

1.1 OFFICE ROLE

POLICY: The Sheriff's Office shall establish reasonable goals and objectives in the pursuit of professional standards and improved service to the community

This General Order consists of the following sections:

1.1.1 Oath of Office

1.1.2 Canons of Ethics

1.1.3 Spirit of Law

1.1.4 Foreign Diplomats/Consular Officials

1.1.1 Oath of Office: All deputies of the Washington County Sheriff's Office will take an "Oath of Office", prior to assuming sworn status.

The Clerk of the Circuit Court, or designee, will administer the oath. After taking the oath of office, personnel will be held accountable for abiding by that oath.

1.1.2 All personnel of the Sheriff's Office will familiarize themselves with the **Washington County Sheriff's Office Code of Ethics**, and conduct themselves in accordance with that code. While personnel are human beings and therefore subject to the frailties and shortcomings of humans, the public has the right to place high expectations on them regarding their professional and personal conduct. The inherent difficulty of the profession is multiplied if deputies do not pursue excellence in both their professional and personal lives. **Ethics training will be conducted biennially for all personnel.**

1.1.3 Comply with the "Spirit of Law" without adding to an already clogged justice system, by working out compromises that are fair and agreed to by the victim and the accused, thereby making incarceration or court action unnecessary.

In this instance, the "Spirit of Law" would mean fair justice for the victim. Such action may be taken in circumstances involving misdemeanor crimes of a relatively minor nature.

For example: The victim's window is broken by an identified juvenile. The victim expresses the sentiment that he/she would be satisfied with having the window paid for or some other form of redress. The parents of the juvenile agree to this, and further action is avoided. Consideration must be given, however, to the extent of the criminal act, whether the juvenile has been involved in prior criminal activity, and the wishes of the victim.

For example: The suspect has a mental health issue and has caused a disturbance. The deputy could file a petition for emergency evaluation on the suspect and get them the medical help they need and keep them out of the criminal justice system.

For example: The suspect is trespassing to stay warm in a building or store, the deputy could provide transportation to the cold weather or other shelter in lieu of arresting the suspect for trespassing.

In appropriate misdemeanor crimes, the investigating deputy may initiate this action with agreement of victim. In crimes of a more serious nature, such actions on the part of the deputy would be coordinated through the State's Attorney's Office.

1.1.4 Foreign Diplomats/Consular Officials

The geographical location of Washington County with respect to the Nation's Capital requires deputies to be well versed in the laws of diplomatic immunity from arrest. The United States Department of State has issued a "**Consular Notification and Access Booklet**" this reference book will be used when faced with the prospect of a possible arrest of someone claiming diplomatic immunity.

It is the policy of the Sheriff's Office to compliance with these guidelines under all circumstance. Copies of these guidelines can be found at all Sheriff's Office facilities.