

Oath of Office and Code of Ethics

Index Code: 102

Effective Date: 2/17/2022

I. Purpose

The purpose of this written directive is to ensure that prior to assuming the duties of the Office of the Sheriff, the Sheriff and all Deputy Sheriff's will take and sign the oath or affirmation prescribed by the Maryland State Constitution.

II. Policy

It is the policy of the Office of the Sheriff for Queen Anne's County to require all personnel, prior to assuming sworn status, to take and subsequently abide by the oath of office as prescribed in §2-104 of the Courts and Judicial Proceedings article of the Annotated Code of Maryland. Said oath will be administered by the Clerk of the Circuit Court for Queen Anne's County.

III. The Clerk of the Court will administer the following oath to all Deputies:

I, (name), do swear (or affirm) that I will not for lucre or malice delay any person applying to me for any business belonging to the office I officiate in, and that I will not directly or indirectly ask, take, exact, demand, or receive from or charge to any such person to my own use any fee or reward whatsoever for any services I may do as deputy of the said office, and that in making out the office fees I will not wittingly or willingly charge other or higher fees than are allowed by law.

IV. In addition, the Sheriff will administer the following oath to Deputy Sheriffs when assuming their sworn duties as soon as practical but within one year of their hire date as a deputy or graduation from their police academy as well as in regular intervals:

"I, (name) do solemnly swear that I will bear true faith and allegiance to the United States of America and to the State of Maryland; that I will serve honestly and faithfully uphold and defend the Constitution of the United States and the Constitution of Maryland; that I will enforce the laws of Queen Anne's County, and the State of Maryland; and that I will obey the orders of the Sheriff and of my superior officers according to the rules and regulations of the Office of the Sheriff, Queen Anne's County and the State of Maryland. I pledge to respect every human life and act with compassion towards others."

V. Public Ethics Law

All personnel, sworn and civilian are responsible for understanding and complying with the Public Ethics Laws. These laws contain minimum standards of conduct to ensure that there are no conflicts between an employee's official duties and the employee's personal interests. By law, the Sheriff and Deputy Sheriffs must comply with Title 15, Public Ethics, as enumerated in the Annotated Code of Maryland. Civilian employees of the Office of the Sheriff must comply with Chapter 8, Ethics, as enumerated in the Code of Queen Anne's County, Maryland.

VI Law Enforcement Officers Code of Ethics

In addition to the State and local ethics laws, sworn personnel will adhere to the Law Enforcement Officers Code of Ethics, which states:

As a law enforcement officer, my fundamental duty is to serve mankind, to safeguard lives and property, and to protect the innocent against deception, the weak against oppression or intimidation, and the peaceful against violence or disorder, and to respect the Constitutional rights of all people to liberty, equality and justice.

I will keep my private life unsullied as an example to all, maintain courageous calm in the face of danger, scorn or ridicule, develop self-restraint, and be constantly mindful for 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 agency. 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 of criminals, I will enforce the law courteously and appropriately without fear or favor, malice or ill will, never employing unnecessary force or violence and never soliciting gratuities.

I recognize the badge of my office as a symbol of public faith, and I accept it as a public trust to be held so long as I am true to the ethics of the police service. I will constantly strive to achieve these objectives and ideals, dedicating myself to my chosen profession - law enforcement.

VII. Training

Ethics training will be conducted for all personnel at least biennially. This training may consist of classroom training, roll call training, training bulletins, or any combination of these methods.

VIII. Pledge and Affirmation

A “Sanctity of Life Pledge” and “Use of Force Training Completion Affirmation” shall be signed and dated by all agency sworn personnel as mandated by the MPCTC. Deputy Recruits will sign and date those forms at the time of their official swearing-in as a Deputy following their police academy graduation. The Human Resources Section of the Administrative Division shall be responsible for the compliance and appropriate electronic and hard copy filings of these documents.

IX. CALEA Reference(s): 1.1.1 & 1.2.2

X. Cancellation: Policy dated 8/10/2021

XI. Proponent Unit: Office of the Sheriff

Sheriff Gary Hofmann