
	<b>GAITHERSBURG POLICE DEPARTMENT</b>		
	<b>Field Training Program</b>		
	<b>GENERAL ORDER</b>	<b>405.2</b>	
<b>Effective Date</b>	<b>05/17/2021</b>	<b>33.4.3, 35.1.3</b>	
<b>Authorized by:</b>		<b>Mark P. Sroka</b> CHIEF OF POLICE	SIGNATURE
			DATE <b>11/25/2025</b>

## 1. POLICY

- 1.1. It is the policy of the Department, and a Maryland Police and Correctional Training Commission (MPCTC) requirement, that officers who have just graduated from an entrance-level training academy, as well as lateral hires, be assigned to a Field Training Officer (FTO) in order to gain practical experience and apply training received in the delivery of police services.
- 1.2. The FTO Program utilizes specially trained officers who are both mentors and trainers. The FTO Program is coordinated by a designated FTO Program Coordinator.

## 2. Definitions

- 2.1. **Field Training** – Within the context of this directive, the term “field training” refers to a structured and closely supervised program provided to recruit officers to facilitate the application of skills and knowledge obtained in the academy / classroom to actual performance in on-the-job situations.
- 2.2. **Field Training Officer (FTO)** – Within the context of this directive, the terms “Field Training Officer” and “FTO” refer to an officer who has been carefully selected, trained, and MPCTC certified to deliver the field training program to recruit officers.
- 2.3. **FTO Program Coordinator** – Within the context of this directive, the term “FTO Coordinator” refers to a member who has been carefully selected, trained, and MPCTC certified to manage the field training program.
- 2.4. **Recruit/Basic/Entry-Level Training** – Within in the context of this directive, the term “recruit, basic, or entry-level training” refers to the orientation of new officers to their jobs and the development of basic law enforcement skills.
- 2.5. **Lateral Hires** – Within the context of this directive, the term “lateral hires” refers to officers who are hired with prior police experience.

## 3. PROGRAM COMPONENTS

### 3.1. Training Period

- 3.1.1. Entry-level trainees who have completed the recruit/basic entrance-level training program and lateral hires will accompany an FTO in the field.
- 3.1.2. Entry-level trainees are under the direct supervision of an FTO for at least 14 weeks. Lateral hires are under the direct supervision of an FTO for a minimum of five weeks. These respective training periods are evaluated and approved by MPCTC.

### **3.2. FTO Selection Process**

- 3.2.1. When FTO training programs become available, a Training announcement will be electronically sent to all Department members and roll call, to alert interested officers of the training.
- 3.2.2. Officers responding to a training announcement shall follow all instructions and procedures listed in the announcement.
- 3.2.3. The most qualified officers for the number of program vacancies will be selected based on criteria that may include:
  - 3.2.3.1. Prior performance evaluations;
  - 3.2.3.2. Current level of performance;
  - 3.2.3.3. Recommendation of supervisors and co-workers;
  - 3.2.3.4. Educational background;
  - 3.2.3.5. Standing with GPD; and
  - 3.2.3.6. Compliance with MPTC requirements.

### **3.3. Supervision of FTOs**

- 3.3.1. All officers who have been trained as FTOs must coordinate their activities with the FTO Program Coordinator.
- 3.3.2. The FTO Program Coordinator is responsible for:
  - 3.3.2.1. Supervising the daily operations of the FTO Program;
  - 3.3.2.2. Selecting other GPD officers to assist with administration and coordination of the program;
  - 3.3.2.3. Ensuring that FTOs know GPD policies and procedures relating to the FTO Program;

- 3.3.2.4. Providing FTOs with guidance and direction on an ongoing basis;
- 3.3.2.5. Explaining the evaluation and reporting processes to FTOs;
- 3.3.2.6. Critiquing the trainee's progress and providing input on any training needs identified; and
- 3.3.2.7. Ensuring that the Chief of Police is kept informed of program activities.

#### **3.4. Liaison With Academy Staff**

- 3.4.1. A newly-hired Police Officer Candidate (POC) has an experienced GPD member assigned to them as a mentor while they are in the training academy.
- 3.4.2. The Program Coordinator and the individual FTO or mentor maintains liaison with academy staff to become familiar with:
  - 3.4.2.1. The skills and subjects that the trainee was taught;
  - 3.4.2.2. The areas in which the trainee excels or is weak;
  - 3.4.2.3. Any career development opportunities for the FTO for skill enhancement; and
  - 3.4.2.4. Any academy recommendation of remedial training for the trainee.

#### **3.5. Training and In-Service Training for FTOs**

- 3.5.1. The FTO Coordinator will ensure appropriate training for all FTOs, to include Basic FTO School, as well as FTO in-service (within every four-year period), as required by MPCTC.

#### **3.6. Rotation of Trainee Field Assignments**

- 3.6.1. In the interest of career development, and to enhance a trainee's skills, knowledge, and abilities, the Department rotates trainees among various field assignments.

#### **3.7. Evaluation of Trainees**

- 3.7.1. FTOs evaluate their trainee pursuant to GPD-approved guidelines and criteria.
- 3.7.2. The FTO Program Coordinator discusses the evaluation guidelines, criteria, and applicable forms with the FTO upon assignment of a

trainee.

- 3.7.3. FTOs will discuss the rating criteria with trainees.
- 3.7.4. Recruit trainees and lateral entry officers are evaluated and rated by their FTO in the following 16 categories using a 1-2-3 Scale:
  - 3.7.4.1. General Appearance;
  - 3.7.4.2. Attitude: Acceptance of FTO Program / Feedback / Police Work / Citizens;
  - 3.7.4.3. Knowledge of Department / Criminal Policies and Procedures;
  - 3.7.4.4. Knowledge of Criminal Statutes / County Ordinances / Traffic Codes;
  - 3.7.4.5. Driving Skills;
  - 3.7.4.6. Orientation / Map Reading / Response Time;
  - 3.7.4.7. Accuracy of Report Writing / Required Forms;
  - 3.7.4.8. Problem Solving – Field Performance;
  - 3.7.4.9. Officer Safety;
  - 3.7.4.10. Control of Conflict;
  - 3.7.4.11. Radio;
  - 3.7.4.12. MDC / CAD Use;
  - 3.7.4.13. Interview / Interrogation Skills;
  - 3.7.4.14. Observation Skills; and
  - 3.7.4.15. Follows Orders.
- 3.7.5. FTOs are encouraged to provide comments in each of the above areas, and are required to provide comments for “unacceptable” or “needs improvement” scores.
- 3.7.6. A “General Comments” category has been placed at the end of the Daily Observation Report to allow FTOs to include additional observations that may not be captured elsewhere in the report.

### **3.8. Reporting**

- 3.8.1. The trainee is evaluated daily by the FTO, utilizing the San Jose Model, Automated Daily Observation Report Evaluation system (ADORE).
- 3.8.2. Patrol Supervisors complete a weekly report, which provides a synopsis of the trainee's strengths and weaknesses, and recommendations regarding observed training issues. It also provides the opportunity to review the respective FTO's performance.
- 3.8.3. The FTO Coordinator evaluates the trainee on a continual basis.
- 3.8.4. Each evaluation is discussed with the trainee before it is forwarded to the FTO Program Coordinator.
- 3.8.5. All field training hours must be documented on an MPCTC-required form(s) and forwarded to the MPCTC upon a trainee's completion of the FTO Program.

### **3.9. Administrative Review**

- 3.9.1. An administrative review of the field training program is conducted annually, providing recommendations for policy or training modifications, and is reviewed by the chief executive officer.