

504.13 SPECIALIZED ASSIGNMENTS, UNITS AND TEAMS

- I. PURPOSE: This directive is issued to identify certain specialized assignments, units and teams throughout the department. The procedure for submitting letters of interest for the specialized assignment, team or unit is described within this policy.
- II. DISCUSSION: There are a variety of positions that can be filled within the department that do not require a formal promotional process. When a position on a specialized assignment, unit or team is open, the department must fill the assignment with a qualified and capable employee. All eligible officers must have an equal opportunity to compete. Assignment to, or transfer from, such positions shall be at the discretion of the Chief of Police.
- III. DEFINITIONS:
 - A. Specialized Assignments: A non-biddable assignment often characterized by increased levels of responsibilities and specific training. Examples of specialized assignments are, but not limited to, School Resource Officer, C.O.P., Street Anti-Crime, etc.
 - B. Specialty Team: A group of individuals whose primary assignments are in various functional areas of the department but who train together, on a regular basis, to function as a team in the accomplishment of specific police missions. TPD specialty teams are Special Weapons and Tactics Team (SWAT); Hostage Negotiation Team (HNT); Underwater Search and Recovery (USAR/Dive) Team and the Hazardous Devices/Materials Team.
 - C. Specialty Unit: A group of individuals who work together on a regular basis and have specific duties and responsibilities in addition to those assigned to other personnel within their division and job classification. TPD specialty units are K-9 squads; Field Training and Evaluation Program (FTEP) squads; Marine Unit, Motorcycle Unit, DUI Unit, Aviation Unit, Bicycle Operations and Response (BOAR) Unit, Mounted Patrol Unit, and School Resource Officer (SRO).
- IV. FUNCTIONS
 - A. Specialty Teams:
 1. SWAT Team: This team has the responsibility of responding to any special threat situation. The objectives are the neutralization and apprehension of the suspect(s) through negotiations and/or assault procedures.
 2. HNT: This team has the responsibility of responding to hostage situations, barricaded suspects, and subjects attempting to commit suicide.

3. USAR Team: Handles requests for service requiring expertise in underwater activities. The team responds to emergency requests concerning victims of water mishaps, underwater evidence and property recovery in and about the waters of the City of Tampa.
4. Hazardous Devices/Materials Team: The team is responsible for the safe handling, transporting, and disposing of hazardous materials and explosive devices.
5. Honor Guard: This team honors those officers who have dedicated their lives to the police service. For that purpose, volunteer officers are chosen to represent the department as an Honor Guard at police funerals and certain other ceremonies directed by the Chief of Police.
6. Crowd Management Group (CMG): A team of officers specially trained and equipped to handle, among other duties, mass demonstrations, events and incidents of civil disorder. CMG is comprised of a select group of officers with special skills and training for when situations of civil disorder develop to restore peace and order as quickly, efficiently and appropriately as possible.

B. Specialty Unit:

1. K-9 Squads: Augments various department divisions by conducting searches in both buildings and wooded areas, tracking for lost/missing persons or wanted criminals, detecting unlawful possession of narcotics, and retrieving articles of evidence
2. Field Training and Evaluation Program (FTEP) Squads: Provides on-the-job training to probationary officers to ensure they meet acceptable standards of performance, as set forth by department guidelines. An additional objective is to recruit and train qualified candidates as Field Training Officers.
3. Marine Unit: Handles requests for service requiring expertise in boating and underwater activities. The unit responds to emergency requests concerning victims of water mishaps, underwater evidence and property recovery, marine traffic control, and enforcement of laws in and about the waters of the city of Tampa.
4. Motorcycle Traffic Unit: Performs traffic law enforcement in an effort to decrease traffic crashes, property damage, and injury or death on the public roadways. In addition, the unit participates in community awareness and education projects related to traffic safety.

5. DUI Unit: Enforces DUI laws by deploying in areas where alcohol related traffic crashes are occurring. This unit also relieves any patrol officer who comes into contact with any driver suspected of DUI, thereby allowing the patrol officer to return to service.
6. Aviation Unit: Provides helicopter surveillance and aerial support during arrest scenarios. The unit can also provide aerial transportation in special circumstances and monitors traffic control during special events.
7. Mounted Patrol Unit: Provides crime prevention, public relations, criminal apprehension, dignitary protection, search and rescue, special escorts and crowd control activities for the department.
8. BOAR Unit: Supports the mission of the department by addressing current crime trends, providing positive community engagement, assisting with crowd control when warranted, and by maintaining productive relationships and safe environments in downtown and throughout the City of Tampa.
9. SRO: Provides security to specific schools inside the city of Tampa. The unit performs law enforcement functions within the school, conducts safety drills, completes class presentations, participates in school administrative meetings and functions, and assists with school-based threats. The unit serves as a member of the School Based Threat Management team in compliance with the Florida Model.

V. TRAINING REQUIREMENTS:

- A. The specific training required by each team or unit varies depending upon the subject matter and the amount of training necessary to attain proficiency. Some training is governed by state or federal regulations, while other training is less regulated. Each employee in a specialized assignment must be sufficiently trained to safely, competently, and legally perform the expected duties.
- B. Some assignments require training as a prerequisite to assignment on the team or unit. Others may allow for training after the assignment; however, all minimum-training requirements must be initiated within a year of the assignment of an employee to the team or unit.
- C. General-training requirements will include:
 1. Development and/or enhancement of skills, knowledge, and abilities particular to the specialization;
 2. Review of policies, procedures, laws, etc., that relate to the specialized position;

3. Evaluation of required performance standards; and
 4. Supervised on-the-job training.
- D. Records of each training exercise will be maintained by the unit/team and reported to the Personnel Unit.
 - E. Periodic training exercises will be performed at the direction of the commander and/or coordinator of the specialty team/unit and documented accordingly.
 - F. Each specialized assignment shall be reviewed annually by the commander and/or team leader to ascertain the feasibility of the continued use and existence of that component.

VI. ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS:

A. General Requirements:

1. Have at least two years' experience with the Tampa Police Department and five years' experience for applicants applying for the Hazardous Devices/Materials Team.

Applicants applying for a plain-clothes assignment or applying to become a Field Training Officer (FTO) will be required to have a minimum of four years' experience with the Tampa Police Department.

These requirements may be waived by the Chief of Police in special circumstances based upon operational necessity.

2. Receive a rating of satisfactory or higher on the most recent performance evaluation.
3. Satisfy the specific training and/or physical requirements as stipulated in the intra-division procedure for each assignment.

- B. Specific Requirements: Specific requirements for each team/unit are enumerated in the intra-division procedure for each respective component.

VII. PROCEDURES:

- A. When an opportunity for appointment to a specialized, unit or team becomes available, the Major or commander responsible for the unit or team will prepare and disseminate an announcement. Letters of interest for a position on a specialized unit or team will be addressed to the Major of the affected Division

through the applicant's normal chain of command. Original hardcopy letters will be collected and kept on file by the affected Division for one year.

- B. When an opportunity for appointment to a specialized assignment is foreseen or becomes available, the Support Services Division will mark "currently open" next to the position listed on the TPD-Net under Personnel – Interest Letter Announcements. Letters of interest for specialized assignments will be addressed to the Captain of the Support Services Division through the applicant's normal chain of command. Original hardcopy letters will be collected by the Support Services Division and kept on file in the Personnel Unit for one year.
- C. All letters of interest should describe the employee's education, training, experience, and other qualifications that would be beneficial in the assignment.
- D. All applicants who meet the minimum requirements for the specialized unit or team may be given the opportunity to interview and/or compete for the assignment.
 - 1. Applicants will be screened by a selection process review board, consisting of the division and/or team commanders. Appointment shall be at the discretion of the Chief of Police.
- E. Promotion to the rank of sergeant may preclude an officer from continuing assignment on a specialty team.

Supersedes SOP 504.13, dated 06/20.