

## 16-03 - Forming Relationships During Public Contacts

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# Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department NEWSLETTER

Field Operations Support Services, (323) 890-5411

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### FORMING RELATIONSHIPS DURING PUBLIC CONTACTS

The purpose of this newsletter is to stimulate discussion on the noted topic and serve as a training resource for deputies.

The Department goes to great lengths to protect its Code of Ethics and promoting professional conduct amongst its personnel. One of the basic tenets of our profession is that we all must abide by uncompromising and high standards of professionalism. In the course and scope of our duties, there are extraordinary expectations and responsibilities placed upon law enforcement professionals which we all understand and accept. Personnel shall maintain a level of moral conduct in their personal and business affairs which is in keeping with the highest standards of the law enforcement profession.

All personnel should exercise caution when extending professional relationships developed on duty (e.g., traffic stops, investigations, etc.) to personal relationships continued off duty. What does this mean? Basically, personnel should use good judgement if a situation arises wherein a personal (dating or business) relationship could form while on duty. This applies whether the individual is in regular uniform or other on-duty apparel.

*Scenario: While on duty, you stop at your local coffee shop. You notice the attractive barista making your cup of coffee. Should you ask for their personal number?*

Some conflicts of interest are readily apparent, while others are not as obvious. This could be perceived by the public as a relationship starting under the color of authority, and we must avoid even the appearance of impropriety. While that relationship may have had a consensual beginning, that perception can quickly

change. Deputies should be aware of information regarding conflicts of interest and the different situations that may arise.

Using the scenario above, how would you handle the situation if the barista was the one trying to develop a personal relationship with you while you were on duty?

It is the Department's responsibility to prevent the adverse impact(s) that may occur as a result of a personal relationship starting on duty. Foresight and common sense go a long way when making any decision, professionally or otherwise, to avoid a damaging

aftermath to the individual or the Department.

For additional information regarding conflicts of interest, refer to the Manual of Policy and Procedures Section 3-01/030.07.

Information regarding the content of this newsletter may be directed to [Field Operations Support Services](#) at (323) 890-5411.

## **References**

Standards of Professional and Ethical Conduct, #597

[http://intranet.lasd.sheriff.sdn/intranet/sheriffs\\_bulletins/597.htm](http://intranet.lasd.sheriff.sdn/intranet/sheriffs_bulletins/597.htm)

Guidelines for Discipline Handbook

<http://intranet.lasd.sheriff.sdn/intranet/sites/rmb/documents/guidelinesfordiscipline.pdf>

Manual of Policy and Procedures Section: 3-01/030.07 Immoral Conduct

<http://intranet.lasd.sheriff.sdn/intranet/mpp/vol3/3-01/3-01-030.07.htm>

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