

OREGON DPSST  
*ETHICS BULLETIN*

Volume No. 25



The Board on Public Safety Standards and Training (BPSST) has the legislative mandate to establish and enforce the physical, mental, and moral fitness standards for all law enforcement officers, telecommunicators and emergency medical dispatchers in the state.

This requirement also defines the procedure for the Department and Board to use when denying or revoking certification of an officer, telecommunicator or emergency medical dispatcher who has fallen below the moral fitness standards.

The Ethics Bulletin is published to provide insight into the types of misconduct that could result in revocation or denial of certification. The following cases of misconduct resulted in **revocation and denial** of certifications by DPSST in **August 2005**.

**Case 1**

**Officer A** made application to attend DPSST Basic Police Training. Based on a constituent tip, an investigation was conducted to determine whether Officer A had truthfully answered the questions on the F-5, Application for Training and whether he was eligible for certification. The results of the investigation revealed that Officer A had a 23-year old conviction for "Official Misconduct", and was not truthful on his DPSST application. Two "Theft in the First Degree" incident reports were located, along with a conviction from the court of record. In both cases, Officer A had misappropriated citizens' property that he had taken control of in the course of his duties as a police officer. As a part of a plea agreement, one of the counts of "Official Misconduct" was dismissed; he pled guilty to the other count. "Official Misconduct" is an impeachable offense, and this crime is a mandatory disqualifying crime for certification purposes. While Officer A has worked as a Reserve Officer in various communities, his conduct has prevented him from becoming certified for the past 24 years and will prevent him from future certification in an Oregon public safety discipline.

**Officer A was denied admission to Basic Police Training.**

**Case 2**

**Officer B** was convicted of "Interfering with a Peace Officer". When the police responded to Officer B's residence to locate his son who had an outstanding felony warrant for a Sex Abuse in the First Degree probation violation, Officer B lied to the officers and told them his son was not at home. Officer B's son then fled from the residence and was caught by police. Officer B told officers that he knew his son was not to have contact with the victim, Officer B's 12-year old daughter and the offender's sister. This case was taken before the Corrections Policy Committee that recommended revocation of Officer B's certification. The Board affirmed the Committee's recommendation and a Notice of Intent to Revoke Certifications was issued. Officer B made a timely request for a hearing; however, prior to the hearing Officer B voluntarily signed a Stipulated Order Revoking Certifications. Officer B's conduct ended his 14-year career.

**Officer B's Basic, Intermediate and Advanced Corrections Certifications were Revoked.**

**PLEASE DISSEMINATE THIS INFORMATION TO ALL PUBLIC SAFETY OFFICERS**

[www.dpsst.state.or.us](http://www.dpsst.state.or.us)

503-378-2305

August 2005

### Case 3

**Officer C** was hired as a Corrections Officer. When application was made to DPSST to attend Basic Corrections training, staff discovered a conviction for "Receiving Stolen Property". This crime had been committed in another state twenty-one years ago. A comparison of the elements of the crime and the imprisonment sanctions was made to Oregon crimes and the equivalent was a mandatory disqualifying conviction. The employer was notified and the officer was removed from his scheduled training at DPSST. Officer C's conduct at the age of eighteen prevents him from entering Oregon public safety disciplines. **Officer C was denied admission to Basic Corrections Training.**

### Case 4

**Officer D** was discharged for cause after an internal investigation revealed that he engaged in workplace harassment and violated numerous agency policies which included insubordination, unbecoming conduct, unsatisfactory performance, courtesy, cooperation and discrimination. In this case, Officer D engaged in this inappropriate conduct after his relationship with another employee within the agency had ended. Officer D's conduct ended his 3-year career. **Officer D's Basic Corrections Certification was Revoked.**



*This article is printed with the permission of Sgt. Bruce Perkins (retired). Sgt. Perkins retired from the Eugene Police Department after completing a career in law enforcement of over 32 years. Sgt. Perkins has instructed numerous FTEP and Ethics classes for many years throughout the State of Oregon for DPSST, OSP, Oregon Police Corps and the Western Community Policing Center. Bruce currently resides in the state of Maryland with his wife Linda, and continues to be a part-time regional instructor for DPSST.*

## INTEGRITY

According to Webster's New World Dictionary, the word "*integrity*" means "the quality or state of being of sound moral principle; uprightness, honesty, and sincerity." It has also been defined as "uncompromising adherence to a code of values" or "always doing the right thing when no one is looking." No matter what definition you like, they all say the same thing.

Unfortunately, in today's world, the word "integrity" appears to be losing its proper place in society. Everyday it seems that newspapers or the nightly news report a "dishonesty" issue with a corporate executive or government official, somewhere in the country. This lack of integrity by individuals in positions of authority has an undermining affect on the youth of America. But so does a lack of integrity among the rank and file.

We, as public safety employees, have an ethical obligation to be honest and forthright, not only because of the oath we took entering our profession, but as a duty to ourselves and our loved ones. For if we cannot maintain our integrity, how can we expect others to do the same. In our profession, we know that for any given situation we will instinctively react the way we have been trained. The same is true for ethical dilemmas. The more we review, discuss and train regarding ethical issues, the stronger our resolve for integrity. Remember, as public safety professionals we are role models and mentors not only for society as a whole but also our peers. We can make a difference!

"Don't compromise yourself, you are all you've got." (Janis Joplin)