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Sheriff

# HARFORD COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE PERSONNEL POLICY

## Penalty Assessment Guidelines

<b>Distribution:</b>	<b>All Employees</b>	<b>Index:</b>	<b>PER 0206</b>
<b>Responsible Unit:</b>	<b>Office of Professional Standards</b>	<b>Rescinds:</b>	
<b>DLI Program:</b>		<b>MD Code:</b>	

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### 1. Purpose

The purpose of administrative discipline is to correct and educate employees for inappropriate behavior. The Penalty Assessment Guidelines will define the categories of infractions and violations therefore enabling the Harford County Sheriff's Office (HCSO) to handle discipline in a fair and equitable manner for all employees.

### 2. Policy

The Harford County Sheriff's Office will create Penalty Assessment Guidelines in an effort to establish general categories for infractions and violations of the rules and regulations to provide a framework for the purpose of providing consistent and fair penalties to all employees.

### 3. Procedures

- A. The Penalty Assessment Guidelines are not designed to be all-encompassing; violations may occur which are not listed in the Penalty Assessment Matrix.
- B. The Penalty Assessment Matrix includes possible charges which may arise out of violations of any HCSO policy, rule, regulation or order.
- C. When assessing discipline, Commanders will not focus on a single factor, but rather should consider all relevant factors that may raise or lower the original violation category including:
  1. type of incident;
  2. related injury and/or damage;
  3. employee intent and/or motive;
  4. prior disciplinary record and performance;
  5. mitigating and/or aggravating factors;

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6. degree of culpability;
7. truthfulness;
8. admission of error/mistake by employee; and
9. other factors rising from the case.

**D. Description of Categories**

1. Misconduct is classified into broad categories of violations based on the degree of severity.
2. Category "A" defines the lowest level of misconduct; Category "E" the highest.
3. Repetition of similar misconduct or violations of more serious offenses will lead to higher penalty categories.

**E. Category "A" Violations**

1. DESCRIPTION: minor misconduct.
2. REPEATED VIOLATIONS: same or similar sustained misconduct within 12 consecutive months enhances next violation to Category "B."
3. MULTIPLE VIOLATIONS: combination of any three sustained Category "A" violations within 24 months enhances the third violation to Category "B."
4. DISPOSITION: formal counseling.
5. Note: Includes preventable departmental collisions with a total loss or damage to property or vehicles less than or equal to \$1000.

**F. Category "B" Violations**

1. DESCRIPTION: minor misconduct.
2. REPEATED VIOLATIONS: same or similar sustained misconduct within 24 months enhances next violation to Category "C."
3. MULTIPLE VIOLATIONS: combination of any three sustained Category "B" violations within 36 consecutive months enhances the third violation to Category "C."
4. DISPOSITION: written reprimand and/or \$75 fine, and/or one day loss of leave or suspension, and/or transfer or reassignment.
5. Note: Includes preventable departmental collisions with a total loss or damage to property or vehicles greater than \$1000; may be an enhancement violation from category "A."

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**G. Category "C" Violations**

1. **DESCRIPTION:** misconduct.
2. **REPEATED VIOLATIONS:** same or similar sustained misconduct within 36 months enhances next violation to Category "D."
3. **MULTIPLE VIOLATIONS:** combination of any three sustained Category "C" violations within 48 consecutive months enhances the third violation to Category "D."
4. **DISPOSITION:** loss of leave or suspension for one to three days; and/or transfer or reassignment; and/or fine of \$100 to \$150.
5. **NOTE:** may be an enhanced violation from Category "B."

**H. Category "D" Violations**

1. **DESCRIPTION:** serious misconduct.
2. **REPEATED VIOLATIONS:** N/A
3. **MULTIPLE VIOLATIONS:** combination of any three sustained Category "D" violations within 60 consecutive months enhances the third violation to Category "E."
4. **DISPOSITION:** loss of leave and/or suspension for four to 15 days; and/or transfer or reassignment; and/or ineligible for promotion for 12 months; and/or fine of \$200 to \$250.
5. **NOTE:** may be an enhanced violation from Category "C."

**I. Category "E" Violations**

1. **DESCRIPTION:** very serious misconduct.
2. **REPEATED VIOLATIONS:** N/A
3. **MULTIPLE VIOLATIONS:** N/A
4. **DISPOSITION:** more than 15 days loss of leave and/or suspension; and/or transfer or reassignment; and/or demotion; and/or ineligible for promotion for 18 months; and/or fine of \$500; and/or termination of employment.
5. **NOTE:** may be an enhanced violation from Category "D."

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J. Violations Not Referenced in Matrix

1. Violations of any other provision of any other rule or regulation not referenced in the matrix will fall into a category of a similar offense unless extenuating circumstances exist where strict adherence would render an injustice to the HCSO and/or the employee.
2. Commanders will consult with the OPS Commander if an offense does not appear to fall into a similarly listed category; if exception is noted, variation from the matrix is only permitted when authorized by the OPS Commander.

Approved   

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**SHERIFF**  
  
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