

PORT HURON POLICE DEPARTMENT POLICY AND PROCEDURAL ORDER

		ORDER NO: 01-01
SUBJECT: Discretion		
EFFECTIVE DATE: February 7, 1992	DISTRIBUTION: B	REVIEWED: 12/13/19 REVISED:
REQUIREMENTS: None		
ISSUED BY: Chief Joseph A. Platzer		FORMS:

I. PURPOSE

The purpose of this order is to make a general statement on the use of discretion by sworn officers of the Port Huron Police Department. Everyone must recognize that discretion is addressed in other directives such as the Pursuit and Deadly Force orders. Discretion may be limited by other orders issued by this department.

II. DEFINITION

Discretion can be defined as the power of free decision or latitude of choice within certain legal bounds. It is also defined as the ability to make responsible decisions.

III. DISCUSSION

- A. A police officer essentially has discretion whenever the effective limits of their power leaves the officer free to make a choice among possible courses of action or inaction. Discretion is necessary because it is impossible to enforce every law that has been enacted at all times. With discretion comes responsibility. Discretion then must be based upon the spirit and intent of the law and departmental directives, as well as experience and training. Discretion is predicated on good judgment.
- B. Officers must recognize when discretion exists and when it is limited. To do this, officers must know the law and the directives that apply. Armed with this information officers must be able to put aside personal biases and utilize their training and experience in reaching a decision.
- C. In the event an officer has any question(s) about the use of discretion in a given situation, the officer should contact a supervisor and get that supervisor's opinion and/or direction as to whether or not the use of discretion is appropriate in that particular situation.

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