OPERATIONAL MANUAL

OPS - 250 – FIELD TRAINING PROGRAMS

Amends/Supersedes: OPS-250 (08/21/2023) **Date of Issue:** 06/29/2026

I. GENERAL

A. Field Training programs are an integral part of the transition from a new trainee into the full-time duties of the employee's assigned position:

1. *Field Training Officer Program*: A program devised for a new officer, either recently hired with a certification or a recent academy graduate, to orient them with the practical application of law enforcement at the Newport News Police Department. Certified field training officers (FTOs) and the involvement of precinct leadership are crucial to the successful implementation of the program.
2. *Field Training and Leadership Program*: A program that provides an officer promoted to the supervisory position of sergeant with instruction about essential first-line supervisory tasks and leadership capacity. The supervisor's lieutenant, or another supervisor designated by the precinct/division commander, is responsible for instructing newly promoted sergeants. [33.8.2]
3. *Non-Sworn Field Training Programs*: Program that provides non-sworn personnel, such as police aides and forensic technicians, with hands-on instruction and experience in the duties and responsibilities of the position. Instruction is provided by a current employee designated by the precinct/division commander or designee.
4. *Communications New Hire Training Program*: A program that provides comprehensive on-the-job training for newly hired public safety specialists. See COM-510 *New Hire Training Program* for program specifics.

B. All time frames referred to in this policy are intended as guidelines only. It is understood that all employees faced with a new position progress at different levels. This, as well as staffing requirements, may require a trainer to use discretion on transfers and other time requirements.

II. PROCEDURE – FIELD TRAINING OFFICER PROGRAM

A. Officer Eligibility [33.4.3(b)]

1. Officers may apply to become FTOs when notified that openings are available in their assigned precinct.
2. To apply, an officer will submit a letter of request through their chain of command to the Patrol Operations Assistant Chef.
3. Qualifications:
   a. Minimum of two years of service with the Newport News Police Department.
   b. Not more than one Group 1 misconduct violation in the twelve months before submitting the application letter.
   c. Must not have a current performance improvement plan on file.
   d. Must not have any open administrative investigations at the time of application.

B. Selection Process [33.4.3(b)]

1. Each supervisor in the officer's chain of command reviews the letter and submits their recommendation. This letter must include the officer's qualifications and verify their eligibility.
2. The Assistant Chief of Patrol Operations selects FTOs after reviewing the recommendations.
3. Once selected, the approved application is forwarded to the Training Section.

4. The Assistant Chief of Patrol Operations may appoint an officer who is not certified as a provisional field training officer per 6VAC20-280-10 and 6VAC20-280-30.

C. Terms of Appointment [33.4.3(e)]

1. FTO candidates must complete the Newport News Police Department's FTO school approved by the Department of Criminal Justice Services (DCJS) before appointment. See 6VAC20-280-20 and 6VAC20-280-30. [33.6.1(a)]

   NOTE: Temporary FTO appointments may be made at the discretion of the Assistant Chief of Patrol. An officer temporarily appointed must be off probation and have attended and completed an NNPD DCJS-certified FTO school. Appointments of this type shall be considered 'temporary/ad hoc' as set out in ADM-345 *Temporary/Rotating Assignment of Sworn Personnel*.

2. All FTOs must attend scheduled FTO training meetings unless excused by their program coordinator.
3. Every FTO must maintain adequate and timely records on each officer under their supervision. [33.4.3(g)]
4. FTOs are expected to assist all trainees in the program as needed. If an FTO is not assigned a trainee on an ongoing basis, they may need to provide training temporarily.
5. An FTO's status as a training officer may be temporarily or permanently suspended at the discretion of the Assistant Chief of Patrol.
   a. Temporary suspensions may occur when an incident or investigation requires follow-up or investigation. If the suspension occurs when the FTO has an assigned trainee, the trainee will be reassigned either permanently or until the situation is resolved. Examples of events that may trigger a temporary suspension include the FTO becoming the subject of an administrative investigation, being placed on a performance improvement plan or failure to retain appropriate state certification requirements.
   b. Permanent suspension may occur when an FTO cannot perform the necessary duties and responsibilities of an FTO, has had complaints or issues with multiple trainees, or has demonstrated an inability to adequately prepare trainees for independent patrol.
      1) When seeking to suspend an FTO from the program permanently, the commander will notify the Assistant Chief of Patrol Operations.
      2) Once a suspension is issued, the commander will notify the Training Academy.

D. Duties of the FTO [33.4.3]

1. The FTO is responsible for:
   a. Providing continuous on-the-job instruction for the trainee utilizing appropriate training techniques tailored to the trainee's needs.
   b. Completing all required program activities with each assigned trainee. [33.4.3(h)]
   c. Submitting the Daily Observation Reports (DOR) on the trainee's performance. [33.4.3(h)]
   d. Properly supervising the trainee's demeanor, conduct and personal appearance.
   e. Providing input relevant to the trainee's potential to function effectively as a law enforcement officer. [33.4.3(h)]
   f. Perform all other required duties.
2. Before a trainee can be released to independent patrol, the recruit's FTO must submit their recommendation and completed DCJS Form-B13 to the Training Section, through their chain of command. [33.4.3(h)]

E. New Officer Training Program Structure & Requirements

1. After graduating from the Newport News Police Department Training Academy, all trainees must participate in and complete the Field Training Program within twelve months of their academy registration date. Failure to do so may result in a probationary extension or separation. The Chief of Police must approve exemptions to this requirement.
2. During program participation, trainees must adhere to all the program's rules.
3. TPM-1 New Police Officer FTO Program and TPM-2 Lateral & Returning Officer Program provide specific information related to the structure of the program, including phases, performance rating criteria and required activities. This information is also stored in Power Ready.
   a. To update program requirements, written requests for updates are submitted to the Training Academy staff. Requests are evaluated, and staff will consult with other FTOs and precinct supervisors as appropriate.
   b. Changes should occur when there are no active program participants unless a critical change is necessary. All changes will apply immediately to current participants.
4. Modified FTO Program
   a. Trainees with established law enforcement (i.e., laterals or returning officers) experience will participate in a modified field training program.
   b. Upon their return or during initial onboarding, these trainees are initially assigned to the Training Section to ensure that all DCJS certification requirements are met and to determine the need for specific field training topics.
   c. Returning Officers
      1) Returning officers who did not complete the Field Training Program before their separation must undergo an evaluation by the Training Academy director to ensure DCJS requirements are met.
      2) If a returning officer completed their training before separating from the department, the affected precinct commander evaluates their knowledge and experience in consultation with the training staff and other relevant personnel. Options to consider for returning officers include:
         a) Completing the lateral officer FTO program. This may be appropriate if an extended time has passed since they separated from the department or significant organizational changes occurred during the separation.
         b) Conducting a brief orientation period consisting of riding paired with another officer. This is not considered formal training.
         c) Returning directly to independent patrol. This option is most appropriate when the separation is brief.
   d. Lateral Officers
      1) Lateral officers are initially assigned to the Training Section to coordinate all DCJS-required activities.
      2) Upon precinct assignment, the precinct commander will assign the officer to another officer for completion of the Lateral Officer Field Training Program.

      NOTE: Both modified programs focus on high liability practices, DCJS requirements and department-specific activities rather than general law enforcement skills.

F. Duties of FTO's First Line Supervisor

1. Provide general supervision of the FTO and the trainee. [33.4.3(c)]
2. Recommend retention or reassignment of an FTO based on performance in the field. [33.4.3(c)]

3. Recommend qualified personnel for consideration as an FTO.
4. Recommend changes in the FTO program, recruit training, or in-service training.
5. Review and approve all trainee paperwork.
6. Document the FTO's performance during FUEL check-ins. Include the following:
   a. Number of recruits trained.
   b. Shift level training.
   c. Academy classes taught, and in what capacity (i.e., primary instructor, etc.); and
   d. Feedback received from recruits receiving the FTO's instruction.

G. Duties of the Precinct Tactical Lieutenant
1. Serve as the precinct's program coordinator and monitor FTO activities.
2. Monitor all trainee program activities continuously and recommend modifications or assignments to another FTO, where appropriate.
3. Review performance evaluations and all other paperwork for all trainees and FTOs. [33.4.3(c)]

H. Duties of Training Section Staff
1. Assist precinct commanders with initial trainee/FTO pairings.
2. Coordinate and act as liaison officer for all FTO training courses.
3. Conduct annual in-service training for FTOs. [33.5.1; 33.6.1(a)]
4. Ensure that all training standards comply with departmental, state and federal guidelines.
5. Conduct an annual administrative review of the Field Training Officer Program, in consultation with program coordinator, participants and department leadership. This documented review will provide recommendations for modifications to the program, policies or FTO training, when appropriate. This review is submitted to the Chief of Police, through the Training Section's chain of command. [33.4.3(i)]

NOTE: The academy director will appoint an academy staff member to monitor the Field Training Officer Program, per ACDMY-1.2 *Authority & Organization*.

III. PROCEDURE – NON-SWORN FIELD TRAINING PROGRAMS

A. Trainer Eligibility
1. Trainers should have at least one year of experience to act as field trainers for new hires. The assignment is based on experience, time in position, and endorsement by the trainer's chain of command.
2. Before assigning a trainer to a trainee, the precinct commander or designee must verify that the employee does not have more than one Group 1 misconduct violation in the twelve months before the assignment.
3. Based on department needs, the precinct commander may request that a trainer who does not meet the eligibility criteria be considered for assignment as a trainer.
4. Based on the trainer's needs and readiness, the commander may choose to request a seat in a formal training course for the trainee, or they may request assistance from academy staff to provide other appropriate training.

B. Duties of the Trainer
1. The trainer will complete all assigned program related training.
2. The trainer is responsible for regular job responsibilities while acting as a trainer for their assigned trainee. The trainer is responsible for:
   a. Providing continuous on-the-job instruction for the trainee, utilizing innovative and practical techniques.

b. Completing all required program paperwork with each assigned trainee. Refer to the appropriate program manual, TPM-4 *New Police Aide Training* or TPM-5 *New Forensic Technician Training Program*.

c. Properly supervising their trainee's demeanor, conduct and appearance.

d. Providing input relevant to trainees' potential to effectively perform their job functions.

e. Perform all other duties that may be required.

3. Before a trainee can be released from field training, the trainer must submit their recommendation to the trainee's supervisor. The supervisor/program coordinator will submit the final recommendation to the commander, via Power Ready.

4. Problems with any aspect of the program will be brought to the attention of the commander for any needed arrangements for remedial training or program changes.

5. During the field training process, the field training records for each police aide will be maintained by the precinct commander's designee. Upon completion of field training, the FTMPA is forwarded through the chain of command to the Assistant Chief of Patrol. The completed FTMPA is sent to the Training Section to become part of the employee's Training Record.

C. Non-Sworn Training Program Structure & Requirements

1. New hires are assigned to a trainer by the commander or designee as soon as they begin employment with the department.

2. The trainer and trainee are designated as a single unit while on duty until the trainee is released to independent duty.

3. A trainee should not be assigned to alternate duties without their trainer during this training period unless pre-approved by the commander.

4. During any extended absence of a police aide trainer or a lack of available trainers, the precinct commander may request that the trainee be temporarily placed in another precinct with an available trainer. In extreme cases, a trainee may be assigned to an available FTO for basic instruction until a trainer is available.

IV. FIELD TRAINING AND LEADERSHIP PROGRAM PROCEDURE

A. Duties of the Sergeant's Supervisor

1. The commander will assign a lieutenant or an experienced sergeant to serve as the primary instructor for a newly promoted sergeant.

2. Proficiency in a specific area may be demonstrated by:

a. Receiving the assistance of the newly promoted sergeant in an assigned task; or

b. Observation of successful completion of an assigned task by the newly promoted sergeant; or

c. The newly promoted sergeant provides the correct answers to questions regarding the related materials and functions.

3. The assigned lieutenant will ensure the training objectives set out in the Field Training and Leadership Manual are completed for the newly promoted sergeant.

4. The commander will meet with the newly promoted sergeant quarterly to provide an evaluation and ensure that the sergeant is satisfied with the training provided.

5. The completed manual and recommendations for "Release from Training Period," indicating competence as a first-line supervisor, will be forwarded to the precinct commander. [34.1.6]

6. Upon successful review, the manual's "Certificate of Completion" is signed by the commander and forwarded to the appropriate Assistant Chief of Police.

7. The completed Field Training and Leadership Manual are forwarded to the Training Section for inclusion in the employees' training file.

B. Newly Promoted Sergeant Remedial Training

If the newly promoted sergeant cannot complete any training objective from the Field Training and Leadership Program, their supervisor will immediately notify the precinct/division commander. The reason or issue for their inability to complete the training objective is evaluated. If the circumstances are appropriate, the commander or designee will initiate a performance improvement plan or other appropriate remediation.

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