

Departmental Directive

TITLE: UNITY OF COMMAND

POLICY:

It is the policy of this Department to define responsibilities and relationships pertaining to unity of command.

PROCEDURE:

I. Unity of Command

To facilitate management of an organization, the principle of “Unity of Command” is employed so that an employee receives orders from only one superior. To insure unity of command and maintain efficient management, clearly defined lines of authority are established to provide command relationships for all employees.

A. General Responsibility

1. Supervisors and subordinates will keep each other informed of their activities. All Department members will keep themselves aware of their relative position in the organization, to whom they are accountable, and who are accountable to them.

B. Table of Organization and Chain of Command

1. The Chain of Command will be as follows: Chief of Police, Deputy Chief of Police, Lieutenant, Sergeant, Patrol Officer.
2. Every member will report to the immediate higher authority in the chain of command and within the organizational subdivision affected, and will exercise authority over all subordinate personnel whether sworn or civilian.

C. Order of Succession

1. After the notification of the on-duty Watch Commander by the field supervisor, and in the absence of the Chief of Police, the order of succession and/or order of notification in the event of an emergency will be as follows:
 - a. Deputy Chief, Operations.
 - b. Deputy Chief, Administration.
 - c. Lieutenant, Investigation Section.
 - d. Lieutenant, Off Duty Watch Commanders.

D. Mandatory Notifications

1. The Chief of Police and the appropriate Division Commander will be immediately notified of the following incidents.
 - a. Mutual aid situations.
 - b. Injuries to officers requiring admission to a hospital.
 - c. Officer involved shootings.
 - d. Officer involved incidents in which any death occurs.
 - e. Hostage or barricaded gunman situations.
 - f. Large scale disturbance or civil disobedience incidents.
 - g. Impending or actual natural problems or disasters (i.e. floods, storms, tidal waves, etc.).
 - h. Attacks on any representative of local government.
 - i. Arrest of any departmental personnel.
 - j. Any other incident of sufficient magnitude wherein notification of the Chief of Police would seem appropriate.

E. Authority Within the Chain of Command

1. Sound management practice demands that each command or supervisory person issue specific orders only to immediate subordinate personnel. The subordinate person then issues orders in the same manner until the point of implementation is reached.
2. When a deviation of the normal practice is believed justified, higher authority may issue direct orders to any subordinate within the higher authority's chain of command. When such an intentional breach of the chain of command is made, every reasonable effort, under the circumstances, will be made to inform all affected intermediate command/supervisory personnel.

F. Authority Outside the Chain of Command

1. When a deviation of the normal practice is believed justified, direct orders may be given across lines of authority. Such a decision to breach the normal chain of command may be made only under situations of such importance and urgency that proceeding through the normal chain of command would be impractical and would seriously impair the safety or successful completion of some official task.
2. This order does not relieve any supervisor of his supervisory responsibilities regardless of assignment. All supervisors share the responsibility that the police mission is carried out and those provisions of this General Order Manual are enforced.

Howard Skerry
HOWARD SKERRY
Chief of Police
