
Ethical and professional conduct of the Romanian police officer

A reflection upon The Romanian *Police Officer's Code of Ethics and Deontology*

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Abstract:

A code of ethics and professional conduct, represent a guide, an example of ideal conduct, to which each employee of an institution should adhere, which they should internalize/identify themselves with the principles and values which are promoted, and which should apply when exercising their work duties. The first part of The Romanian Police Officer's Code of Ethics and Deontology details the principles and values that must guide the professional and ethical conduct of the police officer. The most important are: respect for the law, for the constitutional rights and liberties of the citizens; equality, impartiality and non-discrimination when he apply a sanction; honest collaboration with other state institutions and with the citizens; professionalism (when he knows the legislation that is in force, when he knows to apply efficiently the usual work procedures, when he analyzes attentively the solicitations made by people, when he works in the service of the community); moral integrity (he should behave in accord with the ethical values and norms that are accepted and imposed by society, and with those expressly required by this code); loyalty to the institution, to its values and principles, respect towards the ideals of truthfulness and justice, to conscientiousness in fulfilling one's service attributions, respecting the assumed engagements and the confidentiality of information acquired during work.

The second chapter of this code addresses aspects that pertain to the professional conduct of the police officer, the attitude he must adopt towards colleagues, citizens and towards the profession – analyzing these issues through the prism of the general principles stated above.

Key words: The Romanian *Police Officer's Code of Ethics and Deontology*, *The Application Guide for the Police Officer's Code of Ethics and Deontology*, moral values and principles; respect for the law and for the constitutional rights and liberties of the citizens; professionalism; professional and moral integrity; loyalty; non-discrimination.

INTRODUCTION

The Romanian *Police Officer's Code of Ethics and Deontology* was adopted through Government decision No. 991/2007 and was published in *Monitorul Oficial* No. 813/7 September 2005. The main themes and subjects addressed in the three articles of the *Code* are the following: the first chapter states the general principles that a police officer must respect; the second chapter describes the elements of moral conduct that he must observe in his relations with citizens, colleagues, superiors and with the other institutions with which he collaborates; the third chapter succinctly details the types of sanctions that are to be incurred for trespassing against the *Code*: disciplinary (for example the postponement of promotion to a higher rank), civil or penal (prison sentence). The *Code* has both punitive – because it provides sanctions for trespasses against its provisions – as well as educative value, through the values, principles and rules that it establishes, all aiming at the formation of a habit of moral conduct for the police officer. The *Police Officer's Code of Ethics and Deontology* aims both at the formation and promotion of a professional culture fit for the demands of the job, in whose spirit these public servants should be educated, as

well as to “preventing misconduct, enhancing the quality of services, the protection of persons and of police officers, and the realization, through this means, of equilibrium between the rights of the citizens, the interests of public authorities, and the rights and obligations of the personnel of the institution”¹. The realization of this complex purpose entails rules for the police officer, including rules governing the police officer – institution – community relationship. The active subject to whom the *Code* is addressed is the police officer in his quality of public servant² that activates in the field of maintaining public safety and order, as member of a state institution, fulfilling thus a public function.

Before affirming what is it that it aims to regulate, the *Code* states the two essential values that it embodies and that inform all its prescriptions, values that are considered as absolutely necessary in the realization of the ideal conduct which all that activate in this field ought to emulate: responsibility and dignity. Article 1³ affirms that the police officer has an honor-bound duty to respect the prescriptions of the *Code*, as essential part of the respect he ought to have for the institution and for his profession as defender of the law. Such respect manifests itself through adhering to and applying the principles and rules established by the *Code*, in order that

¹ Article 2, Chapter I from The Romanian *Police Officer's Code of Ethics and Deontology*.

² Article 147 of the Penal Code defines the public servant as “any person that exercises, permanently or temporarily, under any title, notwithstanding the manner in which it was invested, a task of any nature, whether reimbursed or not, in the service of state, county, municipal, town or village organ or institution, or respectively in the service of an autonomous administration or a commercial enterprise with majority or integral state capital.” The status of police officer is described in article 21 of the analyzed code: “The police officer is the civil public servant with special status that exercises the attributions established by law for the Romanian Police and for the other police structures belonging to M.A.I.”

³ ”The respect for the principles and rules prescribed in this code of ethics represent a duty of honor of the policeman.”

no discrepancy and conflict should arise between what is demanded/regulated by the institution and what the agent believes, between the principles and values of the institution and that of the person. These lead to the realization of one's responsibility to have an ethical behavior, a behavior in accord to that what is prescribed by the *Code*.

The main functions fulfilled by police as a state institution, as a public service specialized in the service of the citizens and of the community, are: upholding the rights and liberties of persons, defending private and public property, preventing, discovering and combating infraction, assuring the maintenance of order and public safety. These functions are directly correlated with certain values, such as: reciprocal trust between citizens and police, respect towards the other, whether citizen or job colleague, fostering the democratic development of society, in conformity with the Constitution.

THE ANALYSIS OF THE ROMANIAN POLICE OFFICER'S CODE OF ETHICS AND DEONTOLOGY AND THE APPLICATION GUIDE FOR THE POLICE OFFICER'S CODE OF ETHICS AND DEONTOLOGY

The first part of the *Code* details the general principles that must guide the professional and ethical conduct of the police officer. These are specified in chapter 1, article 6, "Domains of application and general principles", thusly:

a) Legality and the respect the police officer owes towards the law, towards the constitutional rights and liberties of the citizens, and towards the values and the principles affirmed by the *Code*. These two are fundamental principles, which if they are not respected, the institution of the police would jeopardize both the object of its activity and actions – the law⁴ and its

⁴ "Starting from the premise that law represents the guarantee for the safety of the citizens in a democratic state, any action or activity of the structures having attributions in the domain of public order and safety must be

application – and even the purpose for which it was created – protecting the fundamental rights and liberties of the citizens, defending private and public property, maintain public order and peace, and, not in the least, for discouraging crime. All these elements, that define the purpose of the institution, have at their core the wellbeing of the citizen and, implicitly, that of the whole community. Besides the respect for the law and the respect for the citizens (manifested through polite demeanor, avoidance of disdainful, discriminating and aggressive attitudes, respecting their rights and liberties), the police agent must also respect his colleagues, without underestimating them, without considering himself superior to them, neither treating them with indifference; he must be prompt and punctual at his job, and he must collaborate efficiently with them. In order to respect the principle of legality it is necessary, as affirmed in the *Application Guide for the Police Officer's Code of Ethics and Deontology*, that the police agent knows the laws and specific regulations applicable to his work, that he has self-control in the activities he realizes, reporting every action to the legal framework before, during and after the carrying out of the action, and respectively through hierarchic control from his overseers, so that there be no misbehavior or offences from the part of the subordinates.

b) Equality, impartiality and non-discrimination are defining values in the police officer's ethics and deontology. When applying a sanction, the police officer must not apply it differentially for different persons that have broken the same law; he must not be influenced by their religion, sex and race, by preconceived notions or by any resentments or antipathies that he may harbor. He must be impartial, without protecting or applying gentler sanctions to certain persons he favors, like

grounded in law and in law only.” *Application Guide for the Police Officer's Code of Ethics and Deontology*, p. 4.

relatives. The police agent must, conforming to this principle, respect the equality each person is due in front of the law, administering sanctions fairly, without permitting his personal life influence his professional activity. In other words, the police agent must respect the law and he must apply it as it is required by it, legitimately, impartially and equitably to all people.

c) Transparency entails the honest collaboration of the police officer with the other state institutions and with the citizens. It is a safeguard against accusations of corruption and misleading. In his interactions with the citizens, the police officer should use a language that is familiar to them, so that they may understand the message they are being transmitted. Transparency implies honesty, fairness and not distorting the truth. But in order that one may practice transparency, as is required by law in the case of public servants, from my point of view it is important that the same person behave transparently in daily life, since if one behaves in a certain way at home, and in an altogether different way at the job, this implies a certain degree of hypocrisy. During leisure time also, in family life, one ought to be the same person, respecting the others, abiding the laws, loving justice and truth. When informing the mass media on ongoing investigations pertaining to infractions that have been committed and on the measures that have been taken in order to remedy the respective situations, besides the requirement of transparency already defined as non-distortion of truth, as correct and real presentation of facts, it is also necessary that the police officer maintain composure and also that he relate only those aspects of the case that are deemed relevant for understanding the situation. If the outcome of the situation is still uncertain, the police officer should declare that there is an ongoing investigation on the subject and that its conclusions will be made available to the public through the

public relations structures. If there are persons (witnesses) who would risk coming to harm if their identities were to be disclosed, endangering their corporal integrity, their freedom or their life, the police officer must assure their protection (for example, when the criminal is still free, he could take revenge against witnesses who have made declarations against him to the police). All information given to the media must conform to the recommendations of the European Union, the dispositions of the National Council on Audiovisual and with the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. The attitude and behavior of a police officer towards the victims of an infraction should be the following: he should offer his support both during his work hours and outside them, while guiding them towards the specialized services where they may recover as soon as possible from the negative effects experienced following the wrongs that have been done to them. Special care should be given to vulnerable persons: children, mothers, the elderly and people suffering from disabilities.

d) The capacity for and duty of self-expression refers to the police officer's capacity of analyzing the situations he is confronted with and, based on this analysis, of expressing a pertinent and well-argued professional opinion, conform to his training and experience, "enhancing the quality and efficiency of the services provided by the police with regard to this aspect." (*Article 6*). The police officer should take an active role in the institution he is a part of, unafraid of expressing his opinions from fear of eventual repercussions.⁵ For the quality and efficiency of police work to be enhanced there must be, besides training and accumulated experience, also personal involvement, sprung from passion for the profession, that may

⁵ "Any worker should know that deontology demands that he speak in good faith about issues, based on his professional conscience and not in order to present what he believes his bosses might like to hear." *Application Guide for the Police Officer's Code of Ethics and Deontology*, p. 7.

render daily work a pleasure, from his desire to help his community flourish, and also from benevolence towards people, because ultimately he is there to serve the community.

e) Availability refers to the obligation the police officer has to intervene every time he observes that a law is being broken or when a person is being endangered to become victim of an infraction. He should always be at duty, alert and receptive for any infraction that might take place. Without regard to the fact that he is off duty or on vacation, he should always be ready to intervene whenever he perceives an infraction. The police officer should never remain indifferent or pretend not to notice that an infraction is being committed, when he in fact is well aware of the fact. He should also always be forthright, in order to be able to communicate effectively with the citizens, so that he may promptly resolve their problems, or if their problems are not of his competency, to be able to direct them towards the police agent operating for the competent department. Communicating calmly and efficiently with people, and having adequate understanding of their problems are part of what constitute police professionalism, essential for providing a quality service of law enforcement. The availability of the police officer should be understood as regulate and mandatory presence on the job, at any hour of the day or night he is needed, or as his capability to remain at duty above schedule in case of an emergency situation. All of these belong to the commitment he has assumed when he joined the police force and obtained his first professional degree.

f) The priority of public interest is the principle that attests the demand that the public interest of the community must prevail over the personal one of the police officer, since the police officer's duty is to assure the safety of the people. This is the reason why I have stressed above the importance of the

pleasure with which the police officer should fulfill his professional duties, the importance of being fair, honest and to behave transparently both in personal as well as in professional life, and, not in the least, the importance of being available in his duty towards society, letting his personal problems and objectives in the background during his work, without allowing them to interfere with his performance. If there is love for the human kind, for the job, for doing justice and for doing to people, the lawman must forget, put aside from his mind his personal problems and focus on what is to be done.

g) Professionalism, needed in order that the police officer realize superior performance when doing his duty (he should not perform superficially, on the contrary, he should be involved in what he does, wanting both to do justice and to develop himself professionally), implies the correct application of both theoretical and practical knowledge, as well as that the agent assumes responsibility for every action he carries out. For such responsibility to be effective, it is required that all the agent's professional actions should be constantly monitored and justified through the prism of the national legislation. A police officer may be rightly called a professional when he knows the legislation that is in force, when he knows to apply efficiently the usual work procedures, when he analyzes attentively the solicitations made by people, when he works in the service of the community and has respect for all people; when he identifies with his profession and with the institution (he likes his job; he recognizes himself in the principles and values espoused by the institution; does not let himself get excessively involved sentimentally in resolving the cases, in order to be able to remain impartial and to correctly apply the law).

h) Confidentiality is tightly correlated to legality, the first principle analyzed above, referring to the police officer's duty to

not disclose certain sensitive information, obtained during the exercise of his lawful authority, to persons from outside the law enforcement system. He is strictly prohibited to make public classified information, such as state secrets or secrets of the institution.

i) Moral integrity⁶: the police officer should always behave in accord with the ethical values and norms that are accepted and imposed by society, and moreover with those expressly required by the code of ethics – values and norms that he should interiorize so that they become his own. Without the formation of such identity between one's personal values and principles and those of the profession one practices, there cannot be professionalism, a professional conduct as that promoted by this code of ethics. The police officer must not accept any bribes or presents, rejecting them politely, because he is being paid to fulfill his duties and he is strictly forbidden to receive such "bonuses". Likewise, the police officer must not seek to profit from his status by pretending money or any other benefits that are not his due, in other words he must not be corrupt or corruptible. The receiving of money or other benefits⁷ that are not his due, the pretending of such, accepting the promise of such or the non-rejection of this promise, all constitute incriminating acts for the police officer, whom may be accused of accepting bribery for merely pretending or even for failing to reject the promise of it. It is not required that the money or goods actually change hands, the infraction being already consummated at the moment the police officer pretended, accepted the promise or failed to reject the promise of bribery.

⁶ The integrity of an organization refers to the effectiveness of internalization, by the organization's members, of the values and principles espoused by the respective institution, in order that they give raise to what the organization defines as ethical behavior. If this is realized, then the final aim is no longer profit, but ethical performance.

⁷ Providing services, properties, free trips, rise of position/rank, etc.

As it may be glimpsed from this, the passive attitude of non-rejection is also punishable, being considered a tacit acceptance of the bribe. In order to not become susceptible of being accused, the police officer must explicitly reject the bribe offer. Due to his status and his mission, the police officer should be an example for other people. If he, a lawman, whose duty is to assure law enforcement and the maintenance of public order, were to become corrupt, what may one expect from regular citizens? The integrity of the personnel is an essential factor in raising the public credibility of an institution and of its functionaries. Integrity should be proven factually, not merely declaratively, through the quality of actions carried out with professionalism, impartiality and honesty.

j) Operational independence: the lawman should always act responsibly, in function of the rank possessed within the structure of the police force and in virtue of the service attributions belonging to his position, conform to the competencies he has gained and because of which he is there. He is accountable for all actions he carries out while simultaneously free to identify and use those means and procedures he considers as best fitting the situation and that best facilitate the fulfillment of the mission, while carrying the lowest risk of harming the rights and freedoms of the persons affected by his actions. During the exercise of his service attributions, the police officer is protected by the institution to which he belongs and by the public authorities, enjoying the legal rights to social protection, specific measures of health and security protection, and to pay conform to the risks and dangers he faces in line of duty.

k) Loyalty refers to the attachment to the institution, its values and principles, as well as to honesty in interpersonal relations, respect towards the ideals of truthfulness and justice, to

conscientiousness in fulfilling one's service attributions, respecting the assumed engagements and the confidentiality of information acquired during work. All these elements, belonging to the last principle stated in the *Code*, summarize, in my opinion, all the other principles, while clarifying the honor-bound duty referred to in the first article of the *Code*. A police officer should recognize himself in the principles and values upheld by the institution of the police; he should be accountable for his actions and conscientious that they must be carried out with dedication (possessing moral integrity, avoiding corruption, placing public interest in front of the personal one while on duty), he should have the will to perfect himself in doing his daily job (by facing different situations, by applying laws fairly, indifferently of the person involved), and foremost he must respect the rights and freedoms of the people whose safety he is guarding.

The second chapter of *The Romanian Police Officer's Code of Ethics and Deontology* addresses aspects that pertain to the professional conduct of the police officer, the attitude he must adopt towards colleagues, citizens and towards the profession – analyzing these issues through the prism of the general principles stated above. The police officer should be aware that the performance of his function depends upon respecting the principles of the *Code*, upon his demeanor and even the orderliness of his attire while on duty.⁸

a) The police officer – citizen relation: Due to his job, the police officer is always in direct contact with people. He has to respond to every solicitation related to the exercise of his profession, to avoid any unethical behavior (for example bribe taking) that would lower the trust the community accords him

⁸ "Through their entire behavior, the policeman must show worthy of consideration and confidence imposed by profession pursued." *Application Guide for the Police Officer's Code of Ethics and Deontology*, p. 27.

as agent of law enforcement, while also risking the trust in the correctness of the institution of the police as a whole. The police agent should in all circumstances maintain a polite but firm manner, using a language appropriate for his training, avoiding familiarity (like using the personal pronoun for the second person singular, which in Romanian is reserved for familiar forms of address, when addressing people in the line of duty) in the lawman – citizen interaction. The police officer should show his interlocutor that he is interested in fixing the problem that the other is facing, that he cares, that he is involved. At the same time, the lawman should assert and uphold his ideas and professional judgments, and when interacting with citizens he should show determination and self-assuredness (the lack of which may be considered as sign of weakness, encouraging the criminal to take advantage of it or lowering the faith of the law-abiding citizen in his capability). He should explain to suspects what their offence consists of and what sanctions does the law state for it. As it can be seen from this, an important aspect of law-enforcement work requires the capacity of efficient communication, requiring that police agents possess abilities in this field, in order to make themselves clearly understood by the citizens. Nevertheless, the most important ethical demand from police work as pertaining to its relation with the citizen is that the police officer remains always impartial, not favoring any person in particular, but treating all of them as equal before the law (without this, the police officer would essentially cease to be an agent of law enforcement, becoming an agent of arbitrariness, an intolerable situation in a state ruled by law).

b) The relation with the colleagues and superiors should be an amiable one, one of collaboration, honesty, loyalty and reciprocal respect, because they all share a common goal, to assure the safety of the citizen. Such mutual respect begins with a positive attitude, with politeness, punctuality and firstly

with the fulfillment of one's job duties. Discrimination, manifestations of superiority or despising one's colleagues should have no place in the police force. The organizational climate of police force should be an environment of open communication where everyone may express their sincere opinions, without fear of intimidation or coercion, not one where saying truths that are not liked by one's superiors or colleagues is punishable. All efforts should be made for establishing and maintaining an environment of good collaboration, in order to facilitate the successful realization of law enforcement duties and the overall purpose of the police institution itself: assuring the safety of persons, tracking down infractions and the maintenance of public tranquility and order. Loyalty, in this context, refers to frankness, the correct and direct information of one's colleagues and superiors of all pertinent job related facts (correct presentation of information about infractions one is tracking etc.). Another aspect of loyalty is the willingness to accord recognition to the merits of one's colleague. Personal life should not be involved in the professional one, being advised to the police agent not to discuss his family problems while on the job, and to concentrate on the professional duties during service. Solidarity as a value should not be misunderstood by the police officer. It rightfully refers to one's availableness to offer advice and opinions to one's colleagues, but never to help a colleague commit or hide an infraction that he has committed. Lying and any guileful attitude are forbidden.

Pertaining to the superior officer, his attributions should contain the coordination of his subordinates and the assuming of responsibility both for the successes and for the failures of their actions. Should conflict situations arise between the subordinates, for example due to personal antipathy, he must manage them with care. I consider the manifestation of such antipathies between colleagues as undesirable – they would not need to exist, because they should be united in their common

goal, the realization of the security of citizens and the maintenance of public order. Open and honest communication, expressing one's points of view, helps finding solutions to problems because it allows reaching a common point, each partner in communication finding out what aspects of his opinion or demeanor should be revised. The superior should always give clear and precise dispositions, he should give his support to and encourage his subordinates to persevere, and also to appreciate their work. He should be a role model for his subordinates, proving that he has earned his position on merit. His attitude must be an impartial one, not favoring anyone and he must correctly and legally sanction anyone who breaks the law.

These issues, mentioned mostly in the *Application Guide for the Police Officer's Code of Ethics and Deontology*, are not singular to the profession of law enforcement, most of the attributions and obligations that a superior cadre has towards his subordinates are similar to those held by the manager of any organization. He, too, although he has a leadership position, must respect the code of ethics of his organization, and he must apply it accordingly. He, too, should be an example for his subordinates, not consider himself as being above them and above the rules of his own organization. The manager, similarly to the superior officer in the case of the police, must attentively monitor the subordinate's activities, since he is responsible for the way they fulfill their work obligations. If the subordinates do their job conscientiously, work with dedication, with passion for what they do, then they will obtain superior performance and the manager's work will also be highly appreciated for the way he had coordinated the work of his subordinates. Such coordination implies establishing with the subordinates a relationship of open and honest communication, trust and reciprocal respect. Without these things no organization may prosper. If each party sees only its immediate proper interest

(the manager, only the maximization of the organization's profit; the employees, the minimization of the work effort required in order not to be fired and to receive their pay) the organization will never be a moral organization. The manager should motivate the employees to involve themselves in their tasks, thereby realizing them with better quality (through praises, appreciating their work and empathizing with their feelings when they encounter a difficult situation), to encourage them to express their professional opinions freely, without fear of repercussions, breaking down the status barrier that stands between management and workforce in order to better collaborate and communicate for the good of the organization as a whole. It is often being said that an organization should be as a family, but this is an exaggerated requirement, the closeness between the two sides of the organization having as its limit the friendship that offers reciprocal support in difficult situations, therefore the organization may better be regarded as a micro-community. It would be even detrimental to the organization's goals if it functioned as a family, since in the latter case mistakes and rule breaking are more easily disregarded. There is further similarity between the case of the manager of an organization and that of the superior cadre of the police with regard to the requirement for an impartial and non-discriminatory attitude. The manager should not be influenced by a possible antipathy or sympathy felt towards an employee, having to treat all of them impartially, without involving personal life with the professional one, sanctioning or rewarding them with fairness as required by the rules of the respective institution. All these aspects discussed above about attitudes and actions that are common for both the superior cadre of the police and the manager of an organization are being attributed by Moses Pava, in his work *Leading with meaning: using covenantal leadership to build a better organization*, to the firsts stages/ways of forming a moral

organization based on ethical leadership: the way of humaneness and the model of the ideal leader.

Another similarity between the superior cadre in the police and the manager is the requirement to avoid adopting an attitude of superiority towards others, stemming from over-appreciating one's own person, fed by the belief that by occupying a leadership position one may do whatever one pleases, without any need of respecting rules or even the law. Such demeanor is based on the false belief that the subordinates, fearing their boss and unwilling to cross him, would keep silent about any illegalities from their bosses' part. This is a direly mistaken attitude, one that has to be avoided, in order that the organization may function efficiently, having a healthy climate based on a good working relationship between the management and the subordinates, and fulfill its purposes and mission. For the same reasons, in the case of the police officer I have mentioned that he must not consider himself above the law, but, on the contrary, he has to uphold it even while not on the job, exactly in virtue of his quality as a lawman, and because he should be an example of professionalism and good conduct, both for his colleagues and for ordinary citizens, the result being a higher level of trust, respect and appreciation from the public in the institution of police (in the case of the manager of an organization, one may speak about the customers' or beneficiaries' trust in the services provided by that organization).

Also a common point between the ideal conduct of a police officer and that of a manager is that of integrity, the principle of respecting the norms and regulations of the ethics code of the respective profession. Both the police officer and the manager are forbidden to accept gifts, money or other benefits that they are not due (the object of the bribe), in order to facilitate solving the problems of the giver. In the case of the manager also it would be the case of an infraction of corruption

if he pretended money or other benefits (for example, sexual favors) in order to employ or not fire someone. Moses Pava argues that the value of integrity also covers the capacity to accept the opinions of others against the personal one, curiosity, openness towards dialogue, being interested in the wellbeing of the organization – all of these leading to continual professional development.

As the police officer should act professionally, blending theory with practical experience and fulfilling his job duties with utmost seriousness, so also the manager of an organization must be competent in his work field, blend theory with practice, involve himself in realizing quality services and place the interests of the organization above his personal ones, which may be profit or personal fame. The interest of an organization should be to offer high quality services, so that the clients be pleased with them, thereby generating profit. The manager's involvement with the activities presupposed by his function arises also from passion for his work, love for his profession, desire to perfect oneself.

c) Relation towards the institution of the police: The police officer's image is an essential part of the mode in which the public perceives the police institution, influencing the degree of trust given to it. Any misdeed by one of its functionaries would negatively affect the image of the institution and even that of the state to which it belongs. If TV shows cases of corruption in which law enforcement officers are involved (for example cases of pretending bribes) then the most part of the public would catalogue both the institution itself as well as the system in its entirety and the state as such as being corrupt. Politeness, courtesy, an adequate demeanor, correctness in what one affirms, they all confer to the police officer the image of a competent, respectable person. He should have a well-kept physical aspect and demeanor, an irreproachable behavior

based on respecting the principles above analyzed, a language worthy of his profession (without familiarity, aggressiveness or untoward gestures). Each time he fulfills his job duties he should proudly wear his uniform and his badge, which show his function, so that people may easily identify him. The police uniform is a symbol of authority, law and order. As to the required attitude, the police officer must defend the prestige of his institution, not bring harm in any way to its image and execute to the letter all duties that belong to his function. The police officer also has the duty not to accept, tolerate or encourage any acts of torture, inhumane treatment, physical or psychological abuse, acts of corruption or to use abusively the public authority conferred by his function and his status in order to realize personal goals.

CONCLUSION

The *Police Officer's Code of Ethics and Deontology* and its *Application Guide* are instruments that complete each other reciprocally: if the *Code* states the general principles and main elements of professional conduct that pertain to the rules and obligations the police officer has to follow in his interactions with his colleagues, superiors and with people from the general public, as well as his obligations towards the institution in which he functions and which he represents, the *Application Guide* offers more in-depth explanations for the benefit of the police officer. The *Code* should be used as a means of education and formation of the personnel, in order that all public servants employed by the institution know what conduct they should adopt in determined situations. Due to changes that may appear in legislation and in the system, the content of the *Code* should be revised once in a few years' span. The *Code* is also an instrument through which it is intended to maintain a state of equilibrium between the rights of the citizens and civil society,

the interests of public authority and the rights and duties of police officers, so that private persons may enjoy security and the state authorities may function in an optimal orderly environment. Respecting the provisions of these two documents allows the police officers to exercise correctly their attributions, thereby furthering the goals of the institution and strengthening public trust in the its correct functioning. Codes of this type must not remain formalities that are just required to exist at a purely declarative level ("a piece of paper gathering dust in a drawer, taken out only as a means of justification in case of conflict"⁹), their value consisting in the active implementation of their content.

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⁹ Mureşan, *Managementul eticii*, 145.