

OREGON DPSST
ETHICS BULLETIN

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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 **January and February 2005**.

Case 1

Officer A was indicted by a federal grand jury on charges of possession of an unregistered silencer; an unregistered sawed off shotgun, and unregistered semi-automatic rifles. In a plea agreement with federal prosecutors, Officer A agreed to a Stipulated Order revoking his Police certification. Officer A's conduct ended his 11-year career.

Officer A's Basic Police Certification was Revoked.

Case 2

Officer B resigned and was thereafter convicted of Sexual Abuse. The victim in this case was his granddaughter. At sentencing, the judge ordered Officer B to sign a stipulated order revoking his certification. Officer B's conduct ended his 5-year career.

Officer B's Basic Corrections Certification was Revoked.

Case 3

Officer C was discharged for cause and subsequently pled guilty to Lewd Conduct with a Minor, a felony offense in the state of Idaho. The victim in this case was between the ages of 7 and 9. Officer C signed a stipulated order revoking his certification. Officer C's conduct ended his 5-year career.

Officer C's Basic, Intermediate, and Advanced Police Certifications were Revoked.

Case 4

Officer D pled guilty to Encouraging Child Sexual Abuse in the Second Degree after sexual images involving children were found on his home computer. Officer D's conduct ended his 20-year career.

Officer D's Basic, Intermediate, Advanced, and Supervisory Police Certificates were Revoked.

Case 5

Officer E pled guilty to Official Misconduct in the First Degree after an investigation by the Oregon Department of Justice and the Federal Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms into the purchase of several automatic weapons and a silencer, and their subsequent transfer to his agency. As a condition of probation, the judge ordered him to surrender his certifications permanently. Officer E's conduct ended his 5-year career. Officer E signed a Stipulated Order revoking his certifications.

Officer E's Basic Police, Emergency Medical Dispatcher, and Basic Telecommunicator's certifications were Revoked.

What is the Law Enforcement Oath of Honor?

"Police officers take risks and suffer inconveniences to protect the lives, defend civil liberties, secure the safety of fellow citizens, and they endure such risks and tolerate such inconveniences on behalf of strangers. Consequently, police work is one of the more noble and selfless occupations in society. Making a difference in the quality of life is an opportunity that policing provides, and few other professions can offer.

A public affirmation of adhering to an Oath of Honor is a powerful vehicle demonstrating ethical standards. To be successful at enhancing integrity within an organization, leaders must ensure the oath is recited frequently and displayed throughout the organization as well as ensuring ethical mentoring and role modeling are consistent, frequent and visible. The following Law Enforcement Oath of Honor is recommended as by the International Association of Chiefs of Police as symbolic statement of commitment to ethical behavior:

*On my honor,
I will never betray my badge,
my integrity, my character,
or the public trust.
I will always have
the courage to hold myself
and others accountable for our actions.
I will always uphold the constitution,
my community and the agency I serve.*

Before any officer takes the Law Enforcement Oath of Honor, it is important that he/she understands what it means. An oath is a solemn pledge someone makes when he/she sincerely intends to do what he/she says.

Honor means that one's word is given as a guarantee.

Betray is defined as breaking faith with the public trust.

Badge is the symbol of your office.

Integrity is being the same person in both private and public life.

Character means the qualities that distinguish an individual.

Public trust is a charge of duty imposed in faith toward those you serve.

Courage is having the strength to withstand unethical pressure, fear or danger.

Accountability means that you are answerable and responsible to your oath of office.

Community is the jurisdiction and citizens served.

In conclusion, it is strongly recommended by the IACP that all agencies adopt the Law Enforcement Oath of Honor. Having officers take an oath will reconfirm the significance of integrity within the agency and help bring the entire profession together to show that the vast majority of law enforcement officers not only are good, decent individuals, but also will step forward to stop unethical acts by any members of our profession."

Excerpt taken from the International Association Chiefs of Police Ethics Toolkit. To review the full document and other related articles, please visit: http://www.theiacp.org/profassist/ethics/what_is_oath_of_honor.htm

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www.dpsst.state.or.us

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