



**INTEGRITY ★ RESTRAINT ★ RESPECT ★  
LEADERSHIP ★ TRANSPARENCY ★ ACCOUNTABILITY**

## **MISSION STATEMENT**

*The Baraboo Police Department is dedicated to serving our community with integrity, professionalism, and respect. Through proactive engagement, problem - oriented policing, and evidence – based strategies, we strive to reduce crime, enhance the quality of life, and ensure every citizen feels heard, safe, and valued.*

## **VISION STATEMENT**

*We join together to build a safer, stronger Baraboo through trusted partnerships, innovative problem-solving, and shared commitment to community well-being.*

# BARABOO POLICE DEPARTMENT CODE OF CONDUCT

## **PREAMBLE:**

The Baraboo Police Department Code of Conduct establishes the ethical, professional, and operational standards expected of all members of the Department. This Code is founded on the understanding that police authority is derived from the public and must be exercised with integrity, restraint, accountability, and respect for the rule of law. Every employee, sworn and non-sworn, is entrusted with a public duty that demands the highest standards of behavior, both on and off duty.

This Code is organized around six core values that reflect the Department's commitment to constitutional policing, ethical decision-making, transparency, and accountability. These core values guide conduct, inform discipline, and serve as a framework for evaluating officer actions and misconduct. Adherence to this Code is a condition of employment and a shared responsibility across all ranks.

When department members are investigated for a breach of this Code, the investigation will be conducted promptly, thoroughly, and impartially. These Standards shall be applied reasonably and objectively in all investigations, hearings and decisions relating to misconduct. Due consideration shall be given to the degree of negligence or intent, as well as the nature and circumstances of the misconduct. If a violation is substantiated, the Chief of Police or the Police Commission reserves the right to impose discipline up to and including discharge from the department.

A shield-shaped graphic with a gold border and a dark blue background. The shield is set against a background of an American flag. The text is in a bold, gold, serif font. The top line reads 'BARABOO' and the second line reads '★ POLICE ★'. Below this is a list of six core values, each on a separate line. At the bottom of the shield is a dark blue banner with the text 'CORE VALUES' in white, sans-serif font.

**BARABOO**  
**★ POLICE ★**

**1 INTEGRITY**

**2 RESTRAINT**

**3 RESPECT**

**4 LEADERSHIP**

**5 TRANSPARENCY**

**6 ACCOUNTABILITY**

**CORE VALUES**

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## **CORE VALUE 1: INTEGRITY**

**Integrity is the foundation of public trust. Department members of the department shall conduct themselves with honesty, fairness, and with moral courage in all actions, both on and off duty.**

1.1 Officers shall comply with all department policies and laws, recognizing that failure to do so undermines public trust.

1.2 All department members shall perform their duties honestly, truthfully and in good faith.

1.3 Officers shall ensure that all arrests, searches, seizures, and detentions are lawful.

1.4 Department members shall not use or disclose their status as a member of the Baraboo Police Department in any way that could reasonably be perceived as an attempt to gain influence or authority for non-department business or activity.

1.5 Department members shall avoid conflicts of interest, disclose potential conflicts promptly, and remove themselves from situations that compromise impartiality.

1.6 Officers shall refrain from accepting gifts, money, rewards, or bribes contrary to the rules of the department.

1.7 Department members shall not participate in any theft of department property; misappropriation or misuse of public funds, property, personnel or the services or property of others; unauthorized removal or possession of department property or the property of another person.

1.8 Officers shall refrain from conduct unbecoming an officer, including actions that bring discredit to the Police Department and community.

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## **CORE VALUE 2: RESTRAINT**

**Department members shall exercise only the minimum force and authority necessary to achieve law enforcement goals, demonstrating self-discipline in our actions.**

2.1 Officers shall demonstrate self-control under stress, and recognize when emotions may impair their judgment.

2.2 Officers shall use only the amount of force that reasonably appears necessary given the facts and circumstances perceived by the officer at that time to accomplish a legitimate law enforcement purpose

2.3 Officers have a duty to intervene, when in a position to do so, to prevent or stop the use of unreasonable or excessive force.

2.4 When circumstances reasonably permit, officers shall attempt de-escalation techniques to decrease the intensity of a situation, increase communication, and increase voluntary compliance.

2.5 Officers shall not engage in reckless or negligent behavior that creates an unreasonable risk of harm to themselves, the public or other officers.

2.6 Officers shall not operate department vehicles in a reckless manner. They are to operate with due regard.

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## **CORE VALUE 3: RESPECT**

**Department members treat all persons with dignity and fairness, listening without prejudice, and exercising authority with professionalism.**

3.1 Department members shall conduct themselves using courtesy and professionalism. Members shall perform their duties with fairness, self-control, and impartiality.

3.2 Officers shall abide by all local, state, and federal laws. Officers will enforce applicable laws fairly and shall not discriminate based on a person's legally protected class/status.

3.3 Engaging in political activities while on duty is not allowed. This includes unauthorized attendance at political sessions, speeches, or campaign events.

3.4 Department members will respect the rights of all groups to express their beliefs/opinions, and will not share their own personal beliefs while on duty.

3.5 Department members shall be civil in their actions and speech. Use of obscene, profane, or derogatory language undermines public confidence and the reputation of this department.

3.6 Department members shall maintain professional demeanor in all interactions with the public, the courts, and other agencies.

3.7 Department members shall not engage in retaliation against individuals who exercise their legal rights or file complaints.

3.8 Officers shall ensure that arrests, searches, seizures, and detentions are lawful and properly documented.

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## **CORE VALUE 4: LEADERSHIP**

**Setting a clear path helps to motivate and influence others in a positive way.**

4.1 Department Members will work collaboratively with department staff, other agencies, and community stakeholders by setting an example that reflects respect, compassion, empathy, integrity, and efficiency.

4.2 The chain of command provides structure to the department. However, leadership is not defined by rank alone. No rank carries special privileges-only greater responsibility. Proper and true leadership is demonstrated through action and service to others.

4.3 Failing to act when there is an opportunity to stop or prevent misconduct is a failure of leadership. All members have a responsibility to uphold the law and the integrity of the department by intervening when necessary.

4.4 Supervisors shall serve as role models by acting in a professional, impartial, and effective manner. Supervisors are responsible for ensuring that those under their supervision perform their duties in accordance with departmental policy and standards.

4.5 Supervisors are to ensure that those under their supervision are supported, guided, and properly trained. They have a distinct obligation to uphold and promote exemplary behavior. Supervisors will address and correct substandard performance and apply disciplinary measures when necessary, and in accordance with policy.

4.6 Supervisors shall foster a culture of accountability, professionalism, and ethical policing.

4.7 Supervisors shall ensure fair, impartial, and respectful treatment of employees during disciplinary processes.

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## **CORE VALUE 5: TRANSPARENCY**

**We act with openness and honesty, clearly explaining our decisions and actions to the public and to one another so that trust, accountability, and lawful policing are consistently upheld.**

5.1 Officers shall truthfully, accurately, and timely complete all required reports and documentation.

5.2 No member shall knowingly, or with reckless disregard for the truth, make or provide false, misleading, or incomplete information during investigations.

5.3 Officers shall not withhold, conceal, alter, or destroy information relevant to an investigation or administrative review.

5.4 All department members shall promptly and fully report activities on his/her part or the part of any other member where such activities resulted in contact with any other law enforcement agency or that may result in criminal prosecution or discipline.

5.5 All department members shall comply with body-worn camera, evidence handling, and records retention policies.

5.6 All department members shall cooperate with audits, inspections, and investigations.

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## **CORE VALUE 6: ACCOUNTABILITY**

**We hold ourselves and one another responsible for our actions and decisions, promptly addressing mistakes or misconduct.**

6.1 All department members shall provide prompt and efficient service to the community. When not actively responding to a call for service, members are expected to use their time to support and advance the mission of the department.

6.2 All department members shall report for duty, training, court, and any other assignments at the time designated by their supervisors or court orders.

6.3 All department members shall report fit for duty, and free from impairment. Members shall not be under the influence of alcohol, non-medically used drugs, misused prescription medications, or any substance that may impair their ability to perform their assigned duties.

6.4 No department member shall consume, purchase or possess intoxicating liquor or fermented malt beverages while on duty or in uniform, except within the performance of official duties.

6.5 All department members are responsible for the care and safeguarding of both personal and department-issued equipment. Members shall not damage, destroy, modify, or misuse any department property without proper authorization.

6.6 Department members shall promptly comply with any proper or lawful order issued by an officer of higher rank. Should any member receive an order believed to be unlawful or conflicting, it must be reported as soon as practicable to a supervisor of higher rank.

6.7 Department members shall comply with lawful orders related to investigations and administrative proceedings.

6.8 Department members shall report misconduct, policy violations, or illegal actions by any department member as soon as practicable.

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## DISCIPLINE MATRIX

The Discipline Matrix lists Code of Conduct and policy violations and discipline levels of I through V. The least punitive discipline is level I with discipline becoming more severe as the categories progress to Level V. Because certain Code of Conduct violations may include a wide range of facts and circumstances, certain violations contain multiple discipline levels. Given the extensive number of policies contained within the department's manual, the discipline matrix includes only the most commonly cited violations. Any violation not specifically reflected in the matrix, the full range of disciplinary options remains available and may be applied based on the circumstances of the case.

For each level of misconduct, there are recommended disciplinary guidelines. These guidelines are generally shaped by precedent – specifically, by reviewing comparable disciplinary actions from prior Internal Affairs cases. This ensures consistency, fairness, and transparency in how discipline is applied across the department.

This discipline matrix may be updated periodically to reflect the addition of new violations, shifts in disciplinary trends, and evolving priorities for department members. It does not override any applicable laws or provisions outlined in collective bargaining agreements.

Certain categories of misconduct may **skip levels** and result in immediate higher discipline.

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## MANDATORY ESCALATION / LEVEL SKIPPING

The following conduct presumptively warrants immediate Level III–V discipline regardless of prior history: - Excessive or unlawful

force - Falsification of reports or evidence - Retaliation against complainants or witnesses - Failure to intervene in unlawful conduct - Criminal acts or conduct involving moral turpitude

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## **LEVEL I**

Purpose: Corrective, non-punitive intervention for minor misconduct.

Applicable Conduct: Conduct violation occurring in a single incident that results in minimal negative impact on department operations. Sanctions are considered non-disciplinary corrective action, intended to address the behavior without formal discipline

Sanctions: Counseling, policy review, remedial training

Escalation Rule: - Repetition elevates discipline to Level II

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## **LEVEL II**

Purpose: Formal notice of misconduct and expectation of correction.

Applicable Conduct: - Violations that results in more than a minimal negative impact on the department operations or reputation. This category also includes actions that undermine relationships with fellow members, other agencies, or the public.

Sanctions: Written Reprimand

Escalation Rule: - Repetition or related misconduct elevates discipline to Level III

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## **LEVEL III**

Purpose: Punitive discipline addressing serious misconduct or repeated violations.

Applicable Conduct: - Violations that cause a pronounced negative impact on department operations, reputation, or

relationships. This includes significant harm to working relationships with employees, other agencies, or the public.

Sanctions: Written reprimand, suspension (Up to 10 days)

Escalation Rule: - Repetition or aggravating factors elevate discipline to Level IV

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## **LEVEL IV**

Purpose: Address egregious misconduct or supervisory failure.

Applicable Conduct: - Violations that are fundamentally Inconsistent with the core values of Baraboo Police Department and involve a substantial risk to officer or public safety.

Sanctions: Extended suspension (10-30 days), demotion

Escalation Rule: - Continued misconduct may result in termination

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## **LEVEL V**

Purpose: Removal of individuals whose conduct is incompatible with public trust.

Applicable Conduct: - Violations that are directly contrary to the core values of Baraboo Police Department. This includes acts of serious misconduct, criminal behavior, and/or any conduct that will effectively disqualify a sworn member from continued employment as a law enforcement officer.

Sanction: Termination

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## **SANCTION OPTIONS**

The following dispositions are considered formal discipline:

1. Written Reprimand
2. Suspension of Days
3. Demotion
4. Termination

The following dispositions are considered non-disciplinary:

1. Counseling
2. Policy Review
3. Remedial Training

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## **SEVEN JUST CAUSES OF POLICE DISCIPLINE**

Per WI SS 62.13(5)(em): No subordinate may be suspended, reduced in rank, suspended and reduced in rank, or removed by the board under par. (e), based on charges filed by the board, members of the board, an aggrieved person or the chief under par. (b), unless the board determines whether there is just cause, as described in this paragraph, to sustain the charges. In making its determination, the board shall apply the following standards, to the extent applicable:

1. Whether the subordinate could reasonably be expected to have had knowledge of the probable consequences of the alleged conduct.
2. Whether the rule or order that the subordinate allegedly violated is reasonable.
3. Whether the chief, before filing the charge against the subordinate, made a reasonable effort to discover whether the subordinate did in fact violate a rule or order.
4. Whether the effort described under subd. 3. was fair and objective.

5. Whether the chief discovered substantial evidence that the subordinate violated the rule or order as described in the charges filed against the subordinate.

6. Whether the chief is applying the rule or order fairly and without discrimination against the subordinate.

7. Whether the proposed discipline reasonably relates to the seriousness of the alleged violation and to the subordinate's record of service with the chief's department.

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## **OFFICER BILL OF RIGHTS**

Per WI SS 164.02:

1. If a law enforcement officer is under investigation and is subjected to interrogation for any reason which could lead to disciplinary action, demotion, dismissal or criminal charges, the interrogation shall comply with the following requirements:
  - a. The law enforcement officer under investigation shall be informed of the nature of the investigation prior to any interrogation.
  - b. At the request of any law enforcement officer under interrogation, he or she may be represented by a representative of his or her choice who, at the discretion of the officer, may be present at all times during the interrogation.
2. Evidence obtained during the course of any interrogation not conducted in accordance with sub. (1) may not be utilized in any subsequent disciplinary proceeding against the law enforcement officer.

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## **GARRITY RIGHTS**

If an officer is being compelled to answer any questions during an interrogation, they must fully cooperate with the investigator. Any statements made by the officer during the interrogation cannot be used against them in any subsequent criminal

proceeding, nor can the fruits of any of statements be used against the officer in any subsequent criminal proceeding.

Refusal to answer questions will subject the officer to termination.

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## **LOUDERMILL RIGHTS**

When disciplinary action at the level of suspension or higher is determined, employees must be informed of the basis/reasons for the proposed discipline. Employees may request to review all relevant documents considered by the Chief in recommending such discipline.

Employees shall be provided an opportunity to present a written or oral response to the Chief and committee of all supervisors at a level above the accused employee's position, prior to imposing discipline.

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*This Code of Conduct is intended to promote accountability, professionalism, and public trust in the Baraboo Police Department.*

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