

ELIZABETH POLICE DEPARTMENT GENERAL ORDERS



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SUBJECT: FIELD TRAINING & EVALUATION PROGRAM

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BY THE ORDER OF:

CHIEF GIACOMO SACCA

BY AUTHORITY OF:

POLICE DIRECTOR EARL J. GRAVES

SUPERSEDES ORDER #:

PURPOSE: The purpose of this general order is to establish a field training program facilitating the transition from academy training to agency-specific training. The success of the program is dependent upon the combined efforts of everyone involved. To achieve the maximum benefits from this field training program, both the supervisors and their subordinates must approach this training with an attitude that reflects confidence in its value and purpose.

POLICY: The Field Training & Evaluation Program is designed to augment the basic training courses taught at the police academy and commences upon the graduation of each trainee from the academy or upon hire, whichever is later. Each newly sworn officer is assigned to an experienced officer who has been selected to mentor him or her through their field training. The Elizabeth Police Department must always strive to maintain the highest standards of professionalism. The Field Training & Evaluation Program has been developed to meet this responsibility. The standards for proficiency set by the Field Training & Evaluation Program are developed to ensure that each officer completing the program will have received the necessary instructions and guidance under field conditions to meet the minimum standards of the department.

PROCEDURE:

I. PROGRAM OBJECTIVES

- A. The Elizabeth Police Department Field Training & Evaluation Program has been designed and implemented so that the following objectives may be met:
1. Improving the overall applicant screening process. The Field Training & Evaluation Program is one phase of the department's overall applicant screening process designed to facilitate on-the-job observations and performance assessment.
 2. Establishing a probationary police officer evaluation system. The program is designed to provide a valid, job-related, post-basic academy training evaluation of probationary law enforcement officer performance. The process utilizes a standardized and systematic approach to documenting a probationary law enforcement officer's performance.
 3. Improving the probationary law enforcement officer training process. The program provides post-basic academy training and on-the-job training to probationary law enforcement officers. Field Training Officers serve as role models for trainees in the development of the knowledge/skills/abilities that are needed to perform patrol duties and practical application of police academy materials.
 4. Establishing career opportunities within the department. The Field Training & Evaluation Program is another career path within the police department. It provides an incentive for the demonstration of proficiency in the knowledge/skills/abilities needed to perform patrol functions.

II. DEFINITION OF TERMS

- A. Trainee: A newly sworn law enforcement officer who has completed the required training course and is certified by the New Jersey Police Training Commission. This shall include lateral transfer police officers, alternate route candidates.
- B. Field Training Officer (FTO): an officer who serves as a trainer and evaluator of a trainee.
- C. Field Training Coordinator (FTC): is the designee of the Chief of Police, responsible for the day-to-day supervision, operations, and management of the Field Training & Evaluation Program (FTEP).
- D. P.O.S.T.: (Police Officers Standardized Training): are the training objectives required by the Police Training Commission that the employing law enforcement agency must conduct with the trainee per N.J.A.C. 13:1-5.1.

III. PROGRAM STRUCTURE

A. The Field Training & Evaluation Program (FTEP) is an 8-month program of training that all trainees must complete, outside of the required classroom training. The Field Training & Evaluation Program shall be divided into the following phases:

1. **Phase I - Orientation**

- a. This phase begins after the trainee's successful completion of the Basic Training Course at the police academy. Trainees hired by the Elizabeth Police Department that have already graduated from the police academy, begin this program with this phase.
- b. This phase is the trainee's first exposure to the Field Training & Evaluation Program. It is important that the Field Training Coordinator fully explains the Field Training & Evaluation Program process so that it can be clearly understood by the trainee.
- c. For Phase I, the trainee will be assigned to the Field Training Coordinator. The FTC will schedule the trainee to various police functions. Assignments during the orientation phase will include the following bureaus and units: Patrol, Detective Bureau, Juvenile, Narcotics, Community Affairs Bureau, Communications, Emergency Service Unit, Neighborhood Stabilization Unit, Services, and Traffic.
- d. For Phase I, the Field Training Coordinator will institute a formal evaluation process using the Daily Observation Report (DOR), completed by conferencing with the trainee's daily supervisor. The FTC entries on this report will be explained to the trainee at the end of each training day or the start of the next training day.

2. **Phase II – Bureau Assignments**

- a. The trainee will be assigned to three Patrol Field Training Officers over six months. The trainees shall change their primary Patrol FTO every two months.
- b. Trainees are not to be assigned as "third officer in a car" or as one officer units during this phase of training.
- c. The FTO will personally ride with the trainee to various calls for service and complete routine police work (M.V. Stops, Disputes, Disorderly calls, etc).
- d. The Field Training Officer will continue the formal evaluation process using the Daily Observation Report (DOR). Entries in this report will be explained to the trainee at the end of each training day or the start of the next training day. The reports will be maintained by the trainee and submitted after their training period along with their final field training report.
- e. The Field Training Officer must spend time reviewing the trainee's areas of weakness and providing remedial training where indicated.

FTOs are responsible for the quality of work produced by their trainee.

- g. When not assigned to a Patrol FTO, trainees shall complete their orientation schedules at the Detective Bureau, Juvenile, Narcotics, Community Affairs Bureau, Communications, Emergency Service Unit, Neighborhood Stabilization Unit, Services, and Traffic.
- h. After this phase, the trainee should have the necessary knowledge and skills to function as a solo officer and acceptably meet the standards required in every category on the Daily Observation Report (DOR).

3. **Phase III - Observation Phase (the final month in Patrol)**

- a. This phase is a very important part of the evaluation process and essentially provides the Field Training Officer with insight into the solo capabilities of the trainee.
- b. The trainee will assume all law enforcement activities without direct FTO intervention unless corrective action is necessary. The FTO will evaluate daily, the trainee's actions and written reports.
- c. Upon the completion of this phase, the Field Training Officer will recommend to the Field Training Coordinator that the trainee:
 - 1) Is qualified to work alone, or
 - 2) Should be given an extension of training for remedial purposes, or
 - 3) Has not made satisfactory progress and should be terminated.
- d. After their eight-month training assignment and bureau orientation tour, trainees shall complete a final training report. The trainee shall attempt to memorialize their experience in the FTO program. Trainees shall document their assignments and assess their education through the program. Trainees shall also report on their involvement in agency volunteer programs such as food drives and police-community functions.
- e. Completed reports and DORs shall be compiled and submitted to the Office of the Chief of Police, through the chain of command. All ranks receiving the completed packages shall review and endorse or decline the completed trainee's submission. Completed trainee DORs and final training reports must have an endorsement cover page (Official trainee report cover page is in PowerDMS)
- f. The Field Training Coordinator will meet with the Chief of Police at which time the trainee's completed Field Training reports will be reviewed.

- g. The Chief of Police will make the final decision on the trainee's status.

B. Balance of Probationary Employment Period

1. The continuing evaluation of performance shall be conducted throughout the probationary period per the department's general order on Performance Evaluations.
2. During the probationary period, if a probationary officer is not performing at a satisfactory level, a recommendation for termination may be initiated.

IV. FIELD TRAINING OFFICER ELIGIBILITY AND SELECTION PROCESS

A. The success of the Field Training & Evaluation Program depends on the abilities and efforts of the person instructing the trainee. It is important that a Field Training Officer is properly motivated, trained, and has the desire to instruct. The following minimum guidelines are established for becoming an Elizabeth Police Department Field Training Officer:

1. Officers must have acceptable departmental performance evaluations, satisfactory internal affairs, and personnel records;
3. The ability to communicate effectively, orally, and in writing;
4. The desire and ability to critique trainee performance and offer constructive criticism;
5. Sufficient knowledge of general orders established by the Elizabeth Police Department;
6. Sufficient knowledge of the regulations, techniques, and procedures used to conduct investigations of traffic and criminal law and local ordinances;
7. The commitment to police integrity, as demonstrated by previous assignments and performance;
8. Cultural and community sensitivity, as demonstrated by previous assignments and training.

B. Selection Process:

1. The Chief of Police or designee will review the candidates' records along with the eligibility criteria and make the final decision for assignment.

V. DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

A. Field Training Coordinator

1. The Field Training Coordinator shall be the highest-ranking officer responsible for the daily operation of the Field Training & Evaluation Program as designated by the Chief of Police.

2. The Field Training Coordinator shall be responsible for the general control and evaluation of the Field Training & Evaluation Program and shall assume the staff monitoring of all probationary patrol officers for the duration of their probationary employment period.
3. The Field Training Coordinator shall whenever possible, attend the various training sessions and Field Training meetings to provide/receive first-hand information concerning trainee performance and to evaluate the instructional techniques of the Field Training Officers.
4. The Field Training Coordinator shall monitor and evaluate the overall development of trainees during the probationary period for purposes of ascertaining any deficiencies and resolving them through training and retraining.
5. The Field Training Coordinator shall be responsible for planning, directing, and evaluating field training assignments and any changes in such assignments or variations in the length of the assignments.
6. The Field Training Coordinator shall work closely with the shift supervisors of trainees during and after the completion of Field Training & Evaluation Program assignments to determine and correct any training deficiencies and may recommend remedial training for the trainee.
7. The Field Training Coordinator shall facilitate the assembly of information relating to a trainee's progress to the Chief of Police or designee.
8. The Field Training Coordinator shall ensure that the training and evaluation process is properly administered.
9. The Field Training Coordinator shall be responsible for the review of Daily Observation Reports along with the Field Training Officer. Reports written by the trainee also serve to identify deficiencies, especially ones of spelling, grammar, neatness, and attention to detail as well as the general organization of thought.

B. Supervision of Personnel

1. Patrol supervisors have ultimate supervisory authority over all personnel assigned to a respective shift, including the trainee.
2. Field Training Officers and trainees are accountable to the Field Training Coordinator for all matters pertaining to the Field Training & Evaluation Program.
3. Field Training Officers may intervene in any field training activities that they consider unsafe or inappropriate but must inform the Field Training Coordinator of any such actions taken. Field Training Officers shall forward the information to the Field Training Coordinator through the chain of command so that it can be documented and addressed.

C. Field Training Officer

1. The Field Training Officer is the essential means by which the goals of the program are achieved, specifically, the development of a police officer able to work in a safe, skillful, productive, and professional manner.
2. The Field Training Officer will have complete responsibility for the trainee during the Field Training & Evaluation Program.
3. The Field Training Officer is responsible for the initial recommendation for release to solo assignment, an extension of training, or termination. The Field Training Officer must have documentation to support the recommendations. For example, if the Field Training Officer believes that a trainee should be terminated, but fails to document, remediate, and further document, the recommendation for termination may be adversely impacted.
4. If the actions of the trainee constitute a hazard or create a potentially dangerous situation to either citizens or employees, the Field Training Officer must take whatever action is necessary to reduce the hazard and ensure that safety practices are followed. Also, the Field Training Officer must ensure that the trainee's actions are legal and ethical at all times, without exception.
3. All administrative paperwork associated with this program will be forwarded to the Field Training Coordinator.
4. FTOs shall submit a monthly request for agency Comp Time Requested (CTR) for any additional time spent coaching their trainee beyond regularly scheduled work hours. FTOs shall submit comp time requests on agency form DP170. FTO coaching earned time credit is limited to eleven hours per month. FTOs shall not be paid overtime for coaching a trainee beyond their scheduled tour.

VI. TRAINING

- A. When applicable, the Field Training Coordinator shall liaison with the police academy staff to learn about a trainee's progress while at the academy.
- B. All candidates selected to become Field Training Officers shall be trained in their duties and responsibilities, including the procedural requirements of this general order by the Field Training Coordinator.
- C. Incumbent Field Training Officers must receive periodic refresher training regarding this program minimally on a triennial basis.

VII. ASSIGNMENT OF FIELD ASSIGNMENTS

- A. The trainee will be rotated through various geographical zones, assignments, and tours to provide the exposure needed to become a well-developed officer.

VIII. STANDARDIZED EVALUATION GUIDELINES

- A. Documentation is an essential requirement if a true picture of the trainee's response to training is going to be memorialized. Factual accounts of the trainee's behavior during training situations and actual events help the FTO plan remedial training and justify the ratings given to the trainee.
- B. Evaluation processes shall be the same for all trainees in the Field Training & Evaluation Program; strict compliance with the standardized evaluation guidelines should be followed by the FTOs. No prejudicial or bias evaluation can be tolerated if the program is to be reliable.
- C. The standardized evaluation guidelines are established to assist the FTO when utilizing the Daily Observation Report. Each of the evaluated performance areas in the report has written criteria. The FTO shall evaluate the performance of the trainee using the Daily Observation Report. Trainees will receive a copy of the Daily Observation Report (DOR) for their records.
- D. The rating scale is used to show the trainee where they are or are not progressing. It is also used to illustrate the measured success of the trainee towards the goal of meeting the acceptable standard established by the department.
 - 1. The rating scale shall be (1) for needs improvement or (2) for acceptable. The FTO shall rate the trainee as defined in the Standardized Evaluation Guidelines.
 - 2. The FTO shall also indicate:
 - a. **N.R.T.** - Not Responding to Training shall be given when the trainee's performance in a given area fails to improve after remedial training is conducted or if there is inconsistent behavior in an area. Guidelines for evaluating a trainee as NRT:
 - 1) How difficult is the task being attempted? If the task is complex, it may require more remedial training time before rating a trainee as NRT.
 - 2) How many times has the trainee practiced or tried the task being evaluated? This information should be documented in the narrative section of the Daily Observation Report (DOR).
 - 3) How much progress has been made, if any? Progress should be measurable and documented.
 - b. **N.O.** - Not Observed shall be given when the specific task is not observed during the shift.

IX. REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

- A. It is essential that every step in this program be documented. It is important that these reports be completed properly. These reports are being utilized to document the progress or lack of progress of the trainee and exactly what was taught to the trainee during the program. The reporting requirements of this program are as

follows:

1. Daily Observation Report (DOR)
 - a. Completed by the designated Field Training Officer for each day of training and evaluation period.
 - b. The criteria and ratings established in the standardized evaluation guidelines section of this general order shall be used in the preparation of the report.
2. Other Police Reports
 - a. The trainee shall be required to complete agency-specific reports during their FTO training and evaluation period.

X. FIELD TRAINING & EVALUATION PROGRAM RECORDS

- A. The Field Training Coordinator is responsible for starting a Field Training & Evaluation Program file for each new trainee. The Field Training & Evaluation Program file is comprised of documentation of the performance of a trainee throughout the training period.
- B. Field Training Officers are responsible for ensuring that all Field Training & Evaluation Program documentation is forwarded to the Field Training Coordinator. It is the Field Training Coordinator's responsibility to ensure that the documents or copies of documents are included in the trainee's Field Training & Evaluation Program file.
- C. The Field Training & Evaluation Program files shall be maintained in the Trainee's Training file, per the New Jersey Administrative Code and applicable records retention schedule.