

1 LAW ENFORCEMENT CODE OF ETHICS

Departmental Order #: 06-04 (Originally issued under Department Order # 37-03)

A. POLICY STATEMENT

1. This section reaffirms the commitment of the Halifax Regional Police to unbiased policing. Section 1 sets the standard for the Code of Ethics expected of all police officers within HRP. Subsection 1.1 reaffirms the philosophy of the Halifax Regional Police to providing each citizen of the public with whom we have contact dignified treatment and Subsection 1.2 clarifies the circumstances in which officers can consider race/ethnicity when making law enforcement decisions and to enforce procedures that serve to assure the public that HRP is providing service and enforcing laws in an equitable manner.

2. Any sworn member requiring access to the *Nova Scotia Police Act* and *Police Act Regulations* will access them at the Nova Scotia Government website.

B. CODE OF ETHICS

1. The HRP-accepted Code of Ethics states the following:

AS A LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICER, my fundamental duty is to serve mankind; to safeguard lives and property; to protect the innocent against deception, the weak against oppression or intimidation, and the peaceful against violence or disorder; and to respect the constitutional rights of all to liberty, equality and justice.

I WILL KEEP MY PRIVATE life unsullied as an example to all and will behave in a manner that does not bring discredit to my agency. I will maintain courageous calm in the face of danger, scorn, or ridicule; develop self-restraint; and be constantly mindful of the welfare of others. Honest in thought and deed in both my personal and official life, I will be exemplary in obeying the laws of the land and the regulations of my department. Whatever I see or hear of a confidential nature or that is confided to me in my official capacity will be kept ever secret unless revelation is necessary in the performance of my duty.

I WILL never act officiously or permit personal feelings, prejudices, animosities or friendships to influence my decisions. With no compromise for crime and with relentless prosecution of criminals, I will enforce the law courteously and appropriately without fear or favour, malice or ill will, never employing unnecessary force or violence and never accepting gratuities.

I RECOGNIZE the badge of my office as a symbol of public faith and I accept it as a public trust to be held so long as I am true to the ethics of the police service.

I KNOW that I alone am responsible for my own standard of professional performance and will take every reasonable opportunity to enhance and improve my level of knowledge and competence.

I WILL constantly strive to achieve these objectives and ideals, dedicating myself to my chosen profession...law enforcement.

2. All Halifax Regional Police officers shall comply with the Code of Ethics at all times whether on duty or off duty. Officers deemed to be in contravention of the Code of Ethics will be subject to disciplinary action.

C. STANDARD OF CONDUCT

1. The Code of Conduct and Discipline by which all HRP sworn members must abide is mandated by Part 2 of the *Nova Scotia Police Act Regulations*.

1.1 ENTITLEMENT TO DIGNIFIED TREATMENT

Departmental Order #: 37-03

A. POLICY

1. The Halifax Regional Police has always been concerned about the potential for the exhibition or expression of any form of bigotry, discrimination, prejudice and sexual, racial or workplace harassment by its members. This concern is not only with the manner in which members of the HRP may treat the public but also with the manner in which they may treat one another.

2. It is recognized that each member of the HRP is entitled to his/her own beliefs. However, a member of the HRP cannot allow those personal feelings to enter into contacts with the public or contacts with other members of the HRP.

3. Every member of the HRP: a. Must avoid any expression or display of prejudice, bigotry, discrimination, and sexual or racial harassment.

b. Shall conduct themselves at all times in a manner that promotes public confidence in the integrity and impartiality of the HRP. The appearance of bias or prejudice can be as damaging to the public confidence as would be the actual presence of bias or prejudice. Likewise, such behavior can damage the mutual respect between co-workers and must be avoided to maintain positive working relationships which are vital to a functioning organization.

4. Members of the Halifax Regional Police are conspicuous representatives of the Halifax Regional Municipality and are symbols of stability and authority upon whom the public can rely. As such, members of this force must recognize that individual dignity is vital to a free system of law and that while all persons are subject to the law, each person is equally entitled to dignified treatment by all those involved in law enforcement.

5. Therefore, all members of the HRP must, at all times, whether on duty or off duty, refrain from conduct or remarks which may be interpreted in a way that is detrimental to themselves, the HRP or any other person, department or agency involved in the administration of justice.

B. POLICE OFFICER

1. Each police officer shall regard the discharge of his/her duties as a public trust and recognize his/her responsibilities to treat the public in an impartial manner during all interactions. In doing so, officers shall refrain from actions such as vehicle stops, questioning, searching, detaining or arresting based solely on a person's:

a. Race.

b. Ancestry.

c. Place of origin.

d. Ethnic origin.

e. Citizenship.

f. Creed.

g. Gender.

h. Sexual orientation.

i. Disability.

j. Age.

k. Marital status.

l. Same-sex partnership status.

m. Family status.

1.2 VALUING RACE RELATIONS & DIVERSITY

Departmental Order #06-04

A. DEFINITION

1. Racially-biased Policing: occurs when law enforcement inappropriately considers race or ethnicity in deciding with whom and how to intervene in an enforcement capacity.

B. POLICY

1. Halifax Regional Police is committed to endorsing a police environment which prohibits the practice of racially-biased policing and values the diversity within communities in the Halifax Regional Municipality.

2. All members of this service are obligated, from the first day of their employment, to conduct themselves at all times in a professional, legal and respectful manner and to display a high level of professionalism during any type of contact with members of the public.

3. Officers must be able to determine and articulate they have articulable cause that support their actions prior to conducting any of the following:

- a. Investigative detentions.
- b. Traffic stops.
- c. Arrests.
- d. Non-consensual searches. And
- e. Property seizures.

4. Except as provided in A5 below, skin colour, race or ethnicity absent any other factors will be insufficient to justify a stop, search or arrest. Therefore, officers shall not in isolation consider a person's race/ethnicity:

a. When establishing articulable cause.

b. In deciding to initiate even those nonconsensual encounters that do not amount to legal detentions or to request to consent to search.

5. Officers may take into account the reported race/ethnicity of a specific suspect(s) when they have been provided with reliable, locally relevant information that links a person(s) of a specific race/ethnicity to a particular unlawful incident(s).

6. The following list includes but is not limited to inappropriate conduct which will not be tolerated by the Halifax Regional Police:

- a. Targeting motorists for traffic stops based on race.
- b. Applying discretionary enforcement on the basis of race.
- c. Tolerating different degrees of disorder and deviance based on race.
- d. Interfering with citizens' routine activities based on race.
- e. Assuming someone is dangerous on the basis of race.
- f. Providing different levels of police patrol and protection on the basis of race, or because of unfounded racial fears.
- g. Providing different levels of service on the basis of race.

7. Race/ethnicity must never be used as the sole basis for determining articulable cause. Violations of this policy shall result in disciplinary action.

8. Competencies for race and diversity relations shall be embodied within the Competency Assessments, hiring, promotional routines and competitions for transfers. HRP members are evaluated on some of these standards and competencies under the broad headings of Providing Distinguished Service, Valuing diversity and Leadership.

C. POLICE OFFICER

1. HRP seeks to prevent incidents of misinterpreted perceptions of biased law enforcement. To accomplish this objective, each officer shall do the following when conducting pedestrian and vehicle stops:

- a. Be courteous and professional.
- b. Introduce him/herself to the citizen (providing name and agency affiliation) and state the reason for the stop as soon as practical, unless providing this information will compromise officer or public safety. In vehicle stops, the officer shall provide this information before asking for the driver's license and registration.
- c. Ensure that the detention is no longer than is necessary to take appropriate action for the known or suspected offence and that the citizen understands the purpose of reasonable delays.

- d. Answer any questions the citizen may have, including explaining options for traffic citation disposition, if available.
- e. Thank them for their patience and/or explain if s/he determines that the reasonable suspicion was unfounded.
- f. See also **TRAFFIC STOPS** and **CHECKPOINTS AND VEHICLE STOPS**
- 2. Police officers must:
 - a. Unless public interest dictates (i.e., road blocks, routine checks, breathalyzer checkpoints, etc.), make their decisions to engage the public based on the actions or conduct that they observe, on actual witness information and/or on-hand evidence.
 - b. Have articulable cause in order to pursue legitimate law enforcement activities with a member of the public.
- 3. Any member who witnesses a discreditable act by another member of the HRP shall report it to an NCO/supervisor without delay.

D. NCO/SUPERVISOR

- 1. NCOs and supervisors shall consistently demand appropriate behaviour from subordinates. In this regard, NCOs and supervisors are responsible to initiate disciplinary measures against any member who fails to conduct him/herself in a professional manner.

E. PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS

- 1. Professional Standards will ensure that:
 - a. HRP standards concerning the administration, promotion and support of professionalism (including the practices, conduct, appearance, ethics and integrity of its members) help to strengthen public confidence in and co-operation with the police.
 - b. Appropriate disciplinary action is taken against members who contravene the standards of professionalism expected of them.
- 2. Professional Standards will provide feedback to SMT about systemic, repeated or ongoing discriminatory issues in order that appropriate corrective measures can be introduced.