

FORT MYERS POLICE DEPARTMENT GENERAL ORDER 8.2

TITLE: Field Training & Evaluation Program (FTEP)

INDEXING: Field Training & Evaluation Program, FTEP, Field Training Program, FTO Program, FTO, Recruit Training, Shift Sergeant

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PURPOSE

The purpose of this directive is to establish the Fort Myers Police Department's Field Training & Evaluation Program and describe its basic operational parameters. Detailed instructions to the Field Training Officers and Trainees are stipulated in the Field Training & Evaluation Program Manual.

(CALEA 33.4.3a,b,c,d,e,f,g,h)

SCOPE

These procedures shall apply to all Fort Myers Police Department personnel.

DISCUSSION

It is the policy of the department to place every new regularly employed sworn member into a Field Training & Evaluation Program directly supervised by an experienced, qualified Field Training Officer. This program, an in-house training program up to twelve weeks in length conducted by the Fort Myers Police Department personnel, shall expose a certified trainee to the Fort Myers Police Department's policies and procedures, facilities, personnel, equipment, and day-to-day operation of the department. It shall also provide a system of training and assessment to evaluate the trainee's progress. Upon completion of the program, the officer should be able to provide most departmental services to the public independently, with minimal supervision or assistance. The program will serve as an evaluation of both the trainee and the curriculum of the Field Training & Evaluation Program. The field-training period also serves to aid in determining if the trainee has all the requisites to become a permanent member of the Fort Myers Police Department. **(CALEA 33.2.4 & 33.4.3a)**

SECTION I: DEFINITIONS

- A. DOR: Daily Observation Report
- B. Chain of Command: Formal lines of communication going downward or upward within the organization hierarchy through each successive level of command.

- C. Field Training Officer (FTO): A specially trained law enforcement officer who is responsible for providing on-the-job training to newly appointed officers.
- D. FTEP Coordinator: The Training Division Supervisor coordinates and administers the Field Training & Evaluation Program at all levels under the guidelines of the FTE Program, set forth by the Training Division. The FTEP Coordinator is responsible for overseeing the day-to-day operation of the program, the training of Field Training Officers, and acting as a liaison between FTO's, Trainees, and FTEP Supervisors. **(CALEA 33.4.3c)**
- E. Field Training & Evaluation Program Manual: Also referred to in this directive as the "Manual." It is the manual that is utilized by Field Training Officers that contains an outline for training new officers. This manual also contains all of the forms that are used in the program.
- F. FTEP Supervisor: The supervisor in charge of a shift where both an FTO and a Trainee are assigned.
- G. The Field Training and Evaluation Program (FTEP): A structured program that's goal is to produce highly trained and positively motivated police officers through standardized training and a closely supervised evaluation process.
- H. Probationary period: The Collective Bargaining Agreement between the City of Fort Myers defines probation as the one-year period that begins on the date of hire for Florida certified officers and the date of certification for non-certified officers.
- I. Trainee: A police officer in the Field Training and Evaluation Program.

SECTION II: OBJECTIVES & REASONS

- A. Objectives of the program:
 - 1. The Field Training and Evaluation Program's (FTEP) structure is intended to provide optimum utilization of training resources and personnel in a dynamic environment that provides:
 - a. A solid foundation for a law enforcement career with the Fort Myers Police Department.
 - b. The evaluation of each participant based on established guidelines, to ensure training integrity and reliability.
 - c. An accurate and complete record of each participant's progress based on observed performance and testing.
 - d. Training based on individual need.
 - e. To produce highly trained and positively motivated police officers, capable of meeting or exceeding the standards of performance required by the Fort Myers Police Department.
 - f. To provide equal & standardized training to all newly hired and cross-certified officers and provide remedial training in those areas where deficiencies are identified.
 - g. To build on the foundation of knowledge gained at the police academy.

- h. To improve the screening process by providing on-the-job observation of each trainee's performance.
- i. To establish a valid and job-related appraisal system utilizing a standardized and systematic approach to the documented measurement of a trainee's performance.
- j. To ultimately increase the overall efficiency and effectiveness of the Fort Myers Police Department by enhancing the climate of professionalism and the competency demanded by the ethical standards of law enforcement.

SECTION III: QUALIFICATIONS & SELECTION OF FTO'S

A. Field Training Officer Qualifications & Selection: (CALEA 33.4.3b)

1. The degree of success realized by any law enforcement agency is directly related to the caliber of training offered to its officers. To ensure that the new and inexperienced officer receives the highest level of training possible, certain police officers are selected by the department to receive comprehensive specialized training and assignment as an FTO.
2. A police officer designated as an FTO is an officer who, on the basis of leadership, ability, intelligence, temperament, excellent report writing skills, positive attitude, and demonstrated professional conduct, is entrusted with the task of providing the initial field training to trainees. This position includes all the duties and responsibilities normally assigned to a police officer in the Patrol Division.
3. The Field Training and Evaluation Program is a management responsibility of the Training Division Supervisor, who shall serve as a liaison between the agency and police academy staff, and the designated FTEP Coordinator. **(CALEA 33.4.3d)**
4. Field Training Officer Requirements: The position is limited to those officers who possess the below attributes and have two years of service with the agency. Officers with prior experience in law enforcement must have a minimum of one year of service with the agency. The Chief of Police or designee, under emergency conditions, can waive the two-year requirement, but in no case shall the FTO be on probationary status.
5. The District Lieutenant and a shift Sergeant must provide a written recommendation supporting the officer to be an FTO based on the following factors:
 - a. Experience
 - b. Effective communication skills
 - c. Ability and willingness to evaluate a Trainee
 - d. Initiative
 - e. Leadership
 - f. Attitude
 - g. Counseling skills
 - h. Sick time usage
 - i. Review of complaints through IA Pro
6. FTO's must not have received any unacceptable dimensions on the last two performance evaluations.

7. FTO's must have an acceptable discipline record that would directly relate to the officer's suitability for the program for at least one (1) year prior to appointment to the Field Training & Evaluation Program.
 8. The officer's job performance shall be reviewed, to include, but not be limited to, substantiated citizen complaints, disciplinary actions, reliability, specialized training, and ability to deal effectively with people.
 9. Officers will be selected by the Professional Services Bureau Commander after a full review of all candidates' background and consultation with both the Patrol Operations Bureau Commander and FTEP Coordinator. The Chief of Police shall approve all candidates prior to assignment.
 10. Officers selected for FTO duties must have attended a (40) forty-hour Field Training Officer course or be scheduled to attend the next available course. The Field Training Course required by the department focuses on the Field Training Officer's role in evaluations, teaching, remedial training, and the effects of his style and beliefs on recruit growth and achievement. **(CALEA 33.4.3e)**
- B. Removal from FTO Status: Assignment duration to this temporary assignment shall be determined by the Chief of Police or designee. Removal is at the discretion of the Chief of Police.

SECTION IV: PROGRAM OPERATION & ADMINISTRATION

- A. Administration of the Program: The Field Training & Evaluation Program operates within the Patrol Operations Bureau; however, it is administered by the Training Division and the Professional Standards Bureau Commander. The Training Division Coordinator shall insure program maintenance and annual program review.
1. The Training Division Coordinator will serve as the liaison between the police department and the police academy staff. **(CALEA 33.4.3d)**
 - a. ***Conduct an annual review of the Field Training Program, providing recommendations for policy or training modification to the Professional Standards Bureau Captain and the Chief of Police (CALEA 33.4.3i)***
 2. The Training Division Supervisor coordinates and administers the Field Training & Evaluation Program, and shall have the following duties and responsibilities:
 - a. Coordinate, supervise and monitor the FTEP, including annual review of the FTEP, and revision of the FTEP manual as needed.
 - b. Insure proper maintenance and security of training records and files. Once a recruit has successfully completed the FTEP and his / her first year of probationary status, their Daily Observation Report (DOR) Binder and recruit training manual shall be forwarded to the Training Division for permanent storage.
 - c. Schedule and assign recruits and Field Training Officers (FTO) according to program and training needs.
 - d. Act as a liaison with the Training Division, as well as the police academy, to ensure FTO's receive continuing job-related training.

3. The FTEP Sergeants shall be responsible to the FTEP Coordinator for recruit training issues. Additionally, they shall:
 - a. Supervise FTO's, and closely monitor recruit training and progress.
 - b. Complete mid and end of phase evaluations of recruits under their supervision for the designated period of time and perform other duties and responsibilities as set forth by the FTEP Manual. **(CALEA 33.4.3g,h)**
4. Supervision of FTO's: Field Training Officers report directly to their immediate supervisors in their normal function, (Patrol Officer reports to the Shift Supervisor and/or Shift Commander, etc.). The FTO will, however, report matters concerning the Field Training & Evaluation Program and the progress of his trainee directly to the Field Training & Evaluation Program Coordinator. **(CALEA 33.4.3c)**
5. FTO duties & responsibilities : (SEE FTEP Manual).
6. Recruit evaluation guidelines (CALEA 33.4.3g,h) : (SEE FTEP Manual).
7. Training Curriculum : (SEE FTEP Manual).
8. Number of FTO's: While assigned to the FTEP, a recruit will rotate between a minimum of (3) three different FTO's. **(CALEA 33.4.3f)**

SECTION V: TERMINATION PROCEDURES

- A. If at any time during the training program it is concluded by the FTO or FTO supervisor that a trainee is not responding to training and termination is recommended, a termination review board will be convened. Normally, a recommendation for termination will be made after a trainee has been instructed on a specific task, has failed to perform at the Knowledge Level 2 rating for that task, has received remedial training through extension on the specific task and continues to display an inability to perform the task. If progress has been made on the specific task and the FTO and FTO supervisors concur that additional instruction will result in the trainee performance becoming adequate, more remedial time may be allowed during ANY Phase.
- B. Prior to the board's meeting the trainee's FTO Program documents (Daily Observation Reports, Significant Incident Reports, Agency 360 Analytic Reports, etc.) will be updated with all relevant information and documentation. It shall include specific details of the trainee's deficiencies listed by the category. It shall also include the totals of all training time spent in each category and what training was accomplished to correct the trainee's performance. The decision to terminate will be made only after all reports have been received and have been reviewed by the termination review board.
- C. The Termination Review Board shall consist of the Professional Standards Bureau Commander (Chairperson), an additional Bureau Commander, other than the one in the trainee officer's chain of command, an FTO Supervisor, other than the one in the trainee officer's chain of command, and two FTO's, not training or having trained the trainee officer. One Review Board member MUST be of the same race, gender and/or ethnicity of the trainee.
- D. The Termination Review Board is charged with:
 1. Independent confirmation that the trainee did not meet the requirements of the FTO Program.
 2. Ensuring that the trainee's performance is properly documented.

3. Providing protection to the trainee for personality issues/conflicts between trainee and FTO and/or FTO Supervisor.

E. The Termination Review Board's purpose is to agree or disagree that standards were not met, and that proper documentation supports termination. This should not be confused with any portion of the discipline process. It is the responsibility of the Training Division Bureau Commander (Chairperson) to make the final recommendation and forward to the Chief of Police for a final disposition.

SECTION VI: PROCEDURES FOR TRAINEES

A. The department requires all new regularly employed sworn members to have successfully completed a recruit academy training program in accordance with the Florida Department of Law Enforcement's Division of Criminal Justice Standards and Training Commission (CJSTC).

B. Before a new regularly employed sworn member may perform law enforcement functions for this department without the presence of (span of control) a fully certified and experienced Fort Myers Police Officer, he or she must successfully complete the department's Field Training & Evaluation Program as outlined in this written directive.

C. Upon successful completion of the FTEP, regularly employed sworn members may be released to perform law enforcement duties independently. Provisions of the Field Training & Evaluation Program are contained in the FTEP Manual. The following are recommended suggestions for successful completion of the Field Training & Evaluation Program:

1. Follow directions of the FTO.
2. Ask questions on any directions not fully understood or comprehended.
3. Comply with all departmental directives.
4. Accept constructive criticism or comments in order to improve deficient areas.
5. Read and ask questions regarding all trainee evaluation reports before signing.

a. The trainee has the right to respond in writing the contents of the report and receive a copy. Any response should be made within (24) hours of such receipt.

D. Some very basic restrictions must be followed during the FTEP, and they are as follows:

1. The trainee will not participate in any training other than the FTEP, and in-service training, except by permission of the FTEP Coordinator.
2. The trainee will not work any paid extra-duty details or off-duty secondary employment. The trainee may only work city paid overtime as may be required by subpoena or judicial order, or when exigent circumstances warrant, as approved by the Professional Standards Bureau Commander.

SECTION VII: DURATION OF TRAINING (CALEA 33.4.3a)(CFA 14.08Mc)

A. Newly hired officers with no prior law enforcement experience will be placed in a four-phase, twelve-week field-training program. However, the duration may be adjusted by the FTEP Coordinator to meet the needs of the agency.

- B. Newly hired officers with two or more years prior Florida law enforcement experience may be placed in an accelerated Field Training & Evaluation Program, at the discretion of the department.
- C. Officers re-hired with less than one year's separation from the Fort Myers Police Department may be placed in a four-week Field Training & Evaluation Program. This requirement may be waived by the Chief of Police, if the length of separation was minimal and considered insignificant in regard to the need for retraining.

SECTION VIII: FIELD TRAINING FOR NEWLY PROMOTED OR ASSIGNED SHIFT SERGEANTS

- A. When a patrol officer is promoted to the rank of Sergeant and is assigned as a shift Supervisor, or when a Sergeant is assigned as a shift Supervisor and has not previously held that position in the past, the Patrol Operations Bureau Commander will assign the newly promoted Sergeant to a senior Sergeant for the purpose of training. The new shift Supervisor/Sergeant will complete a training period consisting of sixteen days of daily observation by the assigned Field Training Sergeant. The shift Supervisor/Sergeant will have six months to complete all skills assigned in the current automated Field Training program (Agency 360). During the training period, the new sergeant's schedule will coincide with that of his trainer's schedule.
- B. While the trainer is accompanying the new Sergeant, the trainer will utilize the Job Description for the position of Shift Supervisor (Patrol Sergeant) to instruct the new shift Sergeant on his or her new duties, tasks, and responsibilities.
- C. The new shift Sergeant may be released to perform independently, once approved by the Patrol Operations Bureau Commander. Any deviation from the training schedule, MUST be approved in writing by the Patrol Operations Bureau Commander and included in the affected supervisors training file.

SECTION IX: PROGRAM INCENTIVES

- A. FTO's will be issued the designated uniform assignment identifier ("FTO" pin) and shall wear it on their duty patrol uniforms. Officers may only wear the designation if they are assigned these duties by the FTEP Coordinator.
- B. Training Course consideration will be given to FTO's for classes that are intended to expand the FTO's training, knowledge, and skills.

REFERENCES:

FTEP Manual

APPROVED:

[SIGNATURE ON FILE]

01/12/2026

**Jason Fields, Chief of Police
Fort Myers Police Department**

Date