

Effective 04/06/2021

It is the mission of the El Paso Police Department to preserve life, to provide services with integrity and dedication, to enforce the law, and to work in partnership with the community to enhance the quality of life in the City of El Paso.

Effective 01/11/2021

PURPOSE

Professionalism dictates, in addition to prescribing a desired level of performance, the establishment of minimum standards of ethical conduct with prescribed policies for internal discipline to ensure compliance. The El Paso Police Department has created and adopted a Mission Statement and published Core Values. These values are an important code of ethics and standards upon which performance, conduct, policies, and procedures are based.

WE RESPECT LIFE

We hold the preservation of all life as our sacred duty. Our value of human life sets our priorities.

- A. The primary responsibility of the officers of the El Paso Police Department is to protect the people within its jurisdiction and to uphold the Constitution of the United States, the Texas State Constitution and the laws derived therefrom.
- B. Employees will respect and uphold the dignity, human rights, and constitutional rights of all persons.
- C. Officers will not use more force than is reasonably necessary and will use force in accordance with the law and Department procedures.
- D. Employees will be courteous to the public. Employees will be tactful in the performance of their duties and will control emotions and exercise patience and discretion. Employees will not express any prejudice concerning race, color, religion, gender, politics, national origin, lifestyle or similar characteristics.
- E. Employees will not allow their personal convictions, beliefs, prejudices or biases to interfere with the appropriate execution of official acts or decisions.

WE REVERE THE TRUTH

We accept nothing less than truth, honesty, and integrity in our profession.

- A. Employees will follow the principles of integrity, fairness, and impartiality in connection with their duties.
- B. Employees will not knowingly make false accusations of any criminal, ordinance, traffic or other violation.
- C. Employees will treat the official business of the Department as confidential. Information regarding official business will be disseminated only to those for whom it is intended in accordance with established Department procedures. Employees will not divulge the identity of persons giving confidential information except as authorized by proper authority.
- D. Employees will not make false official statements.
- E. Employees will truthfully and impartially report, testify, and present evidence in all matters of an official nature.

WE ENFORCE THE LAW

We recognize that our basic responsibility is to enforce the law. Our role is to resolve problems through the law, not to judge or punish.

- A. Officers will, within their jurisdiction, preserve the public peace, protect life and property, and enforce the laws for which the Department is responsible.
- B. Officers will follow legal practices in such areas as interrogation, arrest or detention, searches, seizures, use of informants, and collection and preservation of evidence.
- C. Employees, within legal and Department guidelines, will share appropriate information with other employees and other agency personnel that will facilitate the achievement of criminal justice goals or objectives.
- D. Employees, whether requested through appropriate channels or called upon individually, will render needed assistance to any other employee in the proper performance of their duty.

WE SEEK COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIP

We view the people of our community as partners who deserve our concern, care, and attention. We are committed to reducing the fear of crime in our community, and we endeavor to do this by creating partnerships in our neighborhoods.

- A. Employees must recognize the basic goals of the community and the Department and work with each other and all citizens to make El Paso a better place to live.
- B. Employees will, within legal and Department guidelines, attempt to communicate to the people of their community the goals and objectives of the profession and keep them informed of conditions which threaten the maintenance of an ordered society.
- C. Employees will recognize that their highest priority is to serve this community.
- D. Employees will consider themselves a valued part of the community policing team.
- E. Employees will react to complaints or reports courteously and judiciously in accordance with Department procedures.
- F. As police employees are under constant observation by the public, they will present themselves as leaders within the community and always be professional and courteous, both on and off duty.
- G. Employees will, within legal and Department guidelines, be honest and cooperative with the news media whenever possible.

WE HONOR OUR POLICE POWERS

We do not tolerate the abuse of our police authority.

- A. Officers will be aware of the extent and the limitation of their authority in the enforcement of
the law.

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- B. Employees will provide every person in our society with professional, effective, and efficient law enforcement services.
- C. Officers will not restrict the freedom of individuals by detention or arrest, except to the extent permitted by law.
- D. Employees will courteously and promptly record any complaint made by a citizen against any employee of the Department. Employees may attempt to resolve the problem but will never attempt to dissuade any citizen from lodging a complaint. Employees will follow established Department policy for processing complaints.
- E. Employees will not accept gifts or other benefits or engage in any conduct in violation of the City's Ethics Ordinance.
- F. Employees will not use their position, identification card, or badge for personal or financial gain, obtaining privileges not otherwise available to them, or avoiding the consequences of illegal acts.

WE CONDUCT OURSELVES WITH DIGNITY

We recognize that our personal conduct, both on and off duty, is inseparable from the professional reputation of both the officer and the Department.

- A. Employees will obey all laws of the United States and of any state or local jurisdiction in which the employee is present.
- B. Employees will be courteous and respectful in their official dealings with the public, fellow employees, superiors and subordinates.
- C. Employees, as professionals, will maintain an awareness of those laws, policies, and other factors affecting their responsibilities.
- D. Officers will maintain a level of moral conduct in their personal and business affairs that is in keeping with the highest standards of the law enforcement profession.
- E. Employees will not participate in conduct which impairs their ability to perform as law enforcement employees or causes them or the Department to be discredited or brought into disrepute.
- F. Employees will maintain a level of performance and competence that will keep them abreast of current techniques, concepts, laws, and requirements of the profession. Employees will strive for professional excellence.
- G. Employees will strive to set an example for other law enforcement personnel.

Effective 01/11/2021

PURPOSE

The purpose of this document is to give practical meaning to the stated Department's Mission and Values by setting forth for all officers and employees of the El Paso Police Department articulated policies, procedures, and codes of conduct which encompass and describe expectations of behavior and conduct, both on duty and off duty. Codes of conduct are as essential to a well-functioning, correctly disciplined organization as proper laws are to society. Police officers and public employees are granted a public trust which requires that they consistently demonstrate the highest degree of integrity. The purpose of policies, orders, and procedures is to maintain a high level of personal and official conduct in order to maintain the respect and confidence of the public.

POLICY

All members of the Department will become familiar with these standards and will abide by them. Ethics training for all employees will be conducted annually. Ethics reviews can be in the form of classroom, shift briefing, computer based training, and bulletins, or any combination of methods.

Employees witnessing violations of the City's Ethics Ordinance or criminal acts by another employee will immediately report the incident to the supervisor on duty. Violations may be subject to discipline, up to and including termination.

OATH OF OFFICE

I do solemnly swear, that I will faithfully execute the duties of the office of Police Officer of the State of Texas, and will to the best of my ability preserve, protect, and defend the Constitution and laws of the United States and of this State, so help me God.

POLICE POWERS

Officers of this Department are granted their police powers by the people through the Texas Code of Criminal Procedure. It is the duty of every officer to preserve the peace within the officer's jurisdiction. Officers will not abuse their authority and will not take official action contradicting their oath. The police powers of officers of this Department may be suspended by the order of supervisors acting on behalf of the Chief of Police.

SCOPE

Nothing in the Department's policies, orders, or procedures is intended to limit or supersede any provision of law relating to the duties and obligations of peace officers or the consequences of aviolation thereof. When this code specifies certain conduct as unprofessional, this is not to be interpreted as approval of conduct not specifically mentioned. From time to time, the Department may implement orders that may change, alter, or supersede a policy or procedure set forth herein. Once notice of an order is given, employees will be responsible for learning any new procedures and abiding by them.

USE OF JUDGEMENT IN COURSE OF ACTION

Members of the Department confronted with situations that are not specifically covered by this code, these procedures, or other Department policies must use their best judgment and make decisions as to the appropriate course of action or conduct based upon training, experience, and, perhaps most importantly, the mission and values of the Department. Employees should strive to uphold the spirit of the law, as opposed to enforcing merely the letter of the law.

Employees, in the application of the law, shall exercise mature judgment and discretion within the limits of statutory authority and Department policy.

OVERSIGHT OF COMPLIANCE

All supervisors, sworn and civilian, are responsible for the enforcement of ethics standards, policies, procedures, rules, codes of conduct, laws, regulations, and any other regulatory statutes. Command Staff personnel are further responsible for overseeing compliance with the contents of this manual through training, audits, observation, report reviews, and any other means available.