



SYKESVILLE POLICE DEPARTMENT

Written Directive System

General Order 1-5 Effective: 03/10/17

Authorized By: *Michael A. Spaulding* Chief of Police

I. PURPOSE

The written directive system provides members with rapid access to individual policies, procedures, rules and regulations.

II. POLICY

It is the policy of the Sykesville Police Department to maintain a formal written directive system which provides members with a clear understanding of operating constraints and organizational expectations. The Chief of Police is vested with the authority to issue, modify, rescind or approve written directives.

III. DEFINITIONS

The following words are defined to assist members with an understanding of the different levels of written directives.

- A. A GENERAL ORDER is a written directive that is permanent and can only be canceled by the Chief of Police. General Orders deal with policy, rules and procedures that affect more than one organizational component of the Department. General Orders prohibit specific behavior and require the performance of certain duties. General Orders are established to apply to situations in which no deviation is permitted, except under the most rare and unique situations.
- B. A MEMORANDUM provides a means of relaying information of a specific nature, Department wide, and may be utilized for interim implementation of policy and procedural changes. Memoranda will remain in effect until incorporated into another directive, canceled via another memorandum or self-canceled by a specific date.
- C. A PERSONNEL ORDER is defined as written documentation that is issued by the Chief of Police and concerns the following: appointment of new personnel, assignment or transfer of personnel, promotions, demotions, retirements, and other changes in status of Department personnel.
- D. A POLICY is defined as a written directive that is a broad statement of Department principles.
- E. A SPECIAL ORDER is defined as a written directive that is of a temporary nature. Special Orders may announce policies or procedures directed to a specific circumstance or event or directed to specific segments of the Department. Special

Orders may be self-canceling or may be canceled at the direction of the Chief of Police.

- F. A STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURE is a written directive that is narrowly focused and only affects a single organizational component. Standard Operating Procedures may be self-canceling or may be canceled at the direction of the issuing authority. Standard Operating Procedures may be issued by the Chief of Police or his/her designee.
- G. A WRITTEN DIRECTIVE is defined as any document that is intended to affect or guide the action of Departmental members. Written directives include Department policies, procedures, rules, and regulations, General Orders, Memoranda, and Special Orders. Written directives also include town or County issued policies.

IV. PROCEDURES

- A. The written directive system used by the Department provides direction to members in their performance of duty. This system is a continual process of revising and updating written directives. Therefore, members who see a need for a change or improvement in a written directive are encouraged to submit their proposed changes to their immediate supervisor for review via chain of command.
- B. All written directives and draft written directives will be composed in a standard format, similar to this document. A template for written directives will be available in the PowerDMS system under the “Documents” section. All written directives will be approved by the Chief of Police prior to being distributed for review.
- C. Group Supervisors may issue informational memoranda that do not affect policy without forwarding them to the Chief for approval. Copies of such memoranda shall be provided to the Chief of Police for reference purposes.

V. DISTRIBUTION

- A. All written directives and drafts thereof will be distributed electronically to all members via the PowerDMS. The PowerDMS is a cloud-based electronic document management system that is accessible to all personnel via a website (www.powerdms.com). All personnel will be issued a user name and password in order to access the system. The user name and password will also act as each person’s electronic signature once they have reviewed a document within the system. Personnel will be notified via email that they have documents to review when written directives are distributed. All such directives must be acknowledged within twenty (20) days.
- B. A hard copy of all written directives will be maintained within the Chief’s office.

- C. New employees will be provided with a user name and password in order to access the PowerDMS, and then will be provided with all current General Orders as part of their orientation process.

VI. REVIEW

- A. Supervisors are responsible for verbally reviewing all newly issued written directives with their subordinate members and conducting annual inspections of all Departmental orders and procedures.
- B. Supervisors are also required to review the following orders/policies with their subordinates at the designated times. This review will be documented via email and forwarded to the Chief of Police by the end of the appropriate month;
 - 1. General Order 6-3 regarding USE OF FORCE will be reviewed in December and June of each year.
 - 2. General Order 2-2 regarding RULES OF CONDUCT will be reviewed in March and September of each year.
 - 3. General Order 6-6 regarding VEHICLE PURSUIT POLICY will be reviewed in February and August of each year.
 - 4. General Order 6-13 regarding DOMESTIC VIOLENCE INVESTIGATION will be reviewed in January and July of each year.
 - 5. General Order 2-15 regarding ANTI-HARASSMENT POLICY will be reviewed annually in May of each year.

VII. REVOCATION OF DIRECTIVES

- A. All written directives may be canceled by:
 - 1. A cancellation notice in a newly issued directive, OR
 - 2. A Memorandum issued by the Chief specifically canceling a directive.
- B. Until such time as new orders are issued by a current Chief of Police, all previously issued written directives will remain standing and in effect.

VIII. CANCELLATIONS

This General Order cancels and replaces the following policies:

General Order 12.2, entitled Written Directives, dated December 3, 2001