


FAIRFAX COUNTY POLICE DEPARTMENT  GENERAL ORDER	SUBJECT: REVISIONS TO GENERAL ORDERS	NUMBER: 003
	EFFECTIVE DATE: December 2, 2024	REVIEW: November 2028
RESPONSIBLE ENTITY: PLANNING AND RESEARCH BUREAU		<input type="checkbox"/> New Directive <input type="checkbox"/> Replaces: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Revised: 12-02-24
ACCREDITATION STANDARDS:	CALEA 12.2.1, 12.2.2 <hr/> VLEPSC ADM.09.01, ADM.09.02	

I. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to establish uniform procedures to be followed by all members of the Fairfax County Police Department (FCPD) whenever proposing changes to the General Orders.

II. POLICY

It is the policy of the FCPD to maintain a formal written directive system that clearly states the Department’s policies, procedures, and regulations. Department members are encouraged to submit comments or recommendations regarding General Orders in order to ensure that the written directive system remains updated and germane to existing Department practices, procedures, training, expectations, and any applicable Collective Bargaining Act. General Orders must be thoroughly reviewed to ensure that they withstand legal scrutiny, are operationally sound, conform to existing accreditation standards and can be clearly understood and adhered to by all affected personnel. To ensure directives reflect the Department’s current organizational structure and are consistent with up-to-date policing strategies and practices, the Planning and Research Bureau (PRB), in conjunction with subject matter experts, the County Attorney’s Office, the Department’s Executive Staff, and the Fairfax Chapter of the Southern States Police Benevolent Association (SSPBA) as the designated exclusive bargaining agent for the police bargaining unit, conduct reviews and, when deemed necessary, updates to the General Orders.

III. DEFINITIONS

- A. Command Staff Memorandum (CSM): A written communication that contains information, advisories, or announcements of general or specific interest. Command staff memoranda are issued for a period of time, and when dated, these memoranda are cancelled after the specified date (e.g., a detective process announcement will include a deadline for interest submissions; thus, the announcement is self-canceling after the deadline).
1. Any command staff memorandum that alters or affects a General Order will be indexed with that General Order and included in the next review.
 2. Memoranda issued by competent authority shall have full authority, as provided in FCPD [Regulation 201.1, Knowledge and Obedience to Laws, Regulations, and Training](#).
- B. General Order: A comprehensive directive which specifically defines Departmental policy, procedure, or regulations on stated actions or activities. General Orders apply to all Department members, unless expressly stated otherwise.
- C. Policy: A general statement of agency principles for members on a specific issue that provides a framework for development of procedures and regulations. Each General Order shall include a policy statement.
- D. Procedure: A method of performing an operation or a manner of proceeding upon a course of action. Procedures set forth the exact actions to be taken to best achieve a desired objective.
- E. Regulations: A set of general responsibilities and standards of conduct within the General Orders outlining expectations of Department employees. Unless the content indicates otherwise, all Regulations apply to non-sworn as well as sworn employees.
- F. Subject Matter Expert: A Department member with a demonstrated understanding of a particular job, process, area, function, or technology that serves as the designated person to provide content for policy creation or update.
- G. Written Directive: Any written document used to guide or affect the performance or conduct of Department members.

IV. ISSUING AUTHORITY

Any member of the Department, by virtue of expertise or position, may be designated to author or provide source material for a written directive. The overall authority to issue, modify, or approve written directives resides with the Chief of Police. The subsequent appointment of a new Chief does not invalidate a written directive issued by a predecessor unless specifically stated. Written directives may be assigned under the authority and responsibility as follows:

- A. Command Staff Memorandum: Initiated by members of Command Staff (Lieutenants and above, including non-sworn Directors). Memoranda issued by the Chief of Police and Deputy Chiefs of Police establish Departmental policy and procedure. Only memoranda issued by the Chief of Police shall have the authority to amend General Orders.
- B. General Orders: Issued under the authority and signature of the Chief of Police and the County Executive.
- C. Regulations: Departmental rules of conduct outlined within the General Orders that are issued under the authority and signature of the Chief of Police.

V. PROCEDURES

- A. General Order Revisions/Additions
 - 1. Employees who identify a need to make changes to an existing General Order, or a need to create a new General Order, should review the matter with their immediate supervisor for the purpose of consultation, direction, and coordination.
 - 2. After consultation with their supervisor, Department members should contact the PRB, via FCPDPolicy@fairfaxcounty.gov with the proposed change.
 - 3. If the new policy or proposed changes are deemed by the PRB to be in compliance with applicable accreditation standards and do not conflict with existing Department directives or applicable law, the PRB may create a revised draft incorporating the proposed changes.
 - 4. The PRB may identify a Subject Matter Expert (SME) who may assist with the policy revision. The SME should use this General Order, any related written directives, available model policies, and when appropriate,

departmental and community input. The SME should submit their revisions within 30 days to the PRB.

5. The PRB will review the draft submitted by the SME, make any necessary edits to the content as well as the formatting if necessary, and insert the appropriate accreditation standards.
6. The PRB will coordinate the internal vetting and legal review process for the General Order, to include seeking feedback from the SSPBA once it has been reviewed by the Executive Staff. SSPBA leadership shall be provided ten (10) business days from receipt of the policy to provide feedback, and may request a reasonable extension of time if needed.
7. Upon review, approval, and appropriate signature(s), the General Order will be uploaded into the PowerDMS system for review and acknowledgement by all Department members.
8. The General Order will also be uploaded onto the Department's external webpage.

B. Command Staff Memoranda and Policy Change

1. All policy and procedural changes affecting a General Order requiring immediate dissemination shall be prepared for distribution via a Command Staff memorandum by the originating entity following currently established procedures.
2. The subject of the Command Staff memorandum shall be "Policy/Procedural Change," with a reference to the appropriate written directive and a statement indicating which General Order is affected.
3. A copy of the General Order, or specific section thereof, indicating the additions/deletions, will be attached to the Command Staff memorandum.
4. The entire package, including the PD-128 (Staffing and Decision Cover Sheet), shall be forwarded to the PRB for review and signature by the Chief of Police.
5. The PRB staff will be responsible for ensuring that the changes are incorporated into the next revision of the affected General Order.

VI. GENERAL ORDER DRAFT FORMAT

- A. All new General Orders will be prepared in Microsoft Word format (Font: Arial, Size: 12).
- B. Each new or revised General Order will be clearly identified in the header as a draft. Example includes: DRAFT GENERAL ORDER.
- C. When creating a new General Order, it should contain, at a minimum, the following subheadings: (Other sections may be added as necessary)
 - 1. Purpose: A brief statement regarding the need for the written directive.
 - 2. Policy: A statement of the department's policy and principles relating the subject of the written directive.
 - 3. Definitions (*when applicable*): Descriptions of words or phrases found within the written directive to give a sense of the context and meaning of the words or phrases.
 - 4. Procedures: Specific instructions on the implementation of the policies contained in the written directive.
 - 5. Legal References: A list of pertinent legal references (when applicable) for the General Order, to include the *Code of Virginia* and the *Code of the County of Fairfax, Virginia*.
- D. Visual aids such as charts, graphs, and reference pictures can be utilized when appropriate.
- E. When amending an existing General Order, wording that is no longer applicable should be crossed out using the Microsoft Word "strike-through" technique and/or "Track Changes" function; new wording should be highlighted in yellow by using the highlight option.
 - 1. This is also true when moving paragraphs or sections within a written directive. The pertinent paragraph should appear twice: once, struck out, at its original position, and again, highlighted, at its new location. A comment should be added utilizing the review feature in Microsoft Word 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 written directive to another, this fact should also be

clearly identified (“MOVED FROM GENERAL ORDER XXXX, Section XXX, etc.”).

- G. If a document requires extensive corrections, consult with PRB staff for guidance on an acceptable revision format.

VII. RESPONSIBILITIES

A. Subject Matter Experts (SMEs)

1. The employee identified as the SME will review the policy documents and provide any and all required and recommended language for the new/revised General Order.
2. Once their first draft of the newly drafted policy is complete, the SME will upload all revisions and supporting documentation to the designated electronic folder or email the document(s) to the IAPD Policy Manager.
3. The deadline for the initial draft to be returned to the IAPD should be no more than 30 days from receipt of notice, thus allowing sufficient time for processing and presentation to the administrative staff within 120 days.
4. When appropriate, the draft will then be given to the SME for a final review prior to facilitating the applicable internal and external reviews and obtaining the necessary signatures.

B. Planning and Research Bureau (PRB)

1. The commander of the PRB is responsible for staff review of all proposed or amended written directives 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, PRB staff shall prepare the document for review by the Executive Staff.
2. The commander of the PRB shall be responsible for reviewing General Orders and SOPs and identifying those in need of update. The commander shall then identify the bureaus responsible for the selected written directives and notify their commanders that a review will be required to ensure that the directives reflect the Department’s current

organizational structure and are consistent with up-to-date policing strategies and practices.

3. Amendments to General Orders which do not require immediate dissemination throughout the agency shall be prepared and presented for Executive Staff review and approval by the PRB.
4. Following the internal and/or external review, the PRB will facilitate a review of the written directive with the County Attorney's Office.
5. The PRB will then submit the written directive to the Chief and Deputy Chiefs of Police for review and approval.
6. Upon approval from the Assistant Chiefs, the written directive will be given to the Chief of Police for review and approval.
7. The written directive will then be delivered to the Government Center for approval by the County Executive.
8. Only those General Orders and amendments thereto, that have been reviewed by the PRB, approved by the Executive Staff, and signed by the Chief of Police and the County Executive when appropriate, will be incorporated into the PowerDMS update package.
9. Concurrent with the distribution of the regular amendments to the General Orders, PRB staff shall also update the General Orders on the Department's blueNET web site.
10. The PRB commander shall be responsible for archiving true copies of each signed General Order as well as purging previous versions in accordance with any applicable laws, regulations, and/or County directives.


C. Internal Affairs Bureau – Inspections

1. The Inspections Division of the Internal Affairs Bureau will be responsible for quarterly audits to ensure all employees have acknowledged any/all policies as required in PowerDMS within 30 days of the policy's effective date.

General Order 003 becomes effective on the above date, and hereby rescinds all previous rules and regulations pertaining to the subject.

ISSUED BY:

APPROVED BY:



Chief of Police



County Executive