

# **Wisconsin State Fair Park Police Department Code of Conduct**

## **Preamble**

The Wisconsin State Fair Park Police Department hereby establishes a Code of Conduct comprised of our Vision Statement, Mission Statement, Core Values and Guiding Principles and Rules and Regulations. This Code establishes fundamental standards of conduct and performance consistent with the highest professional standards of policing.

**Our Vision Statement describes what we, as a Police Department, seek to achieve.**

**Our Mission Statement describes how we, as a Police Department, will achieve that Vision.**

Our Core Values and Guiding Principles shape our conduct and performance both on and off duty. Our Rules and Regulations guide our standards of practice for situations most likely to be encountered in the course of our duties.

The Wisconsin State Fair Park Police Department recognizes the inherent complexity of policing and the use of legitimate discretion by members to confront that complexity. Discretion is, however, limited. Discretion cannot be arbitrary nor used as an excuse for personal inclination when members fail to perform properly. When members confront situations that are so unique that no rule or regulation can guide them, their decisions and interventions must always be consistent with our core values and guiding principles.

Department members shall always conduct themselves – to the extent their position requires – in accordance with the provisions of this Code. Any conduct, whether on or off duty, which brings or is likely to bring discredit upon the City of Wisconsin State Fair Police Department may be investigated to establish whether or not a breach of the Code has occurred. A breach of the Code may result, in appropriate circumstances, in a criminal or disciplinary investigation, either as directed by the Chief of Police or the Police Commission.

When department members are investigated for a breach of this Code, whether directed by the Chief of Police or Police Commission, the investigation will be conducted promptly, thoroughly, and impartially. This Code shall be applied to any investigation, hearing or decision relating to misconduct in a reasonable and objective manner. Due regard shall be given to the degree of negligence or deliberate fault of a member and the nature and circumstances of the member's misconduct. The Chief of Police or Police Commission reserves the right to impose discipline up to and including discharge from the department if, after a prompt, thorough, and impartial investigation has been conducted, it is determined that a breach of the Code has occurred.

# **The Vision, Mission, Core Values and Guiding Principles of The Wisconsin State Fair Park Police Department**

## **VISION**

A State Fair Park venue where all employees, businesses, and visitors can live safely and without fear, protected by a police department with the highest ethical and professional standards striving for continuous improvement.

## **MISSION**

The Wisconsin State Fair Park Police Department strives to provide all businesses and visitors with professional, competent, ethical, and compassionate law enforcement services. We pledge to work in partnership with all members of our community to make the Wisconsin State Fair Park a better place to work and visit.

## **CORE VALUES**

### **1.00 – COMPETENCE**

**We are prudent stewards of the public's grant of authority and resources. We are accountable for the quality of our performance and the standards of our conduct. We are exemplary leaders and exemplary followers.**

#### **1.01**

All members are at-will employees and shall be evaluated on their conduct and fitness for the performance of their duties. If a member's conduct or performance of duties is not satisfactory for continued service the department, the member shall be discharged, with no right of appeal to Human Resources.

#### **1.02**

We cooperate with our colleagues, other agencies, and citizens to ensure public safety, improve the quality of urban and rural life, protect those who cannot protect themselves and enforce the law.

#### **1.03**

All department members shall render service to the community promptly and efficiently. When not answering a call for service, members shall use their time to accomplish the mission of the department.

#### **1.04.**

Police investigations shall at a minimum be based upon reasonable suspicion or an actual or possible offense or crime. Investigations shall be conducted, and report shall be prepared in a prompt, thorough, impartial, and careful manner so as to ensure accountability and responsibility in accordance with the law.

#### **1.05**

All department members shall be familiar with department policy, procedures and training and shall conduct themselves accordingly.

#### **1.06**

All department members shall report for duty at the time designated by their supervisors.

#### **1.07**

All department members shall report to court at the time designated by their subpoenas or court notices.

#### **1.08**

All department members shall report fit for duty, and not be impaired because of drinking alcohol, using a drug for non-medical purposes, intentionally misusing a prescription drug or substance abuse.

#### **1.09**

No department member shall consume, purchase, or possess any intoxicating liquor and/or fermented malt beverage while on duty or in uniform except with approval of the Chief of Police or his/her designee in accordance with special duty assignments.

#### **1.10**

All department members are responsible for the condition and safeguarding of their personal and department issued equipment. Department members shall not deface, damage, destroy, modify, or carelessly or inappropriately use any department property without permission to do so.

## **2.00 – COURAGE**

**We place the safety of others before our own and accept our moral responsibility to act against injustice and wrongdoing. Police members are expected to take prudent risks on behalf of the public.**

### **2.01**

Police members are required to discharge their duties with composure and determination and in time of danger or adversity shall act together and assist each other in the restoration of peace and order.

### **2.02**

Members shall oppose and, if possible, prevent any violation of the Code of Conduct and report violations if they occur. Members will not be punished but will be protected and supported for reporting a violation of the Code of Conduct, unless the report is shown to be malicious or unfounded.

### **2.03**

Failure to intervene when a violation of the Code of Conduct occurs, or is about to occur, shall be treated the same as if the member committed the violation.

## **3.00 – INTEGRITY**

**We recognize the complexity of police work and exercise discretion in ways that are beyond reproach and worthy of public trust. Honesty and truthfulness are fundamental elements of integrity. It is our duty to earn public trust through consistent words and actions. We are honest in word and deed.**

### **3.01**

Our behavior shall inspire and sustain the confidence of our community. Whether on or off duty, department members shall not behave in such a way that a reasonable person would expect that discredit could be brought upon the department, or that it would create the appearance of impropriety or corruptive behavior.

### **3.02**

Members shall avoid regular or continuous associations with persons or groups they reasonably believe, know, or should know are planning to, or are engaged in, criminal behavior, or advocate the overthrow of government, such that the association would undermine the public trust or affect the member's credibility or integrity. The exceptions

are associations that are necessary in the performance of duty or familial relationships of which the Chief of Police or his/her designee are cognizant of.

### **3.03**

Police members shall exercise powers of arrest, search, seizure, and surveillance only when it is lawful, necessary and proportionate to do so.

### **3.04**

Department members shall treat the official business of the department as confidential, not imparting it to anyone, either orally, electronically, or in writing, except those for whom it is intended or under due process of law.

### **3.05**

Department members shall obey local ordinances and state and federal laws, whether on or off-duty. Any violation of ordinances or laws in any jurisdiction shall be reported to the Chief of Police or any supervisory officer, whether such supervisors are on or off duty, as soon as practical.

### **3.06**

Department members shall not use their official position or membership with the Wisconsin State Fair Park Police Department to unnecessarily interfere with the personal affairs or professional responsibilities of any person or agency.

### **3.07**

Members shall not suggest or recommend a specific attorney to anyone who has been arrested or to someone on their behalf nor become involved in the employment of an attorney for any victim of a crime or accident within the Wisconsin State Fair Park grounds.

### **3.08**

Department members shall not accept nor solicit, either directly or indirectly, anything of value, including a gratuity, money, reward, gift, fee, loan, or special consideration because of their office. Members are not precluded from receiving very minor courtesies and gratuities (i.e., small amounts of food or non-alcoholic drink) if it is not sought nor in exchange or expectation of official favor.

### **3.09**

All department members are bound by the Wisconsin State Fair Park Rules and Regulations or the Wisconsin State Fair Park's Human Resources policies regarding

residency and are required to establish and maintain their actual and bona fide residence pursuant to said guidelines.

### **3.10**

All department members shall be forthright and candid, orally or in writing, in connection with any administrative inquiry or report.

### **3.11**

Department members are required to be complete, honest, and accurate with respect to relevant facts and information pertaining to any criminal or civil investigation, report or inquiry. No department member shall knowingly or with reckless disregard for the truth sign or make any false official statement.

*Note:*

*The provisions of this guiding principle do not apply to a member's questioning or interrogation of a person involved in a criminal investigation where the member is engaged in an approved undercover role where such representation is not consistent with law or is an accepted professional practice.*

## **4.00 – LEADERSHIP**

**We seek to influence human behavior to achieve organizational goals that serve the public while developing individuals, teams, and the organization for future service. We accept our responsibility to be leaders, both within the community and among our peers, and for the actions of our colleagues and ourselves. We are all responsible for the performance, reputation, and morale of the department.**

### **4.01**

We will work together and set an example that embodies respect, compassion, integrity, and efficiency.

### **4.02**

Leadership is not solely positional, and no rank has unique privileges. The only privilege of rank is increased responsibility.

### **4.03**

Personal failure to intervene to prevent or stop misconduct, when there is an opportunity to do so, demonstrates not only a lack of courage, but also a failure of leadership.

#### **4.04**

Supervisors shall be role models for delivering truly professional, impartial, and effective police service. Supervisors shall ensure that the individuals for whom they are responsible carry out their professional duties correctly. Supervisors must put the department's mission first, in both word and action, and do nothing to interfere with its accomplishment.

#### **4.05**

Supervisors shall ensure that for whom they are responsible are supported and guided on the professional performance of their duties and encouraged to further their professional development. Supervisors have a particular responsibility to secure, promote, improve, and maintain professional standards and integrity through the provision of advice and guidance. Supervisors have an obligation to commend exemplary behavior, a responsibility to correct substandard behavior and a requirement to discipline when necessary.

### **5.00 – RESPECT**

**We hold life in the highest regard. We treat all citizens and colleagues with dignity and respect and are fair and impartial as we perform our duties.**

#### **5.01**

Department members shall treat the public and each other with courtesy and professionalism. Civility and patience are valued attributes, while profane or insolent language or actions undermine the public's confidence in us.

#### **5.02**

Members shall act with fairness, self-control, tolerance, and impartiality when carrying out their duties.

#### **5.03**

Members shall promptly obey any proper and lawful order emanating from any officer of higher rank. Any improper or unlawful order should be reported to a supervisor of higher rank.

#### **5.04**

A conflicting order shall be brought to the attention of the member giving the order. If this member does not change the order, the order shall stand, and this member shall bear full responsibility.

## **6.00 – RESTRAINT**

**We use the minimum force and authority necessary to accomplish a proper police purpose. We demonstrate self-discipline, even when no one is listening or watching.**

### **6.01**

Police members shall exercise restraint in the use of force and act in proportion to the seriousness of the offense and the legitimate law enforcement objective to be achieved.

### **6.02**

Members shall not subject any person to torture or cruel, inhumane or degrading treatment or punishment. No circumstances whatsoever may be invoked to as a justification for torture or other cruel, inhumane, or degrading treatment or punishment.



**WISCONSIN STATE FAIR PARK POLICE DEPARTMENT  
CODE OF CONDUCT  
DISCIPLINARY DECISION PROCESS**

**PURPOSE**

This section identifies factors that will be considered in the disciplinary decision process for alleged breaches of the Code of Conduct and/or the Wisconsin State Fair Park Police Department Rules and Regulations or Employee Handbook. It is critical that a system of discipline be established that contributes to minimizing the abuse of police authority and promotes the department's reputation for professionalism. Each department member must understand and be guided by the standards that have specifically been established in this Code.

It is recognized and understood that department members will make judgmental errors from time to time in carrying out their responsibilities. While each error in judgment offers and opportunity for the department and member to learn, it is also understood some errors will have greater consequences than others for the public, the department, and the member.

The department has an obligation to make its expectations as clear as possible to its members. The department has an equal obligation to make the consequences for failing to meet those expectations clear. There are often circumstances that may have contributed to errors of judgment or poor decisions that need to be considered when determining the appropriate consequences for conduct found to be improper.

Disciplinary action must be imposed in a consistent and fair manner:

Consistency is defined as holding everyone equally accountable for unacceptable conduct.

Fairness is defined as understanding the circumstances that contributed to the conduct while applying the consequences in a way that reflects this understanding.

To ensure that members are treated in a consistent and fair manner, the application of consequences for conduct that is not in keeping with the department's expectations will be based upon a balanced consideration of factors. Following the careful consideration of all applicable factors in any disciplinary review, every effort will be made to determine the consequences that consistently and fairly fit each specific incident.

**DISCIPLINE FACTORS**

**Employee Motivation:** The department exists to serve the public. One factor in examining a member's conduct will be whether the member was acting in the public's interest. A member who violates a rule or regulation to accomplish a legitimate police purpose, and who demonstrates an understanding of the broader public interest inherent in the situation, will be given more positive consideration in the determination of consequences than one who was motivated by personal interest. From time to time, it may be difficult to distinguish between public and personal interest. As an example, arresting a dangerous criminal is in the public's interest. However, violating the criminal's Constitutional rights to do so is not in the public's interest. The greater public interest is for the police to carry out its responsibilities while protecting the public's Constitutional guarantees. But if a member attempts to devise an innovative, nontraditional solution for a persistent crime or service problem and unintentionally runs afoul of minor rules, the desire to encourage creativity may carry significant weight in determining any discipline that might result.

**Degree of Harm:** The degree of harm that an error causes is also an important aspect in deciding the consequences of a member's conduct. Harm can be measured in a variety of ways. It can be measured in terms of the monetary cost to the department and community. For example, an error that causes significant damage to a vehicle could be examined considering repair costs. Harm can also be measured in terms of personal injury the error causes, such as the consequences of an unnecessary use of force. Another way in which harm can be measured is the impact of the error on public confidence. An employee who engages in criminal conduct could affect the public confidence in the department if the consequences do not send a clear, compelling message that the conduct will not be tolerated.

**Employee Experience:** The level of experience of department members is a discipline factor. A relatively new member (or an experienced member in an unfamiliar assignment) will be given greater consideration when judgment errors are made. Conversely, a member who makes a judgment error that would not be expected of one who has a significant amount of experience may expect more serious sanctions. Consideration will be given to whether the error was deemed of the heart or of the mind.

**Intentional and Unintentional Errors:** Errors can be classified as intentional and unintentional errors. Factors in this determination will be given to whether the error was also deemed of the heart (good intentions) or of the mind (willful intentions).

Unintentional Errors are defined as an action or a decision that turns out to be wrong but based upon the information available at the time it was taken, seemed to follow rules and regulations and the most appropriate course. Unintentional errors include those memory lapses of judgment or acts of carelessness that result in minimal harm. Department members will be held accountable for these errors, but the consequences will be more corrective than punitive unless the same errors persist.

Intentional Errors are defined as an action or a decision that an employee makes that is know (or should be known) to conflict with law, established training or procedures or this Code of Conduct. Generally, intentional errors will be treated more seriously and carry greater consequences than unintentional errors. Within the framework of intentional errors there are certain behaviors that are entirely inconsistent with the responsibilities of the police profession. These include lying, theft, physical abuse of citizens, and other seriously equally serious breaches of trust placed in members of the police profession.

The nature of the police responsibility requires that police officers be truthful. It is recognized, however, that it is sometimes difficult to determine if one is being untruthful. A member will face discharge from the department when the member is intentionally engaging in an effort to be untruthful. It is also a serious breach to have engaged in theft, physical abuse of citizens and other criminal behavior.

**Employees Past Record:** To the extent allowed by law and rules and regulations, a member's past record will be taken into consideration in determining the consequences of a failure to meet the department's expectations. A member that repeatedly makes errors can expect the consequences of this behavior to become progressively more punitive. A member whose past record reflects hard work and dedication to the community and department will be given every consideration in the determination of any disciplinary action.

## **RESPONSIBILITY**

The Wisconsin State Fair Park Police Department has a well-established tradition of serving the community with integrity and professionalism. We are among the finest police organizations in the nation. To maintain our proud tradition and continue improving the quality of service the department provides to the community, each member must accept their responsibility for maintaining the high professional standards of this Code and to working diligently to follow all departmental rules and regulations.

Reviewed: 07/11/2022 Chief KMP