

**ETHICS STATEMENT
DEPARTMENT OF CRIMINAL JUSTICE SERVICES**

INTRODUCTION

The Department of Criminal Justice Services (DCJS) plays a key role in improving the functioning and effectiveness of Virginia's criminal justice system. To fulfill its role, the Department

- conducts research and evaluation on criminal justice issues;
- develops short and long-term criminal justice plans;
- distributes federal and state funding to localities, state agencies and nonprofit organizations in the areas of law enforcement, prosecution, school and campus safety, crime and delinquency prevention, juvenile justice, crime victim services and corrections;
- provides training, technical assistance and program development services to all segments of the criminal justice system;
- establishes and enforces minimum training standards for law enforcement, criminal justice, private security and other public safety related personnel; and
- licenses and regulates the private and electronic security and bail bonding industries, special conservators of the peace, locksmiths, and tow truck drivers.

DCJS is unique because of its system-wide perspective on criminal justice. While it directs programs and services to each component of the system, it has an overarching responsibility to view the system as a whole; to understand how changes in one part of criminal justice will affect other parts, and to work to assure that plans and programs are comprehensive.

In addition to those responsibilities DCJS also has an obligation to its constituencies and the citizens of the Commonwealth to conduct business in an ethical manner. This concept is central to how each staff member will conduct business on behalf of the agency and the citizens of Virginia.

OBJECTIVES

Advocacy

Many decisions made by the Department can affect a significant number of other agencies and people. Therefore, objectivity is essential to ensuring that the process by which decisions are made maintains a high degree of integrity. The agency goal is effective and transparent decision-making that assures citizens and stakeholders of a process that is inclusive and fair. DCJS will ensure that our policies, practices and decision-making are free from inappropriate and undue influence, either implied or actual, of any special group, individual or organization.

Excellence

DCJS, gives the highest priority to achieving and maintaining excellence. We recognize that organizational excellence is a product of individual and team effort. Agency leadership encourages collaborative work and information sharing, maintains a bias toward innovation and responsible change and requires that management acts in support of and models this priority. DCJS will strive for both organizational and individual excellence in order to fulfill its obligations to the criminal justice community and the citizens of the Commonwealth.

Quality of Service

The Department seeks to ensure that quality service occurs at every level of the organization and across every functional unit. DCJS pledges a commitment to continually work toward improving the value and quality of our individual and organizational performance in terms of effectiveness, quality, and cost.

Financial Reporting and Accountability

The leadership of DCJS is committed to preserving the financial health of the agency. All financial transactions must be reported in accordance with GAAP (Generally Accepted Accounting Practices). DCJS management will demand ingenuity, creativity and resourcefulness to address short and long-term issues in a cost-effective and responsible manner.

WORKPLACE PRINCIPLES

Positive Work Environment

Each DCJS employee will understand that excellent performance is an expectation. This expectation is supported by a positive, productive organizational culture at all levels within the agency. The DCJS management team is responsible for demonstrating the qualities needed to ensure our workplace culture supports honesty, integrity, respect, trust and accountability. Those in leadership roles must ensure their own words and actions are supportive of ethical behavior and consistently encourage the professional delivery of service.

Workplace Standards

It is difficult for any organization to maintain credibility if it does not follow its own standards. Therefore, DCJS pledges to adhere to the same requirements that we place on others in order to maintain our credibility and effectiveness.

Integrity

DCJS employees will assume individual responsibility for upholding the principles of honesty, integrity, fairness, and consideration of others in every situation having direct or indirect impact on our organization and other stakeholders.

Communication

Communication is the foundation of effective organizational health and performance. DCJS will constantly work toward ensuring our internal and external communication builds upon the trust and confidence needed for the effective operation of the agency. DCJS will promote open and honest dialogue at all levels on issues affecting individuals or the organization as a whole. DCJS will maintain an open, accessible and accountable agency that encourages employee and citizen input and involvement on critical issues affecting the Commonwealth. The agency encourages employees to bring forward ideas, suggestions, or information to their managers to ensure these principles are upheld.

Collaboration and Teamwork

No single section, individual, or agency can serve the varied and complex needs of an individual community or the Commonwealth. Service excellence can be best achieved through a spirit of collaboration and teamwork between DCJS and our constituents. This principle also applies to our relationships with state agencies, local governments and nonprofit organizations. DCJS will work diligently to create and maintain partnerships inside and outside of our organization which will address current and long-term needs of the Commonwealth.

Learning Organization

DCJS encourages and supports growth and professional development of our employees which enhances our ability to provide services at the level expected by our constituents. DCJS creates an environment where continuous learning is recognized as an integral part of individual and organizational performance. DCJS will continue to search for opportunities to enhance our organization and individual capacity to continuously maintain a competent and contemporary workforce.

RESPONSIBILITIES TO OTHERS

The Public Interest

DCJS employees will work for the common good of the citizens of the Commonwealth and not for any personal gain or any private or political interest. They will assure the fair and even-handed treatment of all matters dealt with by DCJS and the Criminal Justice Services Board.

Decisions Based on Merit

DCJS will ensure that our decision-making processes are free from actual or implied undue influence of any special group, individual or organization not in the best interest of DCJS or the Commonwealth.

Use of Public Resources

At DCJS we will refrain from creating or participating in any situation that would raise questions about how we use public resources. DCJS will use public resources conscientiously and in the best interest of taxpayers, and consistently apply the principles of stewardship.

Confidential Information

DCJS is committed to openness and accessibility and seeks to earn the trust and confidence of all served. Equally important to garnering public confidence is protecting confidential information as required by law. DCJS pledges to respect the confidentiality of information that by law should not be publicly available. The agency will only disclose confidential information with proper legal authorization, and never use such information to advance personal, political or other private interests.

Conflict of Interest

All DCJS employees should avoid any situation or interest which might interfere with their judgment in carrying out their responsibilities to the agency, other employees, customers, suppliers and constituents. If an employee believes he or she may have a direct or indirect conflict of interest, the employee must disclose such potential conflict to management. Further, all employees are expected to abide by the conflict of interest laws of the Commonwealth. Designated staff is periodically required to complete conflict of interest training.

This policy is effective January 1, 2016 until modified or rescinded.