

OREGON DPSST
ETHICS BULLETIN

Volume No. 11



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 **February 2004**.

Case 1

Officer A was discharged for cause after an internal investigation revealed that she had violated agency policy by failing to report personal contacts with inmates and their families. Contacts with the families of inmates included Officer A staying overnight with an inmate's mother and dining with another inmate's mother at the restaurant she owned. The investigation also revealed that Officer A was untruthful during the investigation. Officer A's conduct ended a 13-year career.

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

Case 2

Telecommunicator B resigned during an investigation in which it was alleged that he engaged in conspiring to manufacture and deliver controlled substances, and that he possessed controlled substances. Telecommunicator B was convicted of one of the felonies and signed a Stipulated Order to never seek employment as a public safety officer in the state of Oregon. Telecommunicator B's conduct ended a 6-year career.

Telecommunicator B's Telecommunicator and Emergency Medical Dispatch Certificates were Revoked.

Case 3

Officer C was convicted of two counts of Encouraging Child Sex Abuse. Officer C unlawfully possessed photos of sexually explicit conduct involving a child. The court found that Officer C consciously disregarded the fact that creation of the visual recording of sexually explicit conduct involved child abuse and was contrary to statute and against the peace and dignity of the State of Oregon. Officer C's conduct ended a 10-year career.

Officer C's Basic Corrections certification was Revoked.

Case 4

Officer D resigned after he was arrested in the state of Washington and subsequently convicted of Possession of a Controlled Substance and Bail Jumping. Police officers were dispatched to a call for service where a male was seated in his car, with the engine running, and was slumped over the wheel. Officers found Officer D dazed and confused. After a DRE evaluation, Officer C was arrested, methamphetamine and drug paraphernalia was found on his person, and he admitted to smoking meth. Officer D jumped bail and was later picked up on a warrant. Officer D's conduct ended his 7-year career.

Officer D's Basic Corrections certification was Revoked.

Case 5

Officer E was discharged for cause after he repeatedly handled domestic violence calls for service inappropriately. Officer E created a risk to the victims of domestic violence and a liability for his agency when he repeatedly violated agency policy and state statute by not writing reports on the incidents and not arresting the perpetrators. Officer E's conduct ended his 12-year career.

Officer E's Basic Police Certification was Revoked.

Information for our Readers:

Reprinted with permission from the Center for Law Enforcement Ethics, Ethics Roll Call "Listening to the inner voice", Summer 2003 issue. To access more information on this topic, visit www.theilea.org

Once people identify a situation with ethical implications, they need to be able to think it through and act correctly. To help facilitate this, consider the following questions excerpted from an article entitled, "Uncertainty and Principles", by Chris Warren.

The Law Test

Is what you are considering doing illegal? There's very little nuance to this question; if it's illegal, don't do it.

The Newspaper Test

Would you want to read about your actions on the front page of your local paper? If not, you should reconsider.

The Child Test

Ask yourself what you would you tell your child, or a friend, to do if he or she were in your situation. If you wouldn't tell your child or friend to do what you're considering doing, then maybe you should think about it again.

The Harm Test

Who gets hurt if you do this? One way of boiling down a lot of complex ethical principles is to simply not do anything that causes unjustified harm. In business there are, of course, instances where someone may be harmed through a layoff, but the important question is whether or not it's justifiable.

The Smell Test

Does what you're thinking of doing smell? Even if you've asked yourself all the other questions, there still might be something that makes you feel uneasy. If so, talk to somebody else and see if they get the same smell.