



*Office Of The Sheriff*  
**Allegany County**  
*Maryland*

GENERAL ORDER NO: **1-100.00**

TO: All Patrol and Judicial Personnel

RE: **CODE OF CONDUCT**

REL: Rules of Conduct

PURPOSE: To establish Rules of Conduct expected of members of this office that will enhance them as professional criminal justice employees and advance the Mission of this office in providing quality law enforcement to the citizens of Allegany County.

EFFECTIVE DATE: 2003

REVISION DATE: 3/1/2016

**1-101.00** Any attempt to bring influence upon the Sheriff, his Administration, or a Senior Deputy in rank, for the purpose of securing personal gain, to avoid disciplinary action, or to obtain the above for any other member of this office will be considered insubordination and treated accordingly. No member of this office will coerce or attempt to coerce any other member of this office to give undue consideration to subject(s) outside the office.

**1-102.00** No member of this office will interfere or cause interference with the mission of this office to provide law enforcement services to the citizens of Allegany County.

**1-103.00** All members of the Allegany County Sheriff's Office will treat official communications, documents, and business of this office as confidential and will not discuss internal matters with anyone outside this office, except as may be directed by the Sheriff of Allegany County or by legal authority.

.01 Members shall treat the official business of the office as confidential. Information regarding official business shall be disseminated only to those for whom it is intended, in accordance with established policy. A member may remove or copy official records or reports from the office only in accordance with established policy. A member shall not divulge the identity of a person providing confidential information, except as authorized by proper authority in the performance of police duties.

.02 The content of "Draft" or "Confidential" material must be treated with the utmost sensitivity, as items of this nature may differ significantly when finalized. Only those employees directed under competent authority to review discuss or have input into draft and confidential material may divulge the content of said material and then only to employees specifically authorized.

**1-104.00** Members of this office will maintain an exchange of information with the news media limited to official news releases on PUBLIC INFORMATION. Matters of administration/operation within the office will not be discussed with, nor information given to the news media without the consent of the Sheriff.

**1-105.00** Compensation received from private sources by members of this office will be limited to corporations, businesses, or restaurants, who by standard policy allow discounts to law enforcement officers of any agency for food or merchandise. At no time will a member of this office solicit compensation, money, merchandise, food, or services by using or attempting to use influence as a member of this office. Privileges given by businesses will not be abused. Other than the above, no reward or compensation from private sources will be accepted without permission of the Sheriff of Allegany County. Members of this office will, at no time, imply or agree that reception of compensation or reward from private sources entitles the benefactor to special treatment by any member of this office.

**1-106.00** No member of this office will maliciously threaten, strike, or assault any other member of this office. Malicious criticism without constructive purpose or abject ridicule will not be tolerated.

**1-107.00** No member of this office will willfully disobey any lawful command or order, either verbal or written, from any deputy senior in rank or from any member of the Administration.

.01 Any order may be countermanded in an emergency. Personnel countermanding a prior order will immediately report the reason for their action to their immediate supervisor for disposition. Responsibility for all prudent and reasonable action necessary for compliance with orders will remain with the superior issuing the order. Accountability for all actions taken, in compliance with orders, remains that of the person taking such action.

**1-108.00** All Allegany County Sheriff's Office employees will make every effort to pay all just debts and legal liabilities incurred by them. If the employee is unable to pay, the Sheriff will be advised of the situation before any possible legal action is initiated. It is incumbent upon members of this office to plan fiscal matters within their economic means. Disciplinary action may be taken when:

- A. Judgments of creditors have been finally adjudicated and the employee, even though able to pay, has refused to comply with such judgment, or;
- B. The effects of such indebtedness have adversely affected the ability of the employee to perform his job or have negatively reflected on the reputation or effectiveness of the office.

.01 Absent extenuating circumstances, disciplinary action shall be inappropriate where:

- A. The employee has made a genuine and sincere effort to pay his debts, or;
- B. The employee has filed for a voluntary bankruptcy petition.

**1-109.00** All members of this office will be civil and orderly at all times. While humor and fun is essential in law enforcement to relieve stress, it will not be conducted in such a way as to detract from the professionalism of the office in the public eye. No member of this office will engage in "horse play", practical joking, or any other action, which, although initiated with humor in mind, could be harmful to any other member of the office. Members will refrain from loud, coarse, profane, or insolent language.

**1-110.00** Members shall avoid associations or dealings with persons whom they know, or should know, are racketeers, gamblers, felons, persons under criminal investigation or indictment, or others who have a reputation in the community for felonious or criminal behavior, except as directed otherwise by a superior.

**1-111.00** Members of this office will conduct themselves in a manner so as not to discredit himself or herself or the Allegany County Sheriff's Office. Conduct that demonstrates and enhances the professionalism of this office is essential to the successful attainment of the goal of quality law enforcement to the citizens of Allegany County. No member of this office will engage in any unjustified conduct, which will detract from that image of a professional criminal justice employee.

**1-112.00** Members of this office will, at all times, treat the public with decency, courtesy, dignity, and consideration. Questions from the public will be answered civilly and courteously. Slang expressions, profane language, or belligerent attitudes will not be used in public contacts.

**1-113.00** Reports submitted by members of this office will not contain improper or inaccurate information. A distinct determination must be made between reports, which contain information characterized by that which is untrue by mistake or accident or made in good faith, after the exercise of reasonable care.

**1-114.00** No member of this office will appropriate any material/equipment belonging to this office for personal use in amounts that clearly indicate criminal intent. Pens/paper or articles supplied by the office for use by the deputy are excluded, provided the amount is not clearly above that necessary for day to day use in performance of duty. No member will, at any time, take money belonging to this office for personal use. No member of this office will remove the equipment of another (personal or issued) without prior permission or just cause.

A. Members will not obtain or exert unauthorized control over property that belongs to this agency with the intent to temporarily or permanently deprive the Sheriff's Office of the property or the use of the property.

1. In addition to the commonly accepted definition of "property", "property" also includes reports, logs, forms, etc., regardless if they are in paper, electronic, microfilm or any other form.

**1-115.00** Members of this office will promote good public relations by giving assistance to the public when it is needed or requested, by impartial and fair administration of the law, and by clean, sober and orderly habits. Upon request by a member of the public, a member of this office will furnish his name and the name of his immediate supervisors.

**1-116.00** The use of narcotics or dangerous drugs by members of this office, while on duty, is prohibited. The use of alcoholic beverages by members of this office, while on duty, is prohibited, except as may be required by duty assignment.

.01 When it becomes necessary to consume alcohol beverages, while on duty, written permission will be obtained from the employee's immediate supervisor. An employee given written permission to consume intoxicating beverages, while on duty, may not do so to the extent that his ability to perform his duty is impaired.

.02 Members of this office will not report for work with a blood alcohol content beyond that of indigenous alcohol normally found in the body; .003%. An immediate supervisor may order a member of this office to submit to an intoximeter test in accordance with the "Law Enforcement Officers' Bill of Rights" if he has reasonable cause to believe alcohol is present beyond the indigenous limit.

- .03 A member of this office will not be allowed to work while taking prescription drugs or over the counter drugs, which impair judgment or reflexes. It is incumbent upon each member of this office to advise his/her immediate supervisor if he/she is taking any drugs for medicinal purposes, which may impair judgment or reflexes. The use of unlawful narcotics or drugs at any time by members of this office is prohibited. The excessive use of alcoholic beverages, in any setting, which brings discredit to the member or this office in the public esteem, is prohibited.
- .04 No member of the office will bring any intoxicating beverage into any county building officially occupied by the Sheriff's Office, except as evidence or pursuant to property held procedures, and excluding commercial or prescribed medication.

**1-117.00** Members will not violate their Oath of Office and trust or any other condition of their employment. Members will not commit an offense punishable under the laws or statutes of the United States or any sovereign nation, the State of Maryland, or public local laws and ordinances. Any member who has been charged with a violation of any law, statute, or public local law or ordinance stipulated in this section must report the facts concerning such violation immediately to the Patrol Supervisor. Parking violations, except when they are issued to an agency vehicle, are exempted from this subsection.

**1-118.00** Members of this office will be punctual, in attendance to all requirements of duty to include court time, training sessions, overtime assignments, and other specified duties.

- .01 All Patrol Personnel working standard shifts, (2400-0800, 0800-1600, 1600-2400), will contact the shift supervisor at the beginning of their shift to obtain their daily assignment. Only legitimate reasons will be accepted for tardiness. If tardiness is unavoidable due to a legitimate reason, the on-duty supervisor will be advised. Once assignments have been completed, deputies will commence their assignments, with no loitering at the office.
- .02 No more than two (2) on-duty units will have meals simultaneously or at the same location.

**1-119.00** **Sexual Harassment** - To maintain a quality working environment for all employees, uniformed and civilian, or potential employees of this office so that they may work free from intimidation, humiliation, insult or subjection to offensive physical or verbal abuse or actions of a sexual, ethnic, racial or religious nature, the following policy will be observed.

- .01 Sexual, ethnic, racial, or religious harassment is an offense against both this office and any specific employee or group of employees. Offenses refer to physical or verbal actions that have the purpose or effect of creating hostile, offensive, or intimidating working environment or have an ethnic, racial, religious, or sexual basis, or both. Examples include, but are not limited to: Physical Contact of a Sexual Nature, Sexual, Racial, Ethnic, or Religious Jokes; Comments; Insults; Cartoons; Innuendos; or Personal Conduct or Mannerisms that can be construed as offensive.
- .02 It is this agency's position to take affirmative action to prevent such unwanted conduct from occurring and to deal with all such reported incidents in a fair, impartial and speedy manner. All complaints or incidents will be investigated on a case-by-case basis. In those instances where a violation has been shown to occur, immediate action will be taken to remedy the situation and to prevent its reoccurrence.
- .03 All persons who violate this policy will be subject to disciplinary procedures up to and including discharge. It is each employee 's responsibility to help eliminate all forms of harassment and unwanted conduct. It is each supervisor 's responsibility to prevent such behavior from occurring within his/her work jurisdiction. When incidents of harassment occur, they are to be reported immediately to a supervisor. Nothing in this policy will supersede existing Allegany County Policy on Sexual Harassment.

**1-120.00** No employee of this office shall criticize or ridicule the Sheriff 's Office or its employees. No employee of this office will criticize or ridicule another law enforcement agency, the Maryland judiciary, or employees of these agencies. The above will not be criticized or ridiculed by speech, writing, or any other expression, which is defamatory, obscene, or unlawful. No oral, written, or physical expression will be initiated which undermines the operation of the Sheriff 's Office, other law enforcement agencies, or the Judiciary, by impairing their efficiency of operations, or interfering with the maintenance of discipline.

**1-121.00** All members shall report for duty on the applicable date and time specified and shall be physically and mentally fit to perform their respective duties. They shall be properly equipped and aware of the information required for their proper performance of duty.

- .01 Members will remain awake and alert while on duty. If unable to do so, they will report to the senior deputy on duty, which will determine the proper cause of action.

- .02 Members shall not absent themselves without properly approved leave nor absent themselves from their assigned place of work during their tour of duty without proper authorization.
- .03 Members unable to report for duty due to sickness or other causes shall, as soon as possible, notify their immediate supervisor of the reason for their absence.

**1-122.00** Every member will log, or cause to have logged, the appropriate time their tour of duty began and ended, and the times of their arrival and departure from the office or any other facility. This information may be in person or by radio.

**1-123.00** The failure of a sworn member of this office to take appropriate action, on or off duty, in the event of a crime, disorder, or other circumstances deserving police attention, will be considered neglect of duty.

**1-124.00** No member will engage in any form of illegal gambling at any time, except in the performance of duty and while acting under proper and specific orders from a superior.

**1-125.00** No member of the office will, without proper authority, release any prisoner in his charge, or, through neglect or design allow any prisoner in his charge to escape.

**1-126.00** No member will have any equipment of this office repaired, adjusted, or modified without authorization of the Shift Supervisor and/or authorized personnel i.e. firearms instructor/Taser instructor.

**1-127.00** Only members of this office will be permitted to operate or attempt to operate an agency owned vehicle, use any agency issued firearm, or use any item of property owned by the agency. However, specific exceptions to this may be authorized by Shift Supervisor relating to vehicles being serviced.

**1-128.00** Members of this office will be held strictly accountable for the proper performance of their duties. Members will maintain sufficient competency to properly perform their duties and assume the responsibilities of their position. Members will perform their duties in a manner that maintains the highest standards of efficiency in carrying out the objectives of the office.

**1-129.00** Members will, unless otherwise directed by higher authority, transact all official business with those senior in rank through the official chain of command.

**1-130.00** Members are forbidden from using their position, official identification card, uniform (or any part thereof), or badge for personal or financial gain or as a means of obtaining privileges not otherwise available to them, or for avoiding consequences of illegal acts. No member will lend his identification card or badge to another person, or permit it to be photographed or reproduced without the approval of the Sheriff.

**1-131.00** No employee shall permit or authorize the use of his name, photograph, or official title, identifying him as an employee of the Allegany County Sheriff's Office in connection with testimonials or advertisements of any commodity or commercial enterprise, or for personal reasons without the approval of the Sheriff.

**1-132.00** No member shall sign a petition, without the authority of the Sheriff, when his signature indicates he is an employee of the office; nor shall a member sign any petition that has an unlawful purpose. However, any employee may sign a lawful petition as a private citizen.

**1-133.00** No member shall address a public gathering, prepare any article for publication, act as a correspondent to a newspaper or a periodical, release or divulge investigative information or any other sensitive matters of this office, either in an official or unofficial capacity without prior permission from the Sheriff.

**1-134.00** No member shall visit or enter a house of prostitution, gambling house, or any other establishment wherein the laws of the United States, State of Maryland, or any other law or ordinance of a political subdivision is violated, except in the performance of their duty.

**1-135.00** No member shall, in any way, affiliate themselves with any organization, association, movement, group or combination of persons which advocates the overthrow of our constitutional form of government or which has adopted the policy of advocating or approving the commission of acts of violence to deny any person his rights under the Constitution of the United States, or which seek to alter the form of government of the United States by unconstitutional means.

**1-136.00** A member of this office has the right to join labor or fraternal organizations.

**1-137.00** No member shall engage in any "strike" or "job action". Strike or job action for the purpose of this regulation is not limited to the concerted failure to report for duty, willful absence from one's position, unauthorized holidays, excessive sickness unsubstantiated by physician's statement, stoppage of work, or the abstinence in whole or in part from the full, faithful and proper performance of the duties of employment for the purpose of inducing, influencing, or coercing a change in conditions, compensation, rights, privileges, or obligations of employment.

**1-138.00** Members shall submit all required reports, verbal and written, on time and in accordance with established procedures. All official agency business transacted by members must be processed through channels.

**1-139.00** No member shall feign illness or injury, falsely report himself ill or injured, or otherwise deceive or attempt to deceive any other member of the office as to the condition of their health.

**1-140.00** No member of this office shall reveal the identity of another member of this or another office assigned to plain clothes or covert investigative work. Members shall not recognize such employees unless the other party acknowledges them first.

**1-141.00** No member will intentionally manufacture, tamper with, falsify, destroy, or withhold evidence or information, or make any false accusations of a criminal charge.

**1-142.00** Members will not recommend or suggest in any manner, except in the transaction of personal business, and then representing themselves only as a private citizen, the employment or procurement of a particular product, professional service, or commercial service, (such as an attorney, ambulance or towing service, bondsman, etc.). In the case of ambulance or towing service when such service is necessary and the person needing service is unable or unwilling to procure it, the member shall proceed as a law enforcement officer in accordance with agency policy.

**1-143.00** Sworn members of the office shall not act in an official capacity, without authority, in any civil case, except where such action will prevent a breach of the peace or assist in quelling a disturbance.

**1-144.00** Sworn members will, at all times, show respect for their fellow members and will conform to the rules of military courtesy and military discipline as prescribed by the Sheriff.

**1-145.00** During times when sworn members are not readily identified by the uniform of the Sheriff's Office, they will carry their badge or identification card on their person. Members will furnish their name and identification number to any person properly entitled to this information at any time except when authorized not to do so by proper authority and when such refusal may be necessary for the proper performance of this duty.

**1-146.00** Sworn members of this office will report to their supervisors all information coming to their attention concerning organized crime, racketeering, vice conditions, etc.

**1-147.00** Sex, race, religion, national origin, and ethnic background is prohibited as a basis for conduct, behavior, or decisions affecting another member's or potential member's terms or conditions of employment. Members shall not use sex, race, religion, national origin, or ethnic background in their words, actions, gestures, conducts or behavior that could reasonable be construed or perceived by another member or potential member as being hostile, offensive, or intimidating.

**1-148.00** Members will not create conflicts of interest, or potential conflicts of interest with the duties and obligations of their positions within this organization.

**1-149.00** Members are required to treat other employees with courtesy and respect in their daily interactions, and to behave in a manner that would not be reasonably construed to be offensive or harassing.

**1-150.00** Members, by words, deeds, gestures, performance of jobs, duties, tasks, enforcement of laws, and delivery of services, shall not discriminate, nor shall they establish a pattern of adverse impact on a person or person ' s sex, ethnic background, race, color, national origin, life style, preferred sexual orientation, religion, criminal history, age or social status.

**1-151.00** Members will display competent performance and consistently achieve competent performance results on all assigned and assumed duties and tasks.

**1-152.00** Members will display courtesy and respect in words, deeds, gestures, and actions towards senior ranking officers, to the public and to fellow employees. They shall be tactful in the performance of their duties, shall control their temper and exercise utmost patience and discretion, and shall not engage in argumentative discussions, even in the face of extreme provocation. While on duty, in the performance of their duties, members shall not use coarse, violent, profane, or insolent language or gestures toward the public or fellow employees. Members shall not express any prejudice or use language that might be insulting or demeaning to the public or fellow employees concerning race, sex, religion, politics, national origin, lifestyle, or similar personal characteristics. No member of this office will maliciously threaten, strike, or assault any member of the public.

**1-153.00** Members will give a full day ' s work for a full day ' s pay and not establish patterns of non-productive work time.

**1-154.00** Members will consistently observe the directives, rules, policies, procedures, and practices established for the effective, efficient, and safe operation of the office. This rule applies to policies, procedures, and practices that are written as well as established by past practices.

**1-155.00** Supervisors will treat subordinates with the same courtesy and respect that is required of subordinates. Criticisms of performance will be made directly to the subordinate, and when practical, in a private setting.

**1-156.00** Members will, during the line of duty, come to the aid of another member when a request or need is made known.

**1-157.00** Ignorance of the rules, regulations, policy and procedures of the office, is not justification for any such violation. Members shall be responsible for their own acts and may not transfer to others the responsibility for executing or failing to execute any lawful order or duty.

**1-158.00** At the scene of an incident, the assigned member shall be in charge until relieved at the direction of another member, senior in rank.

**1-159.00** While deprived of police powers, police employees of the office will not wear the uniform and will not represent themselves in an official capacity as an employee of the office.

.01 Any employee of the office deprived of their police powers will turn in all agency issued equipment designated in the order suspending their police powers.

**1-160.00** Damage to or loss of agency equipment will be reported immediately to the member's immediate supervisor.

**1-161.00** Members shall maintain a level of moral conduct in his personal affairs, which is in keeping with the highest standards of the law enforcement profession. No member shall be a participant in any incident involving moral turpitude which compromises or has the potential to compromise his ability to perform as law enforcement officer or as an employee of the Sheriff's Office, or causes the office to be brought into disrepute.

**1-162.00** The political associations and political conduct of employees of the Sheriff's Office shall be in conformance with the established policies and procedures of the office.

**1-163.00** The use of Sheriff's Office telephone, (including mobile telephone), shall be limited to the conduct of official business except for personal or emergency calls made/received in accordance with established policy.

**1-164.00** Police employees, while off duty, shall be subject to call at all times. In the event of an emergency or potential emergency, members ordered to an "inactive/on-call" duty status, will notify the duty officer of the location and telephone number where they can be contacted.

.01 Members ordered to an on-call duty status will not consume alcoholic beverages during the time they are on-call. A member who, by virtue of a written or verbal order, duty schedule, etc., is informed they have been placed on-call, and that it is expected they will be able to immediately report for duty if called, will not consume alcoholic beverages to the extent that it results in behavior which would discredit them or the office, or their ability to perform their assigned function. Any employee called to duty or placed in an on-call status, will refrain from further consumption of intoxicating beverages and will be afforded sufficient reporting time, if necessary, to assure they are fit for duty.

**1-165.00** Members shall not interfere with cases assigned to other employees for investigation without consent, except by order of a senior deputy; nor shall they interfere with the operation of a division or unit. An employee shall not interfere with any lawful arrest or any prosecution brought by other members of the office or by any other agency or person. A police employee shall not undertake any investigation or other police action not a part of their regular duties without first obtaining permission from his supervisor unless they can justify the need for their immediate intervention.

**1-166.00** Members of the office shall not be directly or indirectly concerned with making arrangements, agreements, or compromises between a criminal and a person who has suffered from his criminal acts for the purpose of allowing the criminal to escape any punishment as prescribed by law. Any employee having knowledge of such an arrangement, agreement, or compromise, shall report it to their immediate supervisor without delay.

**1-167.00** When a police employee makes a traffic stop or makes an arrest while in plain clothes, they shall identify themselves to the violator and display their badge and/or identification card.

**1-168.00** A police employee will maintain a neat, well-groomed appearance and will style their hair and wear their uniform consistent with established policy.

**1-169.00** Employees will not read, play games, watch television or movies, or engage in any activity or personal business while on duty that would cause them to neglect or to be inattentive to that duty.

**1-170.00** No member will mistreat persons who are in their custody. They will handle persons in accordance with established agency procedures.

**1-171.00** Weapons will not be used, displayed, or handled in a careless, imprudent manner or contrary to Sheriff 's Office policy.

**1-172.00** A police employee may be authorized to suspend patrol or other assigned activity, subject to immediate recall at all times, for the purpose of having meals during their tour of duty, but only for such periods and at such times as are authorized by their supervisor. Members shall inform Communications of the telephone number and location when they leave service.

**1-173.00** Members will not intentionally evade truthfulness by the content of their reports or by their oral responses relative agency matters.

**1-174.00** Each employee shall maintain a professional working relationship with his or her supervisor, subordinates, and co-workers. While personal relationships (supervisor and subordinate, subordinate and subordinate) have occurred in the past and presently exist, it is also recognized that some of these relationships have created an appearance of impropriety and distrust.

Therefore, it is now the policy of the Allegany County Sheriff's Office that while loyalty and cooperation between employees is encouraged; personal relationships between co-workers, supervisors, and subordinates that compromise the chain of command, result in the appearance of impropriety or partiality, or otherwise undermine good order, discipline or authority are hereafter prohibited. Violation of this policy will result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment.

By Order Of:

Craig A. Robertson, Sheriff