

**GENERAL ORDER  
HATTIESBURG POLICE DEPARTMENT  
HATTIESBURG, MISSISSIPPI**

**GENERAL ORDER NO: 2010-1 DATE: 7-1-2010**

**DISTRIBUTION: ALL POLICE DEPARTMENT PERSONNEL**

**SUBJECT: SOCIALIZATION AND FRATERNIZATION**

**I. PURPOSE:**

The purpose of this General Order is to establish policy and guidelines for socialization and fraternization that affects the work environment. These guidelines are necessary to reduce the potential for sexual harassment, to avoid favoritism, to prevent morale problems, to prevent the potential for divided loyalties in high risk and life threatening situations, to prevent potential conflicts of interest and to protect the reputation of the department in the community.

**II. POLICY:**

It shall be the policy of the Hattiesburg Police Department that the demeanor of the work place is professional. The Hattiesburg Police Department strongly believes that an environment where employees maintain clear boundaries between employee personal and business interactions is most effective for conducting business. Behavior whether by statement or action that degrades the work environment, brings into question the objectivity of employees; tarnishes the professional image of the department or its employees, or otherwise disrupts the work environment cannot be condoned.

Fraternization is a relationship of an intimate or romantic nature between a supervisor(s) and subordinate(s) or conduct that creates the appearance or impression that such relationship exists.

Sphere of influence is the scope in which a person exerts direct or indirect control over another or has the likely hood of influencing the working conditions of another employee through authorized means such as: recommendation of assignment, evaluation, disciplinary action, or assignment (direct or indirect) of daily task or duties.

**III. PROCEDURE:**

1. The Hattiesburg Police Department discourages workplace relationships and conduct which may be mistaken for, or may lead to illegal harassment.
2. The department discourages intimate/romantic relationships between employees and forbids them between supervisors and subordinates, trainers and trainees, employees and informants or any persons that fall in a sphere of influence
3. Employees are strictly prohibited from engaging in physical contact that would in any way be deemed inappropriate by a reasonable person while at work or anywhere on agency controlled property, on or off duty.
4. Touching considered appropriate for the work place consist of handshakes and other brief hand to hand or hand to upper back touching (pat on the back) with no body to body contact.
5. Inappropriate touching in the work place consist of back rubs, massages, hugs or other grasping or groping outside of participation in authorized training classes. Sex or sexually suggestive touching or actions is strictly prohibited. Other open hand touching, rubbing or grasping of main body trunk, to include buttocks or extremities such as legs and arms outside of actions required to perform necessary job task are prohibited.
6. Members interacting on social networking sites shall adherer to conduct that does not reflect negatively on the City of Hattiesburg or the Police Department.
7. The Hattiesburg Police Department will make arrangements for official recording of department activities; all other pictorial, video or audio recordings without permission of the Chief of Police or executive command staff member as authorized by the Chief are considered unofficial and are prohibited.
8. No member shall post official or unofficial photographs, video images, audio files or text documents that belong to the department or were acquired by or through their employment status without permission of the Chief of Police or executive command staff member as authorized by the Chief.
9. Employees having personal web pages or other types of internet postings which can be accessed by the public or by granted permission, shall not place or allow photographs or depictions of

themselves dressed (fully or partially) in uniform and/or displaying official identification, patches or badges, or in any other way, either directly or indirectly, identify themselves as an employee of the Hattiesburg Police Department for any reason, without approval as indicated in this directive.

10. Photographs or other depictions of department uniforms, badges, patches, identifiable equipment or marked units shall not be posted.
11. Photographs or other depictions of the interior of any police facility as well as any crime or accident scene shall not be posted.
12. Employees are prohibited from posting, transmitting, and/or disseminating any pictures, recordings or videos of official department training, activities, or work-related assignments.
13. If an employee indicates in any public forum any opinion on a police related issue, then that employee shall state that the views and opinions expressed are the employee's personal ones, and not those of the Hattiesburg Police Department.
14. Employees are advised that posting of insensitive, biased-based or derogatory comments may have adverse consequences such as being used as exculpatory evidence in the impeachment of witness or expert testimony in court proceedings, negative impact on an individual's future employment and/or result in public embarrassment. Members are discouraged from posting such comments.
15. Inmate and community service workers are placed at the department as a result of criminal activity. During their tenure they will be assigned supervised work. Employees will interact with them in a guarded fashion maintaining strictly a professional demeanor. Conversations with inmates are restricted to only what is necessary for their work performance. Social relationships included but not limited to emotional, sexual or romantic attachments with inmates are prohibited.
16. The intention of this policy is to provide for a professional work environment for the employees of the department. Nothing in this policy should be taken as a judgment on life style issues, impair the development of friendships, or the intermingling of supervisors and subordinates at social events, team building associations such as sporting events, or other social functions.
17. Where problems or potential risk are identified the department will work with the parties involved to consider options for resolving the conflict. Continued failure to work with the department to resolve the situation may be deemed insubordination. Refusal of reasonable

alternative solutions may be taken as an indication of a voluntary resignation.

18. Enforcement of this order can occur at any of the six levels of disciplinary action dependant on the degree of employee actions and/or scope of the issues.

**BY ORDER OF:** \_\_\_\_\_  
**FRAZIER BOLTON**  
**CHIEF OF POLICE**