

# NIGERIA POLICE CODE OF CONDUCT

**“He that will not apply new remedies must expect new evils; for time is the greatest innovator”  
Francis Bacon (1561-1626) Essays (1625)**

**VISION:** To make Nigeria safer and more secured for economic development and growth; to create a safe and secured environment for everyone living in Nigeria.

## **2. MISSION:**

1. To partner with other relevant Security Agencies and the public in gathering, collating and sharing of information and intelligence with the intention of ensuring the safety and security of the country;
2. To participate in efforts to address the root causes of crime while ensuring that any criminal act is investigated so as to bring the criminals to justice in a fair and professional manner.

## **3. VALUES:**

Working together with people irrespective of religious, political, social or economic affiliations to:- a. Deliver quality police service that is accessible to the generality of the people;

b. Build a lasting trust in the police by members of the public;

c. Protect and uphold the rights of persons, to be impartial and respectful in the performance of Police duties;

d. Continuously evaluate and improve Police services;

e. Provide equal opportunities for career developments for all members of the force;

f. Cooperate with all relevant government Agencies and other stakeholders.

g. Liaise with the Ministry of Police Affairs and the Police Service Commission to formulate and implement policies for the effective policing of Nigeria.

## **4. CODE OF CONDUCT AND PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS FOR POLICE OFFICERS:**

To achieve the Mission and Visions as well as imbibe the values illustrated above, it is expedient to formulate a Code of Conduct for all Police officers employed into the Service of the Nigeria Police Force.

The code will be regarded as an accountability code that will apply to all officers (irrespective of rank) and will reflect International conventions for Law Enforcement Agents, the provisions of sections 353-368 of Part XV of the Police Act (cap 359) and other relevant Force Orders as well as Public Service

## **2. Rules.**

The purpose of having a code of conduct is to provide all members for the Nigeria Police Force with a set of guiding principles and standards of behaviour while on or off-duty. It is intended to be used by

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Police officers in determining what is right and proper in all their actions. The code should set an outline which every member of the Force can easily understand. It will enable Policemen to know what type of conduct by a Police officer is right and what is wrong. The code will encompass the following:

**Primary Responsibilities of a Police Officer** – A police officer acts as an official representative of government who is required and trusted to work within the law. The officer's powers and duties are conferred by statute. The fundamental duties of a police officer include serving the community, safeguarding lives and property, protecting the innocent, keeping the peace and ensuring the rights of all to liberty, equality and justice;

**Performance of duties as a police officer** – a police officer shall perform all duties impartially, without favor of affection or ill will and without regard to status, sex, race, religion, political belief or aspiration. All citizens will be treated equally with courtesy, consideration and dignity. Officers will never allow personal feelings, animosities or friendships to influence official conduct. Laws will be enforced appropriately and courteously and in carrying out their responsibilities, officers will strive to obtain maximum cooperation from the public. They will conduct themselves both in appearance and composure, in such a manner as to inspire confidence and respect for the position of public trust they hold.

**Discretion** - a Police officer will use responsibly, the discretion vested in his position and exercise it within the law.

**Use of Force** – a police officer will never employ unnecessary force or violence and will use only such force in discharge of duty, as is reasonable in all circumstances. The use of force should be used only after discussion, negotiation and persuasion have been found to be inappropriate or ineffective. While the use of force is occasionally unavoidable, every police officer will refrain from unnecessary infliction of pain or suffering and will never engage in cruel, degrading or inhuman treatment of any person.

**Confidentiality** – Whatever a police officer sees, hears or learns which is of a confidential nature, will be kept secret unless the performance of duty or legal provision requires otherwise. Members of the public have a right to security and privacy, and information obtained about them must not be improperly divulged

**Integrity** – a police officer will not engage in acts of corruption or bribery, nor will an officer condone such acts by other police officers. The public demands that the integrity of police officers be above reproach. Police officers must therefore, avoid any conduct that might compromise integrity and that undercut the confidence reposed by the public, in the Police. Officers will refuse to accept any gifts, presents, subscriptions, favours, gratuities or promises that could be interpreted as seeking to cause the officer to refrain from performing official responsibilities honestly and within the law. Police officers must not receive private or special advantage from their official status. Respect from the public cannot be bought; it can only be earned and cultivated.

**Cooperation with other Police Officers and Agencies** – Police officers will cooperate with all legally authorized agencies and their representatives in the pursuit of justice. An officer or agency may be one

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among many organizations that may provide law enforcement services to a jurisdiction. It is imperative that a police officer assists colleagues fully and completely with respect and consideration at all times;

**Personal Professional Capabilities** - Police Officers will be responsible for their own standard of professional performance and will take every reasonable opportunity to enhance and improve their level of knowledge and competence. Through study and experience, a police officer can acquire the high level of knowledge and competence that is essential for the efficient and effective performance of duty. The acquisition of knowledge is a never ending process of personal and professional development that should be pursued constantly;

- **Private Life** – Police officers will behave in a manner that does not bring discredit to the Force or themselves. A police officer’s character and conduct while off duty must always be exemplary, thus maintaining a position of respect in the community in which he or she lives and serves. The officer’s personal behavior must be beyond reproach.

## 5. OFFICER REQUIREMENTS

**Principle One** – Police officers shall conduct themselves, whether on or off duty, in accordance with the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria and all applicable laws, ordinances and rules enacted or established pursuant to legal authority.

### Rules

- Police officers shall not knowingly exceed their authority in the enforcement of the law;
- Police officers shall not knowingly disobey the law or rules of criminal procedure in such areas as interrogation, arrest, detention, searches, seizures, use of informants and preservation of evidence;
- Police officers shall not knowingly restrict the freedom of individuals, whether by arrest or detention, in violation of the Constitution and laws of the Federal Republic of Nigeria;
- Police officers, whether on or off duty, shall not knowingly commit any criminal offense under any laws of the Federal Republic of Nigeria or any state or local jurisdiction in which the officer is present, except where permitted in the performance of duty under proper authority.

**Principle Two** - Police officers shall refrain from any conduct in an official capacity that detracts from the public's faith in the integrity of the criminal justice system.

### Rules

- Police officers shall carry out their duties with integrity, fairness and impartiality.
- Police officers shall take no action knowing it will violate the constitutional rights of any person.
- Police officers must obey lawful orders, but must refuse to obey any orders the officer knows would require the officer to commit an illegal act. If in doubt as to the clarity

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of an order, the officer shall, if feasible, request the issuing officer to clarify the order. An officer refusing to obey an order shall be required to justify his or her actions.

**Principle Three** - Police officers shall perform their duties and apply the law impartially and without prejudice or discrimination.

## Rules

- Police officers shall provide every person in our society with professional, effective and efficient law enforcement services.
- Police officers shall not allow their law enforcement decisions to be influenced by race, religion, or any other sentiment whatsoever.

**Principle Four** - Police officers shall not, whether on or off duty, exhibit any conduct which discredits themselves or the Force or otherwise impairs their ability or that of other officers or the Force to provide law enforcement services to the community.

## Rules

- Police officers shall not consume alcoholic beverages or chemical substances, while on duty, except as permitted in the performance of official duties, and under no circumstances while in uniform, except as otherwise exclusively permitted by an enabling authority;
- Police officers shall not consume alcoholic beverages to the extent the officer would be rendered unfit for the officer's next scheduled shift. A police officer shall not report for work with the odour of an alcoholic beverage on the officer's breath.
- Police officers shall not commit any acts which constitute sexual assault or indecent exposure. Sexual assault does not include a frisk or other search done in accordance with proper police procedures.
- Police officers shall avoid regular personal associations with persons who are known to engage in criminal activity where such associations will undermine the public trust and confidence in the officer or the Force. This rule does not prohibit those associations that are necessary to the performance of official duties, or where such associations are unavoidable because of the officer's personal or family relationships.

**Principle Five** - Police officers shall treat all members of the public courteously and with respect.

## Rules

- Police officers shall exercise reasonable courtesy in their dealings with the public, fellow officers, superiors and subordinates.
- No police officer shall ridicule, mock, deride, taunt, belittle, willfully embarrass, humiliate, or shame any person to do anything reasonably calculated to incite a person to violence.
- Police officers shall promptly advise any inquiring citizen of the Department's complaint procedure, and shall follow the established departmental policy for processing complaints.

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**Principle Six** - Police officers shall not compromise their integrity nor that of the Force, by accepting, giving or soliciting any gratuity which could be reasonably interpreted as capable of influencing their official acts or judgments, or by using their status as a police officer for personal, commercial, or political gain.

## Rules

- Police officers shall not use their official position, identification cards: (1) for personal or financial gain, for themselves or another person; (2) for obtaining privileges not otherwise available to them except in the performance of duty; and (3) for avoiding consequences of unlawful or prohibited actions.
- Police officers shall not lend to another person their identification cards or badges or permit these items to be photographed or reproduced without approval of the Inspector-General of Police except as required by Supervising Government Ministries or for recognized public services.
- Police officers shall refuse favors or gratuities which could be reasonably interpreted as capable of influencing official acts or judgments.
- Police officers shall:
  - a. not authorize the use of their names, photographs or titles in a manner that identifies the officer as an employee of the Force in connection with advertisements for any product, commodity or commercial enterprise;
- Maintain a neutral position with regard to the merits of any labour dispute, political protest, or other public demonstration while acting in an official capacity; nor make endorsements of political candidates, while on duty, or in official uniform.

**Principle Seven** - Police officers shall not compromise their integrity, nor that of their Force, by taking or attempting to influence actions when a conflict of interest exists.

## Rules

- Police officers shall, unless required by law or policy, refrain from becoming involved in official matters, or influencing actions of other police officers in official matters, impacting the officer's immediate family, relatives, or persons with whom the officer has or has had a significant personal relationship;
- Police officers shall, unless required by law or policy, refrain from acting or influencing official actions of other police officers in official matters impacting persons with whom the officer has or has had a private relationship.
- Police officers shall not use the authority of their position as police officers, or information available to them due to their status as police officers, for any purpose of personal gain including, but not limited to, initiating or furthering personal and/or intimate interactions of any kind with persons with whom the officer has had contact while on duty;

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- Police officers shall not engage in any off duty employment if the position compromises or would reasonably tend to compromise the officer's ability to impartially perform the officer's official duties.

**Principle Eight** - Police officers shall observe the confidentiality of information available to them due to their status as police officers.

## Rules

- Police officers shall not knowingly violate any legal restriction for the release or dissemination of information.
- Police officers shall not, except in the course of official duties or as required by law, publicly disclose information likely to endanger or embarrass victims, witnesses or complainants;
- Police officers shall not divulge the identity of persons giving confidential information except as required by law or Force policy.

## 6. Implementation of the Code

- Effort shall be made to ensure that the principles embodied in this code are reflected in appropriate legislations guiding the Nigeria Police Force;
- The code shall be made applicable to all Police officers regardless of their jurisdiction;
- Necessary measures will be emplaced to instruct, in basic training and subsequent training and refresher courses, Police officers of all cadre, on the principles of the code and the implications of their violation
- Principles of the code will be given the widest possible publicity and translated into the major national languages to enable public participation in the monitoring of Police conduct across the country;
- Effective mechanism shall be established to ensure the internal discipline and external control as well as the supervision of Police officers;
- Particular provisions shall be made, for the receipt and processing of Complaints against police officers, made by members of the public and the result of the outcomes of such procedures will not be considered classified.

**7.** The fundamental duty of every police officer and indeed every law enforcement official is to serve mankind; to safeguard lives and property; to protect the innocent against oppression or intimidation, and the peaceful against violence or disorder and to respect the constitutional rights of all men to liberty, equality and justice.

**8.** It is my desire, that the Nigerian Police officer, in the performance of this duty, will keep his private life unsullied 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 both in his personal and official life and exemplary in obeying the law of the land, regulations of the Force and the code of conduct and professional standards as illustrated above.

**9.** This is the mission and vision of this administration.

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