

**GENERAL ORDER**

March 2023

Immediately

**IV-01**

Distribution: All Employees

Subject: **RULES OF CONDUCT**

Index as:	Absence without Leave	Drug Use	Rules of Conduct
	Alcohol Use	Duty to Intervene	Subordinate
	Arrests	Fraternization	Subversive Organizations
	AWOL	Gratuities	Supervisor
	Close Personal Relationship	Investigations, Departmental	Telephone Calls
	Conduct, Rules of	Jokes	Tobacco Products
	Crime and Criminal Activity	Loans	Use of Alcohol
	Dating	Personal Business	Use of Departmental Vehicles
	Departmental Investigations	Recording of Personnel	Use of Drugs
	Departmental Vehicles, Use of	Relief from Duty	Use of Tobacco Products
	Discounts		

Accreditation Standards: 1.2.10, 4.2.3, 12.1.3, 12.2.1, 22.1.8, 26.1.1, 26.1.5, 26.3.6, 26.3.7, CFA 4.01

Cross Reference: [G.O. II-05, II-05 Personal Appearance](#)  
[G.O. II-06, Take-Home Vehicle Program](#)  
[G.O. II-12, Negligent Damage Loss or Theft of Department Property](#)  
[G.O. II-25, Discrimination and Harassment](#)  
[G.O. II-42, Use of Force](#)  
[G.O. II-33, Fiscal Policy And Procedures](#)  
[G.O. II-34, Substance Testing Procedures for Employees](#)  
[G.O. III-05, Uniforms and Equipment](#)  
[G.O. III-40, Mobile Video Recording Systems \(MVRS\)](#)  
[I.O. V.5:05, Comm Procedures MDT, Radio, Cellular Telephone](#)  
City Administrative Policy, 10605 Discounts and Special Offer  
City Administrative Policy, 060500  
City Rules and Regulations, Section 5-6  
City Rules and Regulations, Section 7-5, D.  
§934.03(2)(c), F.S.S., Interception and disclosure of wire, oral, or electronic communications prohibited  
§112.532(1)(g), F.S.S., Law enforcement officers' and correctional officers' rights

Replaces: G.O. IV-1, Rules of Conduct (June 12, 2023)

This Directive consists of the following sections:

- I. Policy
- II. Definitions
- III. Rules of Conduct

## I. POLICY

A. This Directive establishes basic rules and regulations governing the conduct of all employees of the Police Department. These rules are supplementary to:

1. The rules of conduct detailed in labor agreements with various collective bargaining units representing employees of the Department;
2. The Applicable *Administrative Policies* of the City of St. Petersburg and the City of St. Petersburg *Rules and Regulations of the Personnel Management System*;
3. *The City of St. Petersburg Salary Plan, Classification and Pay Plan*; and
4. All applicable state and local laws.

B. Supervisors may suspend employees immediately, either with or without pay, when circumstances warrant such action. (See City of St. Petersburg *Rules and Regulations of the Personnel Management System*, Section 7-5, D, for a guide.) The authority will be in accordance with the following:

1. Majors, Division Managers, Lieutenants and Sergeants may suspend an employee up to one (1) day.
2. Assistant Chiefs may suspend an employee up to forty (40) hours.
3. Suspensions in excess of forty (40) hours will be by the Chief of Police, or designee.

## II. DEFINITIONS

A. Employee – All Department personnel, sworn and non-sworn.

B. Close Personal Relationship – Having a level of personal affection and familiarity not typically shared by co-workers in the work environment, including dating, cohabitation, having a sexual relationship, or other similar behaviors. This definition applies regardless of the sexual orientation or gender of the employees involved.

C. Dating – Any conduct or behavior normally associated with romantic or sexual relationships, including casual dating, serious dating, and casual sexual involvement when the parties have no intention of carrying on a long-term relationship. This definition applies regardless of the sexual orientation or gender of the employees involved.

D. Member – Sworn personnel, including sworn reserves.

E. Subordinate – An employee who is supervised, including being evaluated by, disciplined by, or otherwise directed by, directly or indirectly by another employee of supervisory rank.

F. Supervisor – An employee who is responsible for the performance of subordinate employees under their immediate control.

G. Volunteer – A non-sworn, unarmed, uniformed or non-uniformed affiliate whose duties contribute to the mission of the Department in a support capacity. Included are Public Safety Cadets, community members and others who serve in an unpaid capacity at the pleasure of the Chief of Police. For the purposes of this Directive and other policies, volunteers, while unpaid, are held to the same level of conduct as paid employees.

## III. RULES OF CONDUCT

A. General Instructions

1. Employees will be held strictly responsible for executing all lawful orders and adhering to all regulations.
2. Any violation of the City *Rules and Regulations of the Personnel Management System* will be considered a violation of this Directive.

3. Polygraph examinations will be administered, in accordance with current applicable law, to employees suspected of a violation of this Order. However, employees under investigation may request a polygraph examination.

4. Employees will obey all lawful orders either written or oral.

5. Employees will advise:

a. The Office of Professional Standards or the Watch Commander, as soon as reasonably possible, whenever they are involved in any incident which results in their:

1) Arrest;

2) Receipt of a *Notice to Appear* or citation for a criminal offense or a criminal ordinance violation issued by a law enforcement agency; or

3) Being the subject of an investigation by a law enforcement agency which may result in criminal charges.

b. A Supervisor, as soon as practical, of violations of this Order and/or any General Orders, or any violation of state or federal law or local ordinance.

6. Employees will promptly identify themselves as employees of this Department, when identification is requested by a member of this Department, in the performance of their duty.

7. Employees, while on duty, will give their name, rank, or position, in a respectful manner to any person who may request same, except when such disclosure would jeopardize an investigation or reveal the identity of an Undercover Officer. In response to a request to view personnel identification, the employee will present their Department issued identification card, if it does not jeopardize their personal safety.

8. Employees, while on duty or in uniform or who represent themselves as employees of the St. Petersburg Police Department, will always represent the Department and the City of St. Petersburg in a positive and professional manner by both word and act.

9. Employees will conduct themselves in a proper manner and with appropriate demeanor. They will not engage in conduct unbecoming an employee of the Police Department.

10. Except for personal correspondence and text submitted as class work at an accredited university, any material written for publication or distribution, which draws on the author's experience as an employee of the Department or identifies the person as a member thereof, must be submitted to the Chief of Police for approval.

11. Employees will be judicious in the use and content of any blog or social networking Web sites; e.g.: Facebook, YouTube, Twitter, Tumbler, Instagram, etc., and will not post any photograph or commentary that reflects negatively on the Department or themselves or violates any standard of conduct related to their employment.

12. Employees will not leave their assigned area without authorization.

13. Employees will not sleep on duty except as authorized.

14. Employees will not report for work while unfit, either mentally or physically.

15. Employees will not make false claims of injuries or sickness.

16. Employees will not give out the phone numbers or addresses of other employees to the public or to representatives of the news media.

17. Employees will not refer work-related complaints to any member of the City Council.

18. Employees will report to work and their assigned work areas at the required time or they will be considered *Absent Without Leave (AWOL)*.

19. Employees will adhere to the appropriate Chain of Command when conducting official Department business.

20. Employees will keep the Department notified of their current permanent and, if applicable, any temporary addresses and phone numbers. Any changes will be reported on the first working day after the change is effective by the employee, who will update the *Employee Record* in Oracle.

21. Employees will be competent in their assigned duties.

22. Employees will be efficient in their assigned duties.

23. As measured through qualifications and testing, employees will maintain proficiency in previously acquired job knowledge and skills.

24. Employees will not use profane, obscene, or vulgar language or gestures either directed at, or in the presence of, citizens or community members.

25. Employees will not utilize any personal cell phone, camera, or other electronic device to photograph, record or distribute any images or sounds of incidents encountered during their course of employment. Exceptions may be approved by the Chief of Police, or designee.

26. Employees will check their Department email during their scheduled work hours and respond to emails in a timely manner.

#### B. Gratuities

1. Employees will not use their official position to gain free admission to any public event or place of amusement, except in an official capacity, nor will the official badge or I.D. card be used for personal or financial gain.

2. Employees, while working in an official capacity, will not accept free or discounted food, drink or merchandise from any business establishment, except those discounts as defined in <J:\Research\Administrative Policies\Administrative Policies\Organizational Practices\AP010605.pdf>.

3. Employees, while working in an official capacity, will not recommend any professional or commercial service such as towing service, bail bondsman, etc.

4. Employees will not use official influence or bribery to secure an advantage pertaining to City employment.

5. Employees, while working in an official capacity, will not seek publicity or furnish information to the news media for the purpose of personal notoriety.

6. Employees will not authorize the use of their names, official titles, or photographs, which identify them as Department employees, in connection with testimonials, advertisements or any commodity or business, without authorization from the Chief of Police.

#### C. Equipment

1. Employees will not alter or allow another to alter any issued equipment unless authorized by a Supervisor.

2. Employees will report the loss or damage of assigned City equipment as soon as possible to their Assistant Chief, Division Manager, or Major via the Chain of Command. Replacement or repair will be made as per [G.O. II-12, Negligent Damage Loss or Theft of Department Property](#).

3. Employees will at all times keep their assigned equipment clean and in compliance with standards of safety.

4. Employees will maintain all issued equipment to prevent theft or loss.

#### D. Police Department Records and False Information

1. Employees will not knowingly make any false official report, written or oral, or give false or fictitious information during Department investigations or inquiries.
2. Employees will not disseminate, release, alter, deface, falsify, remove, or destroy any Police Department record or information without authorization.
3. Employees will not originate or spread rumors concerning another City employee.

#### E. Arrests

1. Members will not use any unreasonable force in making an arrest or in dealing with a prisoner or other persons.
2. Members, at the time of an arrest, will inform the person arrested of the true reason for the arrest and the Officer's authority, if this is practical and can be done without jeopardizing the arrest.
3. Members will not use duress or coercion, nor mistreat an accused person in any way, when endeavoring to obtain investigative information, a confession, or an admission.
4. Members will not make arrests in controversies between themselves and their relatives and/or neighbors, except under circumstances that would justify using self-defense to prevent injury to another or when a serious criminal offense has been committed. Such circumstances will be called to the attention of a Commanding Officer who will have disinterested Officers investigate and take required action.

#### F. Crime and Criminal Activity

1. Employees who observe or obtain any information concerning crimes, while on or off duty, will promptly report same.
2. Employees will not knowingly associate with anyone who is engaging in criminal activity, except in the line of duty as part of an official investigation.
3. Employees have a duty to intervene, when it is safe and reasonable to do so, to prevent or stop wrongdoing, if they observe another agency employee or public safety associate engage in any unreasonable use of force, or if they become aware of any violation of departmental policy, state or federal law, or local ordinance. The employee will also notify the appropriate supervisory authority.
4. Employees, while on duty, will not furnish bail for any person arrested for a crime, except members of their immediate family.

#### G. Personal Business

1. Employees will have only mail pertaining to authorized business sent to headquarters. All correspondence will be directed to their Unit Supervisor, who will properly route same.
2. Employees will not shop or trade while on duty or in uniform, unless authorized by the provisions of [G.O. II-06, Take-Home Vehicle Program](#).
3. Employees engaged in outside employment unrelated to their official duties will annually, in July, submit an updated [Request For Outside Employment](#) through their Chain of Command to the Chief of Police.

## H. Telephones and Electronic Communications

1. Employees will not have personal calls or electronic communications directed to, nor make personal calls or send electronic communications from, Departmental phones, Resource Centers, or other phones or communications devices that are made available to them that interfere with their work responsibilities, except in an emergency or where calls and time are of extreme importance.

2. Employees will not use Departmental phones, Resource Centers, or other phones or communications devices that are made available to them to engage in conduct inconsistent with Department policy, including discrimination, harassment, disparaging messages or remarks, inappropriate behavior, sexual harassment, or any other conduct unbecoming an employee of the police department.

## I. Loans

1. Employees will not borrow money from, or become obligated to, any person whose business deals directly with the operations of the Police Department.

## J. Court

1. All employees involved in work-related cases before the Court or related hearings will be punctual in attendance and will appear in the uniform of the day or in civilian clothes, as required in [G.O. III-05, Uniforms and Equipment](#).

2. Employees will be diligent and thorough in the preparation of cases for Court.

## K. Subversive Organizations

1. Employees will not join any organization created to directly, or indirectly, interfere (by force or illegal means) with the established government.

## L. Vehicles

1. Employees assigned to operate Departmental vehicles will, before use, examine such vehicle and report any obvious unrecorded damage or operational defect.

2. Employees assigned to operate Departmental vehicles are responsible for the cleanliness and orderliness of such vehicles during their tour of duty.

3. Employees assigned to operate Departmental vehicles will ensure that vehicles turned in at the end of their tour of duty have at least one-half ( $\frac{1}{2}$ ) tank of gasoline.

4. Employees will only transport persons authorized by [G.O. II-06, Take-Home Vehicle Program](#), or arrestees, victims, witnesses or persons in obvious distress, etc., in police vehicles. Employees will check with their Supervisor when in doubt about whether a person is considered authorized.

## M. Relief from Duty

1. The Chief of Police, or designee, pending an administrative review:
  - a. May temporarily remove any employee from line-duty assignment, for acts or omissions related, but not limited, to:
    - 1) [G.O. II-34, Substance Testing Procedures for Employees](#)
    - 2) When believed to be physically or psychologically unfit for duty.
      - a) Return to full duty to be authorized by the employee's Supervisor or a qualified physician when applicable.
      - 3) Pending disposition of an Administrative Investigation.
  - b. Will remove any employee from line-duty assignment whose action(s) or use of force, in an official capacity, results in death or serious physical injury.

2. Unpaid Leave as a Result of Unlawful Conduct
  - a. Any employee charged for committing any felony violation or select misdemeanor violations,
    - 1) May be immediately placed on administrative leave without pay until the resolution of their criminal case, or
    - 2) Until the Chief of Police deems it appropriate to:
      - a) Return the employee to duty, or
      - b) Terminate employment.
  - b. Misdemeanor violations that may result in immediate administrative leave will include arrests for DUI, domestic battery, and other misdemeanors to be determined on a case-by-case basis by the Chief of Police, or designee.
  - c. In criminal cases in which the Chief of Police has declined to place the employee on administrative leave without pay, the Chief will retain the right to evaluate their employment status after subsequent court appearances.

#### N. Departmental Investigations

1. When specifically related to a particular Office of Professional Standards investigation, employees may be required to participate in or provide:
  - a. A medical or laboratory examination,
  - b. One or more photographs,
  - c. Audio or video recordings,
  - d. A line-up,
  - e. Financial disclosure statements,
  - f. Instruments for the detection of deception,
  - g. Handwriting exemplars for analysis,
  - h. A breath test, with a current authorized testing instrument,
  - i. Any other record or item relevant to the investigation, unless excluded by law.

#### O. Recording of Personnel

1. All Department personnel, civilian and sworn, are prohibited from:
  - a. Intentionally recording;
  - b. Endeavoring to intentionally record; or
  - c. Procuring any other person to intentionally record any other Department personnel for any reason, subject to the exceptions listed below.
2. Any person who violates this policy will be subject to disciplinary measures up to and including termination.
3. Exceptions to this Order include:
  - a. Consent – An employee of the Department may be recorded with their clear, direct, voluntary consent, subject to the fulfillment of all of the conditions below:
    - 1) All parties to the recorded communication must give clear, direct, voluntary consent prior to the commencement of each individual recording;
    - 2) The person requesting consent will request it prior to the commencement of each individual recording;
    - 3) The person who chooses to give consent will give it prior to the commencement of each individual recording;
    - 4) Once each individual recording has begun, the request and consent will be repeated such that each is clearly recorded; and
    - 5) In addition to their statement of consent, each individual recording will include the following statement from each person who chooses to give consent:
      - a) The date;
      - b) The place of recording,
      - c) Their full name;
      - d) Their rank or position title; and
      - e) Their personnel number.

6) In addition to their request for consent, each individual recording will include the following statement from each person who requests consent:

- a) The date;
- b) The place of recording,
- c) Their full name;
- d) Their rank or position title, and
- e) Their personnel number.

b. Investigating a Crime – An investigative or law enforcement officer or a person acting under the direction of an investigative or law enforcement officer may intentionally record a communication when such person is a party to the communication or one of the parties to the communication has given prior consent to such interception and the purpose of such interception is to obtain evidence of a criminal act, per §934.03(2)(c), F.S.S.

c. Criminal Investigation of Department Personnel – Where Department personnel is/are the subject of a Chain-of-Command-approved criminal investigation, an investigative or law enforcement officer or a person acting under the direction of an investigative or law enforcement officer may intentionally record a communication when such person is a party to the communication or one of the parties to the communication has given prior consent to such interception and the purpose of such interception is to obtain evidence of a criminal act, per §934.03(2)(c), F.S.S.

d. Office of Professional Standards Investigations –

1) All formal Office of Professional Standards interrogations or interviews of Department personnel, both sworn and civilian, will be recorded on audio tape or otherwise preserved in such a manner as to allow a transcript to be prepared and there will be no unrecorded questions or statements.

2) These recordings will be done by Office of Professional Standards Personnel and no other recordings are permitted.

#### P. Use of Alcohol

1. Employees will not report for duty while under the influence of alcoholic beverages, nor will they report for duty with the smell of an alcoholic beverage on their breath or person.

2. When the Department has reasonable suspicion that an employee is under the influence of alcohol, the employee will, when ordered by a Supervisor, submit to a breath test. Refusal under these conditions is insubordination and may subject the employee to disciplinary action up to and including discharge.

3. Whenever a breath test is being conducted, the Office of Professional Standards will be notified.

4. Employees will not drink alcoholic beverages while on duty or in uniform, nor be in possession of alcoholic beverages, except as ordered or in the performance of official duties.

5. Employees, while off duty, will not consume any alcoholic beverage to the extent that they conduct themselves in a manner which brings discredit upon themselves or the Department.

6. Employees will not consume alcoholic beverages to the extent that they are unfit for their next regular tour of duty.

7. For the purpose of this section, the presumptions of impairment, as set forth in §316.1934, F.S.S. will apply.

8. Note: When the results of a breath test are not consistent with displayed behavior, the employee may be ordered to submit to a urine and/or blood test as detailed in this Directive, reference Departmental Investigations. Refusal under these conditions to submit to additional testing is insubordination and may subject the employee to disciplinary action up to and including discharge.

#### Q. Use of Drugs

1. Employees who feel they have been accidentally contaminated by an illegal drug and/or a controlled substance will notify their Supervisor as soon as possible.

2. Employees will not report for duty under the influence of drugs taken as medication, which impairs their normal faculties to the degree that their ability to work safely is affected.



3. Employees will not use illegal drugs or controlled substances without a prescription at any time, either on or off duty, nor will they be in possession of same except as required in the performance of official duties.

4. When the Department has reasonable suspicion that an employee is using illegal drugs or controlled substances, per: [G.O. II-34, Substance Testing Procedures for Employees](#), the employee will, when ordered by a Supervisor, submit to a urine and/or blood test. Refusal, under these conditions, to submit to a urine and/or blood test is insubordination and may subject the employee to disciplinary action, up to and including discharge.

5. Whenever a drug-screening test is being conducted, the Office of Professional Standards will be notified.

6. When a urine or blood test indicates the presence of a drug, a second test will be conducted, using the same sample, to confirm the results of the first test. The best and most reliable tests, available through a reputable local laboratory, will be used.

7. Note: Testing, as provided for in sections M and N, will be for administrative purposes only.

#### R. Use of Tobacco Products

1. All employees, sworn or non-sworn, hired before October 1, 2016:

- Will not use any tobacco product during roll call (Read-off) or while standing in formation.
- Will not use any tobacco product while walking a beat, issuing a citation, or interviewing victims, complainants, or witnesses.
- Will not use any tobacco product, within Department buildings, on the grounds, or at any time while on duty except in areas designated for that purpose and away from the public.
- Will observe all posted smoking regulations on private or public property and will not smoke on private property owned by another, while they are present thereon during the course of their duties if no regulations are posted.

2. All employees, sworn or civilian, hired on or after October 1, 2016:

- Will not use tobacco products of any kind while on duty.
- Who violate this policy, will be subject to progressive discipline which may affect the employee's employment, regardless of the location of prohibited tobacco use or the method of tobacco use.

3. As of October 1, 2016, all employees, sworn and civilian, regardless of hire date, will not use tobacco products of any kind in or on any City vehicle or vessel whether that vehicle or vessel is owned, leased, take-home or otherwise. Regardless of the location of the vehicle or vessel at the time of tobacco use or the method of tobacco use, such use is prohibited and will result in progressive discipline which may affect the employee's employment.

#### S. Plain Clothes Officers

1. Employees, while either on or off duty, will not recognize or speak to a Plain Clothes Officer outside the area of the police buildings, unless first spoken to by the Plain Clothes Officer.

2. Employees will not disclose any information concerning Plain Clothes Officers to anyone outside the Department, except official agencies such as Court officials, State Attorney's Office, etc.

#### T. Jokes

1. Employees will not participate in any practical jokes, skits or activities pertaining directly or indirectly to police duties or functions, without the expressed approval of their Supervisor.

2. Employees will not create, show, post, or display any literature, photographs, cartoons, drawings, or caricatures which denigrate or make light of an individual or group based upon race, color, religion, gender, sexual orientation, national origin, age, disability, or marital status.

#### U. Assisting Citizens and Other Members

1. Employees, when on duty, will respond promptly and safely to radio calls or calls from citizens for aid or from citizens in distress.
2. Members will, if circumstances are feasible, while on or off duty, assist another member in apparent physical danger.
3. Employees will not interfere unnecessarily in the private business of any person or threaten a law-abiding person in the lawful pursuit of a legitimate business.
4. Employees will be civil and courteous in their relationship with citizens and one another.
5. Employees will not shirk from a dangerous situation, their responsibilities, or their duties.

#### V. Reading Material

1. Employees on duty will not carry and/or read a newspaper, magazine, or book when it interferes with their duties.

#### W. Addressing Superior Officers and Employees

1. Employees will address ranking Officers by their rank or title during roll call (Read-off), court, while standing in formation, in the presence of the general public or in any other circumstances where decorum would dictate.
2. The same applies to ranking Officers addressing employees of a lesser rank.

#### X. Fraternalization

1. The Department has a vital interest in ensuring that operational efficiency is not negatively impacted by close personal relationships between employees. Such relationships, especially between supervisors and subordinates, compromise the Chain-of-Command, incentivize abuse of power and favoritism, may lead to sexual harassment or other inappropriate behavior, and create an appearance of partiality, undermining good order, discipline, authority, and morale. Decisions involving discipline, promotion, evaluation, or advancement will not be influenced by close personal relationships, and employees will not be favored based upon their relationship status. The Department must know when employees are involved in close personal relationships so that appropriate measures can be taken to prevent damage to the Chain-of-Command.

2. If a close personal relationship exists or develops between personnel within the same Chain-of-Command, Bureau, Division, Section, Unit, District, Squad, or assigned zone or area, such employees will immediately disclose the relationship directly to the Chief of Police. Following such disclosure, the Chief of Police will take appropriate measures to ensure that the relationship disclosed is not, or does not have the potential to be, detrimental to the effective, efficient, and safe operation of the Department. This may include, but is not limited to, assigning an employee to work a different shift, transferring an employee to another District, or transferring an employee to a different Bureau, Division, Section, Unit, District, Squad, or assigned zone or area to eliminate conflict with this Directive.

3. Employees will not appoint, promote, or advance any individual with whom they have a close personal relationship.

4. Employees will not advocate that an individual with whom they have a close personal relationship be appointed, employed, promoted, or advanced to any position in the City.

5. Employees will not be involved in any decision-making process that leads to any potential or actual disciplinary action regarding any individual with whom they have a close personal relationship.

6. No employee will circumvent or attempt to circumvent the intent or spirit of this Directive. Any employee found to be in violation of this Directive will be disciplined up to and including dismissal.

7. Any individual who is employed, promoted, or advanced as a result of a violation of this Directive may be returned to the status they occupied prior to the violation.

---

Anthony Holloway  
Chief of Police