

General Order 9-93

S-4

10 May 1993

Subject: *Departmental Administrative Filing System*

POLICY

It is the policy of the Baltimore Police Department to maintain timely, accurate and complete administrative records, organized in systematic logical groupings, to ensure maximum usefulness, internal integrity and prompt retrieval.

GENERAL

The Departmental Administrative Filing System was developed to ensure uniformity in filing methods, to include the classification, use, maintenance and retention of administrative records and executive correspondence, between the centralized Master Administrative File located in the Human Resources Bureau, and the smaller, decentralized Administrative Files located within various department commands. (These files exclude offense reports, individual investigative reports or any of the criminal records maintained by the Central Records Division.)

To avoid needless storage of documents, administrative material will only be filed by the office which prepares it (Office of Origin), each office which must act upon it (Office of Responsibility), and, in exceptional cases, when a copy is sent to the Master Administrative File on some matter of possible historical significance.

In some cases, the same office may act in both capacities. In many cases, while only one office has final responsibility for action and while only one office can be the Office of Responsibility, other offices can be required to take intermediary action and will file copies of documents which relate to the particular action they take.

The file copies of the Office of Origin and the Office of Responsibility are the copies of record for the Baltimore Police Department.

FILING SYSTEM

The Administrative Filing System consists of eight major divisions: Administration (ADM), Legal (LEG), Liaison (LIA), Operations (OPS), Personnel (PER), Public Relations (PR), Services (SRV), and Training (TRN). Documents are classified for filing by subject.

How to Classify Correspondence

The Master Outline consists of two parts - a filing code and a subject or title. Under the eight major divisions are as many first, second and third subdivisions as are necessary. The following example is taken from the Master Outline:

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<u>Filing Code</u>		<u>Subject</u>
ADM	(Major Division)	Administration
ADM 4	(Major Division & First Subdivision)	Budget and Finance
ADM 4-2	Major Division, First, Second & Subdivisions)	Purchasing Section - Fiscal Division
ADM 4-2-1	(Major Division, First, Second & Third Subdivisions)	Purchase Requisitions

Providing for Growth

Since the Administrative filing System is subject-oriented, every new subject which will develop with time cannot be foreseen. Accordingly, the system provides for adding first, second and third subdivisions whenever these prove to be appropriate.

File Retention Guidelines

All documents placed in the Administrative File fall into either of the following categories, and should be filed as appropriate:

- a. Continued Indefinitely -- All correspondence and documents having permanent legal or administrative value shall be retained in their original form, or on micro files with the original records destroyed.
- b. Limited Retention -- All correspondence and documents not designated as permanent shall be filed, unless otherwise specified, for a period of three years, after which time they may be destroyed.

RESPONSIBILITIES

For the purpose of this directive, the administrative File Clerk is any person who classifies the works with the Administrative File System as part of their work assignment.

- Administrative 1.** Place the appropriate classification in the upper right hand corner of all file copies. File Clerk, when classifying a record, determine the subject of the document, and utilize the master Outline and alphabetical index to choose the filing code. No consideration is given to what office prepares it or what office receives it. The subject matter of the record itself is the sole consideration. (For example, a report prepared by the Education and Training Division for the Police Commissioner, with reference to law enforcement programs at various colleges, would have College Programs as the subject matter, and would be classified as TRN 5. If the report pertained to the Community College of Baltimore, a particular college program, it would be further coded as TRN 5-1.)

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***Administrative
File Clerk
(continued)***

2. May develop an alphabetical card index to facilitate classification or location of records. Arrange subjects alphabetically with their file code as listed in the Master Outline.
3. When locating a record, utilize the Master Outline as a reference. However, initially the alphabetical index may also be helpful in searching for a specific subject.
4. Keep all administrative files in a uniform manner as prescribed by this Order.
5. Although files are annual in character, do not physically separate them by year. Divide the files within a folder, by year, inserting a plain piece of 8 ½ x 11" blue paper between years. Only remove an annual accumulation permanently from the main file in accordance with the File Retention Guidelines contained in this Order, and the following:
 - a. When correspondence and documents not designated as permanent may have future historical significance, offer them to the Master Administrative File. If returned from the Master Administrative File Clerk with instructions to offer the material to the Hall of Records for deposit in the State Archives, complete the forms provided and release the material as directed.
 - b. Maintain a record of the incidence of reference to materials in the limited retention file in order to identify those materials frequently referred to which should be retained.
 - c. Refer all matters in question regarding retention status to your Commanding Officer for disposition.
6. Cross reference documents/records when:
 - Two or more subjects are covered in one document.
 - The subject matter is not clearly discernible.
 - a. Indicate cross references on the original document by placing a second (or third) code under the first code, as follows:

ADM 6
REF. - PER 2-2
 - b. Fill out a yellow 8 ½ X 11" Cross Reference Sheet (Form 93/144) and file under PER 2-2, making reference to the record filed under ADM 6. (Cross Reference Sheets are not considered records, but tools.) When necessary, any number of cross references may be made for a single record. Cross referencing is designed to make filing and searching easier; however, this process should not become a major task impeding normal filing operations. An example of the format of a Cross Reference Sheet is given below.

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Sample Cross Reference Sheet

CROSS REFERENCE SHEET

CROSS REFERENCE NO.:

DATE:

MAIN SUBJECT:

TO:

DATE OF:

FROM:

FILED UNDER:

BRIEF SUMMARY:

7. Do not add major divisions to the file. In order to add subdivisions, obtain clearance from the Master Administrative File Clerk.
8. Whenever material is removed from the files, ensure a pink 4 X 11 ½" File Check-Out Card (Form 93/143) is completed and inserted into the files in the position which was occupied by the removed material (even if the material being checked out does not leave the office).
9. Designate a receptacle for the retention of returned documents, and file as appropriate.
10. May not have a need to use all classifications in filing. Use only those major divisions and subdivisions as are necessary. (Do not maintain empty folders.) If a small amount of material is accumulated on a major subject, only use the major divider. (For example, an office may have three documents under the ADM category. Although individually they might be classified ADM 2, ADM 4-3-2 and ADM 6-8, since the volume is small, they do not need individual folders. File all in a single folder. Use subdivisions only where reference is frequent or there is sufficient volume.)
11. After classifying and coding material, place in the correct folder in chronological order with the latest date to the front. (When several pieces relate to the same specific subject, bring all of them forward and join with the latest piece.)
12. Do not set up a folder for anticipated need.

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13. If a folder fills up, it is not necessary to subdivide for this reason alone. A companion folder may be added for the surplus. Do not overload folders. Do not place more than 50% of material in one folder.
 14. Divide major categories by fifth-cut press board metal tab filing guides with the category designation on the first position. Hold material in kraft or manila folders with a typewritten indication of the filing code and subject.
 15. Do not place paper clips within the file folders.
 16. Do not file envelopes with correspondence. (If the correspondence does not contain a return address, copy the envelope address, if available, onto the correspondence.)
 17. Do not maintain duplicate file copies unless specifically directed. Multiple copies and all printed or mimeographed material are considered non-record and should be destroyed as soon as no longer needed.
 18. Do not use administrative file cabinets as storage space for office supplies, equipment, forms, or other departmental or personal property. (Store adequate supplies of forms and other expendable items in desk drawers or supply cabinets.)
- Master Administrative File Clerk**
19. File material in the department's Master Administrative File in accordance with this Order. Restrict access to this file as appropriate.
 20. When material not designated as permanent (which may have future historical significance) is offered to the Master Administrative File, file as appropriate. If the material should be offered for deposit in the State Archives, return the material with specific procedures and necessary forms to the appropriate Administrative File Clerk for completion and release.
 21. Accumulate and issue supplements to, or revisions of, the Master Outline periodically.
 22. Exercise control and coordination over the addition of subdivisions to the eight major divisions to maintain uniformity.
- Commanding Officer**
23. Assign the administrative filing to one person. Ensure this designee is qualified to determine what correspondence and documents have a continuing administrative or legal value to your Command. No other person shall perform this task except in their absence.
 24. Access to the administrative file shall be restricted to the Staff Inspections Section, the Commanding Officer, the Administrative File Clerk, the immediate supervisor of the Administrative File Clerk, and/or a designee of the Commanding Officer. When material is removed from the file, a completed File Check-out Card shall be inserted where appropriate. Material which is being returned to the file shall be placed in the designated receptacle.
- Deputy Commissioner**
25. Coordinate the issuance of Master Outline supplements or revisions with the Master Administrative File Clerk.
- Human Resources Bureau**
26. Ensure access to the Master Administrative File is limited to the Master Administrative File Clerk.

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- Police Commissioner's Office** 27. Whenever administrative correspondence going outside the department is signed by the Police Commissioner, forward a file copy to the Master File Clerk.
- Deputy Commissioner's Offices** 28. Letters relating to routine and repetitive operational matters will generally be signed by the appropriate Deputy Commissioner within whose bureau the particular activity is handled. In these cases, the file copy will be retained by the office of origin.

RECISIONS -- Remove from manuals/files and recycle/destroy:

General Order 67-17, "Departmental Administrative Filing System Manual," dated 5 October 1967, revised 1 July 1971 (Old General Order A-11).

Police Commissioner's Memorandum 68-2, "Implementation of Departmental Administrative Filing System," dated 4 January 1968.

COMMUNICATION OF DIRECTIVE

Commanding officers and supervisors shall communicate the contents of this directive to their subordinates and ensure compliance. This directive is effective on the date of publication.

Commissioner

ANNEXES

- A. Master Outline for Departmental Administrative Files (Limited Distribution - All Administrative File Clerks) *[Pages A-1 through A-25]*
- B. Administrative File Subject Index (Limited Distribution All Administrative File Clerks) *[Pages B-1 through B-11]*

DISTRIBUTION

"B"
Plus All Administrative File Clerks
Plus All Departmental Bulletin Boards

I certify that I have read and fully understand this Order.

signature

Sample Cross Reference Sheet

CROSS REFERENCE SHEET

CROSS REFERENCE NO.:

DATE:

MAIN SUBJECT:

TO:

DATE OF:

FROM:

FILED UNDER:

BRIEF SUMMARY: