

ORGANIZATIONAL FUNCTION - UNIFORM AND EQUIPMENT COMMITTEE

POLICY:

It is the policy of the Omaha Police Department (OPD) to continuously review and evaluate all sworn and non-sworn OPD uniforms and equipment for the highest quality, function, and value. In accordance with the collective bargaining agreement (CBA) of the Omaha Police Officers Association (OPOA), a Uniform and Equipment Committee (UEC) shall review and evaluate current and future uniforms and equipment in order to advise the Chief of Police. The Chief of Police shall make the final authorization on uniforms and equipment worn by OPD personnel.

PROCEDURE:

I. Composition and Organization

- A. The Uniform and Equipment Committee (UEC) will be composed of the following:
 - 1. Chairperson: A voting member selected by a vote of all the UEC voting members.
 - 2. Recording Secretary: The Police Services Bureau (PSB) Support Services Section (SSS) Secretary, a non-voting member, will act as recording secretary when the UEC meets directly to conduct business.
 - 3. Voting Members:
 - a. Two (2) members shall be appointed by the Chief of Police.
 - b. Two (2) members shall be appointed by the OPOA President.
 - c. One (1) member shall be appointed by the mutual agreement of the Chief of Police and the OPOA President.
 - 4. Support Services Section Captain: The Support Services Section Captain shall serve as a non-voting member and act as the uniform and equipment contract coordinator.
- B. The UEC shall conduct business as part of the Office of the Chief of Police, reporting directly to the Chief of Police.
 - 1. Written communications should be addressed to the UEC via the Secretary of the Police Services Bureau (PSB) Support Services Section (SSS).
 - 2. The PSB SSS Secretary will email all UEC members any OPD Form 185 (Uniform and Equipment Committee Request Form) received.
 - 3. The PSB SSS Secretary shall produce UEC meeting minutes in a manner to facilitate written records of recommended items for approval by the Chief of Police.

II. Duties and Responsibilities

- A. The UEC shall advise the Chief of Police on uniform items, duty gear, and other police-related equipment in order to maintain standards of safety for employees.
- B. The UEC shall research rules and regulations on uniforms and equipment in order to maintain standards of safety for employees.
- C. The UEC shall research and evaluate selected items of interest to the OPD.

1. UEC members may determine which items are to be researched and evaluated.
2. Items may be reviewed at the request of any employee.
 - a. Employees may make a review request by completing a Uniform and Equipment Committee Request Form (OPD Form 185).
- D. The UEC will conduct research, reviews, and evaluations prior to items and/or specifications being posted for bid requests, when possible.
- E. Prior to recommending approval of new uniforms or equipment, the UEC shall coordinate purchasing issues with the uniform and equipment contract coordinator.
- F. The UEC shall meet monthly or as frequently as the UEC deems necessary.
 1. Meetings will be recorded by minutes or other written documentation.
 2. All recommendations for adoption of uniforms or equipment will be forwarded in writing to the Chief of Police or designee for approval.
 - a. Email is an acceptable form of written communication for purposes of this policy.
 - b. No uniform or equipment item may be worn or used until approved by the Chief of Police or designee.
 - c. The Chief of Police or designee's approval of the meeting minutes shall be construed as approval of UEC recommendations.
 - (1) For purposes of this policy, approval from the Chief of Police or designee may be an affirmative email response or in writing.
 3. Approved recommendations will be forwarded to the Research and Planning Unit for inclusion in the OPD Policies and Procedures Manual (PPM) [Appendix B](#).
- G. The UEC shall continuously review [Appendix B](#) of the PPM in order to maintain an up-to-date listing of authorized and optional uniforms and equipment.
 1. All OPD employees have access to [Appendix B](#) of the PPM.
 2. Manufacturer and product names, along with manufacturer suggested "wear out" periods, shall be included in [Appendix B](#) of the PPM.
 - a. If an item does not have a suggested "wear out" period, this will be noted in [Appendix B](#) of the PPM.
- H. The UEC shall maintain a detailed list of authorized product names and the manufacturers' addresses and phone numbers. This list will be forwarded to the OPOA in accordance with the CBA.
- I. The uniform and equipment contract coordinator will facilitate all uniform and equipment bidding, purchasing, and budgeting issues with the Police Services Bureau.

III. Implementation of New Uniforms and Equipment

- A. All new uniform items, duty gear, companion equipment, or other uniform/equipment items worn or used by on-duty employees must be vetted and approved by the Chief of Police or designee through the UEC.

NOTE: Employees are reminded that no experimental or test uniforms or equipment may be worn or used on duty without authorization and oversight from the UEC.

EXCEPTION: Specialty units may test and vet equipment for use by their own unit without UEC oversight. The Precinct/Section Captain must approve and monitor the equipment testing. Uniform items must be monitored by the UEC.

- B. The UEC will assess all proposed new uniform and equipment items and determine if a test wear or use period would aid the UEC in determining whether the item should be adopted.
1. If the UEC determines a test or use period should be conducted, the UEC will obtain approval from the appropriate Bureau Deputy Chief prior to starting the test period.
 2. Approved tests shall be limited to a specific period.
 3. The UEC shall designate the employees authorized to test the uniform or equipment.
 - a. If an item to be tested will be used specifically by a particular unit or squad, an employee from that unit or squad will be designated to assist in the testing of the item.
 - b. The UEC Chairperson will notify the test employee's chain of command. The notification will include:
 - (1) The name of the authorized test employee.
 - (2) A description of the uniform or equipment to be tested.
 - (3) The start and stop dates for the test period.
 - c. Notification will include the appropriate Bureau Deputy Chief.
 - d. Upon completion of the test period, all test items will be returned to the UEC.
 4. The UEC will collect all information obtained from the test period, including comments from the following employees:
 - a. The test employee.
 - b. The test employee's chain of command.
 - c. Other employees, including supervisors, who observed the test item's functionality and use.
- C. The UEC will evaluate all information prior to making any recommendation to the Chief of Police or designee for approval. This information includes, but is not limited to, the following:
1. Cost.
 2. Durability.
 3. Functionality.

4. Test comments.
 5. Fit within the OPD mission and values.
- D. The UEC may, after full evaluation, determine that the uniform or equipment item is not suited for use by the OPD.
1. In this situation, the UEC will not seek approval from the Chief of Police or designee, but will forward the results of the evaluation to the Chief of Police or designee for consideration and for future reference.

REFERENCES:

I. Previous OPD Orders

- A. Previous OPD General Orders include the following: #14-91, 10-14, and 40-14.
- B. Previous OPD Information Orders include the following: #184-95.

II. Other References

- A. Collective Bargaining Agreement of the Omaha Police Officers Association.
- B. PPM Monthly Updates #12-2014, #5-2017, and #6-2018.