

LAWRENCE TOWNSHIP POLICE DEPARTMENT

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Subject Code of Conduct				Section Name Personnel Function
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This directive was developed by the Lawrence Township Police Department for internal management, and is not intended to expand or enlarge the civil or criminal liability of any employee in any way. This directive should not be construed as the creation of a higher standard of safety or care in an evidentiary sense with respect to third party claims. Violations of this written directive may be used only to form the basis for administrative disciplinary action within this agency.

- I. **PURPOSE:** The purpose of this directive is to establish a Code of Conduct by which all members will obey.[CALEA 26.1.1]
- II. **POLICY:** It is the policy of the Lawrence Township Police Department to hold members accountable for strict adherence to a prescribed code of conduct.
- III. **RULES AND PROCEDURES:**

1. JOB KNOWLEDGE, COMPETENCY, AND PERFORMANCE

All members are expected to have knowledge of and comply with all department directives, general orders, special orders, standard operating procedures relevant to their respective duties, and any additional procedures established by authorized individuals. Members are expected to have knowledge of and comply with the policies and procedures of the Lawrence Township Police Department.

Sworn members shall familiarize themselves with and have a working knowledge of all laws of the State of New Jersey and Ordinances of the Township of Lawrence, which they are required to enforce. Sworn members are required to abide by the standards of the Law Enforcement Code of Ethics and their Oath of Office.

Civilian members are required to abide by the Department's Code of Ethics.

Members shall maintain sufficient mental and physical competency to properly perform their duties and assume the responsibilities of their positions.

Members shall perform their duties in a manner that will maintain the highest standards of efficiency in carrying out their duties and the lawful objectives of the department.

2. NEGLECT OF DUTY

Members shall execute all assigned job duties, tasks and responsibilities in a thorough and complete manner.

Members shall take any official action required by federal or state law, by local ordinance or by any directive of the Chief of Police.

Members will be approachable and responsive to all persons in need of assistance.

Members shall promptly submit all reports that are required of their duties or by constituted authority, in accordance with established department directives.

While on duty, members shall not engage in any activities or personal business that would cause them to neglect or be inattentive to their assigned responsibilities.

Members shall remain awake, alert and attentive while on duty. If unable to do so, they shall report to their supervisor, who shall determine the proper course of action.

3. REPORTING FOR DUTY

Members shall report for duty at the time and place required by assignment and be physically and mentally fit to perform their duties. Department sanctioned special-duty assignments, training sessions, and legally issued subpoenas and court notices shall constitute an order to report for duty under this section.

Members shall be properly equipped and aware of all information required to perform their assignment.

Members shall remain at their job assignment until relieved by another department member or dismissed by proper authority.

Members will be permitted to suspend assigned activities for the purpose of having an authorized meal and/or authorized break periods during their tour of duty, but are subject to immediate recall.

Members shall not be absent from duty without proper notification and authorization.

Members shall report their absence from duty in accordance with established Department procedures.

Members on sick leave may not perform any activity, to include other employment, which may impede recovery from their injury/illness.

4. COMPLIANCE WITH LAWFUL ORDERS

INSUBORDINATION [CALEA 12.1.3]

Members shall promptly comply with all lawful orders given to them by a superior officer, to include those relayed to them by another member of the Department.

Members authorized to give orders shall ensure that the order is clear, lawful and given in connection with official Department business.

Members who are given an order that conflicts with a department rule, regulation, policy, procedure, general order, directive or previous order, shall respectfully inform the issuing supervisor of the conflict. If the supervisor does not alter or retract the conflicting order, the order will stand. Under these circumstances, the responsibility for the conflict will be upon the supervisor.

Members shall not obey any order that they know, or should know, would require them to commit an illegal act. If in doubt as to the clarity or legality of the order, the

member shall, if feasible, request clarification of the order from either the issuing supervisor or the next level in the chain of command as soon as possible.

5. REQUIRED CONDUCT AND PARTICIPATION IN AN INVESTIGATION

Members shall fully cooperate and provide truthful and complete information in any administrative investigation to which they are considered a subject or witness.

Members shall notify their supervisor of their participation in any investigation conducted by any other agency by their next scheduled tour of duty.

6. UNTRUTHFULNESS

Members shall not intentionally make false statements or fail to disclose information in connection with their performance of official duties. This includes when the purpose is to conceal suitability or non-suitability for hire, during any administrative or supervisory investigation involving an internal or external complaint, or to gain improper personal advantage. Any falsification of, or any intentional failure to disclose, information relevant to suitability or fitness for police employment that is discovered after a member is hired, may result in their termination

Members shall be truthful and complete in all official oral and written statements, reports, and other forms of communication in connection with their employment with the Lawrence Township Police Department. Exceptions include instances where deception is necessitated by the nature of a member's assignment.

Members shall not feign illness or injury, falsely report themselves ill or injured, or otherwise deceive or attempt to deceive any official of the department or the Township as to the condition of their health.

7. HARASSMENT IN THE WORKPLACE

Members shall not engage in any conduct that constitutes racial, ethnic, gender or sexual harassment or abuse of authority as defined in the Department's general orders and procedures, or Township of Lawrence Personnel Policy and Procedure Manual.

8. BIAS BASED POLICING [CALEA 1.2.9 a]

It is strictly prohibited for members to engage in the practice of bias-based profiling. Sworn members shall not take any police action that is based solely upon personal traits that include, but are not limited to race, ethnic background, gender, sexual orientation, religion, economic status, age and cultural group.

9. MEMBER'S DUTY TO REPORT MISCONDUCT

Members shall promptly report any knowledge of another member's non-compliance with any federal, state or local law, Lawrence Township ordinance, Code of Ethics, Department directive, general or special order, policy or procedure, to their supervisor or personnel assigned to the Officer Accountability Bureau.

10. COURTESY, RESPONSIVENESS, AND IMPARTIALITY

Members will exercise reasonable courtesy in all interaction with the public.

Members will not use rude, cruel or profane language toward any citizen.

Members will remain professional toward all individuals during the performance of their duties and while in the presence of the public.

Members shall not express, whether by act, omission or statement, any prejudice concerning race, creed, gender, disability, ethnic background, sexual orientation, religion, economic or marital status, political or cultural group, national origin or other similar personal characteristics.

Members will provide all citizens with professional, effective and efficient police service.

Members shall not allow their decisions to be influenced by race, creed, gender, disability, ethnic background, sexual orientation, religion, economic or marital status, political or cultural group, national origin or other similar personal characteristics.

Members will not permit their personal opinions, associations or friendships to influence their decisions and shall remain impartial in the performance of their duties.

11. INTERACTION AND COOPERATION BETWEEN DEPARTMENT PERSONNEL

Members shall interact and fully cooperate with all Department, Township of Lawrence, and other law enforcement or government agency personnel, in a courteous, respectful and professional manner during the performance of their duties.

Members will utilize their chain of command in all official actions or communication when appropriate.

Members shall not initiate or engage in any form of gossip that pertains to other department members.

Members shall not make frivolous, reckless or false complaints against other members of the Department.

Members shall not publicly criticize or ridicule the department's operations, directives, procedures or personnel in a manner that is unlawful, defamatory, obscene, or undermines the efficiency and effectiveness of the Department, interferes with the maintenance of discipline, or is made with reckless disregard for the truth.

12. UNLAWFUL CONDUCT

Members shall not engage in any conduct, whether on or off-duty, which is in violation of any state, federal, local law or ordinance. Such conduct, in and of itself, is sufficient grounds for disciplinary action regardless of whether or not the member has been cited, charged, indicted, arrested, prosecuted, and/or convicted for an offense.

Sworn members shall not knowingly exceed their authority in the enforcement of the law and will adhere to the law or rules of criminal procedure in areas such as interrogation, searches, seizures use of informants and the preservation of evidence.

Sworn members shall not knowingly restrict the freedom of individuals, whether by arrest or detention, in violation of the Constitutions and laws of the United States and the State of New Jersey.

13. IMPROPER CONDUCT

Members shall not steal, duplicate, manufacture, conceal, falsify, destroy, tamper , convert to personal use, remove or withhold any property, evidence, police record, report or other document obtained or held in connection with an investigation or other official Department business, except by process of law or directed by a supervisor or Chief of Police.

Members shall process all property and evidence obtained or received in accordance with established Department general orders and/or procedures.

Members shall not photograph or record any crime scene or police related in any form, for their personal use.

Members shall not initiate, engage or conduct a work stoppage or strike with the intent to induce, influence, or coerce a change in the conditions, compensation, rights, privileges, or obligations of employment.

14. CONDUCT UNBECOMING

All members are prohibited from engaging in any conduct, on and off duty, that brings the department into disrepute, reflects unfavorably upon the employee as a member of the department, damages or affects the reputation of that employee, or impairs the operation or efficiency of the department or any of its personnel.

Sworn members shall conduct themselves at all times, both on and off duty, in a manner that is in keeping with the highest standards of the law enforcement profession.

Sworn members shall not participate in any incident that involves moral turpitude or their ability to perform as law enforcement officers.

Sworn members will maintain a level of moral conduct in their personal and business affairs. Sworn members shall not fail to perform their required duties because of fear or cowardice.

15. USE OF FORCE

Members authorized to use force in the performance of their duties, shall only use that amount of force, which is objectively reasonable to gain compliance from a person, control a situation, effect an arrest or protect themselves or others from harm.

Members shall comply with departmental procedures concerning the documentation and investigation of the use of any force.

16. PROHIBITED ASSOCIATIONS

Members shall avoid personal, financial or other continuous associations with whom they know, or should know, are engaged in criminal activity, under criminal investigation or indictment, registered as a sex offender or gang members, or who have a reputation for present or past involvement in felonious or other criminal behavior, except as necessary in the performance of official duties, or where unavoidable because of personal or family relationships.

Members shall not knowingly associate with any person or organization that advocates the overthrow of the United States government or promotes or fosters the hatred or persecution of a person or protected group.

17. CONFLICT OF INTEREST AND MISUSE OF OFFICIAL POSITION

Members shall not use their official position, department issued identification cards or badges for personal or financial gain for themselves or another; avoiding consequences of unlawful or prohibited actions; and/or obtaining privileges not otherwise available to them, except in the performance of duty.

Members shall not lend their identification cards or badges to any other person, or them to be photographed or reproduced, without the authorization of the Chief of Police.

Members shall not use or allow others to use the Department's uniform, logo or badge for any private purpose, without the authorization of the Chief of Police.

Members shall not knowingly allow their name or photograph to be used to endorse any product or service as representative of the Department without explicit permission of the Chief of Police or designee.

Members shall not endorse, recommend, or suggest the employment or purchase of any specific professional or commercial service or product, while acting in an official capacity.

Members shall not access, obtain, disseminate or use any confidential or other official department information, for any financial, personal or private gain or interest for themselves or another.

18. GRATUITIES

Members shall not solicit or accept, directly or indirectly, any gift, gratuity, loan, service, currency or fee, either for themselves or others, where there is a direct or indirect connection between the solicitation or acceptance and the expectation of services of an official nature performed by the member from their employment and/or association with the Department, unless authorized by the Chief of Police.

19. POLITICAL ACTIVITY

Members shall not use their official position, authority, employment or association with the Department to influence, interfere with, or affect the outcome of an election or other political activity.

Members shall not engage in political activity of any nature while on duty, while in uniform, or while off-duty and acting in any capacity as a representative or agent of the Department or Township of Lawrence. Exception is the member's right to vote.

Members shall not use any property, equipment, symbols, other information associated with the Department or the Township of Lawrence in any manner that would imply endorsement or support with a political candidate or partisan objective.

20. INTERFERENCE IN INVESTIGATIONS

Members shall not attempt to directly or indirectly secure the abandonment or withdrawal of any complaint, charge, or allegation by any means to include, threat, appeal, persuasion, payment of money or other consideration.

Members shall not conduct or intervene in any investigation or other official action outside the scope of their assignment or assigned to another member, without authorization from a superior officer, unless the exigencies of the circumstances require immediate police action.

Members shall not intentionally become involved in disputes or interfere with that involve their neighbors, friends, associates, or relatives. Sworn members shall not make an arrest or take other official action in personal matters or in which any family member is involved, except such action is necessary due to the immediate threat of serious bodily harm or significant property damage. This does not alleviate a member's obligation to report knowledge of a crime to the appropriate authorities.

21. PARTICIPATION IN CIVIL MATTERS

Members shall not provide any statement or testimony that pertains to a civil action unless under lawful subpoena, or when directed by a superior officer under the advisement of the Department's General Counsel.

Members under lawful subpoena or otherwise directed by a superior officer shall notify the Chief of Police prior to providing any statement or testimony in a civil action related to the member's official duties or employment with the Department or where the Department or the Township has an interest in the matter.

22. DEPARTMENT WEAPONS

Members authorized to carry and use weapons in the performance of their duties, shall do so in accordance with established laws and department procedures.

Sworn members shall not use, carry or handle any firearm or Conducted Energy in a careless or imprudent manner so as to cause an unintentional discharge.

23. ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES & CONTROLLED SUBSTANCES

Members shall not report for duty, or be on-duty, while under the influence of intoxicants to any degree, or with an odor of an alcoholic beverage on their breath.

Members shall not possess or consume intoxicants, while on-duty, except when in the performance of official duties, and then, never to the extent that the member's ability to perform an official assignment or function is impaired.

Members, while off duty, will refrain from consuming intoxicating beverages to the extent that it results in impairment, intoxication, obnoxious or offensive behavior which discredits them or the department, or renders the member unfit to report to their next scheduled shift.

Members shall not purchase intoxicants, either on-duty or off-duty, while in uniform or attire that clearly identifies the member as an employee of the Department. Except in the performance of duty, members in uniform will not enter any establishment or place where the principle business is the sale of intoxicants.

Members shall not bring or store alcoholic beverages, controlled substances, narcotic or hallucinogens in any department facility or vehicle, except those that are lawfully prescribed, held as evidence, used for training or otherwise authorized by a supervisor.

24. PERSONAL APPEARANCE

Members shall comply with Department directives that pertain to uniforms, attire, grooming and personal appearance.

Members shall maintain a neat, clean, well-groomed, professional appearance while on duty or off-duty and acting in an official capacity, unless dictated by job assignment or authorized by the Chief of Police or designee.

25. RELEASE OF INFORMATION /CONFIDENTIAL RECORDS

Members shall consider the operations and official business of the Department to be confidential. Any information that is accessible only to a member as a result of their employment with the Department shall be considered confidential, unless otherwise defined.

Members shall only release confidential or other official information to any person authorized to receive it in accordance with applicable laws and Department General Orders.

Members may not release, or cause to be released, any documents of the Lawrence Township Police Department for use in any hearing or court, unless a judicial

subpoena or court order has been issued, or the release has been approved by the County Prosecutor, the Township Attorney, or the Chief of Police.

26. PERSONNEL CONTACT AND IDENTIFICATION INFORMATION

Members shall maintain an operable cellular or residential phone. Members shall not electronically block the Department's ability to contact them in this manner.

Members shall provide their current phone number, residential address and emergency contact information to the Department for emergency notification and/or "call-out" purposes. Members shall report any changes to the referenced information to their supervisor, commanding officer and the Office of the Chief of Police within 48 hours after the change occurs.

Members shall not disclose another department member's personal contact or identification information to persons not employed with the Department, unless directed by the Chief of Police or designee, or the member whose information is being requested.

Members shall not disclose the identity of any department member assigned to an undercover unit or engaged in authorized covert operations.

27. OFFICIAL REPRESENTATION AND MEDIA RELATIONS

Members shall not address media personnel or release official information relating to Department business without authorization of the Chief of Police or designee.

Members will comply with established department procedures and General Orders that relate to media relations. Release of information to media personnel shall be done in compliance with State Law and the department's General Orders and Standard Operating Procedures.

Members shall not present themselves as the official representative of the Department, without authorization from the Chief of Police. Department letterhead may not be used for personal or private correspondence.

28. OFFICIAL IDENTIFICATION [CALEA 22.2.7]

Members on-duty or off-duty and acting in an official capacity, shall provide their name, rank, duty assignment and/or their official photo identification card in a courteous manner upon request by any person, unless assigned to undercover or covert duties or when otherwise authorized by the Chief of Police or designee.

29. DEPARTMENT EQUIPMENT AND VEHICLE OPERATION

Members shall not abuse, damage, or lose through negligence or intent any property, or equipment owned, insured or leased by the Department or Township of Lawrence.

Members shall properly maintain all property, equipment and vehicles, owned, insured or leased by the Department or Township of Lawrence.

Members shall not operate vehicles owned, insured or leased by the department or Township of Lawrence in an unlawful, careless, or negligent manner, to include actions that contribute to the breakdown of a vehicle, any property damage, or which are found to have been the cause of a preventable accident.

Members shall immediately report to a supervisor, any damage, loss or theft of assigned property, equipment or vehicles, owned, insured or leased by the Department or Township of Lawrence.

Members shall use all equipment, property and vehicles, owned, insured or leased by the Department or Township of Lawrence, only for their intended purpose and in accordance with established departmental procedures.

Members shall not allow unauthorized persons to possess or use any property, equipment or vehicles owned, insured or leased by the department or Township of Lawrence.

All employees authorized to operate a vehicle owned, insured or leased by the department or Township of Lawrence shall maintain a valid New Jersey Driver's License and shall immediately report the loss or suspension of their driver's license to a supervisor.

30. SOCIAL MEDIA; CONDUCT AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF MEMBERS

Members are free to express themselves as private citizens on social media sites or via other means to the extent that their speech does not impair working relationships of this department, impede the performance of duties, impair discipline and esprit de corps among coworkers, or negatively affect the public perception of the department. As public employees, members are cautioned that speech on or off duty, which relates to their official duties and responsibilities, is not protected by the First Amendment and may form the basis for discipline if deemed detrimental to the department. Department personnel should assume that their speech and related activity on social media or other communication media sites will reflect upon the department and them as police officers.

Members engaging in social networking or other means of information exchange must conduct themselves in a manner consistent with the Department Code of Conduct.

Members are subject to discipline for posting, sharing, or otherwise disseminating department related information in any manner that is inconsistent with this General Order, up to and including termination.

Postings Prohibited

Adherence to the Department's Code of Conduct is required in the personal use of social media and other information sharing sites. Because such speech becomes part of the public domain and may be used to discredit members, undermine their ability to testify in court, or damage the reputation of the agency, members are prohibited from posting the following:

- A. Speech containing obscene or sexually explicit language, images, or acts.
- B. Any act or statement, or any other form of speech that ridicules, maligns, disparages, or otherwise indicates bias against any race, religion, color, ancestry, national origin, ethnicity, disability, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, familial status, marital status or other protected status.
- C. Speech or acts involving themselves or other members that reflects violent, reckless, or irresponsible behavior.
- D. False information that harms the reputation of another person, group or organization.
- E. Private facts about someone without their permission that have not been previously revealed to the public, are not of legitimate public concern, and would be offensive to a reasonable person.
- F. The name, likeness or other personal identifier or attribute of another person without that person's permission in a manner that usurps or falsely uses the person's identity.
- G. The creative work of another copyrighted or trademarked material, or other confidential business information without the permission of the owner.

On-Duty Usage Prohibited

- A. Updating any social media or other information sharing sites while on duty, unless it is in the course or furtherance of employment.
- B. Text messaging while operating a Township owned, insured or leased vehicle.

Information Sharing Requiring Prior Permission of the Chief of Police

Members are prohibited from posting or otherwise publishing any of the following on the internet, any social networking platform, or any other media or information exchange forum:

- A. Any text, photograph, audio or video recording, or any other type of information file, related to any investigation or matter of this department.
- B. Any confidential, law enforcement sensitive or proprietary information of the department.
- C. Logo, badge, uniform, vehicle, equipment, weapon, or any identifying item or symbol affiliated with the department (except as authorized below) without authorization of the Chief of Police.

Information Sharing Regarding Department-Sanctioned Public Activity Permitted

Members may share and post photographs of themselves in uniform, as well as images depicting Department sanctioned public functions such as Academy graduations, promotions, Peace Officer Memorial events, and official fundraising or community projects, as well as union sponsored community activities. Any posting of a member in uniform shall be subject to the General Orders governing the Code of Conduct and Department appearance standards.

Safety of Members

For safety reasons, members are cautioned to not disclose their employment with this department on web postings, or post information pertaining to any other member without that member's permission. This includes posting or sharing personal photos that may cause them to be recognized as members of the department.

Members working in an undercover capacity shall not post any form of visual or personal identification unless operationally necessary.

Duty to Identify Posting

Any member who maintains a blog, or who posts a reply to a blog that identifies the agency, must identify themselves in the blog posting, and must include a disclaimer that their viewpoints are personal and do not reflect the position of the department.

Use of Email Addresses on Information Sharing Sites

Members shall not use Township email addresses to register for or respond to any social media or internet information sharing site unless it is for a department sanctioned purpose.

Access by the Department to Member Postings

Members should expect that any information created, downloaded, exchanged or discussed in a public online forum may be accessed by anyone, to include the department, at any time without prior notice.

Duty to Report Violations

Any employee who becomes aware or has knowledge of a posting, website, or any other manner of posting of information in violation of this General Order shall notify his or her Chain of Command immediately for follow-up action.