



# CRYSTAL POLICE DEPARTMENT

## Department Policy Manual

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### **PURPOSE & SCOPE**

The decision to become involved in a law enforcement action when off-duty can place an officer as well as others at great risk and must be done with careful consideration. This policy is intended to provide guidelines for officers of the Crystal Police Department with respect taking law enforcement action while off-duty.

### **POLICY**

Officers generally should not initiate law enforcement action while off-duty. Officers should not attempt to initiate enforcement action when witnessing minor crimes, such as suspected intoxicated drivers, reckless driving or minor property crimes. Such incidents should be promptly reported to the appropriate law enforcement agency.

When the safety of the public or the prevention of major property damage requires immediate action, officers should first consider reporting and monitoring the activity and only take direct action as a last resort.

Officers are not expected to place themselves in unreasonable peril. However, any licensed member of this department who becomes aware of an incident or circumstance that he/she reasonable believes poses an imminent threat of serious bodily injury or death or significant property damage may take reasonable action to minimize the threat.

### **FIREARMS**

When carrying firearms while off-duty, officers shall also carry their department issued badge or identification.

### **DECISION TO INTERVENE**

There is no legal requirement for off-duty officers to take law enforcement action. However, should officers decide to intervene, they must evaluate whether the action is necessary or desirable and should take into consideration:

1. The tactical disadvantage of being alone and the fact there may be multiple or hidden suspects.
2. The inability to communicate with responding units.
3. The lack of equipment, such as handcuffs, Oleoresin Capsicum (OC) spray or a baton.
4. The lack of cover.
5. The potential for increased risk to bystanders if the off-duty officer were to intervene.
6. Unfamiliarity with the surroundings.

7. The potential for the off-duty officer to be misidentified by other peace officers or members of the public.

Officers should consider waiting for on-duty uniformed officers to arrive and gather as much accurate intelligence as possible instead of immediately intervening.

### **INTERVENTION PROCEDURE**

If involvement is reasonably necessary and time allows, the officer should attempt to call or have someone else call 9-1-1 to request immediate assistance. The operator should be informed that an off-duty officer is on-scene and should be provided a description of the officer if reasonably possible.

Whenever reasonably practicable, the officer should loudly and repeatedly identify him/herself as a Crystal Police Department officer until acknowledged.

### **INCIDENTS OF PERSONAL INTEREST**

Officers should refrain from handling incidents of personal interest (e.g., family or neighbor disputes) and should remain neutral. In such circumstances, officers should call the responsible agency to handle the matter.

### **CIVILIAN RESPONSIBILITIES**

Civilian personnel should not become involved in any law enforcement actions while off-duty except to notify the local law enforcement authority and remain at the scene, if safe and reasonably practicable.

### **OTHER CONSIDERATIONS**

When encountering a non-uniformed officer in public, uniformed officers should wait for acknowledgement by the non-uniformed officer in case he/she needs to maintain an undercover capability.

### **REPORTING**

Officers should cooperate fully with the agency having jurisdiction in providing statements or reports as requested or as appropriate.