


HAVERFORD TOWNSHIP POLICE DEPARTMENT OPERATIONS MANUAL		
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Accreditation Index: 1.4.1, 1.4.2		Rescinds: Directive 1.4.1 of November 2019
Chapter: One – Organization & Management		Section: Four - Direction
Chief of Police: <i>John F. Viola</i>		

SUBJECT: COMMAND PROTOCOL

I. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to establish command and control procedures during exceptional situations, routine operations and in the absence of the Chief of Police. This policy also requires personnel to obey a lawful order and details the procedures to be followed for conflicting or unlawful orders.

II. POLICY

It is the policy of the Department to achieve effective direction, coordination, and control of all personnel and operations by using clearly defined lines of command authority and communication.

III. DEFINITIONS

Commissioned Officer – For purposes of this Directive a commissioned officer shall be any sworn officer of the rank of lieutenant or above.

Noncommissioned Officer – For purposes of this Directive a noncommissioned officer shall be any officer of the rank of sergeant.

Officer-in-Charge – For purposes of this Directive an Officer-in-Charge (OIC) is defined as a police officer designated by the platoon Sergeants and/or an officer of higher rank, to assume the responsibilities and authorities of the platoon Sergeants when the Sergeants are not available to work as platoon supervisors.

Officers selected to perform the duties of OIC shall be approved to serve in this capacity by the Chief of Police prior to assuming these responsibilities. OIC

responsibilities may be extended to other Units and Divisions of the Department if necessary with approval of the Chief of Police.

Rank – All sworn personnel of the same grade shall rank according to the date of their appointment to that grade.

Seniority – Shall be determined by rank first and by continuous service in grade second, unless otherwise established through labor contracts and/or civil service regulations.

IV. PROCEDURE

A. Command Responsibility

1. The Chief of Police has the authority and responsibility for management, direction, planning, staffing, performance and control of the operation and administration of the Department.
 - a) The Chief of Police is granted this authority and responsibility by resolution from the Haverford Township Board of Commissioners.
2. All incidents, occurrences, circumstances and influences affecting the Haverford Township Police Department and its function are the responsibility of the Chief of Police.
3. The Haverford Township Board of Commissioners designates the Chief of Police as solely responsible to the citizens of Haverford Township to provide police service.

B. Chain of Command

1. The Chief of Police, as the Chief Executive and Commanding Officer of the Department, has absolute command authority.
2. An unbroken line of authority extends from the Chief of Police through the officer in command at each level in the Department.
3. The Deputy Chief of Police is the second highest ranking authority within the Police Department. In the absence of the Chief of Police, the Deputy Chief shall be the highest-ranking authority in the Police Department.
4. Lieutenants are the highest-ranking officers within a division.
 - a) The Duty Command lieutenant serves as the “Chief’s Representative” and has overall command authority of the Police Department operations both at headquarters and in the field during the hours of 1700 to 0800 and on weekends.

- b) During normal business hours (Monday through Friday – 0800 to 1700) and in the absence of the Chief of Police and the Deputy Chief of Police, the lieutenant with the highest seniority of rank, or the Chief’s designated lieutenant shall be the overall command authority.

(PLEAC 1.4.1 a, c)

- 5. Patrol Sergeants and Unit Sergeants are first line supervisors within their respective squads or units.

(PLEAC 1.4.1 c)

- 6. Officer-in-Charge (OIC) is designated by the platoon Sergeants, and/or an officer of higher rank, and is approved by the Chief of Police to assume all supervisory authority and responsibilities of the platoon Sergeants in their absence.

- a) All orders issued by an acting OIC shall have the same authorities as those issued by a Sergeant or an officer of higher rank.

- b) An acting OIC shall be compensated at a rate of pay equivalent to that of a Sergeant during the hours the OIC actually performs the duties of the OIC position.

- (1) Officers performing OIC duties shall complete a Department Court & Overtime form (form 23-28) for each shift, or partial shift that they perform OIC duties and submit the form to their Sergeant for approval. These forms shall be completed and submitted for approval as soon as reasonably possible.

- (2) Sergeants shall review and approve these OIC pay request forms and forward the approved form to the Records Unit in a timely manner.

- c) The following guidelines shall be followed in determining when an OIC shall be used, or when a Sergeant shall be paid overtime to supervise a platoon:

- (1) Whenever both platoon Sergeants will not be working for an extended period of time an off duty Sergeant shall be scheduled to supervise those shifts.

- (2) When it is determined prior to a shift, that both on-coming Sergeants will not be working, an off duty Sergeant shall be scheduled to supervise the shift.

- (3) Anytime during a shift when both platoon Sergeants are no longer working, an OIC will assume the supervisory responsibilities for the remainder of that shift.
 - (4) Whenever the activation of an OIC would drop manpower strength below the minimum levels established, an off duty Sergeant shall be called in to supervise.
7. All lieutenants and sergeants shall retain full authority and responsibility for their positions until relieved by an authorized person.
8. Lieutenants or sergeants shall name an OIC to acting authority whenever the sergeant cannot be physically present and/or is unable to assume command functions.
9. In the event of an emergency situation and an OIC is unavailable to assume platoon supervisory responsibilities the senior ranking patrol officer shall assume the platoon supervisory responsibilities. The senior ranking officer shall immediately contact the Duty Commander who shall respond to duty and assume command.

C. Rank Structure

1. Lines of authority within the department and each subcomponent will be based on rank in the following descending order.
 - a) Chief of Police
 - b) Deputy Chief of Police
 - c) Lieutenant
 - d) Sergeant
 - e) Officer-In-Charge
 - f) Police Officer

D. Obedience of Orders

1. All personnel shall immediately comply with the lawful order provided by a superior officer or acting OIC. Failure to do so may be considered insubordination.
2. All personnel shall immediately comply with a lawful order from a superior officer relayed through an officer of the same or lesser rank.

(PLEAC 1.4.2)

E. Conflicting or Unlawful Orders

1. In the event an employee receives an order which is in conflict with a previous order they shall notify the supervisor issuing the conflicting order. Responsibility for disobedience of the first order then shifts to the supervisor who issued the second and conflicting order.
2. In the event that an employee receives an unlawful order from a supervisor, no disciplinary action shall be taken against an employee who refuses or omits to carry out the unlawful order.
 - a) Should the employee know that the order is unlawful the employee shall inform the supervisor issuing this order that the order is unlawful. In the event the supervisor does not rescind the order the employee shall notify the next person higher in the chain of command as soon as possible of this unlawful order.
 - b) Unlawful orders shall not be carried out.

(PLEAC 1.4.2)

F. Incident Command Protocol

1. Exceptional Situations
 - a) In exceptional situations, catastrophic events, major crimes, an officer of the rank of sergeant will assume command of the police operation as incident commander until relieved by higher authority.
 - (1) When two sergeants appear on a field operation, the primary sergeant will assume command until relieved by a higher ranking authority.
 - b) The Duty Command Lieutenant will respond to the scene and assume the incident command responsibilities until relieved by higher authority.
 - c) The Chief of Police will be notified immediately of any such incident and shall designate an incident commander. In the absence of the Chief of Police, the Deputy Chief of Police shall make this designation. In the event that neither the Chief of Police nor the Deputy Chief of Police is available, the Lieutenant assigned as Duty Commander shall become the assigned incident commander.
2. Preplanned Events - such as a preplanned warrant or raid, dignitary protection, or other anticipated large scale event.

- a) The Chief of Police or his designee shall designate an incident commander to be in charge of a preplanned event. In the absence of the Chief of Police, the Deputy Chief of Police shall make this designation. In the event that neither the Chief of Police nor the Deputy Chief of Police is available, the Lieutenant assigned as Duty Commander shall become the assigned incident commander.

(PLEAC 1.4.1 b)

G. Military Courtesy and Protocol

- 1. When in uniform, a sworn officer of this Department shall render the hand salute to uniformed commissioned officers in accordance with proper military procedure and shall address a commissioned or noncommissioned officer by his title or rank. A superior officer in addressing a sworn officer of lesser rank shall refer to him by title of his rank. Proper military courtesy and etiquette shall be observed in all appropriate situations.
- 2. Police Department employees shall address civilian supervisors, managers, and superior officers by rank or as indicated below when in the presence of other junior employees, representatives from other agencies or departments, or the public.
 - a) Employees may address superior officers by their first name, only if authorized by that officer and others described above are not present;
 - (1) It is not appropriate to address a superior officer by their first name in public or in the presence of junior employee.
 - (2) The employee should address the officer as “Sergeant” or “Sergeant Smith” or address them as “Sir” or “Ma’am” if their rank is lieutenant or above.
 - (3) Employees shall address civilian supervisors or managers as “Mr.,” “Ms.,” “Ma’am”, or “Sir” as appropriate. They may address supervisors by first name only if authorized and others described above are not present.

BY ORDER OF THE CHIEF OF POLICE