

SAN DIEGO POLICE DEPARTMENT PROCEDURE

DATE: OCTOBER 4, 2013

NUMBER: 6.23 - PATROL

SUBJECT: FIELD TRAINING PROCEDURE

RELATED POLICY: [5.07, 5.03](#)

ORIGINATING DIVISION: TRAINING & VOLUNTEER SERVICES

NEW PROCEDURE:

PROCEDURAL CHANGE:

SUPERCEDES: DP 6.23 – 10/30/2009

I. PURPOSE

This Department procedure establishes guidelines for involvement in the Field Training Program.

II. SCOPE

This procedure applies to all sworn members of the Department.

III. BACKGROUND

The nature of the relationship between the Field Training Officer (FTO) and the Trainee is a critical one. It includes full-time instruction, coaching, observation, evaluation and immediate feedback, resulting in the most intensive and productive learning environment new officers are likely to experience.

The primary objective of the Field Training Program is to develop competent, independently-functioning police officers who provide police services to all citizens in a fair and impartial manner. This is accomplished by a cooperative, comprehensive and consistent delivery of training.

IV. DEFINITIONS

NEW

- A. Field Training Administration Office - a unit of the Training Division that operates as a part of Training and Volunteer Services. This office oversees and governs all business, as it relates to the Field Training Program.
- B. Program Director - a lieutenant who oversees the entire operation and manages the program. The Program Director works closely with the area commands.
- C. Program Administrator - a sergeant who oversees the day-to-day operations of the Field Training Administration Office. The sergeant must attend the POST-certified Field Training Supervisors/Administrators/Coordinators course prior to, or within, twelve months of appointment.
- D. Assistant Administrators - police officers who maintain the day-to-day operations of the Field Training Administration.
- E. Field Training Lieutenants - area command lieutenants who work in cooperation with the Field Training Administration Office to coordinate and manage the Field Training personnel at their command. Field Training Lieutenants review all daily and bi-weekly evaluations prior to submission to the Field Training Administration Office.
- F. Field Training Sergeants - area command sergeants who coordinate and manage the Field Training personnel assigned to their watch and service area. Field Training Sergeants ensure that training and evaluation processes are correctly accomplished daily by the Field Training Officers. Field Training Sergeants review and approve all FTO staff work prior to its submission to the Field Training Lieutenant and the FTO Administration Office.
- G. Field Training Officers (FTOs) - area command police officers who provide training and guidance on a daily basis to Trainees. Field Training Officers are responsible for training and evaluating Trainee performance based on the performance anchor standards set forth in the Field Training Guide.

V. TRAINING PROGRAM STRUCTURE

The Field Training Program consists of four phases of field training. Each phase is four weeks in length and begins when the Trainees graduate from the Academy.

Phase training is designed to be a progressive training process. The Trainee's level of performance is expected to increase with each phase. To attain independent acceptable performance by the Trainee, the Field Training Officer designs the phases to progress from discussion and demonstration, to application.

After completion of the Field Training Program, the Trainee should possess all academic, physical and practical qualifications required to be a competent and independently-functioning police officer. Officer safety and public interactions are the first and foremost priorities throughout the program.

- A. Phase I - the first phase after graduation from the Academy. The Trainee is required to participate in all performance anchors. The FTO will discuss and/or demonstrate each standard for all performance anchors. The Trainee's performance will be evaluated daily using those standards.
- B. Phases II and III - the Trainee is required to participate in all performance anchors. The FTO will discuss and/or demonstrate each standard for all performance anchors. The Trainee's performance will be evaluated daily using those standards. Additionally, Phase III is the first phase a Trainee can repeat (i.e., be re-phased). It is the responsibility of the Phase III FTO, in consultation with the FTO Administration, to determine if the Trainee is ready to proceed to Phase IV.
- C. Phase IV - the final four-week period in which the Trainee is expected to demonstrate proficiency and/or knowledge of all performance anchors independent of the FTO. The FTO will critically evaluate the Trainee's ability to function independently at an acceptable level in all performance anchors. The Phase IV FTO will determine if the Trainee is a competent, independently-functioning police officer. Trainees who are not competent and cannot function independent of the FTO can be re-phased prior to being released from the Field Training Program.
- D. Re-phase Training –provided to Trainees needing additional training and work environment exposure, based on an assessment by the FTO Administration personnel. Such training is provided in 1-4 week increments. Re-phase training occurs when the Trainee's weak points are so numerous and/or their performance is so deficient that the Trainee would not be able to correct their weak points or deficiencies while assuming the additional requirements of Phase IV or independent performance. FTO Administration personnel reserves the authority to determine if additional phase training will improve the performance of a Trainee (i.e., bring the Trainee to a competent level of performance.)

VI. QUALIFICATION REQUIREMENTS - FTO

Applicants desiring to become Field Training Officers will follow the guidelines set forth in Department Procedure 5.07, Transfers within the Department. All approved applicants will be interviewed and selections will be based upon the needs of the program. Applicants must meet the following criteria to be an FTO:

- A. Non-probationary PO-II status possessing a POST Basic Certificate;
- B. Minimum of three years patrol experience as a sworn officer with the San Diego Police Department. For the purpose of this procedure, the time will start upon Academy graduation or the date sworn for lateral officers;
- C. Currently assigned to a uniform patrol function, performing patrol duties. Patrol officers assigned to a specialized unit may apply for a FTO position, during the selection period. These officers, if selected for an FTO position, must return to a uniform patrol position and relinquish their specialized assignment;
- D. Positive role model possessing the desire and ability to train, evaluate, counsel, and supervise a new officer;
- E. Meets employee performance standards on the last two years of Employee Performance Evaluations;
- F. Recommendation by their Commanding Officer; and,
- G. If selected, the ability to attend and successfully complete the 40-hour POST-approved FTO course and the four-hour agency-specific course. Officers assigned to a specialized unit will not be scheduled for the POST FTO Course until their return to a patrol assignment.

VII. QUALIFICATIONS FOR REINSTATEMENT

Reinstatement to the Field Training Officer position guidelines:

- A. Police Officer IIs who were Field Training Officers can request to be reinstated to the FTO candidate pool. To request reinstatement, the officer must submit a memorandum through their chain of command detailing his/her experience and reason for being removed from the FTO program and meet the following criteria:
 - 1. Have voluntarily left the program and had no negative comments in their performance evaluations during their tenure as an FTO;
 - 2. Meets employee performance standards on the last two years of employee performance evaluations;
 - 3. Have the approval and recommendation of their current command; and,
 - 4. Have been inactive as an FTO for three years or less.

- B. Upon approval by the command, the reinstatement request should be forwarded to the Field Training Administration Office at MS 733. The FTO Administration Sergeant will verify eligibility and forward the request to the FTO Administration Lieutenant.
- C. Upon final approval by the FTO Administration Lieutenant, the officer's name will be added as a reinstatement to the current candidate pool.
- D. Officers reinstated to, and those already in the current pool, will receive equal consideration for any FTO vacancies that occur.
- E. FTOs will be removed from the program according to the criteria set forth in this procedure.

VIII. PROCEDURES

- A. Trainee Assignments
 - 1. Once FTOs have successfully completed the POST Field Training Officer course, they will be placed on their Division FTO list and will be considered available to accept Trainee assignments.
 - 2. The Field Training Administration Office will send out notifications of Trainee assignments. Field Training Officers will confirm their shift, days off and availability on the form and notify the Field Training Administration staff if there is any type of scheduling conflict.
- B. FTO Availability
 - 1. Leaves of Absence
 - a. FTOs are in a full-time paid status. Consistency of training delivery is a requirement of the FTO program. All forms of leave for FTOs while a Trainee is assigned to them are highly discouraged. FTOs are expected to accept Trainee assignments when requested by the Field Training Administration unless prior approval to decline an assignment has been authorized and/or pre-approved scheduled leave has been granted.
 - b. FTOs taking three or more days leave in addition to their normal days off during a trainee assignment period, shall consider themselves "unavailable" for a Trainee assignment and decline the assignment; this includes compensatory time off.

NEW

- c. FTOs who decline to take a Trainee assignment must have pre-approval from their area Field Training Sergeant or Lieutenant. If leave is granted, the officer must immediately notify the Field Training Administration so reassessments can be completed.
- d. FTOs should not accept a trainee assignment if they plan on requesting compensatory time off at any time during the trainee assignment period. Consistency in training is a priority for the Trainee and is a requirement of the Field Training Administration. Compensatory leave may be denied if granting the request will be unduly disruptive to the Department's operations. Area Field Training Sergeants or Lieutenants may consider the following factors when reviewing leave requests:
 - 1) The phase of the Trainee's training;
 - 2) The performance level of the Trainee;
 - 3) Amount of leave previously requested within the phase of training;
 - 4) Duration of leave requested, including number of consecutive days;
 - 5) Subject matter to be covered during the period of requested leave; and,
 - 6) Whether another FTO can be assigned to cover for the requested period of leave and not disrupt the training of the Trainee.
- e. FTOs who are sick or need emergency leave and exceed the two-day rule must send a copy of their signed Request for Leave of Absence form (CS-14-25A) indicating sick leave was taken to the Field Training Administration Office.
- f. Unscheduled assignments occasionally occur. FTOs contacted for such assignments are expected to accept them unless they have pre-approved leave of three or more days during the training dates.

2. Temporary Assignments

Field Training Officers who are in a paid status without an assigned Trainee can accept temporary special assignments until they are required to take a Trainee. If the FTO is required to take a Trainee, they must make themselves available, even if it requires leaving the special assignment.

3. Specialized Assignments Over 30 Days

Officers who accept a specialized assignment must transfer out of the FTO program and will be required to reapply when FTO positions become available. This does not include Out-of-Class assignments (OCA) as an Acting Sergeant (see Exceptions in Section IX).

C. FTO Refresher Training

The Field Training Administration will schedule on-going quarterly refresher training for all FTO personnel, including Field Training Officers, FTO Sergeants, and FTO Lieutenants. All FTOs, FTO Sergeants and FTO Lieutenants must attend each refresher training session. Excused absences, such as prolonged illness or extended military leave, will be reviewed by the Field Training Administration on a case-by-case basis for approval.

D. Reserve Trainees

FTOs will submit Reserve Trainee evaluations to be reviewed and approved by a FTO Sergeant. The FTO Sergeant will forward the signed evaluations to the Reserve Administration for storage.

E. Selection and Transfer Process - Officers

Once attrition or removal causes the number of FTOs at a command to be less than the authorized number of eligible positions for that command, FTOs can be selected according to the following criterion:

1. FTOs at other commands may transfer into the command needing replacements, with the approval of the receiving command via Transfer Request (PD-599).
2. If no FTOs are willing to transfer, FTOs can be selected from the current list of eligible candidates, or the selection process will be initiated by the FTO Administration Office.
3. The FTO Administration will publish a Department Announcement outlining the eligibility requirements for FTO and identify the command(s) with vacancies.
4. The Field Training Administration will coordinate the selection process.

All candidates and their commands will be advised of the results and provided an opportunity for feedback.

5. Officers assigned to specialized units within the command are eligible to apply for FTO; however, these officers will not attend an FTO Academy or receive FTO pay until they return to a patrol function.
6. Each command will be responsible for scheduling successful FTO candidates in an FTO Academy, as space becomes available.
7. The transfer process should generally be voluntary. Officers selected and who have successfully completed the FTO Academy may be required to adjust days off, shifts, or transfer to another area command in order to accommodate FTO staffing requirements.
8. Command clerical staff will make FTO Administration and Payroll notifications.
9. Commands may not exceed their allotted FTO positions.

F. Selection and Transfer Process for FTO Sergeants

1. Selection will be conducted by each command to fill vacancies as needed according to the listed criteria. FTO Sergeants must meet the following requirements:
 - a. Be non-probationary;
 - b. Be assigned to uniform patrol;
 - c. Meets employee performance standards on the last two years of employee performance evaluations;
 - d. Be recommended by their command;
 - e. Ability to attend and successfully complete a 40-hour POST-approved FTO Academy and a four-hour agency specific course; and,
 - f. Ability to attend all required FTO refresher courses.
2. Desirable qualifications for FTO Sergeants are:
 - a. Possess investigative and/or administrative experience;
 - b. Have teaching and/or training experience;

- c. Demonstrated coaching and/or mentoring experience; and,
 - d. Have former FTO experience.
3. Sergeants assigned to specialized units within the command are eligible to apply for FTO Sergeant; however, these sergeants will not attend an FTO Academy or receive FTO Sergeant pay until they return to a patrol function. A list of eligible FTO Sergeants will be provided to the FTO Administration Office and Payroll each shift change.
4. The selection process will consist of the Captain and Lieutenant reviewing the following criteria for each candidate:
 - a. Evaluations on file in the command, ensuring that candidates meet employee performance standards on the last two years of employee performance evaluations;
 - b. Length of service as an FTO, if applicable (to be supplied by FTO Administration);
 - c. Tenure as a Sergeant;
 - d. No specific weight is to be given to any individual criterion, but each must be reviewed.
5. Area commands may reassign the selected FTO Sergeants to achieve one per service area per watch coverage. Thereafter, coverage will be adjusted as necessary at regular shift changes or achieved via transfer.
6. FTO Sergeants may transfer to another command and retain their FTO Sergeant status, if a vacancy at the receiving command exists and only with the approval of the receiving command via a Transfer Request (PD-599). Transfers may also be achieved via a “swap” between FTO Sergeants after approval by each involved command.
7. Should a vacancy for FTO Sergeant exist at a command, the Commanding Officer where the vacancy exists will:
 - a. Conduct a selection process and select a qualified applicant according to the criteria set forth above; or,
 - b. The Commanding Officer may select an eligible FTO Sergeant from another command. The FTO Administration will furnish the names of eligible candidates at other commands. The command will make a selection from that group.

8. Transfer of FTO Sergeants will generally be voluntary. Candidates may be required to transfer between commands to achieve one per service area per watch coverage.

9. Commands may not exceed their allotted FTO Sergeant positions.

G. FTO Insignia

1. Field Training Officers and Sergeants shall wear the FTO pin on the outer-most garment and center the pin under the nametag on the flap of the right breast pocket.
2. Supervisors and officers who have been removed from the program may not wear an FTO pin.

H. Fraternization

1. Field Training Officers and supervisors are required to fairly and impartially train and evaluate new officers. Personal off-duty relationships between Trainees and FTOs or supervisors are strictly prohibited. This fraternization restriction applies to all Recruits in the Regional Academy and Trainees in field training for the length of their assignment to the Field Training Program. This restriction will no longer apply after Trainees complete their Field Training program and are permanently assigned to a command as officers. However, at all times personnel must comply with Department Procedure 5.03, Equal Employment Opportunity.
2. Exceptions to the Fraternization Policy:
 - a. Trainees who are members of the San Diego Police Officers Association (SDPOA) may attend SDPOA-sponsored events, such as the Christmas party and the summer picnic. FTOs or supervisors at these events should limit their contact with any Trainees attending.
 - b. FTOs or supervisors who have a prior existing relationship with a Trainee may maintain that relationship. Examples of such relationships include a spouse, other relative or close friend of a Trainee. FTOs or supervisors who have a relationship with a Trainee must contact the Field Training Administration to advise of the relationship prior to the Trainee beginning phase training, to avoid any conflict of interest or perception of favoritism.
 - c. Trainees are permitted to participate in organized police athletic events, such as the Police Olympics. FTOs or supervisors and

Trainees attending these events will conduct themselves in a professional manner and will not have unnecessary contact with each other away from the competition.

IX. PERMANENT REMOVAL

Field Training Officers or Sergeants who violate provisions of this procedure may be permanently removed from the FTO program. Permanent removal will require the officer or sergeant to re-apply through the formal process.

- A. The following are grounds for permanent removal from the FTO program:
 1. Permanent transfer to a non-patrol position, (i.e., investigations, preferred assignments);
 2. Specialized assignments lasting over 30 days within a fiscal year that interferes with active FTO status (i.e., beach teams, bike or walking teams, or other non-FTO units that do not accommodate trainees);
 3. FTOs or sergeants engaged in misconduct which subjects the officer or sergeant to discipline;
 4. Absence without authorization from any single training cycle of FTO Refresher Training. Authorized absences include:
 - a. Assigned annual vacation;
 - b. Injury, medical or military leave, or light duty status;
 - c. Hardship circumstances; or
 - d. Department or POST required training;
 5. FTOs or sergeants who fail to meet employee performance standards on their evaluation;
 6. FTOs or sergeants who fail to meet employee performance standards on employee performance evaluations (i.e., on a supplemental performance report) on any FTO performance anchors on their evaluation;
 7. FTOs who refuse trainees without proper cause;
 8. FTOs or sergeants who fail to complete FTO Refresher Training as required to maintain their certification by POST; and,

9. Actions that are detrimental to the goals and mission of the FTO program, as determined by the Chief of Police.

B. Exceptions:

1. It is recognized that long-term Acting Sergeant OCAs benefit the Department and officer alike, to a degree, overriding FTO program concerns. Officers assigned to Acting Sergeant OCA will not be removed from the FTO program. OCA Acting Sergeants will be placed in the “unpaid” category for that shift, if the term is for more than 30 days, up to the balance of the shift.
2. The “on-deck” sergeant in Internal Affairs (IA) benefits the Department and sergeant alike, to a degree, overriding FTO program concerns. Sergeants assigned to the “on-deck” IA position will not be removed from the FTO program. OCA sergeants in this capacity will be placed in the “unpaid” category for that shift, if the term is for more than 30 days, up to the balance of the shift.

C. Disciplinary action arising from misconduct or performance deficiencies by FTOs or FTO Sergeants shall be initiated by the FTO Sergeant or FTO Sergeant’s assigned area command.

1. The FTO Administration staff will provide the affected area commanding officer with any necessary information regarding the performance of their assigned FTOs or FTO Sergeants.
2. The FTO Commanding Officer and the area commanding officer shall consult regarding whether permanent removal from the FTO Program is appropriate, in addition to any disciplinary action involving an FTO or FTO Sergeant.
3. FTO Officers and FTO Sergeants may appeal their removal from the FTO Program. The appeal will be processed in accordance with the current Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) and the Discipline Manual, and treated as if it were a “reduction in compensation,” unless more specific language is agreed upon in future updated MOUs. If the removal is in conjunction with other discipline stemming from the same incident, the matters will be combined. The matter which affords the highest level of administrative scrutiny will govern the proceedings.

X. INVESTIGATION-TRAINEES

A. Misconduct

In most cases, violations related to misconduct shall be investigated by Internal Affairs, the related specialized investigative unit, or the area command to which the trainee is currently assigned, according to established guidelines. For example, if a trainee is involved in a domestic violence incident, the Domestic Violence Unit would assume responsibility for investigation into the matter.

- B.** Any disciplinary action resulting from an investigation into misconduct by a trainee assigned to the Field Training Program will be handled by the FTO Administration.
- C.** If the disciplinary action is not determined until after the trainee has completed the Field Training Program, the discipline will be handled by the appropriate area command to which the officer is assigned.

D. Performance

All performance-related issues will be handled by the FTO Administration staff, with input from the following:

- 1. The assigned Field Training Officer(s);
- 2. The FTO Sergeant of the command to which the trainee is currently assigned; and/or
- 3. Other command staff of the command to which the trainee is currently assigned.

- E.** In instances when the performance of a trainee is so deficient that removal from the Field Training Program is necessary, FTO Administration staff will:
 - 1. Meet with the trainee to discuss the reason for their removal from the Field Training Program;
 - 2. Obtain all field equipment from the trainee; and
 - 3. Prepare the Failure of Probation documents.
- F.** The FTO Administration will be responsible for processing the Failure of Probation until the trainee is either released or reinstated.