GUIDELINES

For Discipline (Minor Offences)  
In The Nigeria Police Force

PREPARED BY:  
POLICE SERVICE COMMISSION

Police Service Commission
First Published in 2006 by:
POLICE SERVICE COMMISSION
Federal Secretariat, Phase 1,
Shehu Shagari Way
Abuja, Nigeria
Tel/Fax: 09-5236510

© All rights reserved. This publication may not be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system or transmitted, in any form or by any means electronic, photocopying, mechanical, recording or otherwise, without due authorization and acknowledgement of the Police Service Commission, the copyright owners.

Police Service Commission
## GLOSSARY

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ACSC</td>
<td>Area Command Selection Committee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AIG</td>
<td>Assistant Inspector General of Police</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>APER</td>
<td>Annual Performance Evaluation and Rating</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ASP</td>
<td>Assistant Superintendent of Police</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DIG</td>
<td>Deputy Inspector General of Police</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DPO</td>
<td>Divisional Police Officer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DSP</td>
<td>Deputy Superintendent of Police</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IG</td>
<td>Inspector General of Police</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NPF</td>
<td>Nigeria Police Force</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PSC</td>
<td>Police Service Commission</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SCSC</td>
<td>State Command Selection Committee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NSC</td>
<td>National Selection Committee</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Police Service Commission iii*
Table of Contents

Acknowledgement v
Preface vii
Introduction 1

Part I: Categories of Minor Offences/ Misconducts and Punishments 6
  Governing Principles
  Categories of minor offences 6
  Categories of punishments 10

Part II: Disciplinary Procedures 11
  Disciplinary Procedure for Minor Offences / Misconducts 12
The Police Service Commission (PSC) is grateful to groups and individuals that supported it in the production of these Guidelines on Discipline in the Nigeria Police Force.

Firstly, we thank the CLEEN Foundation and Open Society Justice Initiative (OSJI) for their immense support in the development of the draft and publication of this booklet. Of particular mention are their consultant, Prof. Okechukwu Ibeanu and staff, Kemi Asiwaju and Maxwell Kadiri.

Secondly, the inter-agency collaboration and cooperation between the Nigeria Police Force led by Mr. Sunday Ehindro, the Inspector General of Police Service Commission
Police, the Police Performance Monitoring Unit of the Ministry of Police Affairs, the National Assembly, civil society groups under the umbrella of the Network on Police Reform in Nigeria (NOPRIN) contributed a lot in shaping the content of publication.

Finally, the Commission is grateful to its members and staff, particularly the internal committee set up by the Commission to review and come up with a final draft of the guidelines, which was led by Alhaji Ahmadu Rufai Mohammed MON, an honourable member of the Commission and Prince Emmanuel Ibe who served as secretary to the committee.
Preface

The return of Nigeria to democratic governance poses new challenges for the Nigeria Police Force. Under successive military regimes, the Police was neglected and in most part became an extension of military authoritarian rule, rather than a civilian-oriented agency. In the process, the personnel policy of the Nigeria Police became shrouded in secrecy, lacking transparency, fairness and representation and thus in dire need of review to bring them in line with the requirements necessary for policing a democratic society.

With the return to democratic civil rule on May 29, 1999, Section 153 (1)(m) of the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria 1999 as elaborated by Part I of the Third Schedule of the Constitution makes provision for the establishment of a Police Service Commission (PSC) as a Federal Executive Body with powers to appoint persons to offices.

Similarly, the Police Service Commission (Establishment) Act 2001, which came into force on 4\textsuperscript{th} January, 2001 elaborates the constitutional provisions on which the PSC's establishment is based. Section 6 (1) of the Act provides that the Commission shall among other things be responsible for the appointment and promotion of persons to offices (other than the office of Inspector-General of Police) in the Nigeria Police Force; dismiss and exercise disciplinary control over persons (other than the Inspector-General of Police) in the Nigeria Police Force; and formulate policies and guidelines for the appointment, promotion,
discipline and dismissal of officers of the Nigerian Police Force.

It is against the foregoing background that the Police Service Commission in pursuance of its constitutional and statutory mandate planned the publication of three booklets, each providing guidelines and procedures for exercising the delegated powers of the Commission in its three core function areas: Appointment, Promotion and Discipline in the Nigeria Police.

The objectives of the Guideline series are to:

- Ensure that police appointment, promotion and disciplinary processes are clearly defined, fair and transparent.

- Ensure that appointment and promotion in the Nigeria Police Force are based on merit and equity.

_Police Service Commission_
• Promote fair representation of the federal units of Nigeria\textsuperscript{1} and gender in the Nigeria Police Force

• Promote professionalism, integrity and high ethical standards among police personnel in Nigeria.

• Ensure that a transparent, open and fair disciplinary mechanism exists within the Nigeria Police Force.

This publication, which is the second in the series focuses on promotion in the Nigeria Police Force. It is divided into three sections. Section I provides for the establishment of Appraisal/Promotion Committees at the Area Command, State and National levels. Section II stipulates the procedures for promotion into the different ranks in the police

\textsuperscript{1} Representation meaning gender and federal character.

\textit{Police Service Commission}
up the rank of Deputy Inspector General of Police. Section III provides procedure for petitions and appeal.

I believe that if these guidelines are diligently implemented we will have a police force that the Nigerian public will be proud of. The Police Service Commission under my leadership is committed to ensuring their implementation and solicits the support of all stakeholders in policing to make it work.

Chief Simon Okeke, *FNIVS, FRICS*
Chairman, Police Service Commission
Introduction

The importance of discipline in any organisation cannot be over emphasized. In the Police, discipline is an essential management tool necessary for the proper functioning and good order of the organisation, like any other organisation. It is at the heart of the development and sustainability of the values and ethics of the police profession.

Most times, it is regarded as punishment or penalty but it actually consist of instructioning, training and/or teaching. The main purposes of discipline are to facilitate coordination of effort, development of self control and character, fostering of orderliness and efficiency. The level of orderliness that is perceived in the police is

Police Service Commission
dependent upon the conduct of the police men and women, which in turn, is largely dependent upon how well the supervising officer performs his or her duty. The guideline hopes to achieve and ensure ongoing improvement and attainment of discipline in the Nigeria Police Force.

The guideline on the minor disciplinary process is based on the following principles:

1. Justice and fairness to complainants, personnel of the Nigeria Police Force, and where applicable, victims;

2. Respect for and protection of the dignity and human rights of all persons; and

*Police Service Commission*

Supremacy of the Constitution and Statutes

The provisions of these Guidelines supplement the provisions of the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria and of other laws applicable to discipline in the Nigeria Police Force.

Disciplinary Process Does Not Preclude Judicial Review

Nothing in these Guidelines shall preclude or prejudice the rights of any person to apply for judicial protection or redress of their rights in accordance with the Constitution, laws

Police Service Commission
applicable in the federation or any part thereof, and the relevant rules of court.
Part I:
Categories Of Minor Offences
Misconducts And Punishments

Police Service Commission
Categories of offences/misconduct and punishment

Offences1 or acts of misconduct for which investigative or disciplinary action may be taken against a serving police officer are of two kinds, namely:

(a) Minor offences/misconduct;
   and

(b) Serious offences/misconduct.

This section will deal solely with minor offences.

Minor Offences/Misconduct

(a) In these Guidelines, a minor offence or mis-conduct shall include any act, omission or
wrongdoing, the prescribed punishment of which does not, in case of conviction in criminal proceedings, exceed a term of imprisonment for six months.

(b) Without limiting them, such minor offences/misconduct may include the following:

1. Driving police vehicles when not properly dressed
2. Riding on the tailboard
3. Improper dressing
4. Incivility towards the public
5. Lateness to duty
6. Hiding a name-tag or force number
7. Sleeping on duty
8. Malingering
9. Laxity on duty
10. Smoking in prohibited areas and/or while on duty
11. Drinking alcohol while on duty

12. General misbehaviour at police stations, offices and posts

13. Disregard for general rules and regulations

(c) The Police Service Commission or the Inspector-General may extend or supplement the acts or categories of minor offences/misconduct. Where the Inspector-General exercises powers to supplement the categories of minor offences under this paragraph, he shall promptly notify the Police Service
Commission of the exercise of such powers not later than the second working day after adoption of the additions.

**Categories of punishment for minor offences/misconduct**

(a) Punishment for minor offences shall include but not limited to:
- Warning
- Reprimand
- Minor fines (₦5,000 – ₦50,000)
- Confinement to barracks
- Extension of hours on duty
- Compulsory community service

*Police Service Commission*
Part II:  
Procedure For Discipline  
Disciplinary Procedure For Minor  
Offences/Misconduct
Procedure for discipline
Disciplinary procedure for minor offences/misconduct

Superior Police Officers at various command and operational levels of the Nigeria Police Force shall be competent to discipline subordinates for minor offences/misconduct after due investigation. Officers shall keep a log of such offences, of investigation undertaken, and any punishment administered. Summaries of such logs shall be transmitted monthly to the Police Service Commission through the State Command and/or Force Headquarters.