



The Ethical Society of Police – E.S.O.P.

4901 Delmar Blvd • St. Louis, MO 63108 • 314.690.3565
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The St. Louis County Police Department (SLCPD) has stated it will not recognize the Ethical Society of Police (E.S.O.P.) as a local association of police officers, according to a letter from SLCPD Chief of Police Colonel Jon Belmar.

There is no legal or practical justification for the SLCPD to refuse our organization official Departmental status and doing so sends the wrong message to our officers and the community.

The Ethical Society of Police is a membership organization whose mission is to improve the working conditions of law enforcement officers and the safety of the communities they serve through education, legislation, community service, and employee representation. We represent police officers in grievances and legal cases, champion fairness and equality for our members and the community and promote diversity within the Department. On April 2018, the E.S.O.P. expanded membership to the St. Louis County Police Department. Sixty SLCPD officers have joined to-date. Chief Belmar even fought inclusion through payroll deductions. He had allowed payroll deductions from other organizations but sought to deny the E.S.O.P. He relented in this stance after pressure from our supporters.

The Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) we submitted to the Department clearly stated our mission and role. We would not be involved in collective bargaining.

We believe Chief Belmar's denial to recognize E.S.O.P. is unconstitutional at the highest levels of law. On June 27, 2018, the U.S. Supreme Court ruled in *Janus v. AFSCME* that it is unconstitutional to force public employees to fund union advocacy as a condition of employment. This ruling gives public employees the right to choose whether or not they will join a union and makes favoritism toward the collective bargaining unit unconstitutional.

E.S.O.P. advocates for greater diversity in the police department. African-Americans make up 10 percent of SLCPD police officers, in a county with a population that is nearly 30 percent minority. In his letter, Chief Belmar indicated that the SLCPD is proud of its programs to support minority recruitment, namely a youth Police Athletic League and a cadet program with a dozen youth participants, and therefore is making sufficient strides in recruiting more minority officers.

Neither of these programs nor the Department's current recruitment efforts are likely to produce an increase in minority officers in the near future. We believe much more needs to be done to develop a police department that reflects the demographics and issues of the community, and to support the minority officers already in the department.

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We believe all voices within the department should be heard. The police department is fair more often than not. But when there are wrongs, light must be shed on them. The E.S.O.P. offers a network of community leaders, political leaders, officers, and activists who stand up for what is right, both within the department and in the larger community. The inclusion of the E.S.O.P. as an official departmental organization would empower minority officers to speak up rather than remain silent with grievances and corruption.

Establishing the E.S.O.P. as a departmental organization, with the same opportunities, rights and privileges as organizations such as the Fraternal Order of Police (FOP), would honor our mission of diversity and fairness, and would send a message of commitment to officers and the community.

We are requesting a call to action from all current members and allies of the E.S.O.P. We are asking all regional police officers, City and County, to rescind their FOP membership until the St. Louis County Police Department and Chief Belmar sign a formal agreement recognizing the existence of the E.S.O.P. as a local association of police officers. With the recent expansion of the E.S.O.P. across county lines, we have formed an unbreakable bond between our brothers and sisters who demand a more equitable and responsible police department.

Sincerely,



Heather Taylor, President
Ethical Society of Police

MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING

WHEREAS, ESOP is a 501(c)(4) local association of employees who represents the interest its members. It exists for the purpose of civic improvement and to improve the multi-level process in which law enforcement candidates of African American descent are judged, based on fairness, competence and qualifications, and to fully implement all components of affirmative action throughout the entire community; and

WHEREAS, the minimum qualifications allow membership to be open to all St. Louis County law enforcement officers and, from time to time, will accept members of the criminal justice system, such as: prosecutors, correctional officers, judges and other related positions; and

WHEREAS, St. Louis County currently withholds bi-monthly membership dues from ESOP members' paychecks.

THEREFORE, ESOP and SLCPD acknowledge this relationship and accept the minimal concessions set forth below.

- (1) During all disciplinary or personnel matters, a member of ESOP will be given the opportunity to contact ESOP for representation on the matter;
- (2) ESOP shall not unnecessarily delay any disciplinary or personnel matter;
- (3) SLCPD shall recognize ESOP as a local employee association and all legal rights association with such status;
- (4) ESOP does not seek to be recognized as a bargaining unit;
- (5) ESOP acknowledges that a local employee association does not have the right to strike or walk off the job;
- (6) SLCPD shall work with the necessary County departments to allow members and potential members the ability to deduct dues from their paychecks and transfer such funds to ESOP proper accounts; and
- (7) SLCPD recognize ESOP as a non-union bargaining entity that represents the interest of its members to provide a more equitable and trusted St. Louis County Police Department

IN WITNESS WHEREOF the parties hereto have caused this Memorandum to be duly executed on this 31 day of August, 2018.

St. Louis County Police Department

The Ethical Society of Police

By: James Morgan

By: Heather Taylor

Printed Name: James Morgan
Authorized Rep. of St. Louis County Police

Printed Name: Heather Taylor
Title: President ESOP

By: _____
Printed Name: _____
St. Louis County Counselor