

# Building and Maintaining a Culture of Employee Respect and Accountability

## 100.1 PURPOSE

This Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) outlines guidelines to promote a workplace culture of mutual respect, accountability, and professionalism at the University of Maryland, Baltimore Police Department (UMBPD). It seeks to minimize or eliminate triangulation, ensure all employees are treated with dignity, foster open communication, and support positive relationships throughout the department.

## 100.2 SCOPE

Respect, integrity, and accountability are core values of the University of Maryland, Baltimore (UMB) that guide the UMBPD in cultivating a workplace culture where employees uphold ethical and transparent conduct while asking for accountability from one another. Although not explicitly mentioned in the UMB Core Values, the concept of non-triangulation aligns with values such as ethical behavior, open communication, and work-life balance. This procedure applies to all UMBPD employees and governs department operations, interactions, and behaviors to promote respect, accountability, compassion, and empathy in the workplace.

## 100.3 POLICY

UMBPD is dedicated to fostering an environment where mutual respect is essential to the department's success. Every employee, regardless of position or tenure, should feel valued, heard, and respected. The department will actively implement policies, provide training, and encourage behaviors that uphold a culture of respect, ensuring all employees are accountable for maintaining a positive and inclusive workplace.

## 100.4 DEFINITIONS

**Accountability:** Ensuring employees meet performance standards, follow policies, and fulfill responsibilities through clear expectations, feedback, and appropriate consequences, fostering transparency and integrity.

**Diversity:** The practice of embracing and valuing differences in people, perspectives, and experiences. It reflects the University's commitment to fostering a culture enriched by inclusivity in its thoughts, actions, and leadership. Demonstrating diversity means actively promoting equity, respect, and belonging for all individuals, ensuring that varied backgrounds and viewpoints are recognized and valued (<http://www.umaryland.edu/core-values/award/diversity/>).

**Harassment:** Any unwelcome behavior that creates an intimidating, hostile, or offensive work environment, based on discrimination or inappropriate conduct.

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**Inclusion:** Ensuring all employees feel valued and have equal opportunities to contribute, regardless of differences in gender, race, ethnicity, age, religion, disability, or other protected characteristics.

**Integrity:** Commitment to honesty, ethical behavior, and consistency in actions, values, and decisions, regardless of circumstances. It means upholding moral and professional principles, taking responsibility for one's choices, and demonstrating trustworthiness and transparency in all interactions.

**Respect:** Treating others with courtesy, dignity, and fairness in all professional interactions.

**Triangulation:** The act of an individual communicating unfavorable information or a frustration about someone to a third party instead of addressing the issue directly with the original party. This does not include necessary communication with a third party, such as seeking support from Human Resource Services or reporting misconduct.

**Workplace Bullying:** Deliberate, ongoing behavior that harms, intimidates, or humiliates an employee, either verbally or physically at work or during work-related activities. It is hostile, offensive, and unrelated to legitimate business interests. Refer to State of Maryland Bullying in the Workplace Policy for additional information on the definition and characteristics of bullying in the workplace.

**Workplace Culture:** The shared attitudes, beliefs, and practices that shape the working environment within the UMBPD.

### **100.5 RESPONSIBILITIES**

Assistant Vice President for Public Safety and Chief of Police:

- Ensure the implementation of this SOP and that adequate resources are available to support a respectful work environment.
- Lead by example, demonstrating respect and professionalism in all departmental activities.
- Review the effectiveness of this policy regularly and make necessary adjustments.

Command and Supervisory Personnel:

- Set the tone for behavior in the department by modeling respect, civility, and accountability.
- Address and report to their supervisor any behavior that undermines the department's culture of respect, accountability, and non-triangulation.
- Ensure all employees have an equal opportunity to be heard and involved in departmental decision-making processes.
- Ensure all staff members are aware of this policy and its expectations.

Employees (Encompasses all employees - sworn and non-sworn personnel):

- Treat colleagues, supervisors, and community members with respect and dignity.

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- Report incidents of harassment or disrespectful behavior through proper channels.
- Foster open communication and collaboration to improve departmental performance and morale.

### UMB Office of Accountability and Compliance:

- Provide training, resources, and guidance on fostering a respectful workplace culture.
- Requires all members of the UMB community to complete mandatory training each year on Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 (<https://www.umaryland.edu/oac/>).
- Investigate complaints of harassment and ensure appropriate follow-up actions are taken.

## **100.6 PROCEDURES**

### 100.6.1 CORE VALUES COMMITMENT PLEDGE PROCESS

#### Introduction, Awareness, and Commitment:

- A. Share the Core Values Commitment Pledge with all employees. The pledge is found on the UMB website at <http://www.umaryland.edu/core-values/pledge/>.
- B. Explain the importance of respect, integrity, ethical behavior, direct communication, and accountability in the workplace.
- C. Encourage each employee to formally acknowledge their commitment to UMBPD's workplace culture and values by signing the on-line pledge at <http://www.umaryland.edu/core-values/pledge/>.

### 100.6.2 INTEGRATION AND ONGOING REINFORCEMENT

- A. Employees are encouraged to demonstrate the pledge values in their interactions, decision-making, and leadership.
- B. All employees are expected to check emails, texts, and phone calls, responding within 24-48 hours.
  1. If there will be a delay in response, the recipient of the message should still respond that the message was received and explain why there will be a delay (e.g., collecting information, going on leave, etc.).
  2. Employees who expect to be out of the office for one day or more shall activate their out-of-office reply, including the contact information of the person to reach during their absence.
- C. Employees should arrive on time and prepared for all meetings. During meetings, employees should refrain from being on their phones (e.g., checking emails and text messages, taking non-emergency phone calls, etc.).
- D. Training and discussions on effective communication, respect, triangulation, and accountability will be provided during Roll Call or through individualized coaching and mentoring sessions as needed.

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- E. Leaders and supervisors will model the pledge values through their actions and provide recognition or counseling memorandums for both commendable and poor performance.
- F. Regular check-ins and team discussions will reinforce commitment to the pledge, encouraging employees to share experiences and provide feedback.
- G. Individuals who exemplify the pledge values will be recognized and celebrated to promote a culture of respect and accountability.

### 100.6.3 ACCOUNTABILITY AND CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

- A. All employees are accountable for maintaining a culture of respect and accountability while eliminating triangulation. All employees who observe others violating these standards are expected to say something, preferably when it occurs, to either their respective supervisor or file a formal complaint with the Internal Affairs Section. Refer to Policy 1010 (Personnel Complaints) for additional information for filing complaints.
- B. Review and refine the pledge process as needed to ensure alignment with organizational culture and goals.
- C. Employees are expected to take immediate action to address any issues or behaviors that violate the department's respect and non-triangulation standards.
- D. Disciplinary action will be taken in cases of severe disrespect or harassment, following the department's disciplinary policies and procedures.
- E. Establish a feedback process for employees to report concerns or share success stories.

### 100.6.4 TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT

- A. All employees will receive mandatory training on workplace respect, triangulation, and accountability during onboarding and annually thereafter.
- B. Training will include:
  - 1. Identifying and taking corrective action when triangulation occurs.
  - 2. Reviewing and understanding the concepts and characteristics of Bullying in the Workplace, a State of Maryland Policy.
  - 3. Understanding respect and its importance in the workplace.
  - 4. Conflict resolution strategies.
  - 5. Setting clear expectations and asking for accountability.
  - 6. Preventing harassment and discrimination.
  - 7. Active listening and constructive feedback techniques.
  - 8. Supervisors will receive additional leadership training focusing on promoting a respectful workplace and managing difficult conversations.

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### 100.6.5 RECOGNITION AND POSITIVE REINFORCEMENT

- A. Employees who demonstrate exceptional respect toward colleagues, community members, and the department will be recognized publicly.
- B. Implement and maintain processes that use positive reinforcement to recognize employees who promote a respectful and supportive workplace.
  - 1. Conduct Annual Awards Ceremony – see Policy 1015 (Commendations and Awards).
  - 2. Recognition through the monthly newsletter.
  - 3. Spotlight employees.
  - 4. Accomplishments by department members.
  - 5. Upcoming events.

### 100.6.6 COMMUNICATION AND CONFLICT RESOLUTIONS

- A. Clear and open communication is essential to fostering respect within the department by promoting transparency, encouraging active listening, advocating for the department's needs, and ensuring fair and consistent application of policies and procedures.
- B. Employees should be encouraged to express concerns in a constructive manner.
- C. Reduce triangulation by encouraging direct communication.
- D. Supervisors will facilitate constructive conversations between conflicting parties to promote understanding and resolve disputes.
- E. If informal resolution methods fail, formal conflict resolution procedures, including Human Resource Services involvement, may be initiated.
- F. The department will provide a confidential reporting system for employees to report incidents of disrespect, harassment, or misconduct without fear of retaliation.
  - 1. Workplace Mediation Service (<http://www.umaryland.edu/mediation/>).
  - 2. UMB Office of Accountability and Compliance (<http://www.umaryland.edu/oac/office-personnel/>).

### 100.6.7 INCLUSIVE LEADERSHIP PRACTICES

#### **Smartsheet:**

- A. Establish Smartsheet as a project management platform for all Lieutenants and above (recommend template called "Project with Work Breakdown Schedule (WBS)."
- B. All departmental projects that: (a) involve three or more UMBPD personnel at the rank of Lieutenant or higher and are either (b) ongoing or recurring in nature, or (c) long-term projects expected to take more than two weeks to complete should be tracked in Smartsheet. Columns would include:
  - 1. Overall project name and sub-tasks.
  - 2. Responsible persons.

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3. Description/Notes.
  4. Priority.
  5. Status.
  6. Metrics.
  7. Deliverables.
  8. Documentation linked (memos, routing slips, request for funding, etc.).
  9. Deadlines (overall and for sub-tasks).
- C. This tool provides visibility, accountability, and ensures shared understanding. This will allow everyone to see project status, see where the project may have stalled, and check-in to provide support.
- D. Supervisors will still be ultimately responsible for holding their subordinates accountable.

**Command Staff Meetings:**

- A. The team will review the Smartsheet prior to the meeting.
- B. The team will discuss the ongoing "group" projects to ensure they are on track. The discussion should focus on challenges and new ideas rather than reviewing information.
  1. The team will come to the table with ideas about ongoing projects, propose solutions to issues they've identified in the department, and share new tools and resources that may benefit the rest of the team.
- C. Team members may also discuss individual projects at the meeting and request support from others (either tangible support or ideas/discussion).
- D. Team members should be encouraged to submit a request in advance to "present" interesting information, training, tools, etc. that could benefit the team.
- E. Accountability measure: **Team members should feel empowered to ask for accountability during the discussion of ongoing projects if others are not meeting their agreed-upon expectations.**

100.6.8 MONITORING AND EVALUATION

- A. The UMBPD will conduct annual surveys, both by email and in paper format, to evaluate employee perceptions of respect, accountability, triangulation, communication, and overall job satisfaction.
- B. Surveys will be anonymous to ensure honest feedback and will help guide improvements in the department's culture.
- C. Adjustments will be made based on employee feedback, incidents of misconduct, and the evolving needs of the department.