

Somerville Police Department 	TYPE: GENERAL ORDER		POLICY NUMBER: 401	VERSION: 4.00			
	Subject: Oath of Office/Code of Ethics						
	Issuing Authority: Charles Femino Chief of Police		Signature:  Number of Pages: Page 1 of 3	Effective Date: April 05, 2023			
Accreditation Standards (6th Edition) 26.0.1, 26.0.2, 11.1.0		<input type="checkbox"/> New <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Revised <input type="checkbox"/> Amended					
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Purpose

The taking of an oath of office and abiding by a code or cannon of ethics is a universal practice in law enforcement. The oath includes elements to satisfy local and state requirements as well as the need to uphold the Constitution of the United States.

Policy

All personnel, prior to assuming sworn status or upon receiving a promotion in rank, shall appear before the City Clerk to be sworn-in and take the oath of office outlined below. Prior to assuming sworn status, [FORM - 401 - Oath Of Office](#), shall be signed and included in the officer's personnel file. Each officer will also be required to accept the responsibility for the achievement of the department's mission statement and publicly register his/her commitment to it and to the concepts of quality service. All sworn-officers of the Somerville Police Department shall abide by the following oath of office, mission statement, and code of ethics. All civilian employees shall abide by the mission statement and the civilian code of ethics.

Procedure

1. Oath of Office *

"I, _____, do solemnly swear that I will faithfully perform the duties incumbent on me as a police officer for the City of Somerville in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, and uphold the Constitution of the United States, under the pains and penalties of perjury" [26.0.1]

2. Mission Statement *

The Somerville Police Department, as part of, and empowered by, the community, is committed to protect the lives, property, and rights of all people, to maintain order, and to enforce the law impartially. Members of the department are committed to racial and social justice and actively pursue the cooperation of every resident in an effort to create a police/community partnership that is sensitive to the multitude of cultures that make up the human fabric of our community. To fulfill our mission, we will utilize innovative and proven crime prevention strategies and problem-solving partnerships with our community. [11.1.0]

3. Code of Ethics for Sworn Officers *

As a law enforcement officer, my fundamental duty is to 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 people to liberty, equality, and justice.

I will keep my private life untarnished as an example to all; 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 my personal and official life, I will be exemplary in obeying the laws of the land and the regulations of my department.

I will never act officiously or permit personal feelings, prejudices, animosities, or friendships to influence my decisions. I look to deescalate volatile situations, deter crime, and use the powers of arrest entrusted to me as necessary. I will enforce the law courteously and appropriately, without fear or favor, 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 will constantly strive to achieve these objectives and ideals, dedicating myself to my chosen profession—Law Enforcement. [26.0.2]

4. Code of Ethics for Civilian Employees

As a police department employee, my fundamental duty is to serve the public, and to respect the constitutional rights of all people to liberty, equality, and justice.

I will strive to keep my private life untarnished as an example to all. 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 what is confided in me in my official capacity will be kept private unless revelation is necessary in the performance of my duty, or until it is no longer relevant.

I will never act officiously or permit personal feelings, prejudices, animosities, or friendships to influence my decisions. I will never accept gratuities.

I recognize my employment with the police department is 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 department. I will constantly strive to achieve those objectives and ideals, dedicating myself to my profession within this law enforcement agency. [26.0.2]

5. Value Statement * [11.1.0]

The core values of the Somerville Police Department are:

1. To make Somerville safe in ways that reflect our democratic values and that fulfill the commitment to police Somerville without violating our legal, moral, and ethical principles
2. To treat every individual with civility, courtesy, sensitivity, and respect
3. To act with integrity
4. To provide quality service
5. To listen carefully and to act appropriately
6. To respect stability and embrace change, keeping what works and changing what could work better
7. To value diversity and inclusion
8. To discharge faithfully our role as guardians of the public trust and intervene when people's rights are violated
9. To partner with the public in an effort to solve community problems
10. To act with this thought in mind: to the citizens of Somerville, at all times in our actions we represent the government

*Also referenced in "[Somerville Police Department – Rules and Regulations Manual](#)"