

**GENERAL ORDER**  
FAIRFAX COUNTY POLICE DEPARTMENT



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SUBJECT: INSPECTIONS	NUMBER: 320.1
CANCELS ORDER DATED:	DATE: 4-1-13

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I. PURPOSE

To establish the Department's line, staff, evidence, and equipment inspections procedures and processes.

II. POLICY

The inspections process provides internal controls to foster efficiency, effectiveness, and chain of custody adherence to all applicable laws and professional standards. Additionally, to provide an ever-present culture of safety, all personnel shall be held accountable for the proper working order of equipment, facilities, and work habits utilizing work equipment.

The inspectional process is designed to educate all employees and volunteers in the standards associated with all equipment use and evidentiary procedures. However, should non-compliance issues be found during the inspectional processes, progressive discipline will be administered by the appropriate supervisory and/or command staff when necessary.

III. TERMINOLOGY

**Essential equipment:** Equipment issued to specific divisions or stations for routine law enforcement operations.

**Evidence:** Any property that comes into the custody of the Department, when such property may tend to prove or disprove the commission of a crime or the identity of a suspect, pursuant to an official criminal investigation.

**Facility:** Any building, structure, or rooms that are owned, leased or used by the County and/or Police Department for the purpose of conducting business or functions.

**Line inspection:** An inspection of personnel, equipment, and/or facilities, conducted by those with supervisory authority.

**Staff inspection:** An inspection conducted by designated, authorized personnel, who do not have control of the personnel, facilities, and/or procedures being inspected.

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FAIRFAX COUNTY POLICE DEPARTMENT



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---

**Stored agency equipment:** Equipment that is maintained by the Department and essential for specific events or situations, but not utilized on a regular or frequent basis, either in an operational capacity or as part of training.

**Temporary property collection point:** A secure, Department authorized room, designated by each station and certain divisions to house property from the time it is collected by the officer or detective until it is picked up by the Property and Evidence technicians, or delivered directly to the primary Property and Evidence Section. Property collection points shall be maintained in compliance with prevailing laws, rules, and standards.

IV. INSPECTIONAL AUTHORITY

A. Line Inspections

Line inspections may be conducted at the discretion of any supervisor within the chain of command. Line inspections shall be conducted in accordance with Regulation 201.12, which states:

*Inspections of employee's dress, uniform or equipment may be made at any time by competent authority. Such inspections shall include, but not be limited to, examination of lockers, desks, or any other space on departmental premises used by an employee.*

B. Staff Inspections

The responsibility and authority for conducting staff inspections of organizational components is vested in the Internal Affairs Bureau (IAB) Inspections Division. The IAB reports directly to the Chief of Police. Personnel assigned to the Inspections Division are authorized to conduct inspections involving any employee or entity of the Department, regardless of rank or assignment. Failure of an employee to submit to, or cooperate with, an inspection conducted by Inspections Division personnel may subject the employee to disciplinary action.

Staff inspections will be conducted at the direction of the IAB commander or the Chief of Police. The use of temporary inspection personnel to assist may be coordinated with the affected bureau commander and approved by the Chief of

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Police. The findings of all staff inspections shall be reported directly to the Chief of Police.

## V. PROCESS

### A. Line Inspections

Commanders shall ensure that first line supervisors under their command conduct line inspections on a semi-annual basis at a minimum to include:

- Conducting open inspections of personnel, material, procedures, and results of police operations.
- Correcting unsatisfactory conditions that the supervisor or manager is able to remedy.
- Inspecting and correcting conditions reported as unsatisfactory.
- Inspecting line operations to evaluate the extent to which resources are being properly applied to the attainment of Departmental objectives.
- Reporting problems beyond the scope of a supervisor or manager.

All inspections shall be documented electronically via the BLUENet inspections reporting form. Deficiencies and any corrective actions taken as a result of the line inspection shall be noted in the electronic form.

### B. Staff Inspections

Staff inspections include observation and analysis of bureaus and divisional procedures and practices for compliance with applicable laws, rules, regulations, and policies. Staff inspections shall be accomplished as follows:

- Inspections may be conducted on a scheduled or unscheduled (no-notice) basis. Scheduled staff inspections generally target divisions and district stations. In some instances, sections or

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squads may be inspected. Generally, scheduled inspections will be announced 30 days in advance. Unscheduled inspections may be conducted on rare occasions where the urgency and sensitivity of an issue or specific concern warrants an immediate assessment. The IAB commander must approve all unscheduled inspections.

- Scheduled and unscheduled inspections of personnel, records, facilities, and equipment, including appropriate interviews with employees and management of the component being inspected, may be conducted to determine adherence to established directives.
- Prior to a scheduled inspection, the commander of the unit to be inspected shall be notified of the scope of the inspection. During this pre-inspection phase, the inspection team shall also ask the commander to provide any records or data that may be subject to review.
- Inspections shall be conducted in a manner that ensures minimal disruption of the component's operation. The Inspections Division staff will work flexible schedules in order to observe all operational components of the unit being inspected.
- Upon conclusion of an inspection, the inspection team will brief the unit commander of its findings.
- Within 30 days following an inspection, a written report will be forwarded by the IAB commander to the Chief of Police, detailing the process, findings, and recommendations. A copy of the report will also be made available to the Deputy Chiefs and commander(s) of the inspected unit. Reports that may raise liability issues shall be sent to the County Attorney's Office for review. Inspection reports shall be written in the administrative investigation format, and classified using an inspection number.
- Within 30 days of the findings presented to the Chief, commanders of the inspected bureau/division are required to acknowledge the inspection report and initiate change with any

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---

issues found “not in compliance”. Commanders shall write an “Action Taken” report, addressing issues of noncompliance, how they will be remedied, and a timeline for becoming compliant.

- A follow up inspection, where appropriate, may be conducted after any inspection where the findings suggest that the unit is “not in compliance”, and/or following an Action Taken report. The Inspections Division commander shall notify the Chief via memo when all issues found not in compliance have been resolved, or if the unit has failed to implement corrective actions, as described in the action taken memo.
- Division reports shall be maintained in the Internal Affairs Bureau. The IAB commander must authorize access to these reports.

**C. Property and Evidence Inspections**

Twice a year, the Inspections Division, at the direction of the Chief of Police or his designee, shall conduct an unannounced inspection of the Property and Evidence Section. These unannounced inspections may be conducted at the primary Property and Evidence Section facility, or they may be conducted at the temporary property collection points at the district stations or those divisions with temporary collection points. At least one unannounced inspection of the procedures and inventory of the narcotics used for training shall also be conducted by the Inspections Division.

Annually, the Inspections Division shall conduct an announced audit of the primary Property and Evidence Section.

All inspections and audits shall be documented. Deficiencies shall be addressed according to the procedures in Section IV, B.

**D. Essential Equipment**

Division and station commanders are responsible for ensuring that all essential equipment necessary to specific police services and operations is inspected monthly.

**GENERAL ORDER**  
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---

E. Stored Agency Equipment

The Department maintains a variety of equipment that is essential to specific events and operations, but is not utilized in a regular or frequent manner, either in daily operations or in training.

In order to ensure this equipment is prepared for deployment and safe for operations, it shall be inspected, at a minimum, twice a year. It is the responsibility of the bureau, division, or station maintaining the items to conduct the inspections. These inspections may include, but not be limited to, safety checks of lights/sirens, communication devices, tires, etc.; functionality checks of technology or other electronic devices; examination of expiration dates; and replacement or restocking of supplies.

F. Special Purpose Vehicles

Divisions and stations shall handle designated special purpose vehicles according to the procedures outline in General Order 501.1, Section XVI.

VI. ESSENTIAL AND STORED AGENCY EQUIPMENT INVENTORY LISTS

All bureau commanders shall develop an authorized list of both essential and stored equipment on the BLUENet. Only commanders are authorized to edit these lists. The BLUENet form shall be used to document all equipment inspections, note deficiencies, and record corrective actions.

VII. ACCREDITATION STANDARDS REFERENCE

**VLEPSC**

**ADM.**

16.03

19.01

19.02

19.03

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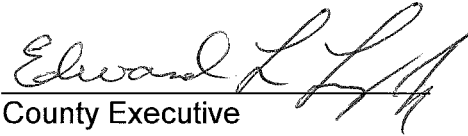
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This General Order becomes effective April 1, 2013, and rescinds all previous rules and regulations pertaining to the subject.

ISSUED BY:

  
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Chief of Police

APPROVED BY:

  
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County Executive