent and wise use of discretion, based on professional policing competence, will do much to preserve good relationships and retain the confidence of the public. There can be difficulty in choosing between conflicting courses of action. A timely word of advice, rather than arrest can, at times, be a more effective means of achieving a desired end.
- **Use of Force** - A police officer will never employ unnecessary force or violence and will use only such force in the discharge of duty as is reasonable in all circumstances. Force should be used only with the greatest restraint and only after discussion, negotiation, and persuasion have been found to be ineffective or inappropriate. While use of force is occasionally unavoidable, every police officer shall refrain from applying the unnecessary affliction of pain or suffering and will never engage in cruel, degrading, or inhumane treatment of any person.
- **Confidentiality** - Whatever a police officer sees, hears, or learns of, which is of a confidential nature, will be kept secret unless the performance of duty or legal provision requires otherwise. Members of the public have the right to security and privacy. Information obtained about them must not be improperly divulged.
- **Integrity** - A police officer will not engage in acts of corruption or bribery, nor will an officer condone such act by other police officers. The public demands that the integrity of its police officers be above reproach. Police officers must avoid any conduct that might compromise integrity and erode public confidence in a law enforcement agency. Officers will refuse to accept any gifts, favors, gratuities, or promises that could be interpreted as seeking to cause the officer to refrain from performing official duties. Respect from the public cannot be bought; it can only be earned and cultivated.
- **Cooperation With Other Officers and Agencies** - Police officers will cooperate with all legally authorized agencies and their representatives in the pursuit of justice. It is imperative a police officer assist colleagues fully and completely with respect and consideration at all times. It is equally important however, that no illegal activity or violation of policy is allowed to occur.
- **Personal and Professional Capabilities** - Police officers will be responsible for their own standard of professional performance and will take every reasonable opportunity to enhance and improve their level of knowledge and competence. Through study and experience, an officer can acquire a high level of knowledge and competence that is essential for the efficient and effective performance of duty. The acquisition of knowledge is a never ending process of personal and professional development, and should be pursued constantly.

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- **Private Life** - Police Officers will behave in a manner that does not bring discredit to their agencies or themselves. A Police officer's character and conduct while off duty must always be exemplary, thus maintaining a position of respect in the community in which the officer lives and serves. The officer's personal behavior must be beyond reproach.