



TALLAHASSEE POLICE DEPARTMENT GENERAL ORDERS

 Proudly Policing Since 1826	SUBJECT Written Directives System		 Nationally Accredited 1986
	CHIEF OF POLICE <i>Signature on File</i>		
NUMBER 1	ORIGINAL ISSUE 07/15/1985	CURRENT REVISION 06/27/2025	TOTAL PAGES 8

AUTHORITY/RELATED REFERENCES

City of Tallahassee Ethics Statement
 General Order 2, Chain of Command-General Management
 General Order 46, Rules of Conduct
 AIU 4, Policy Revision and Dissemination Process

ACCREDITATION REFERENCES

CALEA Chapters 1, 11, 12
 CFA Chapter 3

KEY WORD INDEX

Composing, Issuing, Indexing and Archiving	Procedure V
General Guidelines	Procedure I
Policy Responsibilities – All Members	Procedure II
Policy Responsibilities – Supervisors/Commanders	Procedure III
PD Forms	Procedure VI
Written Directives System Management	Procedure IV

POLICY

The Department is responsible for establishing a formal written directives system for the operation of the agency and to provide members with a clear understanding of the constraints and expectations related to the performance of their duties. Members are responsible for adhering to the written directives applicable to their work assignment.

DEFINITIONS

Branch: A major Department organizational component under the command

TALLAHASSEE POLICE DEPARTMENT

of a Deputy Chief.

Bureau: A Department organizational component within a Branch, which is under the command of a Major or a civilian Director.

Chain of Command: The unbroken line of authority extending from the Chief of Police through a subordinate at each level of command.

District: A geographical area within the city limits comprised of a designated number of zones.

Employee: Each person filling a full-time or part-time position within the Department and receiving monetary compensation.

Member: A Department employee or volunteer.

Office: An organizational component of a bureau or the Office of the Chief.

Power DMS: A web-based computer application utilized for the maintenance and distribution of Department written directives, training bulletins, and other work-related documents.

Section: A primary organizational component of a bureau.

Shall: Indicates the described action is mandatory.

Shift: 1) A primary organizational component of the patrol function (e.g., day, afternoon, and midnight shifts); 2) The operational functions of the Department during a designated time period (e.g., Alpha/Bravo shifts).

Should: Indicates the described action is not mandatory, but preferred.

Squad: A subset of a shift or section.

Supervisor: A member with delegated authority to oversee or supervise others in the accomplishment of their work assignments and tasks.

Sworn Member: An employee who is a certified police officer as described in Chapter 943, Florida Statutes.

Unit: A subset of a bureau, district, section, or office.

Team: A group of sworn members specially trained for response to certain incidents or situations.

Volunteer: A person who donates their services.

TALLAHASSEE POLICE DEPARTMENT

Written Directive: Approved General Orders, Special Orders, Standard Operating Procedures, and policy memoranda.

Zone: A subset of a district to which officers are assigned for patrol purposes.

PROCEDURES

I. GENERAL GUIDELINES

- A. The definitions provided in the definitions section above are applicable to the entire written directives system.
- B. The written directives system is used to inform members and the public of Department policies and protocols in the fulfillment of the Department's mission.
- C. The Chief of Police has the authority to issue, modify, approve and rescind Department written directives.
- D. The Accreditation and Inspection Unit (AIU) is responsible for the administration of the written directives system.
- E. The written directives system consists of:
 - 1. General Orders,
 - 2. Special Orders,
 - 3. Standard Operating Procedures, and
 - 4. Policy Memoranda.
- F. A **General Order (GO)** is a written directive addressing member actions in the performance of their duties, from daily tasks to emergency situations (e.g., rules of conduct, vehicle pursuits).
 - 1. Approval authority: Chief of Police.
 - 2. Distribution: Department-wide or all sworn members.
- G. A **Special Order (SO)** is a written directive addressing a specific circumstance or temporary event (e.g., mass arrests, responses to weather related emergencies).

TALLAHASSEE POLICE DEPARTMENT

1. Approval authority: Chief of Police.
 2. Distribution: Department-wide or all sworn members.
- H. A **Standard Operating Procedure (SOP)** is a written directive issued by a Unit, Office, Section, or Bureau to describe specific member protocols to carry out the job tasks of the work area.
1. Approval authority: Chief of Police, Assistant Chief of Police, Deputy Chief of Police, or the affected Bureau Commander.
 2. Distribution: The affected unit, office, section, or bureau; however, Patrol Bureau SOPs are distributed to all sworn members regardless of work assignment.
- I. A **Policy Memorandum** is utilized to disseminate policy information or instructions to members.
1. A policy memorandum may be issued to:
 - a. Present information not warranting inclusion in a General Order, Special Order, or Standard Operating Procedure,
 - b. Relay policy-relevant information prior to, or contemporaneous with, the issuance of a General Order, Special Order, or Standard Operating Procedure, or
 - c. Explain or re-emphasize an existing General Order, Special Order, or Standard Operating Procedure.
 2. A policy memorandum must have a memo number issued by the Office of the Chief.
 3. Approval authority:
 - a. Policy Memoranda related to a specific General Order or Special Order: Chief of Police.
 - b. Policy Memoranda related to a specific Standard Operating Procedure: Chief of Police, Assistant Chief of Police, Deputy Chief of Police, or the appropriate Bureau Commander.
 4. Distribution: Department-wide, the affected unit, office, section, or bureau, or only specific members based upon their job classification (e.g., all civilian, all sworn).

TALLAHASSEE POLICE DEPARTMENT

- J. As with any human endeavor, there will undoubtedly be times when a situation arises which is not addressed by a written directive. In those instances:
 - 1. All members shall rely upon the principles outlined in the City of Tallahassee's Statement on Ethics, and
 - 2. Sworn members shall additionally rely upon the principles outlined in the Law Enforcement Officer Code of Ethics.
- K. Power DMS is the central repository and access point for all written directives, policy memoranda, and associated training bulletins.
 - 1. Members are able to review and acknowledge receipt of these documents by electronic signature within the Power DMS application.
 - 2. The AIU is responsible for management of Power DMS.
 - 3. Members encountering issues with Power DMS should contact the designated AIU member for assistance.

II. POLICY RESPONSIBILITIES – ALL MEMBERS

- A. Each member is responsible for understanding and adhering to the written directives applicable to their work assignment.
- B. Unless directed otherwise by a supervisor or the Accreditation and Inspection Unit (AIU), members are responsible for acknowledging receipt and review of issued written directives, policy memoranda, or training bulletins within **30 days** of:
 - 1. Reporting for a new work assignment (e.g., new hire, transfer, promotion), or
 - 2. Being notified a written directive, policy memorandum, or training bulletin has been distributed through Power DMS.
- C. Members are responsible for successfully completing any associated examination contemporaneous to the review of the issued written directive, policy memorandum, or training bulletin.
- D. Members with questions about a particular written directive, policy memorandum, or training bulletin are responsible for bringing it to the

TALLAHASSEE POLICE DEPARTMENT

attention of their immediate supervisor.

- E. Members are responsible and encouraged to present ideas and recommendations to their chain of command regarding needed revisions to a particular written directive.

III. POLICY RESPONSIBILITIES – COMMANDERS/SUPERVISORS

- A. Upon reporting for a new assignment, commanders and supervisors are responsible for ensuring the written directives affecting their area of responsibility reflect current protocols.
- B. Commanders and supervisors are responsible for reviewing the written directives applicable to their area of responsibility on a regular and consistent basis to ensure the directives are up-to-date and reflect best practices.
- C. As needed, commanders and supervisors shall ensure appropriate steps are taken to amend the written directives applicable to their area of responsibility.
- D. Commanders and supervisors are responsible for ensuring members under their command have access to the written directives applicable to the members' work assignment or responsibility.
- E. Commanders and supervisors are responsible for seeking and receiving input from members regarding the amending of written directives.

IV. WRITTEN DIRECTIVES SYSTEM MANAGEMENT

- A. The Accreditation Manager is responsible for managing the revision process for General Orders and Special Orders, and shall:
 - 1. Work cooperatively with bureau commanders and their designees in the revision process for General Orders, Special Orders, and Standard Operating Procedures, and
 - 2. Adhere to the protocols set forth in AIU4 (Policy Revision and Dissemination Process) in amending written directives.
- B. Bureau commanders are responsible for managing the revision process of Standard Operating Procedures for work units under their command and working cooperatively with the Accreditation Manager in

TALLAHASSEE POLICE DEPARTMENT

the revision process for General Orders, Special Orders, and Standard Operating Procedures.

V. COMPOSING, ISSUING, INDEXING AND ARCHIVING

- A. Written directives shall be composed in exact, concise language with grammatical accuracy.
- B. The format for General Orders, Special Orders, and Standard Operating Procedures consists of six sections (in the following order):
 - 1. Authority/Related References
 - 2. Accreditation Chapter References
 - 3. Key Word Index
 - 4. Policy Statement
 - 5. Definitions
 - 6. Procedures
- C. In its administration of the written directives system, the Accreditation and Inspection Unit (AIU) is responsible for the following:
 - 1. Numbering and indexing General Orders, Special Orders, and Standard Operating Procedures,
 - 2. Distributing written directives and designated training bulletins through Power DMS,
 - 3. Notifying members of new or revised written directives and training bulletins via e-mail,
 - 4. Issuing periodic audits of acknowledged documents within Power DMS and notifying Command Staff of delinquent acknowledgments,
 - 5. Maintaining a master written directive manual (paper documents) containing each current General Order, Special Order, and Standard Operating Procedure,
 - 6. Maintaining each original approved/signed written directive in the written directive file, and

TALLAHASSEE POLICE DEPARTMENT

7. Upon issuing a revised written directive, archiving the out-of-date written directive (in Power DMS and the written directive archive file).

IV. POLICE DEPARTMENT FORMS

- A. Police Department forms (PD forms) are official Department documents which facilitate and/or document member work tasks and:
 1. May be developed for Department-wide use or to meet the needs of certain units, offices, sections, or bureaus,
 2. Must have a PD number issued by the Accreditation and Inspection Unit (AIU), and
 3. Requires approval by the Chief of Police or the AIU prior to use.
- B. The AIU is responsible for the administration of PD forms and AIU members shall:
 1. Work cooperatively with members in the creation and revision process of PD forms,
 2. Issue PD form numbers as appropriate and ensure the number is incorporated into the form template (typically in the document's footer), and
 3. Maintain an archive of all current and obsolete PD forms.
- C. Members involved in the creation or revision of a PD form are responsible for the following:
 1. Ensuring the proposed PD form (or revision to an existing PD form) has approval of the affected work unit supervisor or commander, and
 2. Working cooperatively with the involved AIU members.

History: issued 07/15/1985, revised 01/01/1991, 01/12/1996, 04/20/2000, 10/01/2001, 04/08/2004, 05/14/2009, and 01/9/2017.