

Enforcement of Police Professional Ethics and Its Implications for Public Trust

Kimberly Fewsan¹, Meiraate Leos², Naomi Inly³, Ramdhan Mahardika Nasyith⁴, Telly Augustine⁵, Triswer⁶, Darren William⁷, Yuni Priskila Ginting⁸
Univeristas Pelita Harapan

Article Info

Article history:

Received: 10 June 2026

Publish: 1 September 2026

Keywords:

Police Professional Ethics;

Police Code of Ethics;

Ethical Enforcement;

Public Trust;

Police Accountability.

Abstract

The police profession carries the responsibility of law enforcement, maintaining public security and order, and providing protection and services to society. In performing these duties, members of the Indonesian National Police are required to uphold the professional code of ethics as a moral and professional foundation. Violations of police professional ethics not only undermine institutional integrity but also affect public trust in law enforcement institutions. This study aims to analyze the enforcement of police professional ethics and its implications for public trust. The research focuses on two main issues: (1) the extent to which the enforcement of the police code of ethics can create law-abiding, honest, and fair police officers; and (2) the efforts required to restore and strengthen public trust in the police institution following ethical violations. This study employs normative legal research using statutory, conceptual, and case approaches. The data were collected through a literature review of laws and regulations concerning the police professional code of ethics, decisions of the Police Code of Ethics Commission, court decisions, and relevant legal literature. The findings indicate that violations of police professional ethics constitute not only legal misconduct but also breaches of fundamental ethical principles, including integrity, accountability, honesty, and professionalism. The enforcement of ethical sanctions, including dishonorable discharge, reflects the institution's commitment to maintaining ethical standards. However, weaknesses in internal supervision and institutional accountability remain significant challenges. Therefore, strengthening oversight mechanisms, enhancing transparency, and reforming organizational culture are essential to restoring and improving public trust in the Indonesian National Police.

This is an open access article under the [Lisensi Creative Commons Atribusi-BerbagiSerupa 4.0 Internasional](#)



Corresponding Author:

Kimberly Fewsan

Universitas Pelita Harapan

Email: 01051230022@student.uph.edu

1. INTRODUCTION

The Indonesian National Police (Polri) play a crucial role in maintaining security, order, and law enforcement in Indonesia. As law enforcers, Polri members are expected to carry out their duties and responsibilities professionally and with integrity. To ensure that every Polri member acts in accordance with ethical and moral principles, a professional code of ethics is required to govern their behavior. The professional code of ethics for Polri members is designed to guide in carrying out their duties fairly, honestly, and responsibly. This code of ethics covers various aspects, from interactions with the public and relationships with colleagues to attitudes toward institutions and applicable regulations. This code of ethics is expected to enable Polri members to carry out their duties without abuse of authority, conflicts of interest, or other unethical actions that could damage the

police force's image and undermine public trust.

Despite the existence of the police professional code of ethics, various forms of deviation and violations are still committed by law enforcement officers. This situation indicates that the implementation of the code of ethics has not been fully effective in creating a professional, honest, and integrity-based police force. One incident that has received widespread public attention is the premeditated murder case involving the former Head of the Professional and Security Division (Kadiv Propam) of the Indonesian National Police. This case has drawn public attention not only because it relates to a serious crime but also because it reflects a crisis of integrity within law enforcement institutions. This incident demonstrates how power can influence the law enforcement process and raises public doubts about the independence and objectivity of law enforcement officers. From the initial stages of the case, the public was confronted with various versions of the changing chronology, allegations of fabricated facts, and attempts to conceal the truth. This situation has given rise to public distrust in the police institution's ability to enforce the law fairly and transparently. From a legal perspective, this case is not only viewed as a criminal matter but also as a test of the integrity of the police's professional ethics and the accountability of law enforcement institutions. Enforcing the police professional code of ethics is a very important aspect in maintaining the institution's dignity, upholding the principles of the rule of law, and restoring public trust in the police.

The case involving Ferdy Sambo began with the death of Brigadier Nofriansyah Yosua Hutabarat (Brigadier J) on July 8, 2022, at the official residence of a National Police official in the Duren Tiga area, South Jakarta. At that time, Ferdy Sambo was still serving as Head of the Professional and Security Division (Kadiv Propam) of the National Police. Although the incident occurred on July 8, 2022, information regarding the case was only made public several days later, precisely on July 11, 2022. In an initial statement to the public, the Police stated that Brigadier J's death occurred as a result of a shootout with another of Ferdy Sambo's aides, namely Richard Eliezer Pudihang Lumiu (Bharada E). The incident reportedly began when Brigadier J entered Ferdy Sambo's official residence and allegedly entered the family's private room. Subsequently, Brigadier J was accused of harassing and threatening Ferdy Sambo's wife using a firearm. The initial narrative presented to the public then raised various questions and doubts, especially after several facts were discovered that contradicted the previously presented chronology. This situation sparked widespread public attention regarding the law enforcement process and the integrity of the police institution in handling the case. Based on initial information provided to the public, the incident began when Putri Candrawathi screamed from inside Ferdy Sambo's official residence. The scream allegedly caused Brigadier J to panic and leave the room. At the same time, Bharada E, who was upstairs in the house, heard the scream and asked what was happening. According to the official police explanation at the time, Brigadier J then allegedly fired first at Bharada E, resulting in an exchange of gunfire that resulted in Brigadier J's death from multiple gunshot wounds. This chronology then raised various doubts and suspicions from the public because it was considered inconsistent with several developing facts. The irregularities in the handling of the case prompted National Police Chief General Listyo Sigit Prabowo to form a special team to conduct further investigations into the case. The formation of the special team was announced on July 12, 2022, and was led by the then Deputy Chief of the Indonesian National Police, Commissioner General (Ret.) Gatot Eddy Pramono. In addition to involving internal police elements, this team also involved external institutions such as the National Commission on Human Rights (Komnas HAM) and the National Police Commission (Kompolnas). The involvement of these external institutions demonstrates an effort to maintain objectivity,

transparency, and accountability in the case investigation process. This step is also a crucial part of responding to growing public concern and maintaining public trust in the police institution amidst allegations of ethical violations and abuse of authority.

The death of Brigadier Nofriansyah Yosua Hutabarat (Brigadier J) attracted widespread public attention due to various irregularities in the initial explanation provided by the police. The victim's family, through their legal team, then reported the alleged premeditated murder to the Criminal Investigation Agency (Bareskrim) of the Indonesian National Police. The family believed that the narrative regarding the alleged harassment and the shootout previously presented to the public did not correspond to the facts. This situation raised public doubts about the transparency and objectivity of the police's handling of the case. As the investigation progressed, the Chief of Police took steps to dismiss Ferdy Sambo from his position as Head of the Professional and Security Division (Kadiv Propam) of the Indonesian National Police to maintain the independence and transparency of the investigation. Subsequently, the investigation conducted by the Bareskrim Polri named several suspects in the case, including Bharada Richard Eliezer, Brigadier Ricky Rizal, Putri Candrawathi, and Ferdy Sambo. Based on the investigation, Ferdy Sambo is suspected of orchestrating the premeditated murder and staging events to make Brigadier J's death appear to have resulted from a shootout between police officers. Ferdy Sambo has also been named a suspect in an obstruction of justice case for allegedly obstructing the investigation.

This case then developed not only as a criminal matter, but also as a serious issue related to police professional ethics and abuse of authority by law enforcement officers. As a follow-up, the National Police institution, through a hearing of the National Police Code of Ethics Commission (KKEP), imposed a dishonorable discharge (PTDH) sanction on Ferdy Sambo. This decision demonstrates an effort to enforce the police professional code of ethics against members proven to have committed serious violations, although this case also exposed the weakness of the internal oversight system within the police force. In the criminal trial process, the South Jakarta District Court sentenced Ferdy Sambo to death and Putri Candrawathi to prison. The verdict was later upheld by the DKI Jakarta High Court after the appeal was rejected. The development of this case has attracted significant public attention because it is considered to reflect serious challenges in law enforcement, the integrity of law enforcement officers, and the restoration of public trust in the police institution in Indonesia. The legal action filed by Ferdy Sambo and related parties through the cassation level ultimately resulted in a change in the sentence imposed. The Supreme Court commuted Ferdy Sambo's death sentence to life imprisonment. Although the legal process has progressed and the court's verdict has been rendered, the case has left a significant impact on the public image of the police institution.

Following the revelation of the case, various survey institutions indicated a decline in public trust in the Indonesian National Police (Polri). One national survey revealed that public trust in the Polri had declined significantly compared to previous years. This decline reflects public disappointment with the integrity of law enforcement officers, particularly following the revelation of ethical violations, abuse of authority, and attempts to obstruct law enforcement in the case. Public trust in the police is a crucial element in supporting security, order, and effective law enforcement. A public that has trust in the police tends to be more cooperative in reporting crimes, providing information, and supporting state-run security programs. Conversely, declining public trust can undermine the legitimacy of the police institution and create negative perceptions of the law enforcement process. In addition to cases of ethical violations involving police officers, various other issues, such as abuse of power, corruption, discrimination in legal services, and poor response to public reports, also influence public perception of the police institution. This situation indicates

that the enforcement of the police professional code of ethics has not been optimal. The code of ethics, which should be a moral and professional guideline for every member of the police force, is often violated in practice by certain officers, thus giving rise to public distrust of law enforcement institutions.

The decline in public trust in the Indonesian National Police (Polri) also indicates the continued need for internal reform and strengthening of institutional oversight. Enforcing police professional ethics is not only about imposing sanctions for violations, but also about building integrity, professionalism, transparency, and accountability among law enforcement officers. Strengthening internal oversight mechanisms, improving the quality of public services, and reforming organizational culture are crucial steps in restoring and enhancing public trust in the police institution. Based on this background, this study formulates two legal issues: first, to what extent is the enforcement of the police professional code of ethics capable of producing a law-abiding, honest, and fair police force; and second, how can public trust in the police institution be restored following ethical violations and abuse of authority by law enforcement officers.

2. RESEARCH METHODS

This study uses a normative legal research method, namely research that focuses on the study of applicable legal norms through an analysis of laws and regulations, legal doctrine, court decisions, and literature relevant to the research object. Normative legal research was chosen because this study aims to analyze the enforcement of police professional ethics and its implications for public trust from a positive legal perspective in Indonesia. The approaches used in this study include a legislative approach, a case approach, and a conceptual approach. The legislative approach is carried out by examining various regulations related to police professional ethics, including Law Number 2 of 2002 concerning the Indonesian National Police, Regulation of the Indonesian National Police Number 7 of 2022 concerning the Code of Professional Ethics and the Indonesian National Police Code of Ethics Commission, as well as other regulations related to the enforcement of the code of ethics and discipline of police members.

The case study approach is conducted through an analysis of ethical violations and criminal acts involving police officers, specifically the case involving Ferdy Sambo, along with court decisions and decisions of the Indonesian National Police Code of Ethics Commission related to the case. A conceptual approach is used to understand the concepts of professional ethics, accountability of law enforcement officers, and the theory of public trust in the context of law enforcement. The data used in this study are secondary data consisting of primary legal materials, secondary legal materials, and tertiary legal materials. Primary legal materials include laws and regulations, court decisions, and decisions of the Indonesian National Police Code of Ethics Commission. Secondary legal materials consist of books, scientific journals, research results, articles, and expert opinions related to police professional ethics, law enforcement, and public trust. Tertiary legal materials include legal dictionaries, encyclopedias, and various other reference sources that support this research. Data collection techniques are carried out through library studies by examining various legal sources and relevant literature. The data was analyzed qualitatively using a descriptive-analytical method, namely describing the data systematically and connecting it with relevant legal provisions and theories in order to obtain comprehensive legal arguments regarding the enforcement of police professional ethics and its implications for public trust.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

In carrying out their duties and authorities, members of the Indonesian National Police (Polri) are required to consistently comply with the law and the applicable professional code of ethics. The police professional code of ethics serves as a moral and professional guideline that governs the behavior of every Polri member in carrying out their duties of law enforcement, maintaining public security and order, and protecting and serving the community. The existence of a code of ethics is a crucial instrument in developing a professional police force, has integrity, and is responsible in exercising its authority.

The regulations regarding the Indonesian National Police's Code of Professional Ethics are contained in Regulation of the Chief of the Indonesian National Police Number 14 of 2011 concerning the Indonesian National Police's Code of Professional Ethics. Article 1 explains that the Indonesian National Police's Code of Professional Ethics is a norm or rule that serves as an ethical and philosophical basis for members of the Indonesian National Police regarding behavior and speech regarding matters that are required, prohibited, appropriate, and inappropriate in carrying out the duties, authority, and responsibilities of the position. Based on these provisions, the police professional code of ethics can be understood as a set of norms that function to direct the behavior of police members so that they remain within the corridors of law, morality, and professionalism. The implementation and enforcement of the police professional code of ethics plays a very important role in supporting the realization of a professional police institution and is trusted by the public. As law enforcement officers, members of the Indonesian National Police have great authority, so that every action taken must be accountable, both legally and ethically. Compliance with the code of ethics is not only a formal institutional obligation, but also a form of moral responsibility in carrying out the police profession.

Consistent enforcement of police professional ethics can be one way to maintain institutional integrity and increase public trust in law enforcement. Conversely, violations of the professional code of ethics by police officers can negatively impact the institution's image and undermine public trust in the National Police. Therefore, effective oversight, strict enforcement of ethical sanctions, and strengthening a culture of professionalism are crucial factors in realizing a transparent, accountable, and community-oriented police institution.

For members of the Indonesian National Police (Polri), the professional code of ethics serves as a guideline for attitudes and actions when carrying out their duties and authorities. Through this code of ethics, every Polri member is required to uphold the values of honesty, professionalism, discipline, responsibility, and respect for human rights. Compliance with the code of ethics also plays a crucial role in preventing abuse of authority, discriminatory actions, and various behaviors that conflict with the law and principles of professionalism. Police members are not only required to uphold the law but also to be role models in adhering to the law and professional ethics in social life. Consistent application and enforcement of the professional code of ethics have a significant impact on the image and integrity of the police institution. Violations committed by Polri members often lead to negative public perceptions of the police institution as a whole. Conversely, if the code of ethics is enforced firmly, transparently, and without discrimination, it can demonstrate the institution's commitment to maintaining the professionalism and integrity of law enforcement officers. Effective enforcement of professional ethics is a crucial factor in building institutional legitimacy and strengthening public trust in the Polri.

From a societal perspective, Polri members' adherence to the professional code of ethics can create a sense of security and increase confidence that law enforcement is conducted fairly, objectively, and accountably. The public tends to be more cooperative in

supporting law enforcement if they have confidence in the police. Conversely, violations of the code of ethics that are not firmly addressed can foster public distrust, undermine the legitimacy of the police institution, and hinder the effectiveness of law enforcement. Enforcing police professional ethics has significant implications for the level of public trust in the Polri institution.

The case involving Ferdy Sambo serves as a concrete example of the importance of upholding professional ethics within the police force. His actions not only violated criminal law but also contradicted the fundamental values of police professional ethics, such as integrity, honesty, professionalism, and responsibility. This incident had a far-reaching impact, not only on the individual perpetrator but also on the image and legitimacy of the Indonesian National Police (Polri) institution in the eyes of the public. Enforcing ethical sanctions through the Indonesian National Police Code of Ethics Commission (KKEP) is a crucial step in demonstrating that any violations committed by police officers will be processed in accordance with applicable laws and codes of ethics.

Enforcing police professional ethics plays a crucial role in establishing a professional, accountable, and integrity-based police institution. The code of ethics serves not only as a guideline for police officers in carrying out their duties and authorities, but also as a moral oversight instrument to ensure that police officers' actions remain within the law and ethical principles. Consistent application of the code of ethics can also serve as a means to improve the quality of public services and strengthen public trust in the police institution. In the context of restoring public trust, comprehensive efforts to improve the police institution are needed, both through internal reform and strengthening external oversight. Internal improvements can be achieved through improvements in the recruitment system, increasing the quality of education and fostering professional ethics, and strengthening an organizational culture that upholds the values of integrity and professionalism. Implementing the core values of the civil service, such as service-oriented, accountable, competent, harmonious, loyal, adaptive, and collaborative, is also crucial to support bureaucratic reform and strengthen human resources within the police force.

Strengthening external oversight is also necessary through regulatory improvements and institutional accountability mechanisms. Revisions to the National Police Law could be a strategic step to align the institutional arrangements of the National Police (Polri) with evolving legal needs and social dynamics. As a law enforcement institution with extensive authority and supported by a significant state budget, the National Police (Polri) is required to carry out its duties professionally, transparently, and accountably. Therefore, upholding police professional ethics is not only an internal responsibility of the institution but also a crucial part of efforts to maintain the rule of law and increase public trust in law enforcement officers in Indonesia. Efforts to strengthen the police institution can be implemented through regulatory reform, particularly the Law on the National Police of the Republic of Indonesia. Revisions to the National Police Law could be carried out on a limited basis, with an emphasis on strengthening internal oversight mechanisms, increasing institutional accountability, and adjusting police authority within the criminal justice system, particularly with regard to investigations, inquiries, and law enforcement. These steps are crucial to ensure that police authority remains within the law, transparency, and the principles of the rule of law.

Public criticism of the police institution should not be viewed as mere defiance or distrust, but rather as a manifestation of public concern for the improvement of law enforcement institutions. Public criticism is part of social control in a democratic state, aimed at fostering a professional, accountable, and integrity-based police institution. The government and the Indonesian National Police (Polri) need to respond to public criticism

openly and constructively as a form of support for police reform. Efforts to strengthen the police institution can be implemented through regulatory reform, particularly the Indonesian National Police Law. Revisions to the Polri Law can be carried out on a limited basis, with an emphasis on strengthening internal oversight mechanisms, increasing institutional accountability, and adjusting police authority within the criminal justice system, particularly with regard to investigations, prosecutions, and law enforcement. These steps are crucial to ensure that the authority held by police officers remains within the law, transparency, and the principles of the rule of law.

Public criticism of the police institution should not be viewed as mere defiance or distrust, but rather as a manifestation of public concern for the improvement of law enforcement institutions. Public criticism is part of social control in a democratic country, aimed at fostering a professional, accountable, and integrity-based police institution. Therefore, the government and the Indonesian National Police (Polri) need to respond to public criticism openly and constructively as a form of support for police reform. 2022 will be a challenging year for the Indonesian National Police (Polri) due to declining public trust resulting from various cases involving police officers. This situation indicates that fundamental issues remain that need to be addressed within the police force, including organizational culture, officer professionalism, and internal oversight mechanisms. A joint commitment between the government, the Indonesian National Police (Polri), and the public is needed to realize police reform oriented toward the principles of accountability, transparency, and public service.

In the context of restoring public trust, fair, objective, and non-discriminatory law enforcement is crucial. Police officers must be able to carry out their law enforcement duties impartially, without obscuring legal facts, and without protecting perpetrators of violations simply because of institutional ties or personal closeness. Active oversight by police leadership is also necessary to ensure that every case-handling process is carried out in accordance with the principles of professionalism and accountability. Evaluating organizational culture that could potentially lead to abuse of authority is also a crucial step in building a more transparent and publicly trusted police institution. Enforcing police professional ethics is not only related to imposing sanctions for ethical violations, but also involves institutional reform and changing the legal culture within the police force. Consistent and fair enforcement of professional ethics is expected to improve institutional integrity and restore public trust in the Indonesian National Police as a law enforcement agency.

4. CONCLUSION

Based on the results of research on the enforcement of police professional ethics and its implications for public trust, it can be concluded that the Indonesian National Police's code of professional ethics plays a very important role as a moral and professional guideline for police officers in carrying out their duties and authorities. A professional code of ethics is essentially capable of forming a police force that is law-abiding, honest, fair, professional, and responsible if implemented consistently and supported by an effective system of supervision and disciplinary enforcement. However, various ethical violations that occur within the police institution show that the existence of a code of ethics alone is not enough to prevent abuse of authority if individual integrity and internal oversight mechanisms are still weak. Violations committed by police officers are not only a form of violation of the law, but also reflect a failure to implement the ethical values of the police profession.

Enforcing professional ethics in the police has significant implications for public

trust in the Indonesian National Police (Polri). Ethical violations by police officers can undermine the institution's legitimacy and create public distrust in the law enforcement process. Efforts to restore public trust must be carried out through transparent, accountable, and non-discriminatory law enforcement and a code of ethics. Firmly implementing ethical sanctions, strengthening internal and external oversight, increasing transparency in case handling, reforming organizational culture, and enhancing the professionalism of Polri officers are crucial steps in rebuilding public trust in the police institution. Restoring public trust depends not only on resolving individual cases but also on the Polri's ongoing commitment to creating a law enforcement apparatus with integrity, professionalism, accountability, and a focus on public service, in accordance with the principles of the rule of law.

5. BIBLIOGRAPHY

UU

Peraturan Kepolisian Negara Republik Indonesia Nomor 7 Tahun 2022 tentang Kode Etik Profesi dan Komisi Kode Etik Kepolisian Negara Republik Indonesia.

Undang-Undang Nomor 2 Tahun 2002 tentang Kepolisian Negara Republik Indonesia.

Book

Putri Uzdah Wulandari, RESTORASI CITRA ORGANISASI KEPOLISIAN REPUBLIK INDONESIA TAHUN 2022, FAKULTAS ILMU SOSIAL DAN ILMU POLITIK UNIVERSITAS SRIWIJAYA MEI 2023

Melanz Togi Sihol Marito, OPTIMALISASI PERAN HUMAS POLRI DALAM MENANGANI KRISIS POLRI PADA KASUS FERDY SAMBO, ROGRAM STUDI ILMU KOMUNIKASI FAKULTAS ILMU SOSIAL DAN ILMU POLITIK UNIVERSITAS KRISTEN INDONESIA JAKARTA 2023

Journal

Danur Pernadi, Nadia Putri Marpaung, Rara Kharisma Dewi, "PERAN ETIKA DALAM MENCEGAH PENYALAHGUNAAN WEWENANG DI KEPOLISIAN", Vol. 2 No.1 Januari 2025

Inri Inggris Indrayani, "Identifikasi Strategi Restorasi Citra Kepolisian Republik Indonesia (Polri) dalam Kasus Ferdy Sambo"

Moh. Renaldy Hamid, Roy Marthen Moonti, Ibrahim Ahmad, Muslim A. Kasim, "Hukum dan Kode Etik Profesi bagi Anggota Polri", Vol. 2 No. 1, hal. 1

Dr. Rahmawati, M.HI, "Kasus Ferdy Sambo : Ujian Integritas Hukum dan Moralitas Penegak Hukum", 10 September 2025, hal 1

Moh. Renaldy Hamid, Roy Marthen Moonti, Ibrahim Ahmad, dan Muslim A. Kasim. "Hukum dan Kode Etik Profesi bagi Anggota Polri", Vol. 2 No. 1.

Danur Pernadi, Nadia Putri Marpaung, dan Rara Kharisma Dewi. "Peran Etika dalam Mencegah Penyalahgunaan Wewenang di Kepolisian", Vol. 2 No. 1, Januari 2025.

Media Internet

<https://uin-alauddin.ac.id/opini/detail/252-catatan-kaki--hanya-tiga-polisi-jujur-di-indonesia--patung-polisi-polisi-tidur-dan-jenderal-hoeg>

<https://antikorupsi.org/id/article/reformasi-birokrasi-jokowi>

<https://www.komdigi.go.id/berita/pengumuman/detail/presiden-dorong-polri-kerja-keras-kembalikan-kepercayaan-masyarakat>

<https://www.borneonews.co.id/berita/276033-bentuk-pemulihan-kepercayaan-publik-terhadap-polri-pasca-tragedi-ferdi-sambo>

<https://nasional.kompas.com/read/2023/07/12/13232191/timeline-kasus-pembunuhan-brigadir-j-hingga-berujung-hukuman-mati-untuk?page=all#page4>
<https://polrespandeglang.org/membangun-kepercayaan-publik-terhadap-kepolisian-di-indon>