

	<p style="text-align: center;">BRIDGEPORT POLICE DEPARTMENT</p> <p style="text-align: center;">POLICY AND PROCEDURE GENERAL ORDER</p>	Distribution	General Order Number
		ALL PERSONNEL	<b>5.28</b>
		Original Issue Date	Reissue/Effective Date
		5/21/19	12/20/19
Order Title:  <b>MARINE UNIT</b>	Accreditation Standard: POSTC: 1.3.56		Section  5
	Section Title PATROL FUNCTIONS		
Rescinds: N/A		<b>Armando J. Perez, Chief of Police</b>	

*This General Order is for departmental use only and does not apply in any criminal or civil proceeding. This General Order should not be construed as creation of a higher legal standard of safety or care in an evidentiary sense with respect to third party claims. Violations of this General Order will only form the basis for departmental administrative sanctions. Violations of law will form the basis for civil and criminal sanctions in a recognized judicial setting*

## I. PURPOSE

The purpose of this directive is to establish guidelines for the supervision, operation, and utilization of the Bridgeport Police Department Marine Unit.

## II. POLICY

The Bridgeport Police Department supports a Marine Unit (Unit) to provide and maintain a safe environment for boaters and persons. Marine Unit vessels may be used for special purpose patrol, search and rescue operations, salvage operations, and other duties as specified in this directive.

## III. PROCEDURES

### A. Organization

1. The Commander of the Marine Unit is responsible for the overall supervision of Unit personnel while such personnel are involved in Marine Unit activities.
2. The Unit Commander, in consultation with the Chief of Police or his designee may identify a Bridgeport Police Department sergeant to be assigned as Unit Supervisor. The Unit Supervisor will assure that all activities carried out by Unit personnel conform to the Bridgeport Police Department guidelines and directives when such personnel are involved in Unit activities.
3. The Unit will maintain a roster of sworn personnel eligible for Marine Unit assignments. The Unit Commander, in consultation with the Unit Supervisor

will make recommendations to the Chief of Police or his designee for Unit assignments following a selection process that conforms with Department directives outlining the selection process for temporary assignments.

4. Officers assigned to Unit activities will report any unusual occurrences to a Unit Supervisor as soon as possible following an event. The Unit Supervisor will notify the Unit Commander, if warranted, and initiate additional notifications if appropriate. Examples of “unusual occurrences” include, but are not limited to injuries to Unit personnel, accidents, or property damage.

## **B. Marine Unit Objectives and Circumstances For Use**

1. The purpose and objectives of the Marine Unit are to maintain a safe environment for boaters and persons, including visitors along the shoreline, respond to calls for assistance and enforce state statutes and city ordinances.
2. Unit equipment and personnel may be used to respond to the following:
  - a. Routine or selective patrols;
  - b. Search and Recovery;
  - c. Marine accident response, investigation;
  - d. Waterway closures;
  - e. Special Events;
  - f. Escorts;
  - g. Infrastructure inspections;
  - h. Drug interdiction;
  - i. Marine safety and prevention efforts; and
  - j. Other assignments as determined by the Unit Commander.
3. During Dive operations, a Dive Team supervisor or senior diver will dictate boat maneuvers, actions or anchoring locations

## **C. Authorization and Limitations of Use**

1. The Commander or Unit Supervisor must approve any routine or preplanned patrols or deployment.
2. Duty hours will be determined by the Marine Unit Commander according to operational needs and Collective Bargaining Agreement. Unit personnel may be assigned to cover special target areas, special enforcement functions, or other functions as deemed necessary and appropriate. Unit members understand that this assignment requires flexibility with regard to Unit assignments.

3. In the case of an emergency or request for immediate assistance, an on-duty Marine Unit member may launch a vessel. That member must request any on-duty Marine Unit member to respond to assist. A single Marine Unit member may launch if accompanied by another sworn police officer or public safety official and must notify a line-supervisor of their decision. The team member must also request that a team call-back be initiated. A Unit Supervisor or Commander will be notified of the Unit activation as soon as practical.
4. The Marine Unit Supervisor or Commander may cancel a request for activation when he believes the use of the vessels would be unsafe due to weather conditions or other concerns. Boats/personnel will not be launched or allowed to remain in service when the likelihood of further loss, death or injury become greater than the possible success of the operation
5. Only qualified personnel as described below may operate Marine Unit vessels.
6. Marine Unit vessels will not be used for towing disabled boats, unless an emergency exists. A list of commercial marine towing facilities in the area will be contacted at the boat owner's request.
7. No civilian will be transported on any Marine Unit vessel without prior approval from a Supervisor or exigent circumstances exist.
8. Personnel will not conduct recreational activities while assigned to Department vessels such as swimming or fishing.
9. Jet skis will not be launched after sunset or before dawn and they will not be launched in rescue efforts.

**D. Qualification and Training:**

1. Continued assignment to the Marine Unit is contingent upon the maintenance of skills, periodic in-service training; and evaluations conducted to measure continued competency levels of all unit personnel.
2. All persons seeking assignment to the Unit must provide a current State of Connecticut Certificate of Personal Watercraft Operation to apply for consideration of assignment.
3. All personnel assigned to the Unit will be required to complete an approved Safe Boat Handling course prior to operating any Department vessel for other than training purposes.
4. Upon assignment to the team, supervisors will task experienced operators with training newer members on specifics of each vessel. New members will conduct a minimum of 80 hours of hands-on vessel operation with a trainer

and be signed off by a Unit Supervisor before being allowed to operate a vessel in an operational setting.

5. Unit members will attend annual training which will include legal updates, DEEP notices, vessel/equipment inspections, and PFD inspections
6. The Unit Commander will designate a Marine Training Officer to administer ongoing training programs for Unit personnel as required.

#### **E. Equipment and Maintenance**

1. The Unit Commander will designate an Equipment Control Officer to oversee equipment and maintenance of all Unit vessels.
2. Marine Unit personnel will conduct and log required safety inspections and maintenance on a regular basis, immediately report any accidents involving Unit vessels, or damage thereto, and immediately report any injuries to a Unit Supervisor.
3. Officers utilizing any of the Unit's vessels will complete a Marine Unit Log at the end of the shift to document their activities and all equipment..
4. Unit personnel will wear an approved personal floatation device (PFD) and Department issued radio. The uniform, duty belt with firearm, and additional equipment will be dictated by a Unit Supervisor and dependent on the operational requirements.
5. The patrol boats will be equipped with the following at a minimum:
  - a. All items necessary to comply with State and Federal law
  - b. First aid kit
  - c. Personal flotation device(s)
  - d. Flare gun (boat)
  - e. Anchor
  - f. Fire extinguisher.
6. The PWC will be equipped with:
  - a. Personal Floatation Device (PFD)
  - b. Visual Distress Signal
  - c. Fire Extinguisher (One Type BC-1)
  - d. Sound Producing Device (such as a Whistle)
  - e. Rope

7. All boats will be maintained by a certified marine dealer including preventative maintenance, repairs and winterization. A purchase order will be created each fiscal year via allowing immediate service.
8. All trucks, trailers and support vehicles will be maintained by the Bridgeport Police Garage Personnel.
9. Uniforms will be maintained via established Departmental uniform and appearance policy. Individual members are responsible for yearly inspection of personal floatation devices. Replacement or repair requests are presented to unit supervisor and submitted for approval

#### **F. Pursuits and Emergency Responses**

1. Marine Unit Officers initiating pursuits and responding to emergency situations will at all times abide by the requirements of agency directives related to pursuits and emergency response to calls. In addition, due to the special nature of operating a vessel, Marine Unit Officer(s) will also consider the following factors in making the decision to initiate or continue a pursuit:
  - a. Nature and seriousness of the offense and likelihood of future danger to the public.
  - b. The time of day, number of swimmers, divers, and other civilians;
  - c. Other vehicle or vessel traffic present;
  - d. The sworn member's training and experience with the type of emergency conveyance being operated;
  - e. The condition and performance capabilities of the agency vessel;
  - f. Visibility, and weather conditions;
  - g. Possibility of identification, and later apprehension of suspect(s);
  - h. Availability of other law enforcement units to assist in the pursuit, to include air units;
  - i. During emergency operation all occupants will wear a PFD at all times.
2. During emergency operation the Unit member may engage in the following emergency vessel operations:
  - a. Exceed the posted speed zone limits, or other regulatory zone limits, but only after weighing the risks of danger to life, property, and considering whether such action is safe given sea, weather, traffic, time of day, obstructions present on waterways, and other environmental conditions.
  - b. Disregard navigations rules after considering the likelihood of injury or damage to life or property and only when safe to do so.

3. The provisions of this directive will not relieve the operator of an emergency law enforcement vessel from the duty to operate with due regard for the safety of all persons, nor protect such operator from consequences of exhibiting a negligent disregard for the safety of others