



City of Manassas Police Department General Duty Manual



Effective Date: 03-15-2011	GENERAL ORDER	Number: 01-02
Subject: Written Directives		
<input type="checkbox"/> New <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Amends <input type="checkbox"/> Rescinds <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Reviewed: 09-07-2017 General Order # 1-2 Dated: 12-29-2008		Reevaluation: <input type="checkbox"/> 1 yr. <input type="checkbox"/> 18 months <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N/A
Accreditation Standards: 12.2.1 / 12.2.2	By Authority Of:  Douglas W. Keen, Chief of Police	Total Pages: 5

PURPOSE:

The purpose of this General Order is to establish and clarify a standard system of written directives for the guidance of members of the Department.

POLICY:

Departmental policy is based on the views of the Department administration, police ethics and experience, the desires of this community, and the mandate of the law. Most departmental policy statements are found in General Orders. These statements summarize the Department's position on various issues. Policy statements are intended to set the tone or build the framework for the procedures within a General Order. They contain key words that dictate the necessity of performing certain actions. The words "should" or "may" allow for discretion in the completion of the task or activity referred to. The words "shall", "will" or "must" require adherence and compliance. These words will be used in the same fashion and utilizing the above definitions throughout the General Order to indicate level of compliance and importance.

It is the policy of the Department that members are provided with a system of written directives that is legal, easy to understand, and current. The written procedures found within the Department's directive system should be the product of a participatory process between management and those persons responsible for conducting those procedures.

DISCUSSION:

The formal system of written directives for the Department is intended to keep members abreast of current policy, procedure, rules and regulations, and official activities. All members should have a clear understanding of the expectations and constraints related to their performance of duty.

Members having questions about the interpretation of any written directive should seek the advice of their supervisor. Members should also seek guidance from a supervisor on any subject where there is an obvious policy void.

PROCEDURE:

I. General Orders

- A. General Orders are the most authoritative Directives within the system. General Orders are issued, modified, and approved only upon the authority of the Chief of Police.
- B. Departmental policy originates in the General Order. General Orders are usually directed to the entire Department, and they tend to be more permanent than other directives.
- C. General Orders are written in the format found in this General Order. They should include:
 1. A brief statement of PURPOSE.
 2. A POLICY statement.
 3. A DISCUSSION section when necessary.
 4. A PROCEDURE section, written in clear, concise language in present tense and outline form.
 5. If any section is omitted, N/A is indicated. (i.e., DISCUSSION: N/A).
 6. Outlining does not appear until the first paragraph of the PROCEDURE section.

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- D. General Orders are issued with a heading page as found in this directive, bearing the signature of the Chief of Police. Succeeding pages are issued with an abbreviated heading page.
- E. General Orders are numbered according to the chapter they belong to (the number preceding the hyphen), and the sequence the General Order is found within that chapter (the number following the hyphen), i.e., General Order 05-03 is the third order found in Chapter 5.
- F. The drafting of new or revised General Orders is accomplished in the following manner:
1. The Chief of Police may request a draft from any level within the Department, but usually requests drafts through the Office of Professional Standards Lieutenant or Division Commanders according to the topic.
 2. Members of the Department are encouraged to request a review or amendment of any General Order. The revision requests can also be done in memo, or e-mail format citing the change requested and an explanation for the revision.
 3. The Office of Professional Standards Lieutenant or Division Commanders direct the drafting process in a manner best suited to ensure a participatory process by the members closest to or most familiar with the tasks, duties, or activities addressed by the General Order.
 4. Members preparing drafts of General Orders should first collect all available reference material on the subject matter. Supplementary material from sources such as the International Association of Chiefs of Police, state code, city ordinances, and training bulletins are made available to persons drafting General Orders. Use of these references is intended to form the most current, legal, and understandable directives available.
 5. All typed copies and pages of drafts are marked as draft copies to avoid later confusion with the official General Order.
- G. Drafts of General Orders undergo a staff review process prior to final review and approval by the Chief of Police. The review is usually conducted by persons selected from among the following personnel:
1. Division Commanders
 2. 1st and 2nd line Supervisors
 3. The Director of Human Resources (if deemed necessary).
 4. The City Attorney (if deemed necessary).
 5. Other members, as determined by familiarity or expertise with the subject matter.
 6. The President of the Department's Employee Association.
- H. Copies of all staff review material and comments are forwarded to the Office of Professional Standards for inclusion in the manual archive file.
- I. Drafts of General Orders may undergo repeated staff reviews, as necessary. The Office of Professional Standards prepares a final draft for review by the Chief of Police.
- J. Once a General Order has been approved by the Chief of Police, the Office of Professional Standards has the original duplicated and distributed. The original document is placed in the manual archive file.
- K. All new and revised General Orders are discussed during roll call training. Members reviewing new or revised General Orders sign an "Acknowledgement of General Order Issue" form. Before signing this form, members should ensure that they understand the content of the General Order. Completed "Acknowledgement of General Order Issue" forms are maintained by the Office of Professional Standards.
- L. The reevaluation of General Orders is an ongoing, user based process.
1. All members are responsible for requesting a General Order Revision for any directive they find to be in need of revision.
 2. General Orders containing personnel lists, frequently changed information, or which may be used on legal issues need more frequent review than other General Orders that tend to remain unchanged over time.

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3. General Orders that are deemed to be in need of regular, specialized review are so noted on the first page of the General Order, in the Reevaluation box, at intervals of either one year or eighteen months, or other designated interval. The length of time between reviews depends on the content of the General Order. Those General Orders that do not require specialized review are noted with "N/A" in the Reevaluation box.
- M. General Orders contain accepted step-by-step methods for doing a particular task, and are used for training new members or for introducing new or revised methods to all members. There may be occasions when the "generally accepted methods" or the "usually accepted step-by-step methods" should not be followed or should be modified.
- N. Members making a decision to act in a manner different than that prescribed by policy or procedure may be asked to justify and defend the appropriateness of their judgment. Repeated instances of unsound judgment are reflected in performance evaluations and may also necessitate disciplinary action.
- O. When attachments are used with the General Order, they are noted and identified at the end of the General Order, and follow the General Order on additional pages. Attachments are further identified on their pages, by a box insert, located at the upper right corner of the page, that contains a notice such as "Attachment A," with the appropriate General Order number located beneath.
- P. Members are encouraged to make suggestions or offer constructive criticism of any General Order through their chain of command, at any time, regardless of the scheduled review date.

II. Color Coding of the Most Critical General Orders

- A. Most General Orders are produced on white paper. Certain selected General Orders of a more critical nature, are produced on colored paper, in order to differentiate them from all other General Orders.
- B. "The most critical General Orders" are identified as those with higher liability risk to the Department, and that are most affected by frequent case law decisions or legislative changes, at the federal or state level.
- C. The most critical General Orders are identified as follows:
 1. General Order 01-09: Discipline / Complaints / Commendations.
 2. General Order 02-01: Rules of Conduct.
 3. General Order 02-04: Use of Force.
 4. General Order 06-08: Search and Seizure
 5. General Order 06-12: Firearms Discharge.
 6. General Order 06-15: Domestic Relations.
 7. General Order 06-21: Pursuit Policy.

III. Rules and Regulations

- A. Rules and Regulations are the least flexible written directives within the Department's written directive system. Department Rules and Regulations express policies, procedures and standards that permit no deviations or exceptions. Violations of rules and regulations generally result in disciplinary action.
- B. Rules and Regulations are set apart from other General Orders in Chapter 2 of the General Duty Manual. For a complete description of Rules and Regulations, see Chapter 2.

IV. Special Orders

- A. Special Orders may be issued by any supervisor, but are most often issued by the Chief of Police. Civilian supervisors may issue Special Orders when the order is directed to their civilian subordinates. Special Orders are generally temporary in nature; their expiration date is noted on their face. Special Orders may be issued for various purposes, including:
 1. To supplement, amend, or correct a General Order until a new General Order is written or amendment is issued. These Special Orders are placed in the General Duty Manual and added to the CD copies. These may only be issued by the Chief of Police or the Office of Professional Standards Lieutenant.

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2. To provide specific orders or information on a temporary assignment or detail, such as parades, festivals, events or a prolonged traffic assignment. These Special Orders are issued only to those members who are directly involved.
 3. To announce the deletion of General Orders. When used in this way, the Special Order becomes self-canceling once the General Order is deleted. This type of Special Order must be approved by the Chief of Police prior to issuance.
- B. Special Orders may be directed to one or more members of the Department: they need not affect the entire Department.
 - C. Special Orders are a formal way of conveying expectations or directing activities. They have the same force and effects as a written direct order.
 - D. Supervisors preparing Special Orders distribute copies to the Command Staff, all affected personnel and post when appropriate on the Roll Call Board until the order's expiration date. An additional copy is forwarded to the Office of Professional Standards for archive file retention.
 - E. The Special Order format is located in Attachment "A."
 - F. A Special Order exemplar is located in Attachment "C."

V. Memorandum

- A. Memorandum forms, interoffice routing slips, electronic mail, special instruction manuals and training bulletins are used within the Department to communicate orders, instructions, inquiries, and information between units and/or individuals. These may be issued at any appropriate level within the Department.
- B. The standard formal memorandum system of the Department is used to provide information, opinions, guidance, or orders concerning a particular subject or event. Memorandums are also used to make reports for which there is no prescribed format.
- C. A sample formal memorandum is attached to this General Order in Attachment "B."
- D. The Department Memorandum format is stored in the computer network, under the (P:) drive and contained in the "Forms" folder.

VI. City of Manassas Employee Handbook

- A. The Manassas City government is guided in administrative policy by the City of Manassas Employee Handbook. The Employee Handbook is issued by the Department of Human Resources.
- B. The Employee Handbook deals with City wide policies on issues such as personnel, finance, promotions, budget, vehicle use, out of town travel, etc.
- C. All members of the Department are issued an Employee Handbook. It is also available on the City's intranet site under the Human Resources page.
- D. Employee Handbooks issued to supervisors also serve as a group manual for their section or unit.
- E. Members may also utilize an Employee Handbook maintained at the Office of Professional Standards.
- F. Supervisors insure that their subordinates are informed of rules and regulations contained in the Employee Handbook, and that they have an understanding of their responsibilities.
- G. Supervisors have the responsibility to randomly inspect the City of Manassas Employee Handbooks issued to their subordinates, during line inspections.
- H. Members have the responsibility of seeking any needed information concerning the Employee Handbook from their supervisors or consulting the section's group manual.

VII. Department Manuals and Plans

- A. Specialty manuals, files, plans, guidebooks and other writings are issued to cover specific areas in greater detail than may be provided in General Orders. (Some may be issued in electronic format)
- B. Examples of these plans and manuals include such writings as:
 1. The Multi-Year Strategic Plan
 2. ESU Training Manual
 3. Field Training Officers' Manual.

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- C. A file copy of most plans and manuals is kept on file by the Office of Professional Standards, for review or use by any member.
- D. These plans and manuals are used as guidelines and are normally specifically followed and act as any other written directive in its authority. In any case where a General Order and a manual or plans, as outlined in this section, are in conflict, the General Order takes precedent.

VIII. Non-Departmental Written Directives

- A. Non-departmental written directives with which members must comply include:
 1. Federal law and mandates, including the Constitution of the United States.
 2. State laws and mandates, including the Constitution of the Commonwealth of Virginia.
 3. The Code of the City of Manassas and city directives, including, but not limited to, city policies relating to personnel, purchasing, finance, inventory control, operations plans, etc.

Attachments: "A" Special Order Format
 "B" Memorandum Format
 "C" Special Order Exemplar

Index as: Written Directives.
 General Orders.
 Special Orders.
 Employee Handbook.
 Rules and Regulations.
 Memorandum.
 Directives.
 Orders.

References: N/A