

TITLE XX

LAW ENFORCEMENT STANDARDS BOARD

CHAPTER XX-6

PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS AND ETHICAL CONDUCT

DRAFT (5-12-2025)

§XX-6-1 Authority and Purpose

(a) This chapter is adopted pursuant to sections 139-2 and 139-3, Hawaii Revised Statutes, which authorize the Law Enforcement Standards Board to:

(1) Establish, enforce, and maintain statewide professional and ethical standards for certified law enforcement officers;

(2) Develop and maintain the Board's Code of Conduct; and

(3) Promote integrity, professionalism, and accountability within Hawaii's law enforcement community.

(b) The purpose of this chapter is to:

(1) Affirm the professional and ethical standards expected of all certified law enforcement officers in the State of Hawaii;

(2) Establish the Board's Code of Conduct as a statewide standard that reflects the values of integrity, accountability, and public trust;

(3) Emphasize each officer's responsibility to uphold these standards and report serious misconduct; and

(4) Clarify that adherence to professional standards is an essential component of certification, consistent with the Board's responsibilities under chapter 139, Hawaii Revised Statutes. [Eff. 7/1/26] (Auth: HRS §§139-2, 139-3) (Imp: HRS §139-3)

§XX-6-2 Definitions

As used in this chapter, unless the context requires otherwise:

"Misconduct" means any act or omission by a certified law enforcement officer that violates professional standards, ethical obligations, or legal requirements, including but not limited to:

(1) "Criminal conduct" – Any offense under state or federal law, whether or not prosecuted, including:

(A) Felonies;

(B) Misdemeanors involving moral turpitude, such as fraud, perjury, or domestic violence;

(C) Official misconduct, obstruction, bribery, or perjury; and

(D) Unlawful use of force beyond legal authority.

(2) "Dishonesty" – Any act of fraud, misrepresentation, deceit, or false statement, including but not limited to:

- (A) Falsification of records, reports, or applications;
 - (B) Misrepresentation during the certification process; and
 - (C) Tampering with evidence or testimony.
- (3) “Excessive force” – The use of force beyond what is necessary and reasonable under the circumstances, in violation of Board-approved policies or applicable law.
- (4) “Sexual misconduct” – Any conduct of a sexual nature that violates professional ethics, agency policy, or the law, including:
- (A) Sexual activity while on duty;
 - (B) Sexual contact with a person in custody or under authority; and
 - (C) Any act that constitutes a sexual offense under state or federal law.
- (5) “Gross negligence” – Conduct that creates a foreseeable and substantial risk of harm to persons, property, or the officer’s agency, representing a gross deviation from the standard of care expected of a reasonable officer.
- (6) “Abuse of authority” – The improper use of law enforcement powers for personal, retaliatory, or unlawful purposes, including:
- (A) Unlawful search, seizure, or detention without legal justification;
 - (B) Retaliation for protected conduct or speech; and
 - (C) Coercion, threats, or intimidation under color of law.
- (7) “Gross misconduct” – A serious violation of professional standards that undermines public trust or deviates from nationally recognized ethical or training benchmarks for law enforcement officers. [Eff. 7/1/26] (Auth: HRS §§139-2, 139-3) (Imp: HRS §§139-3, 139-6)

§XX-6-3 Board Code of Conduct

- (a) All certified law enforcement officers in the State of Hawaii shall comply with the Code of Conduct adopted by the Board, which sets forth the statewide professional and ethical standards required for certification.
- (b) The document titled *Hawaii Law Enforcement Standards Board Code of Conduct, Revised 2026*, is incorporated by reference in its entirety and carries the full force and effect of this chapter.
- (c) Each officer shall acknowledge the Code of Conduct by signature upon initial certification and upon each certification renewal. A signed copy shall be maintained in the officer’s certification file.
- (d) Compliance with the Code of Conduct is a continuing requirement for certification. Violations may result in certification action consistent with Chapter XX-7. [Eff. 7/1/26] (Auth: HRS §§139-2, 139-3) (Imp: HRS §139-3)

§XX-6-4 Violations of Professional Standards

A certified law enforcement officer shall not engage in any form of misconduct as defined in §XX-6-2. Prohibited conduct includes, but is not limited to:

- (1) Criminal conduct, whether or not prosecuted;
- (2) Abuse of authority or the use of force beyond what is necessary and reasonable under the circumstances;
- (3) Dishonesty, falsification of records, or any act involving deceit, misrepresentation, or obstruction; and
- (4) Gross misconduct that significantly deviates from professional standards, ethics, or

nationally recognized best practices in law enforcement. [Eff. 7/1/26] (Auth: HRS §§139-2, 139-3) (Imp: HRS §§139-3, 139-6)

§XX-6-5 Compliance with the Code of Conduct

Each certified officer shall:

- (1) Acknowledge the Code of Conduct by signature upon initial certification and each renewal;
 - (2) Complete any Board-required ethics or professional standards training; and
 - (3) Uphold the standards set forth in this chapter and in the Code of Conduct at all times.
- [Eff. 7/1/26] (Auth: HRS §§139-2, 139-3) (Imp: HRS §§139-3, 139-6)

APPENDIX A

HAWAII LAW ENFORCEMENT STANDARDS BOARD CODE OF CONDUCT

(Incorporated by reference in §XX-6-3)

As a law enforcement officer in the State of Hawaii, I recognize that my role is one of public service, trust, and accountability. I understand that my professional and personal conduct must always reflect the highest ethical standards.

I pledge to uphold the following commitments:

INTEGRITY AND HONESTY

I will be truthful and accurate in my reports, statements, and official actions. I will not falsify records, fabricate evidence, misrepresent facts, or engage in fraud, bribery, perjury, or obstruction of justice. I will correct any errors in official documents or sworn testimony promptly.

PROFESSIONALISM AND PUBLIC TRUST

I will treat all individuals with dignity and respect, regardless of race, gender, religion, nationality, or status. I will conduct myself with professionalism and discipline, exercising self-control in all situations. I will not abuse my power for personal gain, retaliation, or advantage.

ETHICAL USE OF AUTHORITY AND DISCRETION

I will use force only when necessary, reasonable, and proportional. I will respect constitutional rights and due process in all enforcement actions and will not engage in biased policing, profiling, or discriminatory practices.

DUTY TO INTERVENE AND REPORT MISCONDUCT

I will intervene if I witness excessive force, abuse of authority, or unlawful conduct by another officer. I will report violations of this Code of Conduct to my agency or appropriate oversight authority and cooperate fully with investigations.

ETHICAL CONDUCT IN PERSONAL AND PROFESSIONAL LIFE

I understand that my conduct—on and off duty—impacts public confidence in law enforcement.

I will avoid conflicts of interest, maintain professional boundaries, and refrain from associations that undermine ethical standards.

OFFICER ACKNOWLEDGMENT AND SIGNATURE

I, [Full Name], affirm that I have read, understand, and agree to abide by the Law Enforcement Standards Board Code of Conduct.

Initial Here: _____ I commit to upholding the ethical and professional standards outlined in this Code of Conduct.

Initial Here: _____ I understand that this document will be maintained on file with the Law Enforcement Standards Board as part of my certification record.

Officer Name (Print): _____

Officer Signature: _____

Date: _____

Revised Date: July 1, 2026