




City of Manassas Police Department

General Duty Manual



Effective Date: 12-29-2008	GENERAL ORDER	Number: 01-07
Subject: Command, Supervision and Duty		
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Accreditation Standards: 11.2.1 / 11.3.1 / 11.3.2 / 12.1.1 / 12.1.2 / 12.1.3	By Authority Of:  Douglas W. Keen, Chief of Police	Total Pages: 5

PURPOSE:

To provide clear lines of authority to command and supervise the Department on a 24-hour basis.

POLICY:

The senior ranking officer on duty is in command of the Department until properly relieved by a higher authority such as the Chief of Police or their designee. Each member is accountable for the use of delegated authority; responsibility is accompanied by commensurate authority. Command notifications should be made during serious incidents or disasters, and the chain of command should remain intact pending the expected arrival of higher-ranking officials.

The authority delegated or granted to a superior officer is not generally confined or restricted to their division or unit. That authority includes supervision over all subordinate members of the Department in any situation necessary for the efficient operation of the Department.

DISCUSSION:

Efficient control and channeling of members of the Department as they perform their duties is a most important function of supervision and command. In order to avoid conflict and ineffective action, lines of authority must be established. These lines of authority as they are outlined in this directive are historically inherent in military and quasi-military organizations and are traditional in the American concept of law enforcement.

PROCEDURE:

I. Order of Rank

A. The order of rank among sworn officers is as follows:

1. Chief of Police, holding the rank of Colonel
2. Captain
3. Lieutenant
4. Sergeant
5. Master Police Officer/Master Detective
6. Senior Police Officer/Senior Detective
7. Police Officer/Detective

B. Although Career Development Program (CDP) participants possess rank, they do not normally have command or supervisory authority. There may be occasions when, in the absence or incapacitation of supervisory personnel, CDP participants will have such authority. See Section V.A. (3-5) of this General Order.

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- C. The order of rank among non-sworn members is determined by position and section.
 - 1. Non-sworn members may only supervise other non-sworn members.
 - 2. Non-sworn members may be accountable to any of the sworn officer ranks presented in Part A, according to job description.

II. Chain of Command

- A. The chain of command describes the flow of command authority from the Chief of Police downward through the ranks within an individual's own designated area of responsibility.
 - 1. Accountability follows the same lines of authority from subordinates upward.
 - 2. Authority may be delegated downward through the chain of command, but responsibility may not.
 - 3. Supervisors are fully accountable for the use of delegated authority, as well as for the failure to use it.
- B. The chain of command is followed in order to maintain accountability and the principles of good administration. Rank is not bypassed except:
 - 1. Under a compelling constraint of time.
 - 2. Under unusual circumstances.
 - 3. In the absence of an immediate superior officer or;
 - 4. When necessary to report, prevent, or to intervene during observed misconduct.
- C. In the event that the chain of command is not followed, members must be ready to articulate the reason that the chain of command was not followed.

III. Unity of Command

- A. Each member is accountable to only one supervisor at any given time. Each squad, unit, or component is under the direct command of only one supervisor.
 - 1. Planned special events involving officers of various components are accompanied by special orders delineating supervisory roles.
 - 2. In order to avoid confusion among members and minimize conflict in orders or commands, superior officers use their authority with discretion and, under normal circumstances, avoid giving command to persons not assigned to their control.
- B. Any subordinate officer receiving an order from any superior officer follows that order to the best of their ability.

IV. Orders

- A. Verbal orders and written orders carry the same weight and authority.
- B. All lawful orders of a superior, including any order relayed from a superior by a member of the same or lesser rank, are followed.
- C. Orders from a superior to a subordinate are given in clear and understandable language, civil in tone, and issued in pursuit of Department business.
- D. Members obey instructions given to them by police radio, regardless of the rank of the dispatcher and unless changed by a superior officer. Such obedience is prompt and willing.
- E. Members, who are given a lawful and otherwise proper order which is in conflict with a previous order, rule, or directive, respectfully inform the superior officer issuing the latter conflicting order.
 - 1. If the superior officer who has issued the conflicting order does not alter or retract it, the order stands and the member obeys, yet is not held responsible for disobedience of the prior order, rule, or directive.

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- F. No superior officer knowingly or willingly is to issue any order that is in violation of any law, ordinance, or Departmental rule.
 - 1. No member is required to obey an order that is contrary to the laws of the United States, the Code of Virginia, or the Code of the City of Manassas.
 - 2. Such refusal to obey, however, is the member's responsibility, and they are required to justify the action in writing through the chain of command to the Chief of Police.
 - 3. Written notification is completed as soon after the incident as circumstances permit and forwarded immediately.
- G. Members who are given orders they feel are unjust or contrary to orders or the rules or procedures of the Department, must first obey the order to the best of their ability, and may then appeal as provided below as long as the order does not contradict a duty to intervene.
- H. Members may appeal for relief from orders or instructions which are perceived to be unjust. Such appeals are made, at first opportunity, in writing with the full facts of the incident to the Chief of Police through the chain of command. If the orders were given by a superior within the member's chain of command, the appeal should be made to the Chief of Police through the next highest-ranking superior.
- I. Members in doubt as to the nature or detail of their assignment seek such information from their supervisor. When in doubt as to the designation of supervisor, such as during special details or temporary assignments, members seek guidance from any superior officer on duty.

V. Command Protocol

- A. Command protocol is defined as the determination of the highest level of command authority. Command protocol in the Department is prescribed as follows:
 - 1. The Chief of Police is the Department's Chief Executive Officer, and is designated as having responsibility for the management, direction, and control of the operations and administration of the Department.
 - 2. The Chief of Police may assign ultimate command responsibility in any given operation or situation. In these situations, the members exercise such command authority as prescribed and limited by the Chief of Police.
 - 3. Absent a specific assignment or grant of command authority by the Chief of Police to the contrary, command authority rests with the on duty officer holding the highest rank. In situations where there are two or more on duty officers present or available to make a decision, all of whom are of equal rank, command authority rests with the officer with the longest time in grade.
 - 4. When two or more on duty officers are present or available, all of whom are the highest rank, and each has the same time in grade, command authority rests with the officer with the greatest length of sworn service.
 - 5. Any change of command is announced to those persons affected.
- B. In situations when an officer is working outside their normal assignment, command authority is commensurate with their assignment as follows:
 - 1. Officers assigned as the leader for a special unit or team have command authority over other officers of that team during the operation or assignment, and for the purpose of achieving the specific function or objectives assigned by proper authority.
 - 2. Officers assigned as Acting Squad Leader or Acting Sergeant have the command authority equivalent to a Sergeant.
 - 3. Officers assigned as Acting Lieutenant have the command authority equivalent to a Lieutenant.
 - 4. Officers assigned as Acting Division Commander have the command authority equivalent to a Captain.
- C. Whenever the Chief of Police or any Division Commander plans an absence of more than 24 hours, a designated replacement is announced by memorandum to the Force.

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- D. Command of the scene of any incident remains with the ranking officer on duty until relieved of that command by proper authority.
 - 1. When command is changed, the Public Safety Communications Center (PSCC) is notified. The PSCC shall notify affected members on the scene.
- E. In the event of planned special events, such as the Christmas Parade or Fall Jubilee, command authority is specified in a Special Order directing the assigned officers to various tasks or assignments.
- F. Except in the event of emergencies or unusual circumstances, the number of members under the immediate control of any one supervisor is limited to fourteen, each level of supervision having less than the one below.

VI. Supervisory Responsibilities

- A. Supervisors are accountable for the performance of their subordinates, and for the proper execution of their subordinates' duties. Performance of subordinates must be evaluated, and whenever possible, improved by coaching/counseling, providing or requesting further training, or by making recommendations through the chain of command for other solutions.
- B. The responsibilities specific to each line of supervision are accompanied by commensurate authority.
- C. Supervisors provide leadership and take reasonable steps to promote their subordinates' understanding of and compliance with Departmental policy, procedure, rules and regulations through:
 - 1. Personal supervision.
 - 2. Informal and Formal line inspections.
 - 3. Delegation of authority.
 - 4. Ongoing training.
 - 5. Clarification of directives, orders, and procedures.
- D. Supervisors must take corrective action or request further investigation of their subordinates when violations of policy, procedure, or rules and regulations are suspected.
 - 1. The failure of a supervisor to take remedial action on such violations that were or should have been reasonably known may be deemed neglect of duty.
- E. Investigation by supervisors of reported violations concerning members under their supervision are reported through the chain of command to the Chief of Police, except that oral reprimands or minor infractions may be kept at the supervisor's level.
- F. When the violation is more serious or oral reprimands fail to achieve the desired results on repeated violations, a written Coaching/Counseling Session Form may be issued at any level within the chain of command.
 - 1. A copy of the completed appropriate form(s), in compliance with General Order 01-09, are submitted to the Chief of Police through the chain of command.
- G. A disciplinary measure more severe than a Coaching/Counseling Session Form is approved by the Chief of Police.
- H. A disciplinary measure involving suspension from duty without pay or dismissal is issued by the City Manager after review by the Human Resources Director, as specified in the Manassas City Employee Handbook and in General Order 1-9: Discipline/Complaints/Commendations.

VII. Employee Responsibilities

- A. Responsibilities delegated to employees are accompanied by the commensurate authority necessary for their completion.
- B. Every sworn officer must know and abide by the laws relating to the protection of civil liberties and the restraints upon governmental power.
- C. Officers should know the criminal and motor vehicle laws defined by state and City ordinances, the policy, procedure, and rules and regulations of this manual and contemporary training subjects. The following codes are basic:
 - 1. Title 18.2 of the Code of Virginia, Crimes and Offenses Generally.
 - 2. Title 46.2 of the Code of Virginia, Motor Vehicles.

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- 3. Title 4.1 of the code of Virginia, Alcoholic Beverages and Cannabis Control.
- 4. Title 19.2 of the code of Virginia, Criminal Procedure.
- 5. The City of Manassas Code of Ordinances.
- D. Officers preserve the public peace, detect and arrest offenders, prevent crime, protect life and property, and enforce the ordinances and statutes of the City of Manassas and the Commonwealth of Virginia.
- E. All employees follow the rules and regulations, policies and procedures of the Department and provide a level of service to the public befitting a professional law enforcement agency.
- F. All employees are accountable for the judicious use of authority that is delegated to them in their job duties and/or by condition of their employment.
- G. Non-sworn members such as Parking Enforcement Officers, Crossing Guards, and civilian Animal Control Officers (ACOs), enforce selected statutes and ordinances as defined in the state code and City of Manassas Code of Ordinances. They are responsible for knowing the City ordinances, the policy, procedure, and rules and regulations of this manual regarding their specific job assignment.
- H. All non-sworn members, although not personally responsible for general law enforcement, provide vital support for the Department's basic mission and should be familiar with that mission to the extent possible.
- I. Each non-sworn member is responsible for knowing the policy, procedure, and rules and regulations of this manual regarding their specific job assignment.

Attachments: N/A

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