

PALM BEACH GARDENS POLICE DEPARTMENT		
FIELD TRAINING PROGRAMS		
POLICY AND PROCEDURE 4.3.4.3		
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PURPOSE: To provide for a formal and uniform on-the-job training period for newly hired police officers; to provide experience, guidance and supervision so that the new police officer may develop the skills, knowledge and abilities necessary to become a professional and productive member of the Department; to aid in the evaluation of probationary officers; to serve as an aid in evaluating the police academy training program, and to outline the training of new police officers in a formalized manner.

SCOPE: This policy and procedure applies to all officers.

REVIEW RESPONSIBILITY: Patrol Operations Division

POLICY: The Department recognizes the importance of providing a sound foundation for newly hired officers of the Department. All new officers will be given the opportunity to acquire the skills, knowledge and abilities necessary to become competent and effective police officers through completion of a formalized field training program prior to assignment as a solo patrol officer. Sergeants are most directly in contact with the new officer and Field Training Officers (FTOs), and are expected to identify and address performance and training deficiencies.

PROCEDURES

1. FIELD TRAINING PROGRAM REQUIREMENT

- a. All entry level officers must complete the basic recruit academy and pass the state law enforcement certification exam prior to entering the field training program.
 - i. Must then complete the field-training program prior to being assigned as a solo officer.
- b. All Florida certified lateral entry officers must complete the field training program prior to being assigned as a solo officer.
- c. All lateral officers from other states or federal law enforcement must:

- i. complete any required state equivalency and/or comparative compliance training
 - ii. pass the state law enforcement certification examination prior to or within six months of hire
 - iii. complete the field training program prior to being assigned as a solo officer
- d. Any reserve officers possessing full law enforcement officer certification from the State of Florida, i.e., a Reserve I, must complete the field-training program prior to being allowed to work without the direct supervision of a sworn officer.
 - i. Due to the part-time nature of a volunteer Reserve Officer, they are exempt from the time limits contained elsewhere in this policy.

2. FIELD TRAINING PROGRAM PROCEDURES

The field-training program totals 14-weeks and is structured in four phases. Emphasis is on the daily tasks performed by patrol officers in the Palm Beach Gardens Police Department.

- a. There are two requirements for successful completion of the Field Training Program:
 - i. Trainees must show competency in all required topics of instruction included in the Field Training Program Trainee Manual.
 - ii. Trainees must pass a written release examination at the conclusion of the fourth phase of training.
- b. The release examination will address job-required knowledge of the law, Department policy, officer safety, and geography.
 - i. The test is based on material provided in the Field Training Program Trainee Manual and Department policy.
- c. Trainees with relevant experience may be able to complete the program in less than 14 weeks upon demonstrating competency in all required areas and successfully completing the release examination.
- d. A trainee may be granted up to an additional four weeks of additional training to address specific needs at the discretion of the Chief of Police based on the recommendation of the Field Training Program Supervisor(s).
 - i. Such recommendation shall be made only if it is believed the trainee will be able to successfully complete the program within that time.
 - 1. Criteria for an extension of training is as follows:
 - a. There is a specific identifiable performance issue,
 - b. The trainee has shown progress in the specific area during the previous weeks;
 - c. There is a specific remedial training plan to correct the problem, and
 - d. It is reasonable to believe that the training plan will correct the problem during the allotted extension.
- e. Any trainee failing to complete the program within a total of 18 weeks will have failed to complete probation and may be terminated upon review and discretion of the Chief of Police based on the recommendation of the training program supervisor and Patrol Operations Bureau Major.

3. FIELD TRAINING PROGRAM STRUCTURE

- a. The 14 weeks of the Field Training Program are divided into four training phases.
 - i. Each phase includes an observation period with varying length, defined below. The purpose of the observation period is to allow for the trainee's familiarization to his/her new surroundings, shift, FTO, etc.
 - 1. The phases are broken down as follows:
 - a. Phase I

Four weeks

Observation period is the first week of the phase

Training is based on the respective material in the Trainee Manual

b. Phase II

Four weeks

Observation period is the first day of the phase

Training is based on the respective material in the Trainee Manual

c. Phase III

Four weeks

Observation period is the first day of the phase

Training is based on the respective material in the Trainee Manual

The last week of this phase is dedicated to performing any outstanding tasks and evaluating the trainee's readiness for phase IV.

d. Phase IV

Two weeks

No Observation period

During the two week phase the trainee will act as solo officer with the FTO only observing.

4. FIELD TRAINING PROGRAM RESPONSIBILITIES

The Field Operations Division is responsible for the maintenance and day-to-day supervision of the Field Training Program.

a. The tasks associated with administration of the program are assigned as follows:

i. Training Sergeant

1. Joint coordination of the Field Training Program in partnership with the FTO Sergeant.
2. Assignment of trainees to FTOs, in partnership with the FTO Sergeant.
3. Maintaining records of the Field Training Program.
4. Development and administration of the release examination.
5. Reviewing documentation pertinent to the Field Training Program.
6. Maintaining liaison with the regional training academy as per Policy 4.3.4.2; however, Field Training is separate and distinct from academy training.

ii. FTO Program Sergeant

1. Joint coordination of the Field Training Program in partnership with the Training Sergeant.
2. Assignment of trainees to FTOs, in partnership with the Training Sergeant.
3. Updating the Field Training Program Trainee Manual as needed.
4. Developing and maintaining quizzes and release examination.
5. Tracking trainee progress.
6. Review all Field Training Program documents, to include Daily Observation Report packets and, in case of an identified performance deficiency, forward to the Patrol Operations Bureau Major.
7. Ensure trainees have demonstrated competency in all performance tasks before graduating from phase to phase or release from the training program.

8. Identify and address deficiencies in the performance and training abilities of FTOs.
 9. Identify and address deficiencies in the performance of trainees.
 10. Work with Patrol Operations supervisors to address identified performance concerns on the part of trainees or FTOs.
- iii. Patrol Operations Sergeants
1. Identify and address deficiencies in the performance and training abilities of FTOs and report such findings to the FTO Program Sergeant.
 2. Identify and address deficiencies in the performance of trainees and report such findings to the FTO Program Sergeant.
 3. Make certain that FTOs are actively training and taking advantage of available calls and incidents.
 4. Ensure FTOs are provided the opportunity to temporarily change beat assignments to benefit the trainee.
 5. Provide FTOs the on-duty time to cover training topics that may include leaving the City to demonstrate the location of various services used by the Department.
 6. Ensure FTOs are completing and submitting their training documents to the FTO Program Sergeant no later than the end of the first shift of the week following the week in review.

5. EVALUATION OF TRAINEES

- a. Daily Observation Reports will be completed for each day a trainee is assigned to the Field Training Program.
 - i. The FTO will provide a Daily Observation Report and Daily Performance Narrative for each day of training, and will submit each week's documentation along with a Weekly Observation Report and Routing Form.
- b. Daily Observation Reports will be completed based on the Standardized Evaluation Guidelines as found on PDNet and in the Field Training Program Trainee Manual.
 - i. A rating of "1" in any category indicates performance at a remedial level.
 1. Remedial documentation must be provided outlining the specific areas of deficiency.
 - a. Steps to be taken to remedy the concern shall also be included.
 2. Remedial documentation will accompany the Daily Observation Report each day until the trainee has demonstrated progress and the rating of "1" is no longer warranted.
 - ii. A rating of "3" indicates the minimum acceptable performance as described in the Standardized Evaluation Guidelines.
 1. Unless rated as a "3" or higher, a trainee cannot progress to subsequent phases of training.
- c. During observation periods (first week of Phase I, first day of Phases II and III), the trainee's performance is not numerically rated.
 - i. However, the Daily Rating form will be completed, indicating N.O. (Not Observed) in each category.
 - ii. Additionally, a Daily Observation Report narrative will be completed to document the calls for service to which the trainee gained exposure.
 1. It is not to include the trainee's performance.

- d. For each date a trainee is assigned to a specialized unit, the trainee's FTO will complete a Daily Observation Report.
 - i. N.O. will be given in each category.
 - ii. A narrative will be submitted indicating the area of training the trainee received and if any problems were noted by the respective trainers.
 - iii. Officers from specialized units that are assigned trainees for specific training and are not appointed FTOs will not complete a Daily Observation Report.
 - 1. They shall confer with the trainee's FTO and discuss the trainee's performance for the date of assignment.

6. FTO SELECTION CRITERIA

- a. To be selected as a Field Training Officer, the applicant:
 - i. Must be off probation
 - ii. Must have a minimum of three years law enforcement with the Palm Beach Gardens Police Department.
 - iii. Must have completed the CJSTC Field Training Officer course or agree to complete the course at the first available opportunity after selection for the position.
 - iv. Must be positively recommended by his/her chain of command.
 - v. Must have obtained an overall rating of "Above Satisfactory" or greater on the last two performance evaluations, with no "Unsatisfactory" or "Needs Improvement" ratings.
 - vi. Must not be currently listed in the Early Warning System (EWS) as exceeding the notification number of disciplinary actions.
 - vii. Must not have received any disciplinary action within the previous year.
 - viii. Must complete all elements of the selection process.
 - ix. Must be willing to work on any assigned shift, as needed by the Department.
- b. To remain a Field Training Officer, in addition to properly performing the duties of the position:
 - i. Must maintain a minimum overall rating of "Above Satisfactory" or greater on all performance evaluations with no "Unsatisfactory" or "Needs Improvement" ratings.
 - ii. Must not appear on the EWS as exceeding the notification number of disciplinary actions.
 - iii. Must not receive a disciplinary action during the assignment.

7. FTO SELECTION PROCESS

- a. Whenever a vacancy occurs or is expected for an FTO, and the Department chooses to fill the vacancy, the Field Operations Division Assistant Chief will prepare a vacancy announcement and post the announcement on the Department bulletin board.
- b. When an FTO vacancy is announced, any officer wishing to be considered for assignment to that position must apply in accordance with the instructions in the announcement.
- c. Requesting consideration for assignment as an FTO shall constitute agreement by the requesting officer with the job responsibilities and working conditions of the assignment, including possible reassignment to another shift, as well as agreement to complete any required training at the earliest opportunity.
 - i. Subsequent failure to abide by the working conditions of the assignment or complete training when so directed will be cause for removal from the assignment.
- d. The application process shall consist of the submission of a memorandum of interest to the Chief of Police via the Chain of Command.

- i. Each supervisor in the chain of command shall make specific comments regarding the suitability of the applicant to become an FTO.
 - ii. No supervisor shall simply acknowledge and forward the request without comment.
- e. The memorandum of interest must be submitted by the deadline indicated on the announcement.
 - i. The memorandum is considered to be “submitted” when actually received by the officer's first line supervisor.
- f. The Chief of Police has final authority for the selection of FTO's.
 - i. Selection will be based on factors which may include, but are not limited to, the applicant's:
 - 1. Skills, knowledge and abilities
 - 2. Job performance
 - 3. Past experience
 - 4. Formal education
 - 5. Prerequisite and specialized training
 - 6. Supervisor recommendations
 - 7. FTO Selection Committee recommendation
- g. The FTO Selection Committee will consist of at least three supervisors, to include:
 - i. Patrol Operations Bureau Major
 - ii. FTO Program Sergeant
 - iii. Training Sergeant
- h. The purpose of the Selection Committee is to identify those applicants who meet the basic requirements for the position as described in this policy, the announcement, material submitted by the officers, if any, and other pertinent information, including department records.
 - i. If fewer than three officers meet the requirements, the panel shall notify the Chief of Police, and at his discretion, the position is re-announced or the selection process may continue.
- i. FTO applicants meeting the basic qualifications for the position will participate in a practical testing process that will require they demonstrate the required skills and abilities through written or performance tests, oral boards, simulations or other procedures.
- j. The questions, tests or tasks used in the selection process will be developed by the FTO Selection Committee, and shall be job related to ensure a fair, impartial evaluation and testing process.
 - i. The testing process will be standardized and consistent in its issuance and rating/evaluation.
 - 1. If a written test is used, the passing score will be established statistically as one standard deviation below the mean score of all persons taking that specific test.
- k. At the conclusion of the testing process, the selection panel shall rank, in order, qualified candidates who successfully completed the testing process, considering the factors described above in Section 7f and the applicant's performance on any written or performance tests, oral boards, simulations, or other procedures.
- l. The Selection Committee will score each applicant as a pass or fail, depending on whether or not, in the opinion of the selection panel, the applicant demonstrated the ability to perform the duties of the position.
 - i. Any applicant who fails to pass the selection process will be notified by the Patrol Operations Bureau Major.
- m. The Selection Committee shall rank in order qualified applicants who successfully completed the testing process, considering the factors described above in Section 7f and the applicant's performance on any written or performance tests, oral boards, simulations, or other procedures.

- n. The Selection Committee will submit a list to the Chief of Police with the names of all qualified applicants in the order they were ranked at the conclusion of the testing and review process.
- o. When the Chief of Police receives the names of the qualified applicants, he may select from among the top three applicants on the list for each position to be filled.
 - i. As each selection is made, the fourth name on the list will move into the top three.
- p. If the Chief of Police desires to maintain an eligibility list for the position of FTO, such list will be valid for 12 months from the date it is established.
 - i. The Chief may then make subsequent selections from among the top three applicants remaining on the ranked list established by the selection committee.
 - ii. At any time that there are fewer than three names remaining on the list, the Chief of Police may for any subsequent openings:
 - 1. cancel the list and require a new selection process
 - 2. select from the remaining applicants
- q. After the Chief of Police makes the selection, a Special Order will be prepared and distributed documenting the selection.
 - i. The effective date of the assignment will be established by the Chief of Police and this date will be included in the Special Order.
- r. Each applicant not selected for the position will be notified by the Patrol Operations Bureau Major or their designee.
- s. The Department reserves the right to temporarily assign officers as FTOs to meet temporary or specific needs.
 - i. This section will not be used to avoid the permanent selection of FTOs, but is intended to address temporary circumstances.
 - ii. Any officer so assigned should meet the requirements of Section 6 of this policy and procedure and must have completed appropriate training.
 - 1. When an eligibility list exists, those on the list shall have first priority for such temporary assignment if they have completed the required training.

8. TRAINING FOR FTOs

- a. FTO's may be required to attend additional training, including in-service training, meetings, and advanced courses such as Instructor Techniques, Advanced Field Training Officer, etc.
- b. FTO's may be given priority for management and supervisory training.

9. FTO ASSIGNMENT AND COMPENSATION

- a. Assignment as an FTO is at the sole discretion of the Chief of Police and may be terminated by the Chief of Police at any time.
- b. Assignment as an FTO shall not be considered a promotion for purposes of collective bargaining.
 - i. Any benefits provided for the assignment are based solely upon the assignment's additional responsibility and will cease when the officer leaves the assignment.
- c. Compensation for FTOs will be in accordance with the collective bargaining agreement.
- d. FTOs will be given preference for Officer-In-Charge (OIC) assignments.
- e. Compensation for OIC duties will be in accordance with the collective bargaining agreement.

10. FTO INSIGNIA

- a. Permanently assigned FTOs are authorized to wear Department approved insignia while so assigned.
 - i. Any approved insignia will be provided by the Department.

11. GLOSSARY

Field Training Officer (FTO): A specially trained police officer responsible for the training of new police officers.

INDEX AS:

- FIELD TRAINING OFFICER
- FTO

RESPONSIBILITY INDEX:

- CHIEF OF POLICE
- FIELD OPERATIONS DIVISION ASSISTANT CHIEF
- PATROL OPERATIONS BUREAU MAJOR
- FIELD TRAINING PROGRAM SERGEANT
- TRAINING SERGEANT
- FIELD TRAINING OFFICERS
- OFFICERS

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APPROVED:

Stephen J. Stepp
Chief of Police

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