



POLICIES AND PROCEDURES MANUAL

	CODE OF CONDUCT	
	POLICY NUMBER: 26-2	ISSUING AUTHORITY 
	EFFECTIVE DATE: June 12, 2025	Christine A. Elow Police Commissioner

I. GENERAL CONSIDERATIONS AND GUIDELINES

By the very nature of police work, officers often perform their duties independently with a minimum of direct supervision. They are guided by their own training, intelligence, experience, prudent discretion, and common sense. In addition to these personal attributes, written directives provide officers with specific procedural guidelines that define the limits of discretion.

The *Code of Conduct* serves as a component of the written directives; it is a supplement to the department Policies and Procedures. Whereas policies and procedures allow for leeway in choice from possible alternative actions and generally define the limits of discretion, the *Code of Conduct* specifically defines those actions that are allowed and those actions that are prohibited. It is incumbent on all members of the department to abide by the *Code of Conduct*.

This policy will be reviewed, updated periodically, and will be readily available to all personnel. All employees are invited and encouraged to forward suggestions for the improvement of department operations, policies, practices, and procedures, through the Lieutenant of Professional Standards, to the attention of the Commissioner.

In a constitutional democracy such as ours, police powers and authority are conferred on the police with the full faith, consent, and trust of the people. That faith and trust are earned and maintained by the good actions of its officers; actions that are fair, impartial, and transparent.

II. POLICY

All members of the Department shall familiarize themselves with the provisions of the Department's *Code of Conduct*. Failure on the part of members of the Department to acquaint themselves with and abide by the department *Code of Conduct* as hereby directed may be considered neglect of duty and may subject such members to disciplinary action.

III. DEFINITIONS

- A. *Policies and Procedures*: Policies and procedures provide officers with direction and guidelines for the delivery of police services based on the vision, mission, and values of the department. They allow for officer discretion within the law, good judgement, and common sense; and they define the limits of this discretion.
- B. *Rules and Regulations*: Rules and regulations for the purposes of this Policies and Procedures manual are referred to as the *Code of Conduct*. The *Code of Conduct* includes specific and binding statements regarding employee conduct that allow for little or no discretion. In most cases, conduct outside of the rules and regulations may be subject to disciplinary action.

IV. PROCEDURES

- A. Professional Conduct & Responsibilities
 - 1. Membership in Organizations — Employees of the department shall not affiliate with or become members of any organization if such affiliation or membership would in any way impede or prevent their effective performance of duties or reflect negatively on the department.
 - 2. Outside Employment — Any officer who wants to work outside of the department for pay or on a voluntary basis as a police officer must seek approval from the Commissioner. The police department shall not be held liable or responsible for any losses, expenses, damages, or costs that may incur from injury, claim, demand, lawsuit, or judgments arising from the outside employment. Outside employment shall not interfere with department obligations.
 - 3. Political Activities — Participation in political activities while in uniform or on duty is prohibited. In uniform includes wearing or displaying the department patch, logo, emblems or identifying marks. All actions that could give the impression that officers are using their official positions to influence the electoral process are prohibited. An officer or employee of the department shall not be required to solicit or be obliged to make contributions in money, services, or otherwise, for any political purpose.
 - a. Officers and employees who become candidates for salaried elective office within the public sector may request a leave of absence without pay. Such leave shall encompass both the campaign and the tenure of office if elected. Nothing in this policy shall be construed to mean that department personnel are restricted in any way from exercising their constitutional rights as citizens in the political or electoral process.
 - 4. Testimonials and Gifts — No officer or employee of the department shall collect or receive any money or other thing of value from any source for the purpose of making a gift to any active officer or employee of the department unless specific permission is granted by the Commissioner. No officer or employee of the department shall seek or accept such gift without the permission of the Commissioner.

(It should be noted that under the provisions of M.G.L. c. 268, § 9A, no person shall sell tickets or solicit contributions for a testimonial dinner or similar function for any person in active employment in any law enforcement agency or regulatory body of the state or any city or town.)

5. Unauthorized Transactions — Officers and employees are prohibited from entering into any transactions of material value at substantially lower than fair market value, or the value at which such goods or services are being offered to the general public, when such transaction takes place between themselves and any person involved in any matter or case which arose out of their employment with the department, except as may be specifically authorized by the Commissioner. This shall not preclude officers and employees from taking advantage of standard police discounts available, without obligation, to all department personnel.
 6. Disposition of Unauthorized Gifts or Gratuities — Any unauthorized gift, gratuity, fee, or reward coming into the possession of any officer or employee shall be forwarded to the Commissioner, together with a written report of the circumstances.
 7. Use of Official Position — Officers shall not use their official positions, department identification cards or badges: (a) for personal or financial gain; (b) for obtaining privileges not otherwise available to them except in the performance of duty, or (c) for avoiding consequences of illegal acts. Officers shall not lend to another person their identification cards or badges or permit them to be photographed or reproduced without the approval of the Commissioner. Officers shall not authorize the use of their names, photographs, or official titles, which identify them as police officers, in connection with testimonials or advertisements for any person, commodity or commercial enterprise, without the approval of the Commissioner.
- B. 26.1.1 (M) Required Conduct — In addition to the specific duties of each individual rank and assignment as set forth in this manual, the following provisions are applicable to all officers and employees of the department insofar as they are pertinent to their particular functions and responsibilities.
1. Furnishing Assistance — Officers shall furnish police assistance to all persons making such request or persons in need of assistance consistent with their police duties and assignments. They shall assist and cooperate with other law enforcement agencies, provide them with any authorized information they are entitled to receive, and submit a report on all such actions taken.
 2. Awareness of Activities — Upon returning to duty from any period of absence, all officers shall inform themselves about all new orders, regulations, memoranda, and all other important matters governing their assignments. Every officer of the department shall become familiar with all laws, statutes, ordinances, and regulations necessary for the proficient execution of duty as a police officer.
 3. Civil Disputes — All officers shall take a neutral position in any dispute of a civil nature, acting only to prevent or control any breach of the peace that may arise.

4. Compensation — Officers shall not seek in any way money or compensation for damages sustained or expressly incurred by them in the line of duty without first notifying the Commissioner in writing. Officers who have received municipal salaries for illness or for personal injuries sustained off duty, shall notify the Commissioner in writing of any intent to seek, sue, solicit, or accept compensation as damages for such illness or injury. Notice shall be filed before the action is taken which shall include the facts of the claim and the name of the defendant. The Commissioner shall be kept informed of the status of the case and the final court determination.
5. Departmental Communications — All officers shall transmit all official communications promptly, accurately, and completely to other officers of the department as required; and shall immediately inform their supervisors of any matter of police importance coming to their attention. They shall call to the attention of their relieving officers any information regarding unresolved problems or problems that may arise during the next tour of duty.
6. Courtesy — All officers shall be courteous and considerate to the public, to their superior officers, and to their fellow officers of the department. They shall be tactful in the performance of their duties and are expected to exercise patience and discretion even under the most trying circumstances.
7. Attention to Duty — All officers shall always be alert and vigilant in the performance of their duties and respond prudently and decisively when police action is required. The conspicuous use of a cell phone for non-police business in a public place while on duty that gives the impression of inattentiveness is prohibited.
8. Devotion to Duty — All officers, while on duty, shall devote their full time and attention to the service of the department and to the citizens of the community. They shall remain awake and alert at all times while on duty.
9. Duty Outside of the Community — Officers of the department shall not be assigned to perform duty outside of the community limits, except to assist the police authorities of another jurisdiction when authorized, under the direction of the Commanding Officer of the police department involved. Any such request for assistance from other cities or towns, and the approval for such assistance, must be acted upon in accordance with M.G.L. c. 41, § 99. The officers of this department, so assigned, shall have the authority of a police officer in that city or town and shall have the same immunity and privileges as when acting within their own jurisdiction.
10. Duty Status — While off duty, as for every other citizen of the Commonwealth, officers may respond and intervene when witnessing a felonious act or circumstance involving a likelihood of serious bodily injury or death. It should be noted that in these circumstances, officers are acting in the capacity of civilian and not agents of the Cambridge Police Department. Officers are advised to weigh the immediate risks and act or not act accordingly. At a minimum, officers should be good witnesses and report any event requiring police action.

11. **Reporting for Duty** — All officers shall report for duty promptly at the time and place required by their assignment or as otherwise directed by the Commissioner or supervisor. They shall be properly uniformed and suitably equipped, ready to immediately assume their duties. While on duty they shall avoid any activities not related to their police responsibilities and shall not be absent themselves from duty without leave. Officers unable to report for duty because of sickness or injury shall notify, or cause to be notified, the Shift Commander at least one hour prior to their next tour of duty, except in cases of emergency.
12. **Home Address and Telephone** — All officers and employees shall be accessible by telephone and shall report any change of telephone number or home address to the Commissioner or designee within 48 hours of such change. The officer/employee shall not give out home or cellular telephone numbers or home addresses of other department personnel to anyone outside the City without approval of the employee, Commissioner or designee. In the event of an emergency request, the employee's telephone number will be called with notification to call the person making the request.
13. **Identification** — All officers shall properly identify themselves to any person requesting this information, while they are on duty, except when the withholding of this information is necessary for the performance of police duty, when it might jeopardize the physical safety of a department member, or when authorized not to do so by the proper authority. Under M.G.L. c. 41, § 98D, every full-time police officer is required to carry an official identification card to be shown to the public upon lawful request.
14. **Knowledge of the Community** — Every officer shall become familiar with the geography of the community, including routes of public transportation, the location of streets, highways, bridges, public buildings and places, hospitals, courts, large industrial plants or commercial establishments, and such other information as may be disseminated by supervisors from time to time.
15. **Leaving the Community** — Whenever it is necessary in the performance of duty for an officer to leave the limits of the community and to enter another city or town, the officer shall inform a supervisor or the dispatcher prior to leaving and again upon return. If an emergency prevents following this procedure, the officer must contact a supervisor as soon as possible.
16. **Line-of-Duty Disability** — Any injury, illness, or disability incurred in the line of duty, shall be reported in writing to a supervisor who will also submit a report; these reports will be properly investigated. Disposition as to line-of-duty injuries, illnesses, or disabilities shall be made by the Office of the Commissioner. In each case of illness, injury, or disability incurred in the line of duty, no officer shall be returned to duty until their ability to be placed on full duty status is certified by proper medical authority. The Commissioner may approve light-duty.

The following protocols are to be utilized when an officer is injured in the line of duty.

 - a. The officer must report the injury and or be transported to a hospital for treatment.
 - b. The sergeant must report to the hospital.

- c. The sergeant will notify the shift commander of the incident.
- d. The sergeant will obtain a brief synopsis of the circumstances leading to the injury of the officer.
- e. The sergeant must obtain basic information pertaining to the nature of the injury along with the treating physician's name.
- f. The sergeant should obtain discharge paperwork (if being released) from hospital personnel.
- g. If the officer is to be relieved from duty, the sergeant must obtain all the officer's duty gear to include duty belt, weapon, (3) magazines, radio, pepper spray, PR-24, and body-worn camera, tag and submit directly to the Property Room for proper storage.
- h. The officer must submit a P650 Report of the circumstances leading to the officer's injuries before being relieved from the tour of duty or as soon as possible, thereafter.
- i. If the officer is unable to submit the required reports due to the extent of injuries or hospitalization, the sergeant is to document such in a report.
- j. The officer must submit all original hospital discharge paperwork along with the P650 Report.
- k. The sergeant must complete a P650 Report by the end of their tour of duty or as soon as possible, thereafter, documenting the circumstances of the injury, nature of the injury, name of treating physician if known, recovery/ disposition of duty gear, and if needed, the reasons why the officer could not complete their own documentation by the end of the tour of duty, and when that report will be completed.
- l. The sergeant is to send an email notice to Personnel and a Deputy Superintendent noting that the officer had been injured and referencing the Incident Report Number.
- m. The sergeant is to submit the P650 Report and the officer's P650 Report as a package with all original hospital documentation through the chain of command.
- n. The shift commander is to review and verify all required reports that have been submitted and initial and date all documents.
- o. The shift commander is to mark the officer sick (not injured) for the days noted in the physician's discharge documentation with a referencing incident number entered in the note section. Personnel will make the status adjustment to Injured.
- p. The shift commander will forward all reviewed and initialed documentation to a Deputy Superintendent for further review and submission to Personnel. All submissions are to be made in a timely manner to avoid unnecessary delays in processing
- q. If the injured officer was medically relieved from duty, the officer is not required to call in sick to the shift commander on subsequent days to the injury. This remains in place if subsequent documentation is submitted in a timely fashion and is up to date. If there is

- a lapse in documentation, the injured officer may be required to call in sick until the documentation is updated.
- r. An officer submitting medical documentation allowing return to work from an injury must ensure the documentation contains unequivocal language from a physician stating the officer is able to return to work without restrictions, able to return to Full Duty, or has no physical limitations.
17. Mutual Protection — All officers shall come to the immediate aid, assistance, or protection of fellow officers who, in the performance of their duties, require such aid and assistance.
18. Paid Details — M.G.L. c. 44, § 53C requires that all payments to officers for paid details must be channeled through the Treasurer's Office of the City of Cambridge. Any compensation received directly by the officer, either by check or cash, shall be submitted in a timely manner to the detail office or shift commander when the detail office is closed.
19. Extra Duty Details — All Officers assigned to department-approved and regulated extra duty detail work shall follow the policy standards set forth by this department.
20. Personal Appearance — All officers shall be neat and clean in appearance while on duty, whether in or out of uniform, and they shall maintain police department common space, lockers, desks, and vehicles used by them in a neat, clean, and orderly condition.
21. Physical or Psychological Examination — An officer shall submit to a physical, medical or, upon entry to the department, a psychological examination, at the expense of the department, when so ordered by the Commissioner and in accordance with the conditions of current bargaining agreements. This paragraph does not alter an officer's obligation to provide, at their own expense, a physician's certificate in cases of sick leave.
22. Physical Fitness — All officers shall maintain good physical condition and mental alertness and are expected to keep themselves as physically fit as their age permits and the nature of their duties requires.
23. Care and Transportation of Prisoners — All arrested persons shall be transported safely and directly to the appropriate place of custody. Officers shall make every effort to safeguard prisoners so that they do not injure themselves or others and that they do not attempt to escape or dispose of evidence.
24. Care and Custody of Property — All personal property, including money, which comes into an officer's custody while on duty, whether lost, stolen, confiscated, abandoned, turned in to the department, or taken from a prisoner, shall be suitably tagged, recorded, and turned over to the proper department authority, or placed in the designated place of storage for safekeeping in accordance with current departmental procedures. In some cases, an officer may return a found item to its rightful owner, if known, without submitting the item to a secure location at the station.
25. Public Appearances — All requests for public appearances or speaking engagements by officers about department operations or policies, shall be submitted to the Commissioner for

approval. Officers who are approached directly for this purpose shall suggest that such requests be forwarded to the Director of Communications and Media Relations.

26. Submitting Reports – All officers shall promptly and accurately complete and submit all reports and forms as required by departmental procedures.
27. Trials and Hearings – All officers concerned with cases before the courts, grand jury, or hearing boards shall be punctual in attendance and dressed professionally with their grooming appearance neat and clean. All officers shall have the cases in which they are concerned properly prepared, and evidence suitably arranged for presentation to the court, grand jury, or hearing board. They shall afford the utmost respect toward the court, officers of hearing boards, and members of the jury. When presenting evidence or testimony they shall speak calmly and clearly in a distinct and audible tone to be easily understood. They shall give evidence with accuracy, confining themselves to the case before the court and shall neither suppress nor overstate the slightest circumstances with an intention of favoring any person or projecting ill-will to either the complainant or the defendant. When cross-examined by a defense attorney, they shall answer with the same civility and readiness as when giving testimony in support of the prosecution.
28. Truthfulness — No member of the department shall knowingly or with reckless disregard for the truth sign any false official statement or report, commit perjury, or give false testimony before any court, board, or commission, in any judicial or administrative hearing, or in an Internal Affairs investigation, whether or not under oath. Members found to be in violation of this rule shall be subject to discipline up to and including termination from the department. Additionally, the intentional omission of significant pertinent facts in any written or verbal statement or any testimony will be considered untruthful.
29. Motor Vehicle Operations — When operating a police vehicle in a non-emergency capacity, officers shall obey all laws, CMRs, and City of Cambridge ordinances pertaining to the operation and parking of those vehicles.
30. Officers must remain aware of their visibility due to their uniform and avoid all situations, other than ones strictly in the line of duty that could be cause, whether founded or ill-founded, of malicious gossip or the compromise of the department's good name.
31. All members of the Department are expected to conform their behavior to the standard of conduct established by the required conduct listed above and to execute their public duties in accordance with the policies, procedures, and regulations appearing in other chapters of the policy manual, and those established by current Departmental orders. Failure to do so subjects the offending members to possible disciplinary action.

C. Criminal Conflict

1. Department members shall not commit any criminal act, felony or misdemeanor, or violate the regulatory or criminal laws or statutes of the United States or of any state or local jurisdiction (by-law/ordinance), whether on or off duty. NOTE: A member may be in violation of this requirement regardless of the outcome of any criminal court case. A final conviction

for the violation of any law is prima facie evidence of a violation of this requirement. However, even in the absence of a conviction, which requires proof beyond a reasonable doubt, a member may still be disciplined under for the conduct that was involved since a preponderance of the evidence is the quantity of proof required in such cases.

2. All employees of the department upon learning that they are the subject of an application for a criminal complaint, restraining order, harassment prevention order; have been arrested; or for whom a warrant for arrest has been issued; or who know or have reason to believe that they have been identified as a subject in a criminal investigation; or who have been identified and given a statement to another law enforcement agency which may be put into a police report, shall immediately inform the Shift Commander or their immediate supervisor. Such notification shall include a summary of the complaint sought or issued and a projected date of a hearing or trial, if known. Employees are further required to provide copies of any order modifying any such temporary or permanent order.
- D. Prohibited Conduct: The following acts, actions or activities by department personnel are prohibited or restricted.
1. Conduct Unbecoming an Officer — The commission of any specific act or acts of immoral, disorderly, or intemperate personal conduct, which reflects discredit upon the officer, upon fellow officers, or upon the police department shall be considered conduct unbecoming and may be subject to disciplinary action.
 2. Abuse of Department Property — Intentionally or negligently abusing, misusing, damaging, or losing police department property or equipment is prohibited.
 3. Use of Department Vehicles — Officers shall not use any department vehicle without the permission of a supervisor or drive any department vehicle to which they have not been assigned, except in an emergency.
 4. Discourtesy — Being rude, impolite, or disrespectful to a superior officer, to a fellow officer, or to a member of the public is prohibited.
 5. Improper Associations — Officers and employees shall avoid regular or continuous association or dealings with persons who they know, or reasonably should know, are persons under criminal investigation or indictment, or who have a reputation in the community or the department for present involvement in felonious or criminal behavior, except as necessary to the performance of official duties, with the knowledge and approval of the Commissioner, or where unavoidable because of family relationships of the officers
 6. Incompetence — Officers shall maintain sufficient competency to perform police department responsibilities commensurate with each position.
 7. Incurring Department Liability — An officer or employee shall not incur a liability chargeable to the police department without prior approval according to department procurement protocol.
 8. Insubordination/Obeying Orders

- a. No member of the department shall willfully disobey the lawful command or order of a superior officer or person authorized to give such order by the Commissioner. However, obedience to an unlawful order is never a defense for an unlawful action. Therefore, no member of the department shall issue such an order and no member of the department is required to obey an order that is in violation of any State or Federal law.
 - b. In a case when a supervisor issues an order that conflicts with policy or contract, the officer receiving the order is obligated to obey but may advise the issuing supervisor of the conflict. If the supervisor does not change the order, the officer is obligated to obey the order but may grieve it afterwards.
 - c. When an officer receives conflicting orders, the officer is obligated to advise the supervisor of the conflict and if the order is not rescinded based on this information, the officer shall be obligated by the latest order.
9. Use of Incapacitating Beverages or Drugs – An officer or employee:
 - a. shall not, while on duty, consume any intoxicating beverage, except for a proper police purpose with the specific approval of the Commissioner or a superior officer;
 - b. shall not, while on duty, use any narcotic, controlled substance, or other toxic drug except at the direction of a physician for a specific health purpose;
 - c. shall not report for duty while under the influence of intoxicating liquor or other substance, or under the influence of any narcotic drug, or controlled substance unlawfully administered;
 - d. shall not, while off duty and while wearing any part of the department uniform, drink any intoxicating beverage in public view or in any place accessible to the public; and
 - e. shall not bring, place, keep, or permit to be brought, placed, or kept, in any police building or vehicle, any intoxicating beverage or substance, or any narcotic drug or controlled substance, except in the proper performance of police duty as required by departmental practices and procedures.
10. Department Letterhead — Officers and employees shall not use police department letterhead for private or unauthorized correspondence.
11. Neglect of Duty — Officers shall not be absent from assigned duty without leave; leave post or assignment without being properly relieved; or fail to take suitable and appropriate police action when any crime, public disorder, or other incident requires police attention or service.
12. Department Notices — Officers shall not alter, deface, or remove without permission any posted notice on the department bulletin board. No unauthorized notice shall be posted on a department bulletin board.
13. Dissemination of Official Information — Officers and employees shall treat the official business of the police department as confidential and shall conform to the following guidelines.

- a. Information regarding official business shall be disseminated only to those for whom it is intended, in accordance with established departmental procedures.
 - b. Access to departmental files, records and reports shall be limited to those officers and employees authorized by the Commissioner.
 - c. Official records or reports shall not be copied, or removed from a building, except in accordance with established departmental procedures.
 - d. The identity of any person giving confidential information to the department or to any officer thereof in the performance of police duties shall not be divulged except with the prior approval of the Commissioner or designee.
 - e. No information shall be released, given, or issued to the news media or to any members of the press concerning department operations or the evidentiary aspects of any criminal investigation, without the prior approval of the Commissioner or designee.
14. Personal Business — Officers while on duty shall not conduct any personal business, purchase any alcoholic beverages, or purchase and carry any conspicuous amounts of merchandise, unless required in the performance of duty.
15. Public Statements — No officer or employee shall make, publish, or issue any derogatory, discreditable, or disparaging public statements concerning the department or its officers, which might tend to undermine the efficiency of the department operation and/or the morale of its membership. Officers and employees of the police department with legitimate complaints regarding the department may seek remedies by referring the matter to a superior officer.
16. Smoking While on Duty — M.G.L. c. 32, § 92 states that smoking is prohibited for any sworn officer hired after January 1, 1988. Department officers hired after this date are prohibited from smoking on or off duty.
17. Recommendation for Disposition of Cases — An officer of the department shall not make recommendations for the disposition of any case pending in the courts without the consent of the Commissioner or designee or a request from the Office of the District Attorney.
18. Towing Services — No officer shall solicit in any way for a towing service. All requests for towing shall be referred to the Emergency Communications Department. It shall be the responsibility of the dispatcher to follow department protocol.
19. Undue Influence — An officer or employee shall not seek or obtain the influence or intervention of any person outside the department for purposes of personal preferment, advantage, transfer, or advancement.
20. Excessive Force — No officer shall use more physical force than that which is reasonable and proportionate to accomplish a proper police purpose. Officers shall use force only when required in accordance with law and departmental policies and procedures and then only reasonable force.

21. Wearing the Uniform — An officer shall not wear any part of the department uniform outside the limits of the community except while in the performance of official duty, in transport to and from work, or with the permission of a supervisor.
22. Withholding Evidence — An officer or employee shall not fabricate, withhold, or destroy any evidence of any kind.
23. False Time Sheets — A law enforcement officer, as defined in M.G.L. c. 6E, § 1, who knowingly submits to a state agency, state authority, city, town, or agency, as defined in M.G.L. c. 6E, § 1, a false or fraudulent claim of hours worked for payment and receives payment thereof or knowingly makes, uses or causes to be made, or used a false record or statement material to a false or fraudulent claim of hours worked for payment that results in a law enforcement officer receiving payment thereof or any person who conspires to commit a violation of this section shall be punished by a fine of three (3) times the amount of the fraudulent wages paid or imprisonment for not more than two (2) years. (Payment made is not narrowly defined in monetary terms but is also defined in terms of time off or anything of value received as compensation.)