
Standards of Conduct

319.1 PURPOSE AND SCOPE

This policy establishes standards of conduct that are consistent with the values, ethics, and mission of the Plymouth Township Police Department and are expected of all department members. The standards contained in this policy are not intended to be an exhaustive list of requirements and prohibitions but they do identify many of the important matters concerning conduct. In addition to the provisions of this policy, members are subject to local, state, federal law as well as all other provisions contained in this manual and any additional guidance on conduct that may be disseminated by this department or a member's supervisors.

319.2 POLICY

The continued employment or appointment of every member of this department shall be based on conduct that reasonably conforms to the guidelines set forth herein. Failure to meet the guidelines set forth in this policy, whether on- or off-duty, may be cause for disciplinary action as such actions or inactions detract from the agency's overall ability to effectively and efficiently protect the public, maintain the peace and order of the community and project the appropriate professionalism required by law enforcement.

319.3 DIRECTIVES AND ORDERS

Absent a reasonable and bona fide justification, members shall comply with all lawful directives and orders from any department supervisor or another designated person in a position of authority; however, transmitted or received including orders relayed orally or in writing by a member of equal or lesser rank.

319.4 GENERAL STANDARDS

Members shall conduct themselves, whether on- or off-duty, in accordance with the United States and Pennsylvania constitutions and all applicable laws, ordinances and rules enacted or established pursuant to legal authority.

Members shall familiarize themselves with policies and procedures and are responsible for compliance with each. Members are responsible for seeking clarification and guidance from supervisors in the event of any perceived ambiguity, uncertainty or conflict. Members are responsible for reporting other members whose behavior is clearly illegal.

Discipline may be initiated for any good cause. It is not mandatory that a specific policy or rule violation be cited to sustain discipline. This policy is not intended to cover every possible type of misconduct.

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319.5 CAUSES FOR DISCIPLINE

Civilian personnel and probationary officers are expected to conform to the provisions of this policy. This policy does not convey upon such employees a right to employment who are at-will and shall refer to the Plymouth Township Handbook for additional information.

No officer employed in any police force may be suspended without pay, removed or reduced in rank except for the following lawful causes for discipline listed in the heading of 319.5.1-319.5.6. Following each cause for discipline are illustrative examples that may be applicable to more than one disciplinary cause. The illustrative examples are to emphasize particular points of concern and does not represent an exhaustive list of all prohibited conduct.

319.5.1 PHYSICAL OR MENTAL DISABILITY AFFECTING THE PERSONS ABILITY TO CONTINUE IN SERVICE

Physical or mental disability affecting the officer's ability to continue in service, in which case the officer shall receive an honorable discharge from service.

319.5.2 NEGLECT OR VIOLATION OF ANY OFFICIAL DUTY

319.5.3 VIOLATION OF ANY LAW

319.5.4 INEFFICIENCY, NEGLECT, INTEMPERANCE, DISOBEDIENCE OF ORDERS OR CONDUCT UNBECOMING

319.5.5 INTOXICATION WHILE ON DUTY

319.5.6 ENGAGING OR PARTICIPATING IN THE CONDUCT OF A POLITICAL OR ELECTION CAMPAIGN UNDER CERTAIN CIRCUMSTANCES

319.6 CORRUPTION PREVENTION

The Chief of Police or designee shall handle corruption prevention measures. The designee's responsibilities are:

1. Review citizen and internal complaints for indicators of misuse of police powers for personal gain.
2. Review the findings of internal affairs investigations for patterns that are indicative of corrupt police behavior.
3. Review duty assignments to ensure that periodic rotations are occurring, if necessary.
4. Cooperatively investigate, along with the internal affairs authority, any complaint in which corruption is suspected.
5. Make recommendations to the Chief of Police for policies and procedures that would encourage the reporting of suspicious behavior by both citizens and employees.
6. Complete an annual report, available to the public, documenting the number of corruption cases investigated and the number sustained.

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7. Conduct a public education campaign, if the Chief of Police deems it necessary, to enhance the level of awareness that all citizens can assist the department in maintaining the integrity of the police service.