

WEBER COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE CODE OF ETHICS

All Sheriff's Office employees must be fully aware of the ethical responsibilities of their position and must strive constantly to live up to the highest possible standards of professional policing.

The Weber County Sheriff's Office believes it is important that employees (sworn and non-sworn) have clear advice and counsel available to assist them in performing their duties consistent with these standards and has adopted the following ethical mandates as guidelines to meet these ends.

Primary Responsibilities of a Sheriff's Office Member

A Sheriff's Office member acts as an official representative of government who is required and trusted to work within the law. The member's powers and duties are conferred by statute. The fundamental duties of a Sheriff's Office member include serving the community; safeguarding lives and property; protecting the innocent, keeping the peace, and ensuring the rights of all to liberty, equality and justice.

Performance of the Duties of a Sheriff's Office Member

A Sheriff's Office member shall perform all duties impartially, without favor or 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.

Sheriff's Office members will never allow personal feeling, animosities or friendships to influence official conduct. Laws will be enforced appropriately and courteously and, in carrying out their responsibilities, Sheriff's Office members will strive to obtain maximum cooperation from the public. They will conduct themselves in appearance and deportment in such a manner as to inspire confidence and respect of the position of public trust they hold.

Discretion

A Sheriff's Office member will use responsibly, the discretion vested in the position, and exercise it within the law. The principle of reasonableness will guide the member's determinations and the member 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. It is important to remember that a timely word of advice rather than arrest, which may be correct in appropriate circumstances, can be a more effective means of achieving a desired end.

Use of Force

A Sheriff's Office member 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 inappropriate or ineffective. While the use of force is occasionally unavoidable, every member will refrain from applying the unnecessary infliction of pain or suffering and will never engage in cruel, degrading or inhuman treatment of any person.

Confidentiality

Whatever a Sheriff's Office member sees, hears or learns of, which is of a confidential nature, will be kept a secret unless the performance of duty or legal provision requires otherwise.

Members of the public have a right to security and privacy, and information obtained about them must not be improperly divulged.

Integrity

A Sheriff's Office member will not engage in acts of corruption or bribery, nor will a member condone such acts by other Sheriff's Office members.

The public demands that the integrity of Sheriff's Office members be above reproach. Sheriff's Office members must, therefore, avoid any conduct that might compromise integrity and thus undercut the public confidence in a law enforcement agency. Sheriff's Office members will refuse to accept any gifts, presents, subscription, favors, gratuities or promises that could be interpreted as seeking to cause the Sheriff's Office member to refrain from performing official responsibilities honestly within the law. Sheriff's Office members must not receive private or special advantage from their official status. Respect from the public cannot be bought; it can only be earned and cultivated.

Cooperation with other Sheriff's Office Members and Agencies

Sheriff's Office members will cooperate with all legally authorized agencies and their representatives in the pursuit of justice.

A Sheriff's Office member or agency may be one among many organizations that may provide law enforcement services to a jurisdiction. It is imperative that a Sheriff's Office member assist colleagues fully and completely with respect and consideration at all times.

Personal/Professional Capabilities

Sheriff's Office members 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, a Sheriff's Office member can acquire the 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 that should be pursued constantly.

Private Life

Sheriff's Office members will behave in a manner that does not bring discredit to their agencies or themselves.

A Sheriff's Office member's character and conduct while off duty must always be exemplary, thus maintaining a position of respect in the community in which he or she lives and serves. The Sheriff's Office member's personal behavior must be beyond reproach.

Adopted by: IACP-October, 1989; Utah Chiefs of Police Association-October, 1990; Utah Sheriff's Association-November, 1990; Utah Peace Officers Association-November, 1990; Peace Officer Standards & Training Council-January, 1991; Weber County Sheriff's Office-May, 1997, to replace all previous Code of Ethics for the State of Utah. The term police officer is replaced by Sheriff's Office member.