

**GENERAL ORDER**  
FAIRFAX COUNTY POLICE DEPARTMENT



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SUBJECT: REVISIONS TO THE MANUAL OF REGULATIONS AND GENERAL ORDERS      NUMBER: 001

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CANCELS ORDER DATED: 1-1-08      DATE: 4-1-12

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I. PURPOSE

To establish uniform procedures to be followed by all members of the Police Department when proposing changes to the Manual of Regulations and General Orders.

II. POLICY

The Manual of Regulations and General Orders contains directives of policy and procedures. Any proposed changes, additions or deletions to this document must be thoroughly reviewed to ensure that they withstand legal scrutiny, are operationally sound, conform to existing accreditation standards, and can be clearly and easily understood and adhered to by all affected personnel. To ensure General Orders reflect the Department's current organizational structure and are consistent with up-to-date policing strategies and practices, they are required to be reviewed and, if necessary, updated every four years. While amendments to a General Order may be proposed by all employees, the General Order itself can only be issued under the signatures of the Chief of Police and the County Executive, with concurrence by the Administrative Staff.

III. TERMINOLOGY

General Order: A comprehensive directive, coordinated with Administrative Staff and issued under the signature of the Chief of Police and the County Executive, which specifically defines the departmental policy, process, procedure or philosophy on stated actions or activities.

Policy: A guiding principle or course of action. While a General Order generally covers one broad issue, it also enumerates departmental policy on various aspects of that issue. Changes to an existing policy are made, via Command Staff memorandum, by the Chief of Police. While this amended policy may supersede a General Order, in whole or in part, the policy change becomes a General Order only when it is incorporated into the Manual of Regulations and General Orders, approved by Administrative Staff, and signed by the Chief of Police and the County Executive.

Procedure: The manner in which the policy will be executed. As in the case of "policy" described above, changes in departmental procedures may be made in

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order to alter “the way things are done.” It is entirely possible that changes to certain procedures may be made several times before they are officially incorporated in the General Orders package. Procedural changes are also made, via memorandum, under the signature of the Chief of Police.

Regulations: Prescribed rules of conduct.

IV. PROCEDURES

- A. Employees who identify a need to amend an existing General Orders or to create a new one, or make changes to current policies or procedures, should review the matter with their immediate supervisor for the purpose of consultation, direction, and coordination.
- B. The Manual of Regulations and General Orders can be found on the Department’s BLUENet site under the “Document Center” tab. Individuals wishing to propose changes should access this site to download the appropriate document into their system.
- C. All new General Orders, or amendments to existing ones, should be prepared in Microsoft Word format.
- D. When amending an existing General Order, wording that is no longer applicable should be crossed out using the Microsoft Word “strike-through” technique; new wording should be highlighted by using the highlight option. This is also true when moving paragraphs or sections within an Order. The pertinent paragraph should appear twice: once, struck out, at its original position, and again, highlighted, at its new location. A sentence should be added at the point of insertion, indicating the original location of the paragraph (“MOVED FROM SECTION XXX, etc.”). If paragraphs or sections are moved from one General Order to another, this fact should also be clearly identified (“MOVED FROM GENERAL ORDER XXXX, Section XXX, etc.”).
- E. To facilitate ease of reading, all gender references in General Orders should be masculine; unless otherwise specified, any gender reference applies to both male and female employees.

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- F. Each proposed new General Order should contain, as a minimum, the following subheadings. Other sections may be added as necessary.
1. Purpose: A brief statement regarding the need for the General Order.
  2. Policy: A statement of the department's policy and principles relating the subject of the General Orders.
  3. Procedure: Specific instructions on the implementation of the policies contained in the General Order.
  4. Legal References: A list of pertinent legal references for the General Order, to include the *Code of Virginia* and the *Code of the County of Fairfax, Virginia*.
  5. Accreditation Standards Reference: A listing of accreditation standards which must be satisfied in order to demonstrate departmental compliance.

Each new General Order should also be clearly identified with the statement: DRAFT GENERAL ORDER, at the top of the first page. This statement is also required on Orders that supersede existing ones: "DRAFT GENERAL ORDER; SUPERSEDES GENERAL ORDER XXX."

- G. All completed work products should be saved electronically and printed out in hard copy. Both the electronic and hard copy versions should be forwarded, through the chain of command, to the Chief's Office of Research and Support for review and processing.
- V. CHIEF'S OFFICE OF RESEARCH AND SUPPORT RESPONSIBILITIES:
- A. The Commander of the Chief's Office of Research and Support shall be responsible for staff review of all proposed or amended General Orders for legal issues, accreditation standards' compliance, and other relevant concerns. If the review process concludes that substantial changes are necessary, or the proposal does not withstand legal or accreditation requirements, the document will be returned to the originator with appropriate comments. If no change or clarification is necessary, the

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Chief's Office of Research and Support staff shall prepare the document for review by Administrative Staff.

- B. The commander of the Chief's Office of Research and Support shall be responsible for reviewing General Orders annually and identifying those that have not been updated within four or more years. The commander shall then identify the bureaus responsible for the selected General Orders and notify their commanders that a review will be required to ensure that the directives reflect the Police Department's current organizational structure and are consistent with up-to-date policing strategies and practices.
- C. All policy and procedural changes affecting a General Order and requiring immediate dissemination shall be prepared for distribution, via a Command Staff memorandum, by the originating entity following currently established procedures. The subject of the Command Staff memorandum shall be "Policy/Procedural Change," and the reference shall be the appropriate General Order. A statement indicating that the change supersedes the policy that is contained in the referenced General Order shall be included in the memorandum. A copy of the General Order or a specific section thereof, indicating the additions/deletions, will be attached to the Command Staff memorandum. The entire package, including the "Staffing and Decision Cover Sheet," shall be forwarded to the Chief's Office of Research and Support for the Chief's signature. Once signed, the package will be returned to the originating bureau for distribution. The Chief's Office of Research and Support staff will be responsible for ensuring that the changes are incorporated into the next quarterly revision of the Manual of Regulations and General Orders.
- D. Amendments to General Orders which do not require immediate dissemination throughout the agency shall be prepared and presented for Administrative Staff review and approval during the quarterly update to the Manual of Regulations and General Orders.
- E. The Chief's Office of Research and Support staff will, on a quarterly basis, compile all the amended/new General Orders into one package, present it for Administrative Staff review, obtain the required signatures, and ensure the document is distributed accordingly.

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- F. Only those General Orders, and amendments thereto, that have been reviewed by the Chief's Office of Research and Support, approved by Administrative Staff, and signed by the Chief of Police and the County Executive will be incorporated into the quarterly printing of the General Order update package.
- G. Concurrent with the distribution of the quarterly amendments to the General Orders, the Chief's Office of Research and Support staff shall also update the General Orders on the Department's BLUENet web site.

VI. GENERAL RESPONSIBILITIES

Any member of the Department who proposes a new departmental General Order shall include a listing of accreditation standards and pertinent legal references to include the *Code of Virginia* and the *Code of the County of Fairfax, Virginia*. Any member of the Department who proposes a change or alteration to an existing accreditation standards and legal references to ensure they are still applicable. Additions and deletions to the list of accreditation standards and legal references shall be included with the proposal.

Bureau commanders who have been notified that a General Order has not been updated within four or more years shall work with Chief's Office of Research and Support staff to make necessary changes and, following procedures outlined in Section IV, bring the General Order forward to the Administrative Staff within 120 days for their review.

All members of the Department are to ensure that any proposed changes to departmental General Orders, or any suggested alterations to current policy or procedure, are forwarded, through the chain of command, to the Chief's Office of Research and Support for review and dissemination, or other action as appropriate.

All employees of the Department are required to acknowledge receipt of quarterly updates to the General Orders electronically, via the Department's BLUENet.

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VII. ACCREDITATION STANDARDS REFERENCE

VLEPSC  
ADM.  
04.01  
09.01  
09.02  
10.01

This General Order becomes effective April 1, 2012 and rescinds all previous rules and regulations pertaining to the subject.

ISSUED BY:

APPROVED BY:

Handwritten signature of M. M. White in cursive script.

Chief of Police

Handwritten signature of Attilio in cursive script.

County Executive