


Atlanta Police Department – Standard Operating Procedure			
	APD.SOP.1030 – Written Directive & Forms Effective Date: July 7th, 2025		
Chief Darin Schierbaum	Signature by: DS	Date Signed:7/7/2025	Renewal: 2029

SIGNIFICANT CHANGES

APD Staff,

The City of Atlanta Police Department is committed to transparency, accountability, and excellence in its operations. Since 2005, the Department has maintained national accreditation through the Commission on Accreditation for Law Enforcement Agencies (CALEA), demonstrating its ongoing dedication to best practices in policing. As part of this accreditation, CALEA requires the Department to include more than 450 standards within its policies, covering a wide range of areas including policy development, high-risk operations, use of force, patrol procedures, criminal investigations, and community engagement.

Whenever possible, departmental policies and procedures are made publicly accessible to build community trust, promote understanding, and ensure lawful and equitable policing practices. However, certain policies and procedures may be restricted from public publication to protect the safety of officers, safeguard tactical and investigative assignments and preserve the integrity of ongoing or future investigations. These exceptions are necessary to ensure that sensitive operations of law enforcement are not compromised, and that our officers can effectively respond to threats without jeopardizing public safety.

The Department continually evaluates its policies with the goal of balancing openness with operational and CALEA standards and strives to provide valuable information publicly without undermining its mission to create a safer Atlanta.

APD.SOP.1030 has been revised to combined APD.SOP.1031- Forms, as well as to include current practices by removing outdated language and procedures. Please also note that due to PowerDMS being the central hub to subpoenas, policies and training material, **it is now policy for employees to check PowerDMS at least once a week** in order to read and sign any new documents assigned to them.

Thank you and stay informed!

Policy and Standards Section
Planning, Research, and Accreditation Unit



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1. PURPOSE

To ensure policies are clear, consistent, lawful, and reflective of current operational practices by establishing the structure, responsibilities, and standards for the creation, approval, revision, and distribution of written directives and forms within the Atlanta Police Department.
(CALEA 6th ed. Standard 12.2.1 a, f, g, h)

2. POLICY

The Atlanta Police Department will maintain a written directive system that governs its operations and administrative procedures and forms. All employees are required to comply with written directives issued by the Chief of Police, or authorizing commander. Written directives will be maintained in a central repository, regularly reviewed, and updated to reflect the Department's mission, legal standards, and best practices.

3. RESPONSIBILITIES

- 3.1 The Chief of Police is responsible for the department's written directive system. This responsibility includes the authority to issue, modify, remove, and approve all special orders, standard operating procedures, and manuals. (CALEA 6th ed. Standard 12.2.1b)
- 3.2 Division and section commanders are responsible for implementing applicable department directives within their respective commands and provide input to the PRAU Unit during review cycles, or as needed.
- 3.3 Commanders issuing Command memorandums will conform to applicable city ordinances, state laws, federal laws, Department policies and procedures, and the standards set by the Commission on Accreditation for Law Enforcement Agencies (CALEA), State Law Enforcement Certification Program, 6th Edition. (CALEA 6th ed. Standard 12.2.1c)
- 3.4 The Training Section commander is responsible for issuing, reviewing, and maintaining training material and will coordinate training on new and revised directives, ordinances, and laws. (CALEA 6th ed. Standard 12.2.1c)
- 3.5 The Planning, Research, and Accreditation Unit (PRAU) will manage the department's written directive system to include: formatting, publishing, maintenance, and review of department directives. (CALEA 6th ed. Standard 12.2.1i)
- 3.6 Supervisors will ensure that their subordinates receive, read, understand, and adhere to applicable directives.
- 3.7 Employees are responsible for checking PowerDMS at least once a week in order to read and sign any new written directives that apply to them.

4. PROCEDURE

4.1 GENERAL

- 4.1.1 Written Directives will not conflict with City of Atlanta ordinances, state law, federal law, or accreditation standards. Written directives will not conflict with the policies and procedures of the issuing authority's chain of command, including the Mayor's administrative orders.



- 4.1.2 Interim reviews may be conducted as necessary due to changes in law, best practices, or operational needs. However, standard reviews of policies and forms will be completed every 2-4 years by the PDD Division.
- 4.1.3 The Planning, Research, and Accreditation Unit (PRAU) will prepare the final draft of all department special orders, standard operating procedures, forms and manuals.
- 4.1.4 The Training Section Commander or higher authority determines the format of training materials. The format will conform to the requirements of the Georgia Peace Officer Standards and Training (POST) Council, when applicable.

4.2 REVIEW PROCESS

- 4.2.1 PRAU will coordinate the review of department special orders, standard operating procedures, forms and manuals to determine the need for revision, cancellation, or incorporation into another directive. (CALEA 6th ed. Standard 44.1.2)
- 4.2.2 During the review, renewal and/or revision process, the following sections will be included, but not limited, in the revision discussions or approval process:
 - 1. CALEA Accreditation Unit
 - 2. Divisions and Units that are affected by the SOP
 - 3. The Training Section
 - 4. The City of Atlanta Legal Team
- 4.2.3 By December 31st each year, the Division Commanders, or their designee, will review their command memorandums, and provide any necessary changes back to the Planning, Research and Accreditation Unit.

4.3 POLICY NUMBERING, STRUCTURE, AND CONTENT STANDARDS

- 4.3.1 In order to have a consistent format, it is essential that directives are written Form APD-700 Written Directive template, and include:
 - 1. Type of Directive
 - 2. Effective and Renewal Date
 - 3. Number and Title
 - 4. Applicable to:
 - 5. Approval Authority, Signature and Date signed.
- 4.3.2 PRAU will issue all numbers relating to special orders, standard operating procedures, forms and command memorandums. The number consists of letters and numerals that identify the organizational level, type of directive, and sequence number of the directive within that major category or year. A list of categories and their description can be found as follows:

Example: APD.SOP.1030 – Written Directive

- 1. The first set of letters (APD in the example) represents the Atlanta Police Department.
- 2. The second set of letters (APD.SOP.1030) represents the type of directive:
 - a. SO - Special Order



- b. SOP - Standard Operating Procedure
- c. CM - Command Memorandum
- d. RCT - Roll Call Training

3. The third section following the directive type are a sequence of numbers that represent the major category, or chapter, in the policy manual. The SOP categories and corresponding numbers are:

No. Category -----	Topics -----
1 Administration	Administration and organization
2 Personnel	Personnel issues
3 General Operations	General law enforcement issues
4 Field Operations	Patrol operations issues
5 Criminal Investigations	Criminal investigative issues
6 Support Operations	Communications, records, etc.
7. Community Services	Community Services Division

For a special order or command memorandum this part would be the last two digits of the year; for example, APD.SO.25.01.

4.3.3 Each directive should include the following within the body:

- 1. **PURPOSE:** Clear and concise statement of the reason for the directive.
- 2. **POLICY:** Clear and concise statement of the policy which the directive addresses. (CALEA 6th ed. Standard 12.2.1f)
- 3. **RESPONSIBILITIES:** Designation of specific responsibility, with particular attention to supervisory and command roles.
- 4. **PROCEDURE:** Description of action that is to be taken, by whom, and within what time constraints. (CALEA 6th ed. Standard 12.2.1h)
- 5. **DEFINITIONS:** Define any terms that may be misinterpreted and those that have special meaning in the directive. List the terms in a logical sequence, grouping sequence, or alphabetically. Underline the defined terms and format them as follows:
- 6. **CANCELLATION:** Use this heading to specify what directives are cancelled. A directive cannot cancel a directive issued by a higher authority. Do not use a blanket "anything in conflict" statement but specify directives by number.
- 7. **REFERENCES:** Citation of laws, directives, or other authority governing the subject matter of the directive. Unless quoted or paraphrased in the directive, referenced documents should be accessible to those who must implement the directive.



4.4 DISTRIBUTION, USAGE & CANCELLATIONS

- 4.4.1 New and/or revised directives approved by the Chief of Police will be published via the PowerDMS records management program. Employees will receive the documents automatically upon publication and are required to read, and electronically sign for, each new and/or revised directive published, to acknowledge receipt and understanding.
- 4.4.2 All employees will have access to the departments policies, procedures, and forms, unless the directive has been made confidential by the Chief of Police, or their designee.
- 4.4.3 A directive issued by a commander that leaves the position remains in effect until:
 - 1. A higher authority overrules it.
 - 2. A new directive has been created overruling it by the same authority.
 - 3. It is cancelled or expires.
- 4.4.4 Within five working days of an employee's transfer into a new unit or a significant change in the employee's duties, the unit commander will ensure the employee reviews relevant directives and forms.
- 4.4.5 Allow adequate time between the distribution date and the effective date for training on the new or revised directive and for any related procedural changes, printing, equipment purchases, etc.

4.5 FIVE DAY REPORTING REQUIREMENT RETENTION

If the City modifies any Calhoun SOP for any reason, within five business days (i.e., weekdays except federal holidays) the City will inform Plaintiffs' counsel or Special Master and provide a copy of the modified SOP to Plaintiffs' counsel and/or Special Master. This requirement will be referred to as the 'Five Day Reporting Requirement.

****This Subsection, 4.5, may not be deleted, revised, or amended pursuant to the Orders in Calhoun, et al. v. Pennington, et al. 1:09-CV-3286-TCB. Consult the City of Atlanta Department of Law with any questions or concerns.****

4.6 WRITTEN DIRECTIVE SYSTEM MAINTENANCE

- 4.6.1 The PRAU will:
 - 1. Maintain a log of all department special orders, forms and standard operating procedures. This log lists the title, effective date, and cancellation date.
 - 2. Maintain original hard copies of all department special orders, standard operating procedures, and manuals. The Planning, Research and Accreditation Unit will maintain cancelled directives permanently.
 - 3. Maintain a subject directory or on-line search capability for all active special orders, standard operating procedures, work rules, and manuals within the department. (CALEA 6th ed. Standard 12.2.1e)
 - 4. Maintain a listing of documents that are being reviewed and report on the status of all special orders, standard operating procedures, forms and manuals to the division commanders by December 31 of each year.



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- 4.6.2 The administrative office in each division and section will maintain a log of issued command memorandums and maintain the originals of all command memorandums issued by the division.
- 4.6.3 The Training Section will maintain the originals of all training materials, associated revision notices, as well as acting as the permanent storage repository for all cancelled training materials.
- 4.6.4 PowerDMS will automatically record and archive all signatures submitted for electronically filed documents.
- 4.6.5 PDD will maintain a set of up-to-date reference materials. The set of reference materials will include:
1. Code of Ordinances, City of Atlanta, volumes I through III, or the excerpt produced by the Planning, Research and Accreditation Unit.
 2. A manual of Georgia laws (criminal, juvenile and traffic).
 3. Other references specified by the Chief of Police, or their designee.

5. DEFINITIONS

Written Directive: A formal document that provides guidance, policies, or procedures, including Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs), Special Orders, Training Bulletins, Administrative Orders, and Department Memoranda.

Standard Operating Procedure (SOP): A permanent directive that governs operational or administrative practices.

Special Order: A directive issued for a temporary or specific purpose.

Calhoun SOP: The following SOPs are considered Calhoun SOPs per the 2024 Court order.

- APD.SOP.2010 - Work Rules
- APD.SOP.2011 - General Conduct
- APD.SOP.2130 - Dress Code
- APD.SOP.3020 - Search and Seizure
- APD.SOP.3030 - Arrest Procedures
- APD.SOP.3065 - Field Interviews

6. CANCELLATIONS

APD.SOP.1030 – Written Directive System published 4/30/2020

APD.SOP.1031 – Forms *Archived*

7. REFERENCES

Commission on Accreditation for Law Enforcement Agencies (CALEA) Standards 12.2.1, 12.2.2

City of Atlanta Records Retention Policy

Georgia Open Records Act (O.C.G.A. § 50-18-70)