



## MEDFIELD POLICE DEPARTMENT

POLICY NO. 4.20

# WRITTEN DIRECTIVE SYSTEM

MASSACHUSETTS POLICE  
ACCREDITATION STANDARDS  
REFERENCED: **12.2.1, 12.2.2**

ISSUING AUTHORITY:

Michelle Guerette  
Chief of Police

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### **DEPARTMENT MISSION STATEMENT:**

The mission of the Medfield Police Department is to provide the highest level of public safety and service to Medfield's residents, visitors, and the community in general.

We are committed to providing effective, competent, and considerate public safety services that will enhance the quality of life within our community and ensure that all are treated with the utmost dignity. **[12.2.1(a)]**

### **BACKGROUND:**

The Chief of Police has the responsibility of developing policies and procedures, and rules and regulations for the government, discipline and supervision of the Medfield Police Department. These may be issued, altered, amended, added to or revoked by the Chief, with the approval of the Board of Selectmen. This manual provides personnel guidelines, in the form of a written directive system, establishing these policies and procedures, and rules and regulations. All previous policies, rules, regulations, orders, directives or procedures, inconsistent herewith, are hereby revoked. If any part of these rules and procedures are rendered inoperable or declared illegal by any court or governmental agency of competent jurisdiction, the balance of the entire manual will remain in full force and effect until amended or rescinded. **[12.2.1(b)]**

Personnel guidelines are a necessity in any organization if it is to effectively achieve the purposes for which it is established. This is particularly true in a police department where

the reputation of the organization is fundamentally dependent upon the personal conduct and professional competence of its individual officers. This manual is especially directed to the officers of the Medfield Police Department. However, it is required that all civilian employees adhere to, and be guided by, all policies, rules and procedures consistent with the positions they hold and with their duties and functions in the Department.

It cannot be expected that the contents of this manual will cover all situations or emergencies that may arise. By the very nature of police work, police officers in the field must perform their duties independently with a minimum of direct supervision. Their own intelligence, training, practical experience, prudent discretion, and common sense will often be their guide in carrying out their responsibilities.

It is the Department's intention that this manual will benefit all personnel by providing the agency's mission and values, as well as promoting consistency, efficiency, and professionalism by standardizing the procedures employees use to carry out their duties.

**PURPOSE:**

To establish definitions and formats for various written directives to be issued by the Department. To provide for proper preparation, indexing, and distribution, so that Department personnel are kept informed of new, revised or rescinded policies, procedures or organizational changes.

**POLICY:**

The Chief of Police is responsible for providing direction and control to all members of the Department. This includes the responsibility to ensure that internal directives are carefully organized in a manner that will provide guidance and easy access to members in departmental expectations, policies, rules and procedures. **[12.2.1(f),(g)]**

**DEFINITIONS:**

**Department Manual:** A document available on the Department network, as well as hard copies in various locations, that contains official policies, procedures, rules and regulations of the Medfield Police Department. In the event the department chooses to seek accreditation, the manual will be updated regularly by the accreditation manager throughout the year, reflecting any alterations of written directives issued during that period. **[12.2.1(f),(g)]** (Whenever the context of this manual requires the use of the masculine gender, the feminine will be included, and when applicable, the use of the singular will include the plural.)

**Written Directive:** Any written document used to guide or affect the performance or conduct of agency employees. The term includes policies, procedures, rules, regulations, general orders, personnel orders, special orders, and memoranda. **[12.2.1(h)].**

**General Orders:** Permanent written orders outlining policy matters that affect the entire Department. A general order is the most authoritative written order issued and may be used to amend, supersede, or rescind any previous order. General Orders remain in full effect until amended, superseded or rescinded.

**Special Orders:** Temporary written orders outlining instructions covering particular situations. Special Orders are automatically canceled when their objective is achieved.

**Personnel Orders:** Orders pertaining to assignments, change of duty assignments, administrative matters related to condition of employment and employee rights and benefits.

**Memoranda:** Written communications issued by any personnel to relay information or instructions. Issues covered may include officer specific requests, training, updates, and notifications.

**Policies:** Policies summarize the Department's position on specific matters. Policies are concise position statements based on underlying organizational principles, goals, values, and operational philosophies. They are designed for broad general direction and guidance primarily designed for use by all members of the Department or by more than one operational division.

**Procedures:** Procedures build on the foundation of policy statements to provide specific guidance on required, desired, or preferred methods of operations or conduct. Procedures are more detailed instruction on means and methods for carrying out the policy directive and generally draw the boundaries of permissible officer discretion in performing specific tasks or duties. (As a practical matter, the Department usually issues Policies & Procedures as a combined document.)

**Rules and Regulations:** As opposed to procedure statements that often provide officer flexibility and discretion, rules and regulations are characterized by their inflexibility. Rules and regulations define situations where no deviation or exceptions to agency-authorized actions are permitted without authority from the Chief of Police.

## **PROCEDURES:**

### **Issuing Authority for Written Directives**

- Policies, Procedures, Rules and Regulations, may only be issued by the Chief of Police after approval from the Board of Selectmen.
- General Orders may only be issued by the Chief of Police or the Executive Officer after approval from the Board of Selectmen.
- Special Orders and Personnel Orders may be issued by the Chief of Police.
- The Chief, or sergeants may issue other written directives, such as Memoranda that serve to direct some function or action.
- Non-supervisory personnel may not issue directive memoranda, but may issue informational memoranda or bulletins. **[12.2.1(c)]**

### **Distribution of Directives**

Distribution of written directives to members of the Department will be accomplished in the following formats: **[12.2.2(a)]**

**E-mail:** Written directives may also be distributed to employees via the Town of Medfield's external e-mail system. It is the responsibility of each employee to review these directives.

All employees shall be trained in the use of the e-mail system. Each employee has his own internal and external e-mail account which is password protected. It shall be the responsibility of each employee to check their internal e-mail during every shift and to read all e-mail messages received from Department personnel. At least once a shift, or when directed by an internal e-mail, employees shall check their external e-mail. Once an e-mail is received, it shall be understood that the contents of that e-mail, to include attachments, have been formally issued to the employee. It is the responsibility of each employee to review the information within.

**Verbal:** Directives may be addressed with officers verbally in certain circumstances.

**Hard Copy:** Hard copies of written directives may be posted in the roll call room or distributed directly to affected personnel.

**Receipt/Review:** Written directives require acknowledgement that the document has been received and reviewed. The electronic mail receipt indicating that the employee received notice of a directive on shall serve as a record that the employee received and reviewed the written directive. No employee shall sign off on any Department related policy notification without first opening it and reading the notification and its attachment. **[12.2.2(c)]**

### **Storage of Directives**

Written directives will be stored via hard copy and electronically for easy access to personnel. Hard copies of the Department manual, General Orders, Personnel Orders, Special Orders, and general directive memoranda will be kept in the Shift Commander's Office. Electronic copies will be stored on the internal department computer system. Directive memoranda issued to specific personnel will not be kept with general directive memoranda. **[12.2.2(b)]**

**General Orders:** General Orders will be distributed to all affected personnel in the Department. They will be distributed by department e-mail, posted in hard copy, and verbally announced at roll call. **[12.2.2(b)]**

**Special Orders:** Special Orders will be distributed to all affected personnel in the Department. They will be distributed by e-mail, posted in hard copy, and verbally announced at roll call.

**Personnel Orders:** Personnel Orders will be distributed to affected personnel in the Department. They may be distributed by e-mail, hard copy, and/or verbally.

**Memoranda:** Memos will be distributed to all affected personnel by e-mail, they may also be distributed verbally or in hard copy.

### **Preparation of Written Directives**

Written directives shall not conflict with established policies and procedures, unless short-term extenuating circumstances exist.

Whenever applicable, all written directives shall carry notations directing attention to other published documents, directives or manuals that are related. Any directive amending, superseding or rescinding other written directives should indicate identifying notations (order number, rule number, etc.) necessary to connect such directives.

All written directives will indicate the issued date. Effective dates and expiration dates, when appropriate, shall also be indicated.

### **Indexing and General Format**

All written directives will contain whom they are from, whom they are to, and the date.

All General Orders, Special Orders, and Personnel Orders will also contain an effective date and shall be numbered consecutively by the year of issuance. Example: 08-01, 08-02, 08-03.

When a new policy is issued it shall be in the form of a Policy and Procedure. The Policy and Procedure will include the policy number. This will indicate where it will be placed in the Department manual. If the new policy amends or supersedes an existing policy that shall be noted in the Policy and Procedure. **[12.2.1f, 12.2.1e]**

### **Format of Policies and Procedures**

The front page of each policy will have a title at the top, followed by a header that includes the Policy and Procedure number, the Issue Date, Effective Date, Revision Date, and the Massachusetts Accreditation Standard(s) referenced. Each subsequent page of a policy will have the title and policy number in the header. The bottom of each page of a policy will indicate the last date the procedure was revised and the page number. **[12.2.1(d)]**

### **Review**

All reviews of written directives shall be conducted by the Chief of Police or his designee, as well as other members of the Department selected by the Chief of Police who shall make suggestions as to the current application of the procedure as well as suggested changes. Alterations will be made to reflect changes in law, court decisions, research, and departmental procedures. **[12.2.1(e)]**

Any requests for policy and procedure review, development, or change, will be directed to the Chief of Police. Depending on the nature of the order, selected personnel in various operational components, (e.g., Communications, Records, Training, etc.) should be permitted both review and input. The Chief of Police or the designee thereof should collect all such input. Recommended changes will be incorporated in the order as determined by the Chief of Police. Completed, reviewed, and approved orders will then be issued at the direction of the Chief of Police after approval from the Board of Selectmen. **[12.2.1(i)]**

The written directives, job descriptions, duties and responsibilities contained herein shall be under constant review. All such directives shall continue in force indefinitely, unless rescinded, amended or revised.

## **Procedural Guidelines**

All members of the Medfield Police Department will adhere to the following procedural guidelines.

All employees are expected to read the manual and to be thoroughly familiar with its contents. An employee will be held accountable for understanding and complying with all policies and procedures in the manual. Any employee who is unclear regarding a written directive should seek clarification from a supervisor or a member of the command staff. All employees are invited and encouraged to forward suggestions for the improvement of Department operations, practices, and procedures, in writing, through Department channels to the Chief of Police.

New policies, rules, regulations, and procedures will be issued through written policy and procedure statements. Each employee will be notified of any new or revised policies, and the shift commanders will conduct a review. All written directives will be incorporated into the Department manual on the network and in hard copies. **[12.2.2(b)]**

Employees are responsible for checking the bulletin boards in the Roll Call Room, and their e-mails to see what directives have been issued during any absence. They are responsible for reading each directive issued during their absence, whether or not it is read at roll call.

It shall be the Shift Supervisor's responsibility to deliver, as directed, all information contained in the above directives and to adhere to all instructions contained therein.

## **Composition of Manual**

**Table of Contents/Subject Index:** The table of contents breaks up the department manual into sections. Each subject within each section is sequentially indexed by policy number and title. Use of this index should assist the reader in locating material rapidly. **[12.2.1(e)]**

**Chapter Sections:** The manual is divided into seven sections: Operations, Investigations, Transportation and Detention, Administration, Traffic, Evidence and Property Management, and Special Occurrences. Policies placed in a specific section shall essentially relate to that section's function, but will apply to all Department personnel as well.

## **Maintaining the Manual:**

Department manuals will be maintained on the Department's Information Systems network, accessible to all employees. Several hard copies will be kept in various locations within the police facility for easy reference and periodic inspection. Hard copies of the manual will be kept in the Chief's office, the Patrol Sergeant's office and Dispatch.

When a new policy is issued, or an old policy revised, the Chief of Police or his designee will be responsible for purging outdated material and updating the network version as

well as the hard copies throughout the station. The index and table of contents will also be revised, if necessary, to reflect the changes. Purged items will be destroyed. Individual officers will be responsible for purging and updating their personal manuals upon receiving a new written directive. [12.2.1(e)], [12.2.2(b)]

### **Glossary of Terms**

There are a number of terms used throughout this manual to describe departmental operations. The following is a list of common terms used and their definitions:

**Assignment** A specifically established or prescribed police duty, requiring the person so directed to perform a certain police task or tasks.

**Chain of Command** The unbroken line of authority extending from the Chief through the officer in command at each level of Department operations as established by the Chief of Police.

**Chief of Police** The executive head of the police department.

**Civilian Member** An employee of the Department who is not sworn to perform the duties of a police officer.

**Commanding Officer** An officer assigned to command and direct any functional unit or subdivision of the Department and responsible for its efficient operation.

**Department** The Medfield Police Department

**Departmental Policies and Procedures** Standard methods governing police conduct in the performance of duty, as promulgated by the Chief of Police, as they apply to various law enforcement situations. Such departmental Policies and Procedures, as distinguished from the "Manual" of Department Rules and Regulations, shall not be available for public inspection except as may be lawfully subpoenaed.

**Division** A subdivision of the Department, organized for general police service or for specialized police activity.

**Duty** The obligation to perform police action or service.

**Member** An employee of the Department.

**Officer** A sworn member of the Department having the power and authority of a police officer, regardless of rank or assigned duties.

**Officer in Charge** The officer in command of any functional unit or subdivision of the Department at any given time; or the officer in charge, and responsible for any police action or operation.

**Official Channels** The Department chain of command.

**Organization** The internal structure of the Department consisting of major functional units and subdivisions grouped according to similarity of purpose and operational responsibilities.

**Patrol Officer** A duly appointed and sworn police officer, which serves at the first or entrance level of the Department structure.

**Patrol Supervisor** The sergeant assigned to supervise patrol officers detailed to patrol functions during a prescribed tour of duty.

**Post** A fixed point or location.

**Rank** The relative position of each officer of the police force, classified by grade and title.

**Ranking Officer** The officer having the highest rank or grade on duty at a particular time and place.

**Relieved From Duty** The act of removing an officer from duty.

**Sector** A particular geographical zone of the community designated for police patrol purposes.

**Shift** A group of officers comprising the work force of the Department for a particular tour of duty and containing its own supervisory and/or command officers.

**Superior Officer** An officer holding the rank of Sergeant or above.

**Suspension** The official act of temporarily removing an employee from all police duties, with or without pay for a violation of Department policies, procedures, rules, regulations, orders or directives.

**Tour of Duty** An established work period to which individual officers are assigned.

**Unit** A number of police officers and/or civilian employees regularly or temporarily assigned together to perform a specific police purpose.