



ETHICAL ISSUES

Off-Duty Versus On-Duty Misconduct

Police officers take an oath to uphold the law. Officers swear to be above reproach, both on and off duty, obeying all laws and showing integrity in all aspects of their lives. In many ways, officers' lives are not their own. Proper personal conduct may apply to finances, the use of drugs and alcohol, and Internet postings.

Think About It

Our view that officers uphold the law both on and off duty raises questions.

1. **Should an officer who engages in acts of domestic violence be allowed to remain on the force?**
2. **In some cities, officers maintain the code of silence when a fellow officer is stopped for drunk driving. Should their actions be considered unethical and/or illegal?**
3. **If you worked in law enforcement, would you report a conduct violation of a fellow officer who is off duty?**
4. **What types and how serious would the misconduct need to be?**