

VERTICAL STAFF MEETINGS

1. **PURPOSE:** To establish formal policy and procedure for conducting vertical staff meetings.
2. **POLICY:** To ensure unity of command, clearly defined lines of authority are drawn to create a structural relationship between each employee and the Bureau Commanders. In an effort to enhance the flow of communications from all levels of the chain of command, it shall be the policy of the Huntsville Police Department to require vertical staff meetings at the division and shift level.
3. **SCOPE:** This directive is applicable to all personnel.
4. **RESPONSIBILITY:** It shall be the responsibility of all Bureau Commanders to ensure that vertical staff meetings are held in accordance with the procedures established herein.
5. **PROCEDURE**
 - A. Vertical staff meetings shall be conducted on a semi-annual basis. They may be conducted with more frequency if necessary.
 - B. Commanders shall select members representing all levels of their command structure to attend vertical staff meetings.
 - C. Different members shall be selected for each new meeting for the purpose of ensuring all members within the organization are afforded an opportunity to participate in the process.
 - D. One member shall be selected to record the minutes of the vertical staff meeting. The minutes shall include, at a minimum, the following information:
 1. date, time and place of the meeting;
 2. name and rank of members in attendance;
 3. items submitted for consideration;
 4. names of person submitting items;
 5. response to the submissions; and
 6. the names of persons responding.

- E. The date, time, place and names of members selected to attend a vertical staff meeting shall be posted in advance to allow other members adequate time for presenting topics for discussion.
- F. All department related topics may be discussed in a vertical staff meeting; however, personal problems, grievances, non-constructive criticism, and complaints will not be allowed.

6. REPORTING

- A. The minutes of a vertical staff meeting shall be prepared for the Unit/Shift Commander's review within five working days after the conclusion of the meeting. The Unit/Shift Commander shall ensure that a copy of the minutes is posted.
 - B. The original minutes shall be routed to the Bureau Commander, via chain of command, with a cover letter by the Unit/Shift Commander enumerating any unresolved items or areas of concern.
 - 1. The Unit/Shift Commander shall make a reasonable attempt to answer any unresolved items prior to submitting the minutes of the meeting to the Division Commander.
 - 2. Upon review of the minutes, the Bureau Commander will respond to any unresolved item(s) within five working days.
 - 3. The response shall be submitted in writing to the person who submitted the item(s) for consideration and the Unit/Shift Commander.
 - 4. The response must include reference to the vertical staff meeting, date and time, and the unresolved item(s) in question.
7. POSTING: Commanders shall be responsible for communicating the minutes of any vertical staff meeting held by their authority (as well as any subsequent responses to unresolved items) to all members in their command in a timely and appropriate manner. This may be accomplished by posting the minutes and related responses on a common bulletin board, briefing personnel during roll calls or squad meetings, etc.