

General Order

Houston Police Department



ISSUE DATE:

January 31, 2012

NO.

100-06

REFERENCE: Supersedes all prior conflicting Circulars and Directives, and General Order 100-06, dated December 15, 2009

SUBJECT: DEPARTMENT MISSION, VALUES, ETHICS, AND GUIDING PRINCIPLES

POLICY

The department shall seek to state its mission, values, ethics, and guiding principles and to adhere to these standards and communicate them to its employees. The Houston Police Department shall design and evaluate its activities on the basis of these standards. The conduct of all employees shall be compatible with the stated mission, values, principles, and ethics.

This General Order applies to all employees.

1 DEPARTMENT MISSION

The Houston Police Department was established by the citizens of the city of Houston and exists to provide services to the citizens and residents of the city of Houston. The department's mission statement describes both the fundamental reasons for existing and general activities in which the department shall engage.

The mission of the Houston Police Department is to enhance the quality of life in the city of Houston by working cooperatively with the public to prevent crime, enforce the law, preserve the peace, and provide a safe environment.

2 VALUES

Preserve and Advance Democratic Values

All employees shall uphold this country's democratic values as embodied in the U.S. Constitution, state law, and city ordinances, and shall dedicate themselves to the preservation of liberty and justice for all.

Improve the Quality of Community Life

All employees shall strive to improve the quality of community life through the provision of superior and equitable services.

Improve the Quality of Work Life

All employees shall strive to improve the working environment for the department's employees by engaging in open and honest communication and demonstrating a genuine concern for one another.

Demonstrate Professionalism

All employees shall engage in behavior that is beyond ethical reproach and reflects the integrity of police professionals.

3 GUIDING PRINCIPLES

The guiding principles of the Houston Police Department are as follows:

- a. Life and individual freedoms are sacred.
- b. All persons should be treated fairly and equitably.
- c. The role of the police is to resolve problems through the enforcement of laws and not through the imposition of judgment or punishment.
- d. The neighborhood is the basic segment of the community.
- e. Because law enforcement and public safety reflect communitywide concerns, the police must actively seek the involvement of citizens and residents in all aspects of policing.

- f. The fundamental responsibility of the department's employees is to provide quality services to the citizens and residents of the city of Houston.
- g. The department's employees are its most valuable asset.
- h. Employee involvement in department activities is essential for maintaining a productive working environment.
- i. Employees shall be treated fairly and equitably in recognition of basic human dignity and as a means of enriching their work lives.
- j. The department and each of its commands, offices, and divisions shall strive to reflect the ethnic and cultural make-up of the community it serves.

4 LAW ENFORCEMENT CODE OF ETHICS

It is expected that all employees' conduct be compatible with the department's Law Enforcement Code of Ethics as follows:

As a law enforcement officer, my fundamental duty is to serve mankind; to safeguard lives and property; to protect the innocent against deception, the weak against oppression or intimidation, and the peaceful against violence or disorder; and to respect the constitutional rights of all people to liberty, equality, and justice. I will keep my private life unsullied as an example to all; maintain courageous calm in the face of danger, scorn, or ridicule; develop self-restraint; and be constantly mindful of the welfare of others. Honest in thought and deed in both my personal and official life, I will be exemplary in obeying the laws of the land and the regulations of my department.

Whatever I see or hear of a confidential nature or that is confided to me in my official capacity will be kept ever secret unless revelation is necessary in the performance of my duty. I will never act officiously or permit personal feelings, prejudices, animosities, or friendships to influence my decisions. With no compromise for crime and with relentless prosecution of criminals, I will enforce the law courteously and appropriately without fear or favor, malice or ill will, never employing unnecessary force or violence, and never accepting gratuities. I recognize the badge of my office as a symbol of public faith, and I accept it as a public trust to be held so long as I am true to the ethics of the police service. I will constantly strive to achieve these objectives and ideals, dedicating myself to my chosen profession...law enforcement.

5 OATH OF OFFICE

Classified employees shall conduct themselves in accordance with the Oath of Office to which each officer has sworn as follows:

I, (Name), do solemnly swear that I will faithfully execute the duties of police officer of the city of Houston, 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 and city, so help me God.

See General Order 200-33, **Oath of Office and Promotional Oath**, for additional information.

6 RELATED GENERAL ORDERS

200-08, **Conduct and Authority**
200-33, **Oath of Office and Promotional Oath**



Charles A. McClelland, Jr.
Chief of Police