



# CITY OF FAIRFAX POLICE DEPARTMENT

## GENERAL ORDER

Subject <b>POLICE ETHICS</b>		Number 1-4
Effective Date August 22, 2016	Rescinds General Order 1-4, dated 9-25-07	
Accreditation Standards Sixth Edition 1.1.2	Authority Colonel Carl R. Pardiny Chief of Police	

### PURPOSE:

To state those principles that the department holds as necessary for its members and to provide the members of the department with a written code that shall serve as a guide for personal behavior both on duty and off duty.

### POLICY:

The Canons of Police Ethics, as adopted by the International Association of Chiefs of Police, are embraced as fulfilling and establishing such a written code of personal conduct for all members of the City of Fairfax Police Department.

### DISCUSSION:

A "Canon", as used in the directive, refers to a criterion that forms a body of principles or standards for attitude, actions, or behavior.

### PROCEDURE:

#### I. CANONS OF POLICE ETHICS

##### A. Article 1. Primary Responsibility of Job:

1. The primary responsibility of the police service is the protection of the people of the United States through the upholding of their laws; chief among these is the Constitution of the United States and its amendments. The law enforcement officer always represents the whole of the community and its legally expressed will and is never the arm of any political party or clique.

##### B. Article 2. Limitations of Authority:

1. The first duty of a law enforcement officer, as upholder of the law, is to know its bounds upon him/her in enforcing it. Because they represent the legal will of the community, be it local, state or federal, they must be aware of the limitations and proscriptions which the people, through law, have placed upon them.
2. He or she must recognize the genius of the American system of government which gives to no person, groups of persons, or institution, absolute power, and they must ensure that they, as a prime defender of that system, do not pervert its character.

##### C. Article 3. Duty to be Familiar with the Law and with Responsibilities of Self and other Public Officials:

1. The law enforcement officer shall assiduously apply him/herself to the study of the principles of the laws which they are sworn to uphold. They will make certain of their responsibilities in the particulars of their enforcement, seeking aid from their superiors in matters of technicality or principle when these are not clear to them; they will make special effort to fully understand their relationship to other public

officials, including other law enforcement agencies, particularly on matters of jurisdiction, both geographically and substantively.

D. Article 4. Utilization of Proper Means to Gain Proper Ends:

1. The law enforcement officer shall be mindful of his/her responsibility to pay strict heed to the selection of means in discharging the duties of their office. Violations of law or disregard for public safety and property on the part of an officer are intrinsically wrong; they are self-defeating in that they instill in the public mind a like disposition. The employment of illegal means, no matter how worthy the end, is certain to encourage disrespect for the law and its officers. If the law is to be honored, it must first be honored by those who enforce it.

E. Article 5. Cooperation with Public Officials in the Discharge of Their Authorized Duties:

1. The law enforcement officer shall cooperate fully with other public officials in the discharge of authorized duties, regardless of party affiliation or personal prejudice. They shall be meticulous, however, in assuring themselves of the propriety, under the law, of such actions and shall guard against the use of their office or person, whether knowingly or unknowingly, in any improper or illegal action. In any situation open to question, they shall seek authority from their superior officer, giving them a full report of the proposed service or action.

F. Article 6. Private Conduct:

1. The law enforcement officer shall be mindful of his/her special identification by the public as an upholder of the law. Laxity of conduct or manner in private life, expressing either disrespect for the law or seeking to gain special privilege, cannot be reflected upon the police officer and the police service. The community and the service require that the law enforcement officer lead the life of a decent and honorable person. Following the career of a police officer gives no person special prerequisites. It does give the satisfaction and pride of following and furthering an unbroken tradition of safeguarding the American republic. The officer who reflects upon this tradition will not degrade it. Rather, they will so conduct their private lives that the public will regard them as an example of stability, fidelity, and morality.

G. Article 7. Conduct Toward the Public:

1. The law enforcement officer, mindful of his/her responsibility to the whole community, shall deal with individuals of the community in a manner calculated to instill respect for its laws and its police service. The law enforcement officer shall conduct his/her official life in a manner such as will inspire confidence and trust. Thus, they will be neither overbearing nor subservient, as no individual citizen has an obligation to stand in awe of them nor a right to command them. The officers will give service where they can, and require compliance with the law. They will do neither from personal preference or prejudice, but rather as a duly appointed officer of the law discharging their sworn obligation.

H. Article 8. Conduct in Arresting and Dealing with Law Violators:

1. The law enforcement officer shall use his/her powers of arrest strictly in accordance with the law and with due regard to the rights of the citizen concerned. Their office gives them no right to prosecute the violator nor to mete out punishment for the offense. They shall at all times have a clear appreciation of their responsibilities and limitations regarding detention of the violator; they shall conduct themselves in such a manner as will minimize the possibility of having to use force. To this end, they shall cultivate a dedication to the service of the people and the equitable upholding of their laws whether in the handling of law violators or in dealing with the law-abiding.

I. Article 9. Gifts and Favors:

1. The law enforcement officer, representing government, bears the heavy responsibility of maintaining, in their own conduct, the honor and integrity of all government institutions. They shall, therefore, guard against placing themselves in a position in which any person can expect special consideration or

in which the public can reasonably assume that special consideration is being given. Thus, they should be firm in refusing gifts, favors, or gratuities, large or small, which can, in the public mind, be interpreted as capable of influencing their judgment in the discharge of their duties.

J. Article 10. Presentation of Evidence:

1. The law enforcement officer shall be concerned equally in the prosecution of the wrong-doer and the defense of the innocent. They shall ascertain what constitutes evidence and shall present such evidence impartially and without malice. In so doing, they will ignore social, political, and all other distinctions among the persons involved, strengthening the tradition of the reliability and integrity of an officer's word.
2. The law enforcement officer shall take special pains to increase his/her perception and skill of observation, mindful that in many situations, theirs' is the sole impartial testimony to the facts of a case.

K. Article 11. Attitude Toward Profession:

1. The law enforcement officer shall regard the discharge of his/her duties as a public trust and recognize their responsibility as a public servant. By diligent study and sincere attention to self-improvement, they shall strive to make the best possible application of science to the solution of crime and, in the field of human relationships, strive for effective leadership and public influence in matters affecting public safety. They shall appreciate the importance and responsibility of their office, and hold police work to be an honorable profession rendering valuable service to their community and their country.

II. All personnel shall receive biennial training on the Canons of Police Ethics. (1.1.2)

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Colonel Carl R. Pardiny / Chief of Police

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