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# Corruptive Influences (From Local Government Police Management Second Edition, P 52-73, 1982, Bernard L Garmire, ed. - See NCJ-88274)

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### Annotation

Following a description of the damage done by police corruption, this chapter discusses factors influencing reform, the degrees and types of police corruption, various factors contributing to corruption, and steps police chiefs can take to combat corruption.

### Abstract

Police corruption undermines the confidence of the public in the police, destroys respect for the law, undercuts departmental discipline, and harms police morale. Degrees of corruption can be distinguished by the size of payoffs and the effort exerted by police to obtain them. Corruption is most serious when the climate in a police department permits the existence of corruption of all kinds. The most common type of police corruption is the acceptance of bribes from those who deal in the vices of gambling, prostitution, illegal drinking, and the illegal use of drugs. Officers find it easy to rationalize this type of

corruption, because they perceive it as being relatively harmless and of little concern to the general public. Other types of corruption include 'fixing' traffic tickets, bargaining with criminals, accepting small gratuities, taking kickbacks and similar 'rewards,' stealing, and taking a bribe from another officer. Factors contributing to police corruption are community standards, police chief attitudes, attitudes of the rank and file, police discretion, and prosecutor and court actions. To deal with corruption, the police chief must have the power to implement wholesale reforms and must have political as well as administrative skills. Elements of a reform plan might include speaking out, making internal affairs effective, improving inspections, seeing that everyone in authority is accountable, improving the use of discretion, and controlling corruption through training. The police chief must also have the support of local officials, the media, and the prosecuting attorney if widespread police corruption is to be addressed effectively. Seven footnotes are listed.

## Additional Details

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