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# EARNING THE TRUST

OF CALIFORNIA'S COMMUNITIES

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*“EARN THE BADGE  
EVERY SINGLE DAY”*



The California Highway Patrol (CHP) is a highly respected law enforcement agency grounded since 1929 in its core values of courtesy and service. At its founding, the Department's mission was to facilitate the safe and secure transport of persons and property upon California's highways. Since then, the state's highways and transportation systems have evolved dramatically, requiring the Department to constantly adapt and innovate, always embracing those fundamental core values.

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Public support of law enforcement remains strong across California and the nation; nevertheless, even our supporters will challenge our actions from time to time. Others may question our integrity, cast doubt upon our ethics, or criticize our methods. At no other time in the Department's history has it been so important to remain cognizant of the close attention being paid to law enforcement officers and their actions. We must remember that, as peace officers, we are never behind the scenes. When we wear the uniform and enter public view, we are on a stage for all to see.

Our success as an organization depends upon the establishment and maintenance of a unified vision of our public service role shared by both the Department and the California Association of Highway Patrolmen (CAHP), designed to embrace best practices that maintain the public's trust. The Department and the CAHP understand that we share common cause and responsibility in attaining this vision – one that involves achieving professional excellence, encouraging continued improvement, and exceeding the public's expectations.

Recently, members of the Department's Top Management and the CAHP have engaged in important discussions focused on long-range planning and a strategy to secure public trust. This statement of our shared vision is the product of thoughtful input from employees at all levels, including officers, supervisors, and managers. Area commanders, Department executives, representatives of the CAHP and members of the Commissioner's Citizens' Advisory Board all contributed to its development, bringing their own experiences and points of view to this statement.

Together, we embrace the principles of:

- Individual Evaluation – a willingness to evaluate our own attitudes and actions from the perspective of the people we serve.
- Respect and Dignity – understanding that respect must be mutual between law enforcement and the public.
- Unified Vision – Department officials and patrol officers working together to make the California Highway Patrol the most respected law enforcement agency in America.

## BACKGROUND

Historically, the CHP has benefitted from a high level of public support. While we continue to receive this support, recent events throughout the country have altered the public's perception of law enforcement and focused national attention on the sometimes unsettled relationship between law enforcement officers and the communities we serve. This should serve as a reminder of how a single significant event can compromise the trust and faith our community members have in us. We are reminded that each of us has a responsibility to cultivate and care for the positive relationships we have with those we serve. Attention to that responsibility is the best way to maintain the public's respect for the law and for the officers who face peril every day to protect society.

This statement of our shared vision offers an opportunity to shape and influence the public's perception of our officers, the institution symbolized by our uniforms, and the greater law enforcement community.

The impact of social media and other digital platforms on law enforcement cannot be overstated. These technological innovations provide the public with greater access to information and an intimate perspective of law enforcement operations. Disciplined and thoughtful engagement in these social forums provide opportunities to educate the public and to support our officers when their conduct is justified and when it deserves acknowledgment and praise. These forums also give us opportunities to communicate our desire for self-assessment and willingness to learn from our inevitable mistakes. We must avoid self-inflicted harm to our reputation and should always appreciate the need to follow up our words with actions, which will ultimately define us.





## INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION

By now, most of us have likely participated in discussions involving the theme of enhancing public trust. We have arrived at a time of true and honest reflection, both individually and as an organization. We must embrace and understand the fact that each of us has a stake in the Department's success – this is truly our Highway Patrol. Each employee has the opportunity and ability to achieve individual excellence and to make daily choices that greatly impact the Department. Commanders throughout the state receive countless letters of commendation from members of the public who have been positively affected by the professional conduct of our employees. This praise exemplifies a job well done in a very complex, demanding environment. Each of us must be willing to evaluate our own actions and demeanor from the perspective of the people we serve.

## RESPECT AND DIGNITY

The community's trust in us and our authority depends largely on the degree of respect and dignity people feel when they engage with CHP employees. All of us are proud of what we do and passionate about our profession while remaining respectful and evenhanded in our contacts with the public. We must enforce the law fairly and respectfully, and we must do so while demonstrating the highest level of compassion and professionalism. We must evaluate every contact to determine a course of action that will provide the greatest benefit to both the individual and the public at large. Each public contact offers an opportunity to enforce and educate equally.

## UNIFIED VISION

Just as each of you comes from a background that is unique to you, your leaders are comprised of a diverse group of individuals with their own unique and broad perspectives. We recognize the difficult decisions confronting you each and every day, and we acknowledge the dedication each of you have for our mission. We have all faced those challenges. Our diversity as individuals is unified by the bond of our common experiences that began at the CHP Academy. As cadets, we all quickly learned to set aside our differences and to work together as a single unit – a team. By developing a unified vision, we focused our efforts and collaboratively achieved our goals. We can attain the same success over the course of our entire careers by maintaining a shared vision of our commitment and responsibility to public service.

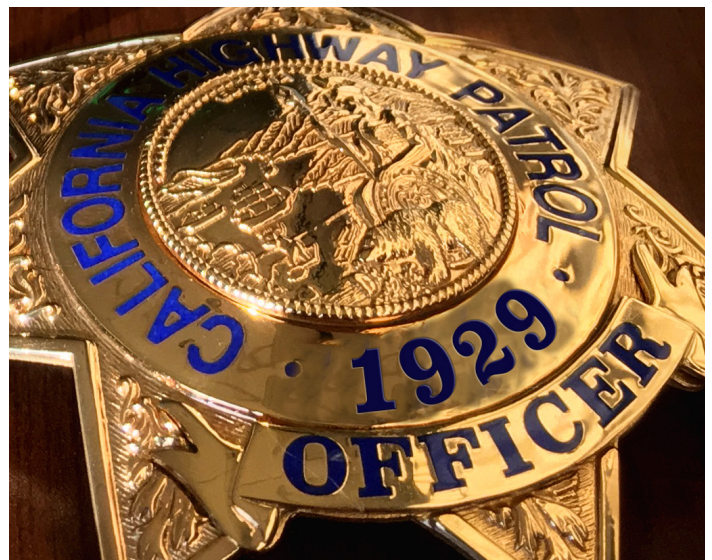
## CONCLUSION

We are all committed to and connected by a common vision of maintaining our position as trusted leaders in law enforcement, ensuring California is the safest place to live and travel. We must continue our unwavering dedication to serving the public and form vital collaborations with the communities we serve. By creating and enhancing these relationships, we can work together to assist the people of California in the best way possible.

We are a proud organization, and we shall never become complacent or silent. We can learn, grow, and continue to earn the public's support. We owe that to the people of California. We must take notice of these concerns and make a continued commitment to honor our long history of professionalism and service. We must demonstrate to our communities our determination to treat each person we encounter with respect and dignity. This effort begins and ends with your exemplary individual efforts.

Each of you swore an oath when you became an officer – when you accepted a badge from the people of this state. With that badge, the people have signified their trust in you to bear and use police authority to assist and protect our communities. You do not own the badge – it is entrusted to you by the people who count on you to protect them. At the end of your career, if you do your job well, the people of this great state will give you that badge to keep. Earn the badge every single day.

***“At the end of your career, if you do your job well, the people of this great state will give you that badge to keep.”***



## CALIFORNIA HIGHWAY PATROL

### EARNING THE TRUST OF CALIFORNIA'S COMMUNITIES




  
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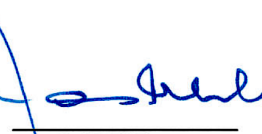
  
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