

# ERIE COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

## 1.07 NON-FRATERNIZATION

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### 1.07 NON-FRATERNIZATION

The Erie County Sheriff must ensure the safety and security of the Erie County Jail and must also ensure that the confidentiality of any information pertaining to allegations of criminal misconduct is protected to the maximum extent possible. It would be contrary to these goals for employees to fraternize with criminal offenders. The ethics of any employee who engages in such a relationship may be easily compromised. The purpose of this policy is to set appropriate guidelines on personal relationships between employees of this agency and criminal offenders, to prevent jail security breaches and/or release of confidential information.

#### DEFINITIONS

**“Employee”** means any individual employed by the Erie County Sheriff’s Office.

**“Offender”** means any person in custody as a prisoner in any local, state, or federal jail, prison, or any other type of correctional facility; or any person who has been charged with any violation of a local, state, or federal felony criminal statute and who has been released from custody on bond or is otherwise under the supervision of a court pending the resolution of that case; and/or any person incarcerated in the Erie County Jail.

**“Ex-offender”** means any person who has been convicted of a felony offense pursuant to any criminal statute and is currently on probation or parole, or any person who has been convicted of a local, state, or federal felony criminal statute and has been discharged from the custody of any local, state, or federal jail, prison, or any other type of correctional facility within the last 365 days.

**“Personal contact”** means non-employment related direct correspondence between the employee and an offender or an ex-offender, including; private conversations or telephone calls; the sending and/or receipt of any correspondence and/or object through the United States Postal Service or any private package delivery service; personal correspondence through the use of any form of electronic communications medium; the formation of a personal friendship; any type of personal visitation; any type of social relationship; any type of dating relationship; any type of relationship involving sexual contact or conduct as defined in the Ohio Revised Code.

**“Social relationship”** means an on-going friendship, or any type of personal contact, outside of the scope of an employee’s agency assigned duties and responsibilities.

#### PROHIBITIONS

Pursuant to this policy, employees are prohibited from engaging in the following activities:

- 1) Personal contact with an offender or ex-offender; and/or
- 2) Personal contact with any person when that contact is for the purpose of furthering any type of relationship between the employee and an offender or ex-offender; and/or
- 3) Involvement in the posting of any type of bond (including acting as a co-signer or surety, or providing any personal funds or item[s] of value, that – as a direct or indirect result – are used for a bond) to facilitate the release of anyone incarcerated in any local, state, or federal jail, prison, or other correctional facility.

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**NOTIFICATION OF RELATIONSHIP TO ERIE COUNTY JAIL PRISONER**

An employee must immediately notify the Sheriff, Operations Officer, and/or Jail Administrator – upon the employee becoming aware of such information – if any family or household member as defined in Section 2919.25(F)(1) is incarcerated in the Erie County Jail, whether or not that individual is released prior to said notification being made.

**EXCEPTIONS**

With the approval of the Sheriff, an employee may be granted an exception to this policy if a personal relationship with an offender or ex-offender existed between the employee and the offender or ex-offender prior to the offender or ex-offender's arrest and/or incarceration. A request for such an exception will be made in writing directly to the Sheriff.