



POLICY AND PROCEDURE NO. 80

Injured on Duty

Date Issued: December 21, 2023
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4 Pages

1. PURPOSE:

It is the purpose of this policy to direct members of the Worcester Police Department through the proper reporting and follow-up procedures when sustaining an injury, illness, or disability during the performance of their duties.

2. POLICY:

It is the policy of the Department to provide all officers who become injured in the performance of their duty, with necessary medical treatment, hospitalization, and other medical care, and to facilitate their effective return to duty.

Officers who become incapacitated for duty because of injuries or illness sustained in the good faith performance of their duty are entitled to leave without loss of pay under the conditions and provisions of Massachusetts General Law Chapter 41, Section 111F, the Ordinances of the City of Worcester, and current collective bargaining agreements.

Officers qualifying for Injured on Duty Status will be indemnified for all hospital, medical, surgical, chiropractic, nursing, pharmaceutical, prosthetic, and related expenses which are the direct result of the injury sustained in the line of duty.

This is providing the injured officer conducted themselves in a legal manner and in compliance with department policy and Rules and Regulations.

3. PROCEDURE:

Any disability, injury or illness incurred by a member of the Department during the lawful execution of their duties, shall be reported in accordance with this policy and applicable law. Any hospitalization, medical care, and indemnification for such medical care shall be requested in accordance with this policy and applicable law.

All requests for Injured on Duty Status should be forwarded through the chain of command to the Chief's Office for review and approval. These requests will include all required documentation, commonly referred to as the IOD Packet. Contained in this packet shall be the following:

Original "Worcester Police Department – Report of Work-Related Injury" form; or copy thereof if incomplete.

Copies of all related incident reports.

All medical reports or doctor's note relating to the injury.

Supervisor's IDC report.

Requests for injured on duty status received by the Chief's Office will be forwarded to Human Resources Division for review. After review, the requesting officer will be advised, in writing, as to whether the request for injured on duty status has been approved or denied.

In accordance with current collective bargaining agreements, after the officer's IOD packet has been signed by the Chief's Office and submitted to Human Resources Division for review, the officer shall be placed on temporary IOD status, unless no loss of work is expected.

After the officer has been out seven (7) calendar days, they shall be carried on the Chief's Office morning report until their return to duty. When out more than seven (7) calendar days, a return-to-work letter from the city physician is required before returning to duty.

At all times throughout the period of IOD, when notified by the Chief's Office, the injured officers will make themselves available for appointments with the city physician or with a physician appointed by the city manager. All reasonable bills incurred as the result of an injury, illness, or disability, which has been approved, shall be submitted through the chain of command to the Chief's Office.

Officers shall continue to receive their regular compensation during the period of their absence from duty resulting from injury or illness arising out of and during the performance of their duty. No sick leave payment or reduction of sick leave credit shall be made for any period during which regular compensation is paid under this section.

Once medically approved to return to duty, injured officers shall submit the related return-to-work letter to their commanding officer as soon as possible. The commanding officer shall notify the Chief's Office and arrange for a return to duty with the involved officer.

4. REPORTING:

When reporting an injury or illness sustained while in the performance of one's duty, the following procedure shall be used:

A. Injured Officer

When injured in the course of their duty, officers are to notify their supervisor immediately upon realization of the injury. The injured officers will either make out or have made out the "Worcester Police Department – Report of Work-Related Injury" form. This injury form must be signed by the officer in the signature field. The officer shall also sign the "Medical Records Release Authorization" field, located at the bottom of the form. The injured officer will then submit the injury form, related doctor's notes or medical treatment documents, and any related incident reports to their supervisor for review.

In cases of minor injuries where no medical treatment is requested and no request for injured on duty status is expected, the injured officer shall still submit an IOD packet containing the injury form and related incident reports to their supervisor. These documents will be forwarded through the chain of command to the Chief's Office to be placed in the officer's medical record.

B. Supervising Official

Upon notification of an injury sustained by an officer in the course of their duty, the supervising official shall investigate the nature, cause and surrounding circumstances of the injury. The supervisor shall generate a report documenting their findings in IDC format. Supervisors will

then ensure that all required documentation is collected from the injured officer and will ensure all documentation is filled out as completely as possible. If the officer is injured to the extent that they cannot physically complete the required documentation, the supervising official shall complete the “Worcester Police Department – Report of Work-Related Injury” form to the extent possible and submit a copy thereof within the IOD packet. The supervising official will then submit the IOD packet, through the chain of command, to the injured officer’s commanding officer. Upon notification of an injury, the supervising official will, when possible, submit the IOD packet before the end of their tour of duty.

In cases of minor injuries where no medical treatment is requested and no request for injured on duty status is expected, the supervising official may still instruct the injured officer to receive medical treatment and examination at a medical care facility.

C. Commanding Officer

Upon receiving an IOD packet commanding officers shall ensure that required documentation is present and complete. Additionally, the commanding officer must sign the “Worcester Police Department – Report of Work-Related Injury” form in the designated section. The IOD packet will then be submitted by the commanding officer to the Chief’s Office for review and approval.

If it is anticipated that the injured officer will be out of work due to an injury sustained in the performance of their duty, the commanding officer shall notify the Training Division as soon as possible. Likewise, the commanding officer shall notify the Training Division upon the injured officer’s return to duty. Once the injured officer has been out thirty (30) calendar days, the commander will follow the protocol in section 7.

5. OFF-DUTY ASSIGNMENTS:

In the event an officer is injured while performing an off-duty assignment, they shall immediately notify an Operations official who will investigate the incident. In accordance with the Section 4A, the officer shall make out or have made out the “Worcester Police Department Report of Work-Related Injury” form and an incident report if necessary. These shall be submitted to the investigating Operations official.

In accordance with Section 4B, the investigating official shall make out a full report concerning the incident in IDC format. The official will then prepare and submit the IOD packet to the injured officer’s commanding officer.

In the event the injury is realized after the off-duty-assignment has concluded, the injured officer shall notify their immediate supervisor in the division or unit to which they are assigned. The injury shall then be reported in accordance with Section 4.

6. MEDICAL TREATMENT PROCEDURE:

If a member of the department is treated at a hospital or medical care facility for an injury or illness received while on duty, the following procedure shall be used:

If the injury or illness is non-disabling and minor in nature, the injured officer shall be treated and allowed to return to duty.

If the injury is of a more serious nature, the injured officer should receive appropriate care, and either be released or admitted.

If admitted, the supervising official shall notify the injured officer's commanding officer as soon as possible.

Copies of all initial medical treatment documentation, including diagnosis, follow-up recommendations, etc., shall be added to the IOD packet, in accordance with Section 3.

When hospital personnel recommend follow-up care, a letter confirming the diagnosis and probable period of disability will be forwarded, by the injured officer to their commanding officer as soon as possible.

When receiving follow-up care, the injured officer shall forward to the Chief's Office, through their commanding officer, a doctor's note after each appointment. This note will indicate the date of the next scheduled appointment. Each subsequent note shall indicate the same and be submitted by the officer until the officer has returned to duty.

7. LONG TERM IOD STATUS:

In cases where an injured officer is out of work more than thirty (30) calendar days, the officer shall be categorized as Long Term IOD Status. After thirty calendar days the injured officer, if ambulatory, shall meet with their commanding officer and provide the most recent doctor's note related to the injury or illness.

After the initial meeting with their commanding officer, the injured officer shall meet with their commanding officer every fifteen (15) calendar days thereafter. These follow-up meetings shall continue until the officer's return to duty.

During each meeting the commanding officer may request from the injured officer the most recent doctor's note that includes the date of the next scheduled appointment. Additionally, the commander will have the injured officer contact Future Comp at 401-558-3109 during each visit to ensure Future Comp and the officer are communicating regularly. The commanding officer will document each meeting using the designated Injured on Duty follow-up form. The follow-up form and doctor's note shall be forwarded to the Chief's Office to be placed in the officer's medical record.

8. NOTIFICATION WHEN LEAVING THE STATE:

No officer on IOD status may travel outside of Massachusetts for a period greater than forty-eight (48) hours without the expressed permission of the Chief of Police. Any officer on IOD status, who intends to travel outside of the state for a period greater than forty-eight hours, shall submit written notification, through the chain of command, to the Chief's Office prior to leaving the state. Written travel notification shall include the location, dates, duration, contact information, and reason of the officer's absence.

Per:

Paul B. Saucier
Chief of Police