Standards of Conduct

319.1 PURPOSE AND SCOPE

This policy establishes standards of conduct that are consistent with the values and mission of the Lewiston 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 all other provisions contained in this manual, as well as any additional guidance on conduct that may be disseminated by this department or a member's supervisors.

319.1.1 STANDARDS OF CONDUCT FOR PEACE OFFICERS

The Lewiston Police Department adopts the Professional Conduct of Peace Officers model policy established and published by the Minnesota Board of Peace Officer Standards and Training Board (POST) (Minn. Stat. § 626.8457). This model policy applies to all peace officers of this department.

See attachment: MN POST Professional Conduct of Peace Officers Model Policy.pdf

The provisions of this policy are in addition to collective bargaining agreements or any other applicable law.

The Department shall report to POST any data regarding the investigation and disposition of cases involving alleged misconduct of officers (Minn. Stat. § 626.8457, Subd. 3).

319.2 POLICY

The continued employment or appointment of every member of the Lewiston Police 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.

319.3 DIRECTIVES AND ORDERS

Members shall comply with lawful directives and orders from any department supervisor or person in a position of authority, absent a reasonable and bona fide justification.

319.3.1 UNLAWFUL OR CONFLICTING ORDERS

Supervisors shall not knowingly issue orders or directives that, if carried out, would result in a violation of any law or department policy. Supervisors should not issue orders that conflict with any previous order without making reasonable clarification that the new order is intended to countermand the earlier order.

No member is required to obey any order that appears to be in direct conflict with any federal law, state law or local ordinance. Following a known unlawful order is not a defense and does not relieve the member from criminal or civil prosecution or administrative discipline. If the legality of an order is in doubt, the affected member shall ask the issuing supervisor to clarify the order or

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shall confer with a higher authority. The responsibility for refusal to obey rests with the member, who shall subsequently be required to justify the refusal.

Unless it would jeopardize the safety of any individual, members who are presented with a lawful order that is in conflict with a previous lawful order, department policy or other directive shall respectfully inform the issuing supervisor of the conflict. The issuing supervisor is responsible for either resolving the conflict or clarifying that the lawful order is intended to countermand the previous lawful order or directive, in which case the member is obliged to comply. Members who are compelled to follow a conflicting lawful order after having given the issuing supervisor the opportunity to correct the conflict, will not be held accountable for disobedience of the lawful order or directive that was initially issued.

The person countermanding the original order shall notify, in writing, the person issuing the original order, indicating the action taken and the reason.

319.3.2 SUPERVISOR RESPONSIBILITIES

Supervisors and managers are required to follow all policies and procedures and may be subject to discipline for:

(a) Failure to be reasonably aware of the performance of their subordinates or to provide appropriate guidance and control.

(b) Failure to promptly and fully report any known misconduct of a member to his/her immediate supervisor or to document such misconduct appropriately or as required by policy.

(c) Directing a subordinate to violate a policy or directive, acquiesce to such a violation, or are indifferent to any such violation by a subordinate.

(d) The unequal or disparate exercise of authority on the part of a supervisor toward any member for malicious or other improper purpose.

319.4 GENERAL STANDARDS

Members shall conduct themselves, whether on- or off-duty, in accordance with the United States and Minnesota 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 should seek clarification and guidance from supervisors in the event of any perceived ambiguity or uncertainty.

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.

319.5 CAUSES FOR DISCIPLINE

The following are illustrative of causes for disciplinary action. This list is not intended to cover every possible type of misconduct and does not preclude the recommendation of disciplinary action

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for violation of other rules, standards, ethics, and specific action or inaction that is detrimental to efficient department service.

319.5.1 LAWS, RULES AND ORDERS

(a) Violation of, or ordering or instructing a subordinate to violate any policy, procedure, rule, order, directive, requirement or failure to follow instructions contained in department or City manuals.

(b) Disobedience of any legal directive or order issued by any department member of a higher rank.

(c) Violation of federal, state, local or administrative laws, rules or regulations.

319.5.2 ETHICS

(a) Using or disclosing one’s status as a member of the Lewiston Police Department in any way that could reasonably be perceived as an attempt to gain influence or authority for non-department business or activity.

(b) The wrongful or unlawful exercise of authority on the part of any member for malicious purpose, personal gain, willful deceit or any other improper purpose.

(c) The receipt or acceptance of a reward, fee or gift from any person for service incident to the performance of the member's duties (lawful subpoena fees and authorized work permits excepted).

(d) Acceptance of fees, gifts or money contrary to the rules of this department and/or laws of the state.

(e) Offer or acceptance of a bribe or gratuity.

(f) Misappropriation or misuse of public funds, property, personnel or services.

(g) Any other failure to abide by the standards of ethical conduct.

319.5.3 DISCRIMINATION, OPPRESSION, OR FAVORITISM

Unless required by law or policy, discriminating against, oppressing, or providing favoritism to any person because of actual or perceived characteristics such as race, ethnicity, national origin, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, age, disability, economic status, cultural group, veteran status, marital status, and any other classification or status protected by law, or intentionally denying or impeding another in the exercise or enjoyment of any right, privilege, power, or immunity, knowing the conduct is unlawful.

319.5.4 RELATIONSHIPS

(a) Unwelcome solicitation of a personal or sexual relationship while on-duty or through the use of one's official capacity.

(b) Engaging in on-duty sexual activity including but not limited to sexual intercourse, excessive displays of public affection, or other sexual contact.

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(c) Establishing or maintaining an inappropriate personal or financial relationship, as a result of an investigation, with a known victim, witness, suspect, or defendant while a case is being investigated or prosecuted, or as a direct result of any official contact.

(d) Associating with or joining a criminal gang, organized crime, and/or criminal syndicate when the member knows or reasonably should know of the criminal nature of the organization. This includes any organization involved in a definable criminal activity or enterprise, except as specifically directed and authorized by this department.

(e) Associating on a personal, rather than official, basis with persons who demonstrate recurring involvement in serious violations of state or federal laws after the member knows, or reasonably should know, of such criminal activities, except as specifically directed and authorized by this department.

(f) Supporting or participating in the activities of a hate or extremist group (Minn. Stat. § 626.8436).

319.5.5 ATTENDANCE

(a) Leaving the job to which the member is assigned during duty hours without reasonable excuse and proper permission and approval.

(b) Unexcused or unauthorized absence or tardiness.

(c) Excessive absenteeism or abuse of leave privileges.

(d) Failure to report to work or to the place of assignment at the time specified and fully prepared to perform duties without reasonable excuse.

319.5.6 UNAUTHORIZED ACCESS, DISCLOSURE, OR USE

(a) Unauthorized and inappropriate intentional release of confidential or protected information, materials, data, forms, or reports obtained as a result of the member's position with this department.

(b) Disclosing to any unauthorized person any active investigation information.

(c) The use of any information, photograph, video, or other recording obtained or accessed as a result of employment or appointment to this department for personal or financial gain or without the express authorization of the Chief of Police or the authorized designee.

(d) Loaning, selling, allowing unauthorized use, giving away, or appropriating any department property for personal use, personal gain, or any other improper or unauthorized use or purpose.

(e) Using department resources in association with any portion of an independent civil action. These resources include but are not limited to personnel, vehicles, equipment, and non-subpoenaed records.

319.5.7 EFFICIENCY

(a) Neglect of duty.

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(b) Unsatisfactory work performance including but not limited to failure, incompetence, inefficiency, or delay in performing and/or carrying out proper orders, work assignments, or the instructions of supervisors without a reasonable and bona fide excuse.

(c) Concealing, attempting to conceal, removing, or destroying defective or incompetent work.

(d) Unauthorized sleeping during on-duty time or assignments.

(e) Failure to notify the Department within 24 hours of any change in residence address or contact numbers.

(f) Failure to notify the City Clerk of changes in relevant personal information (e.g., information associated with benefits determination) in a timely fashion.

319.5.8 PERFORMANCE

(a) Failure to disclose or misrepresenting material facts, or making any false or misleading statement on any application, examination form, or other official document, report or form, or during the course of any work-related investigation.

(b) The falsification of any work-related records, making misleading entries or statements with the intent to deceive or the willful and unauthorized removal, alteration, destruction and/or mutilation of any department record, public record, book, paper or document.

(c) Failure to participate in, or giving false or misleading statements, or misrepresenting or omitting material information to a supervisor or other person in a position of authority, in connection with any investigation or in the reporting of any department--related business.

(d) Being untruthful or knowingly making false, misleading or malicious statements that are reasonably calculated to harm the reputation, authority or official standing of this department or its members.

(e) Disparaging remarks or conduct concerning duly constituted authority to the extent that such conduct disrupts the efficiency of this department or subverts the good order, efficiency and discipline of this department or that would tend to discredit any of its members.

(f) Unlawful gambling or unlawful betting at any time or any place. Legal gambling or betting under any of the following conditions:

1. While on department premises.

2. At any work site, while on-duty or while in uniform, or while using any department equipment or system.

3. Gambling activity undertaken as part of an officer’s official duties and with the express knowledge and permission of a direct supervisor is exempt from this prohibition.

(g) Improper political activity including:

1. Unauthorized attendance while on-duty at official legislative or political sessions.

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2. Solicitations, speeches or distribution of campaign literature for or against any political candidate or position while on-duty or on department property except as expressly authorized by City policy, the collective bargaining agreement, or the Chief of Police.

(h) Engaging in political activities during assigned working hours except as expressly authorized by City policy, the collective bargaining agreement, or the Chief of Police.

(i) Any act on- or off-duty that brings discredit to this department.

319.5.9 CONDUCT

(a) Failure of any member to promptly and fully report activities on his/her part or the part of any other member where such activities resulted in contact with any other law enforcement agency or that may result in criminal prosecution or discipline under this policy.

(b) Unreasonable and unwarranted force to a person encountered or a person under arrest.

(c) Exceeding lawful peace officer powers by unreasonable, unlawful or excessive conduct.

(d) Unauthorized or unlawful fighting, threatening or attempting to inflict unlawful bodily harm on another.

(e) Engaging in horseplay that reasonably could result in injury or property damage.

(f) Discourteous, disrespectful or discriminatory treatment of any member of the public or any member of this department or the City.

(g) Use of obscene, indecent, profane or derogatory language while on-duty or in uniform.

(h) Criminal, dishonest, or disgraceful conduct, whether on- or off-duty, that adversely affects the member's relationship with this department.

(i) Unauthorized possession of, loss of, or damage to department property or the property of others, or endangering it through carelessness or maliciousness.

(j) Attempted or actual theft of department property; misappropriation or misuse of public funds, property, personnel or the services or property of others; unauthorized removal or possession of department property or the property of another person.

(k) Activity that is incompatible with a member's conditions of employment or appointment as established by law or that violates a provision of any collective bargaining agreement or contract to include fraud in securing the appointment or hire.

(l) Initiating any civil action for recovery of any damages or injuries incurred in the course and scope of employment or appointment without first notifying the Chief of Police of such action.

(m) Any other on- or off-duty conduct which any member knows or reasonably should know is unbecoming a member of this department, is contrary to good order, efficiency or morale, or tends to reflect unfavorably upon this department or its members.

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319.5.10 SAFETY

(a) Failure to observe or violating department safety standards or safe working practices.

(b) Failure to maintain current licenses or certifications required for the assignment or position (e.g., driver's license, first aid).

(c) Failure to maintain good physical condition sufficient to adequately and safely perform law enforcement duties.

(d) Unsafe firearm or other dangerous weapon handling to include loading or unloading firearms in an unsafe manner, either on- or off-duty.

(e) Carrying, while on the premises of the work place, any firearm or other lethal weapon that is not authorized by the member's appointing authority.

(f) Unsafe or improper driving habits or actions in the course of employment or appointment.

(g) Any personal action contributing to a preventable traffic collision.

(h) Concealing or knowingly failing to report any on-the-job or work-related accident or injury as soon as practicable but within 24 hours.

319.5.11 INTOXICANTS

(a) Reporting for work or being at work while intoxicated or when the member's ability to perform assigned duties is impaired due to the use of alcohol, medication or drugs, whether legal, prescribed or illegal.

(b) Possession or use of alcohol at any work site or while on-duty, except as authorized in the performance of an official assignment. A member who is authorized to consume alcohol is not permitted to do so to such a degree that it may impair on-duty performance.

(c) Unauthorized possession, use of, or attempting to bring a controlled substance, illegal drug or non-prescribed medication to any work site.

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Attachments

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MN POST Professional Conduct of Peace Officers Model Policy.pdf

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PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT OF PEACE OFFICERS MODEL POLICY
MN STAT 626.8457

I. POLICY

It is the policy of the _____ (law enforcement agency) to investigate circumstances that suggest an officer has engaged in unbecoming conduct, and impose disciplinary action when appropriate.

II. PROCEDURE

This policy applies to all officers of this agency engaged in official duties whether within or outside of the territorial jurisdiction of this agency. Unless otherwise noted this policy also applies to off duty conduct. Conduct not mentioned under a specific rule but that violates a general principle is prohibited.

A. PRINCIPLE ONE

Peace officers shall conduct themselves, whether on or off duty, in accordance with the Constitution of the United States, the Minnesota Constitution, and all applicable laws, ordinances and rules enacted or established pursuant to legal authority.

1. **Rationale:** Peace officers conduct their duties pursuant to a grant of limited authority from the community. Therefore, officers must understand the laws defining the scope of their enforcement powers. Peace officers may only act in accordance with the powers granted to them.

2. **Rules**
   - **a)** Peace officers shall not knowingly exceed their authority in the enforcement of the law.
   - **b)** Peace officers shall not knowingly disobey the law or rules of criminal procedure in such areas as interrogation, arrest, detention, searches, seizures, use of informants, and preservation of evidence, except where permitted in the performance of duty under proper authority.
   - **c)** Peace officers shall not knowingly restrict the freedom of individuals, whether by arrest or detention, in violation of the Constitutions and laws of the United States and the State of Minnesota.
   - **d)** Peace officers, whether on or off duty, shall not knowingly commit any criminal offense under any laws of the United States or any state or local jurisdiction.
   - **e)** Peace officers will not, according to MN STAT 626.863, knowingly allow a person who is not a peace officer to make a representation of being a peace officer or perform any act, duty or responsibility reserved by law for a peace officer.

B. PRINCIPLE TWO

Peace officers shall refrain from any conduct in an official capacity that detracts from the public's faith in the integrity of the criminal justice system.

1. **Rationale:** Community cooperation with the police is a product of its trust that officers will act honestly and with impartiality. The peace officer, as the public's initial contact with the criminal justice system, must act in a manner that instills such trust.

2. **Rules**
   - **a)** Peace officers shall carry out their duties with integrity, fairness and impartiality.

b) Peace officers shall not knowingly make false accusations of any criminal, ordinance, traffic or other law violation. This provision shall not prohibit the use of deception during criminal investigations or interrogations as permitted under law.

c) Peace officers shall truthfully, completely, and impartially report, testify and present evidence, including exculpatory evidence, in all matters of an official nature.

d) Peace officers shall take no action knowing it will violate the constitutional rights of any person.

e) Peace officers must obey lawful orders but a peace officer must refuse to obey any order the officer knows would require the officer to commit an illegal act. If in doubt as to the clarity of an order the officer shall, if feasible, request the issuing officer to clarify the order. An officer refusing to obey an order shall be required to justify his or her actions.

f) Peace officers learning of conduct or observing conduct that is in violation of any law or policy of this agency shall take necessary action and report the incident to the officer's immediate supervisor who shall forward the information to the CLEO. If the officer's immediate supervisor commits the misconduct the officer shall report the incident to the immediate supervisor's supervisor.

C. PRINCIPLE THREE

Peace officers shall perform their duties and apply the law impartially and without prejudice or discrimination.

1. **Rationale:** Law enforcement effectiveness requires public trust and confidence. Diverse communities must have faith in the fairness and impartiality of their police. Peace officers must refrain from fostering disharmony in their communities based upon diversity and perform their duties without regard to race, color, creed, religion, national origin, gender, marital status, or status with regard to public assistance, disability, sexual orientation or age.

2. **Rules**

   a) Peace officers shall provide every person in our society with professional, effective and efficient law enforcement services.

   b) Peace officers shall not allow their law enforcement decisions to be influenced by race, color, creed, religion, national origin, gender, marital status, or status with regard to public assistance, disability, sexual orientation or age.

D. PRINCIPLE FOUR

Peace officers shall not, whether on or off duty, exhibit any conduct which discredits themselves or their agency or otherwise impairs their ability or that of other officers or the agency to provide law enforcement services to the community.

1. **Rationale:** A peace officer's ability to perform his or her duties is dependent upon the respect and confidence communities have for the officer and law enforcement officers in general. Peace officers must conduct themselves in a manner consistent with the integrity and trustworthiness expected of them by the public.

2. **Rules**

a) Peace officers shall not consume alcoholic beverages or chemical substances while on duty except as permitted in the performance of official duties, and under no circumstances while in uniform, except as provided for in **c)**.

b) Peace officers shall not consume alcoholic beverages to the extent the officer would be rendered unfit for the officer's next scheduled shift. A peace officer shall not report for work with the odor of an alcoholic beverage on the officer's breath.

c) Peace officers shall not use narcotics, hallucinogens, or other controlled substances except when legally prescribed. When medications are prescribed, the officer shall inquire of the prescribing physician whether the medication will impair the officer in the performance of the officer's duties. The officer shall immediately notify the officer's supervisor if a prescribed medication is likely to impair the officer's performance during the officer's next scheduled shift.

d) Peace officers, whether on or off duty, shall not engage in any conduct which the officer knows, or should reasonably know, constitutes sexual harassment as defined under Minnesota law, including but not limited to; making unwelcome sexual advances, requesting sexual favors, engaging in sexually motivated physical contact or other verbal or physical conduct or communication of a sexual nature.

e) Peace officers shall not commit any acts which constitute sexual assault or indecent exposure as defined under Minnesota law. Sexual assault does not include a frisk or other search done in accordance with proper police procedures.

f) Peace officers shall not commit any acts which, as defined under Minnesota law, constitute (1) domestic abuse, or (2) the violation of a court order restraining the officer from committing an act of domestic abuse or harassment, having contact with the petitioner, or excluding the peace officer from the petitioner's home or workplace.

g) Peace officers, in the course of performing their duties, shall not engage in any sexual contact or conduct constituting lewd behavior including but not limited to, showering or receiving a massage in the nude, exposing themselves, or making physical contact with the nude or partially nude body of any person, except as pursuant to a written policy of the agency.

h) Peace officers shall avoid regular personal associations with persons who are known to engage in criminal activity where such associations will undermine the public trust and confidence in the officer or agency. This rule does not prohibit those associations that are necessary to the performance of official duties or where such associations are unavoidable because of the officer's personal or family relationships.

E. PRINCIPLE FIVE

Peace officers shall treat all members of the public courteously and with respect.

1. **Rationale:** Peace officers are the most visible form of local government. Therefore, peace officers must make a positive impression when interacting with the public and each other.

2. **Rules**

   a) Peace officers shall exercise reasonable courtesy in their dealings with the public, other officers, superiors and subordinates.

b) No peace officer shall ridicule, mock, deride, taunt, belittle, willfully embarrass, humiliate, or shame any person to do anything reasonably calculated to incite a person to violence.

c) Peace officers shall promptly advise any inquiring citizen of the agency's complaint procedure and shall follow the established agency policy for processing complaints.

F. PRINCIPLE SIX

Peace officers shall not compromise their integrity nor that of their agency or profession by accepting, giving or soliciting any gratuity which could be reasonably interpreted as capable of influencing their official acts or judgments or by using their status as a peace officer for personal, commercial or political gain.

1. **Rationale:** For a community to have faith in its peace officers, officers must avoid conduct that does or could cast doubt upon the impartiality of the individual officer or the agency.

2. **Rules**

   a) Peace officers shall not use their official position, identification cards or badges for: (1) personal or financial gain for themselves or another person; (2) obtaining privileges not otherwise available to them except in the performance of duty; and (3) avoiding consequences of unlawful or prohibited actions.

   b) Peace officers shall not lend to another person their identification cards or badges or permit these items to be photographed or reproduced without approval of the chief law enforcement officer.

   c) Peace officers shall refuse favors or gratuities which could reasonably be interpreted as capable of influencing official acts or judgments.

   d) Unless required for the performance of official duties, peace officers shall not, while on duty, be present at establishments that have the primary purpose of providing sexually oriented adult entertainment. This rule does not prohibit officers from conducting walk-throughs of such establishments as part of their regularly assigned duties.

   e) Peace officers shall:

   - not authorize the use of their names, photographs or titles in a manner that identifies the officer as an employee of this agency in connection with advertisements for any product, commodity or commercial enterprise;
   - maintain a neutral position with regard to the merits of any labor dispute, political protest, or other public demonstration while acting in an official capacity;
   - not make endorsements of political candidates while on duty or while wearing the agency's official uniform.

This section does not prohibit officers from expressing their views on existing, proposed or pending criminal justice legislation in their official capacity.

G. PRINCIPLE SEVEN

Peace officers shall not compromise their integrity, nor that of their agency or profession, by taking or attempting to influence actions when a conflict of interest exists.

1. **Rationale:** For the public to maintain its faith in the integrity and impartiality of peace officers and their agencies officers must avoid taking or influencing official actions

where those actions would or could conflict with the officer's appropriate responsibilities.

2. **Rules**
   - **a)** Unless required by law or policy a peace officer shall refrain from becoming involved in official matters or influencing actions of other peace officers in official matters impacting the officer's immediate family, relatives, or persons with whom the officer has or has had a significant personal relationship.
   - **b)** Unless required by law or policy a peace officer shall refrain from acting or influencing official actions of other peace officers in official matters impacting persons with whom the officer has or has had a business or employment relationship.
   - **c)** A peace officer shall not use the authority of their position as a peace officer or information available to them due to their status as a peace officer for any purpose of personal gain including but not limited to initiating or furthering personal and/or intimate interactions of any kind with persons with whom the officer has had contact while on duty.
   - **d)** A peace officer shall not engage in any off-duty employment if the position compromises or would reasonably tend to compromise the officer's ability to impartially perform the officer's official duties.

H. PRINCIPLE EIGHT

Peace officers shall observe the confidentiality of information available to them due to their status as peace officers.

1. **Rationale:** Peace officers are entrusted with vast amounts of private and personal information or access thereto. Peace officers must maintain the confidentiality of such information to protect the privacy of the subjects of that information and to maintain public faith in the officer's and agency's commitment to preserving such confidences.

2. **Rules**
   - **a)** Peace officers shall not knowingly violate any legal restriction for the release or dissemination of information.
   - **b)** Peace officers shall not, except in the course of official duties or as required by law, publicly disclose information likely to endanger or embarrass victims, witnesses or complainants.
   - **c)** Peace officers shall not divulge the identity of persons giving confidential information except as required by law or agency policy.

I. APPLICATION

Any disciplinary actions arising from violations of this policy shall be investigated in accordance with MN STAT 626.89, Peace Officer Discipline Procedures Act and the law enforcement agency's policy on Allegations of Misconduct as required by *MN RULES* 6700.2000 to 6700.2600.

PB Rev 01/2011