Rockville City Police Department
GENERAL ORDER

Subject **WRITTEN DIRECTIVE SYSTEM**		Procedure **G.O. # 2 - 1**
Authorizing Signature	**Effective: 02-25-10** **Revised: 12-19-13**	**Total Pages** **7**

I. POLICY

It is important that personnel have a clear understanding of the constraints and expectations relating to the performance of their assigned duties. The Rockville City Police Department is committed to providing direction in a clear and consistent manner. Policies and procedures have been established to coordinate efforts and communication through staff meetings.

II. PURPOSE

This Written Directive System is designed to achieve this goal, and will be the means by which policies and procedures are developed, revised, and maintained. The purpose herein is to establish a consistent format for written orders, directives, and policies and procedures.

III. GENERAL

A. When a group is organized to achieve a common goal, there is a need to control, direct, and coordinate the activities of its members if the best interests of the group are to be served and if its objectives are to be reached. "Rules", "Regulations", "Procedures" and "Orders", provide the police organization with some of the controls needed to carry out its mission. The efficient operation of a police department depends upon standard operating procedures, which define policy and direct procedures for the indefinite future, and for the department as a whole.

B. In order to fulfill their function, "Policy", "Rules", "Regulations", "Procedures" and "Orders" need to be definite, clear and understood by all members of the Department. Departmental "Policy", "Rules", "Regulations", "Procedures" and "Orders" need to be reduced to writing and made available to all personnel.

C. If an employee acts in the absence of some guidelines and something goes wrong, the employee is often criticized and perhaps disciplined. Consequently, employees who are unsure of the position of their superiors on particular issues are reluctant to make decisions or take action.

D. Effective and efficient administrative practices and procedures in the Rockville City Police Department will help ensure that appropriate information flows when and where needed and that management decisions are based on the best available information. In addition, coordinated administrative activities will reduce the possibility of duplication, overlap, possible gaps, and wasted effort. Accordingly, all employees must be aware of the general administrative practices and procedures of the Department.

IV. AUTHORITY AND RESPONSIBILITY OF THE CHIEF OF POLICE

Under Maryland State Law (Article 23A of the Annotated Code of Maryland) the City of Rockville is authorized to establish and maintain a Police Department. The Rockville City Charter (Article IV, Section 1, Sub-section 50 & 51) authorizes and establishes a Rockville City Police Department. The Chief of Police derives authority and responsibility for the management, direction, and control of the operations and administration of the Department from the City Manager of Rockville (Rockville City Code, Chapter 2, Section 2-32 [1]).

V. DEPARTMENTAL WRITTEN DIRECTIVES SYSTEM

A. The formal written directives system of the Department is designed to ensure that employees have a clear understanding of the expectations and constraints relating to performance in Departmental activities and duties. Written directives in use within the Department include, but are not limited to the following:

B. General Orders describe permanent directives concerned with policy and procedures affecting more than one organizational component. (See section VII)

C. Rules and Regulations

1. The term "rules and regulations" as used in law enforcement are synonymous.

2. Generally, rules relate to the conduct of the individual in that they indicate what the employee must not do and regulations define to some extent the duties and responsibilities of the individual member or what the employee must do. Basically, they are a means of controlling and defining the behavior of all Department employees.

3. Rules provide rigid and restrictive guides of conduct in those areas in which the ungoverned actions of individuals would be detrimental to the reputation of the Department or would impede its ability to carry out its mission. They are specific concerning the responsibilities of employees to do certain things within a definite period of time, or in particular circumstances. They indicate or imply that a penalty will be imposed for failure to comply.

4. Rules and regulations may apply to specific situations such as spelling out the duties of a patrol officer, a supervisor, a commander or deal with personal conduct, morality, integrity, general duties, responsibilities and in all matters pertaining to obedience of orders and Department directives. Rules and Regulations are contained in General Order # 8-3.

D. Policy

1. Policy is a statement either written or oral which embodies the philosophies of the Chief and Command personnel. It is a general statement serving as a guide to what must be done and its broad limits allow discretion in making decisions aimed at reaching the organizational objectives.

2. Policy must emanate from a single source to assume uniformity in the way specific tasks are performed. It serves to guide the decision-making activities within management, supervision and line levels of the organization.

3. The policies of a police organization may be classified into three main groups.

   a. Department or Major Policy

   b. Bureau Policy

   c. Operating Policy

4. Compliance with policies is normally expected unless good reasons exist for not doing so. It will be the responsibility of any employee choosing non-compliance to justify such non-compliance.

E. Procedures

1. Procedures are a series of tasks that comply with Department rules and policies and are designed to facilitate the performance of specific activities and promote uniformity and efficiency of action. As they deal with activities, they set forth the exact method a task is to be performed. Written procedures are valuable training aids in preparing new employees or instructing personnel to perform new tasks. Procedures must produce uniformity. Uniformity not only facilitates supervision and work evaluation, but also increases employee performance.

2. Compliance with procedures is normally expected unless good reasons exist for not doing so. It will be the responsibility of any employee choosing non-compliance to justify such non-compliance.

F. Lawful Order

1. Any written or oral directive issued by a superior officer to any subordinate or group of subordinates in the course of police duty which is not in violation of any law, ordinance, or Departmental General Orders.

G. Training Bulletins

1. Training Bulletins will be issued to personnel for disseminating pertinent training information.

2. The format of Training Bulletins will be in Department Training Bulletin format. Prior to January 1, 1992 they will be sequentially numbered. Beginning on January 1, 1992, they will be sequentially numbered from the start of the year, e.g. 92-001.

3. All personnel will be responsible for maintaining a training bulletin manual. The employee will be responsible for the correct filing, removal of superseded materials, and maintenance of the manual.

H. Daily Bulletins

1. Daily bulletins will contain general information that may be of interest to all personnel.

2. Daily bulletins will be sent electronically to all personnel, posted on the bulletin board in the administrative hallway, placed in the pass down book in the roll call room and given to the communications center staff.

3. Daily bulletins will be in Daily Bulletin format and sequentially numbered from the start of the year, e.g. 92-001.

I. Memorandums

1. Memorandums will be issued by the Chief of Police or by a commander or supervisor with the approval of the Chief of Police.

2. Memoranda will be unnumbered and in the format established by the City of Rockville.

J. Personnel Orders

1. Personnel Orders will be issued to affected personnel for ancillary duty assignments, shift assignments, promotions, and other personnel assignments, and are to be issued by the Chief of Police or by a commander with the approval of the Chief of Police.

2. Personnel Orders will be in the same format as memorandums.

K. Special Orders

1. Special orders are written directives that define policy or direct procedure for special situations. They are addressed to the component affected by their issuance and are signed by the Chief of Police or Bureau Commander. Special Orders are aimed at providing information, guidance or orders concerning a particular subject or effect.

2. Special Orders are frequently self-canceling after the particular event. Those that have general application will be included in subsequent revisions of related Manuals or General Orders.

3. Special Orders will be in the same format as memorandums.

L. For the purpose of the written directive system, the following will be considered as written directive governing members of the Rockville City Police Department:

1. The Annotated Code of Maryland

2. All Rockville City Ordinances

3. Rockville City Personnel Procedures Manual

4. Written directives issued or authorized by the Chief of Rockville City Police

M. Other memos, interoffice routing slips, training materials, etc., which are used within the Department to communicate orders, instructions, inquiries, and information among and between units and or individuals may be issued by any appropriate commander or responsible person.

N. In order to perform their duties properly, all employees of the Rockville City Police Department will familiarize themselves thoroughly with and comply with Written Directives and other operational policy as adopted by this Department. The employee has a personal responsibility to seek clarification from supervisors or the Chief of Police of any directive not clearly understood. Twenty-four hours after the effective date of any directive, all employees will be assumed to have knowledge of them and to be bound by them. Those employees not on duty during that 24-hour period will be expected to have knowledge and be bound by new directives upon commencement of their next tour of duty after issuance of the directive.

O. Directives affecting all Department employees will normally be signed by or for the Chief of Police. The appropriate commander will normally sign directives affecting employees of a Bureau or team. Other memos, notices, etc., which may in fact be directive in nature, may be signed by any employee whose duty it is to communicate the information received.

VI. NON-DEPARTMENT WRITTEN DIRECTIVES

Non-departmental written directives, with which members of the Department must comply, include:

A. Federal Law and mandates including the Constitution of the United States.

B. State Law and mandates including the Constitution of the State of Maryland and the Code of Maryland.

C. City Code of the City of Rockville and other City directives including, but not limited to City Policies relating to personnel, purchasing, finance, inventory control, etc. City plans such as emergency/disorder operations plan; etc.

VII. GENERAL ORDERS

A. General Orders establish basic Departmental policy and procedures, are approved and issued by the Chief of Police, and are applicable to all employees. The intent of words such as "will", "must", "should", and "shall" in any General Order is to be directive and to mandate a particular action. Words such as "may", "can", and "normally" are less directive and imply a degree of choice.

B. The Chief of Police or designee is responsible for indexing, purging, updating, revising, and the distribution of General Orders. This is accomplished during semi-annual quality review and discussions at monthly staff meetings.

C. The General Order table of contents will indicate General Orders by number.

D. A directive to be included in the General Orders is first prepared in draft form by the responsible office and submitted to the Chief of Police or designee, who reviews it for format and prepares it for staffing. Each Commander is encouraged to circulate the draft among members of their unit and to solicit their comments. Depending on the volume and types of feedback, additional redrafting may be necessary before it is promulgated.

E. Some directives may involve more extensive participation by Department personnel, and the responsible office may request that a task force be appointed to help develop it. Some directives may involve coordination with agencies or offices outside the Department such as with the State's or City Attorneys, Mayor's Office, etc. The responsible office will ensure such outside coordination is accomplished during the staffing process.

F. The Chief of Police has sole authority to issue, amend, and approve the agency's written General Orders. Once a General Order has been approved and signed by the Chief of Police, it will be published and posted on the network.

G. General Orders shall be typed, using standard outline format, on letter-sized paper (8 2" x 11"). A pre-printed form is utilized for the first page of each General Order.

H. Once a General Order is revised or a new one is published the Chief of Police or designee will update the General Order computer files. Each supervisor will be notified of the revision or new General Order and it will be their responsibility to ensure that everyone under their command is made aware of the revision or new General Order.

I. Reference copies of the General Order Manual and other directives will be maintained in the report writing room and the sergeant's office.

J. The Chief of Police or designee will maintain a master copy of each approved General Order in hard copy and on computer backup.

VIII. STAFF MEETINGS

A. A staff meeting will be conducted as needed, on a day and time, which will be announced at least one week in advance. All supervisors, sworn and non-sworn, or their designated representatives

will attend. The purpose of this meeting is to highlight achievements or problems; provide information concerning forthcoming activities or events; discuss needs, requirements, or changes; provide feedback concerning policy, General Orders, or directives; and, in general, to share information of assistance to all. Each supervisor will, in turn, have an opportunity to speak and should feel free to comment, at any time, on any matter under discussion.

B. The staff meeting is an open meeting and any employee, desiring to do so voluntarily, is welcome to attend and will be afforded an opportunity to pose subjects for discussion.

C. Bureau Commanders may conduct such meetings of their personnel as are deemed appropriate. Departmental meetings may also be scheduled as required.