



# GENERAL ORDER ADM-01 WRITTEN DIRECTIVES

EFFECTIVE JANUARY 29, 2018

This General Order contains the following numbered sections:

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## I. POLICY

The Howard County Department of Police (HCPD) shall maintain a formal written directive system to set forth the standards, values, and expectations of the Department. These directives exist to maintain the highest level of performance and professional conduct of all members. The Chief of Police is vested with the authority to issue, modify, rescind, or approve written directives.<sup>1</sup>

## II. DEFINITIONS<sup>2</sup>

- A. General Order: A written directive that is permanent and can only be issued or canceled by the Chief of Police. General Orders deal with policy, rules, and procedures that affect multiple components and require the performance of certain duties.<sup>3</sup>
- B. Instructional Material: Written materials issued by the Education and Training Division to announce new information, explain existing procedures, and disseminate information.
  1. Instructional material may be issued as a Training Bulletin (TB) or as a distance learning course.
  2. These bulletins will be archived and made available for reference in PowerDMS.
- C. Network Shared Drive (NSD): A directory on the HCPD network accessible to any user. The NSD contains PDF copies of all written directives and resources including HCPD forms, the Evidence Manual, etc.
- D. Numbered Memorandum: A formal means of relaying information of a specific nature Department-wide.
  1. Numbered memorandum may be utilized for the interim implementation of policy and procedural changes.
  2. Numbered Memoranda will remain in effect until incorporated into another directive, canceled via a memorandum, or self-canceled by a specific date.
  3. Numbered Memorandum may only be issued by the Chief of Police.
- E. PowerDMS: An internet-based program utilized by the HCPD as the primary source and distribution method of directives, training bulletins, etc. It is the most up-to-date source and can be accessed from a computer, Mobile Data Computer (MDC), or hand-held device such as a smart phone or tablet.

<sup>1</sup> CALEA 12.2.1b and 12.2.1f

<sup>2</sup> CALEA 12.2.1d

<sup>3</sup> CALEA 12.2.1g

- F. Resource Information Bulletin: Informational data issued to personnel that warrants acknowledgement by electronic signature.
- G. Special Order (SO): A written directive that is generally temporary in nature. Special Orders may announce a policy or procedure directed to a specific circumstance or event, or be directed to specific segments of the HCPD. SOs may be self-canceling or may be canceled at the direction of the Chief of Police.
- H. Standard Operating Procedure (SOP): A written directive that is narrowly focused and affects a single organizational component. SOPs may be canceled at the direction of the issuing authority. SOPs are issued by the Deputy Chief of the appropriate Command, or the Chief of Police for components within the Office of the Chief.<sup>4</sup>
- I. Written Directive: Any document that is intended to affect or guide the action of HCPD members and assist members in carrying out agency activities.<sup>5</sup> Written directives include HCPD policies, procedures, rules and regulations, General Orders, Memorandums, and instructional material. Written directives also include County issued policies.<sup>6</sup>

### III. DEVELOPMENT OF WRITTEN DIRECTIVES<sup>7</sup>

- A. The written directive system used by the HCPD provides direction to members in their performance of duty.
- B. This system mandates the continual revision and updating of written directives, providing members with an opportunity to submit suggestions for changes and improvements. Members will submit a memo or email through their chain of command to the Professional Standards Section (PSS), who will ensure the proposal does not contradict any other directives or laws and provide feedback to the member who submitted the suggestion.<sup>8</sup>
- C. PSS will assess all commentary and decisions, ensure proper formatting, and prepare the directive for the signature process.<sup>9</sup> PSS will maintain files of correspondence and suggested improvements, and any updates or revisions that support changes.
- D. PSS will ensure that all issued policies are reviewed by the Office of Law to determine legal sufficiency, and for Accreditation compliance consistent with the Commission on Accreditation for Law Enforcement Agencies (CALEA).<sup>10</sup>
- E. Drafts of all written directives will be distributed for review and comment to applicable subject matter experts, Commissioned Officers, and union representatives.
  - 1. Written directives under revision will generally be made available to all members to provide input.
  - 2. The Chief of Police may identify the need for an immediate policy revision or issuance. In these instances, the solicitation for feedback and input may be limited.
- F. All Training Bulletins (TB) will be developed consistent with standard operating procedures and distributed through PowerDMS.
- G. Standard memoranda that are informational and do not affect current policy or procedure do not require sequential numbering.

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<sup>4</sup> CALEA 12.2.1c

<sup>5</sup> CALEA 12.2.1h

<sup>6</sup> CALEA 12.2.1g

<sup>7</sup> CALEA 12.2.1e

<sup>8</sup> CALEA 12.2.1i

<sup>9</sup> CALEA 12.2.1i

<sup>10</sup> CALEA 12.2.1i

1. Bureau or Division Commanders may issue standard memoranda without forwarding them to the Chief for approval.
2. Copies of such memoranda shall be provided to PSS for reference purposes.

**IV. DISTRIBUTION<sup>11</sup>**

- A. New and revised written directives will be distributed to affected personnel via HCPD email. Each member will acknowledge their receipt of the directive within twenty (20) calendar days through the electronic signature process.<sup>12</sup>
  1. Supervisors will ensure that their members sign for all directives within twenty (20) calendar days from the date the document is published in PowerDMS, and shall provide any required assistance to ensure compliance.<sup>13</sup>
  2. PSS will maintain a list of directives that have been disseminated and complete a quarterly audit of timely signatures.
- B. An updated hard copy of all General Orders, Special Orders, Numbered Memoranda and SOPs will be maintained by PSS.<sup>14</sup> These documents are available to all members electronically through PowerDMS and the NSD.
- C. Instructional material and non-Patrol Standard Operating Procedures will be distributed to affected personnel. Instructional material will be sent to PSS and the Accreditation Unit for reference purposes.
- D. A member's physical or electronic signature to a written directive shall be deemed proof that the member has accessed, read, and understands the directive and an acknowledgement that the member's failure to comply with the directive may result in disciplinary action.

**V. REVIEWING**

- A. Supervisors are responsible for verbally reviewing all newly issued directives with all members in their assigned section.
- B. Certain policies will be periodically reviewed and reinforced through the distance learning system. A member's completion of the online policy review provides an electronic acknowledgement receipt directly to the in-service coordinator at Education and Training. Supervisors will ensure their members' compliance with completing the review, and assist them as needed.
- C. Watch Commanders will forward copies of roll call training forms signed by their subordinates to Education and Training.
- D. Any newly assigned Commander or Supervisor to an organizational component will review any applicable directives and Accreditation standards with their outgoing counterpart.
- E. Supervisors shall issue and review all applicable Standard Operating Procedures with any member assigned to their command upon or within a reasonable time of their arrival.

**VI. INDEXING<sup>15</sup>**

- A. An electronic word search function may be used to locate a specific directive via PowerDMS and the NSD.

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<sup>11</sup> CALEA 12.2.2a

<sup>12</sup> CALEA 12.2.2c

<sup>13</sup> CALEA 12.2.2c

<sup>14</sup> CALEA 12.2.2b

<sup>15</sup> CALEA 12.2.1e

- B. Hard copies will be maintained inside binder manuals at designated police facilities.

**VII. REVOCATION OF DIRECTIVES<sup>16</sup>**

- A. Any directive may be cancelled by a cancellation notice in a newly issued directive or a memorandum or e-mail issued by the Chief of Police.
- B. Until new or revised Orders are issued by a current Chief of Police or Deputy Chief, all previously issued Written Directives will remain standing and in full effect.

**VIII. CANCELLATION**

This General Order cancels and replaces General Order ADM-01 Written Directives, dated March 15, 2013.

AUTHORITY:



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Gary L. Gardner  
Chief of Police

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<sup>16</sup> CALEA 12.2.1e