



## HOWARD COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF POLICE

# GENERAL ORDER ADM-27 FIELD TRAINING AND EVALUATION PROGRAM

EFFECTIVE NOVEMBER 19, 2021

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This General Order contains the following numbered sections:

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### **I. POLICY**

The Howard County Department of Police (HCPD) is committed to expanding the education and training that the police probationary or lateral officer receives in the police academy. This commitment involves assigning police probationary officers or lateral officers to experienced veteran officers to provide on-the-job training and evaluation.

### **II. FIELD TRAINING AND EVALUATION PROGRAM (FTEP) GOALS**

- A. The HCPD field training and evaluation program is an extension of the law enforcement selection process that combines pre-field training with objective evaluations to ensure that the standards of a competent law enforcement officer are met.
- B. The goal of the field training and evaluation process is to improve the overall effectiveness and efficiency of law enforcement service to the community by:
  1. Improving the overall applicant screening process. Field training and evaluation is one phase of the department's overall applicant screening process designed to facilitate on-the-job observations and performance assessment.
  2. Establishing a lateral/probationary officer appraisal system.
    - a. The program is designed to provide valid job-related post-basic training and academy evaluation of a lateral/probationary officer's performance.
    - b. The process utilizes a standardized and systematic approach to documenting this performance.
  3. Establishing a program review procedure. The program provides an appraisal system to measure the effectiveness of the department's selection and training processes by allowing feedback regarding a lateral/probationary officer's strengths and weaknesses.
  4. Improving the lateral/probationary officer training process.
    - a. The program provides post-basic academy training and on-the-job training to lateral/probationary officers.
    - b. Field Training Officers (FTOs) guide lateral/probationary officers in the development of the knowledge, skills, and abilities needed to perform patrol duties and practical application of police academy materials.
  5. Establishing career opportunities within the department.

- a. The field training and evaluation program is another career path within the police department. It provides incentive for the demonstration of proficiency in the knowledge, skills, and abilities needed to perform patrol functions.
- b. While performing the duties of the FTO, the officer gains experience and knowledge that increases leadership, training, and evaluation skills, and may enhance career opportunities.

**III. PROGRAM ELEMENTS**

- A. The Field Training and Evaluation Program (FTEP) period for a probationary officer will be a minimum of fourteen (14) weeks, divided into four (4) phases totaling 560 hours.<sup>1</sup> At least one (1) phase of the FTEP will involve a night shift rotation.
  - 1. In Phase 1, the probationary officer will be assigned to his Primary Field Training Officer. Phase 1 will be four (4) weeks.
    - a. Training may occur in all four (4) weeks but must occur during the last three (3) weeks of the phase.
    - b. The probationary officer will not be evaluated during their first three (3) workdays of field training. Daily evaluations will be conducted on the remaining field training workdays.
  - 2. Phase 2 will be four (4) weeks. The probationary officer will be assigned to a Secondary FTO. Training and evaluation will take place during all four (4) weeks with the exception of the first day of the phase, which will be a non-evaluation day.
  - 3. Phase 3 will be four (4) weeks. The probationary officer will be assigned to a different Secondary FTO. As with Phase 2, training and evaluation will take place during all four (4) weeks with the exception of the first day of the phase which will be a non-evaluation day.
  - 4. In Phase 4, the probationary officer will be reassigned to his Primary FTO. This phase is two (2) weeks and is primarily an evaluation-only phase.
    - a. The FTO will intervene in the probationary officer's handling of an incident only if he fails to meet the criteria set forth in the Field Training Officer Handbook, hereafter referred to as the Manual.
    - b. All days missed by the probationary officer during the FTEP will be made up in Phase 4 regardless of the reason for the absence (sick, military, etc.).
  - 5. Probationary officers will spend one half shift in Dispatch during the FTEP.
- B. The FTEP period for lateral officers will generally be four (4) weeks, consisting of one (1) phase with a minimum of 160 hours.<sup>2</sup>
  - 1. Each lateral officer will be assigned to work with a primary FTO who will assist in obtaining familiarity with HCPD policies and procedures.
  - 2. Training and evaluation will take place during all four (4) weeks with the exception of the first three (3) workdays of the phase which will be "non-evaluation" days.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> CALEA 33.4.3a and 33.4.3f

<sup>2</sup> CALEA 33.4.3a

<sup>3</sup> CALEA 33.4.3g

3. The Deputy Chief of Field Operations may extend or shorten the FTEP period for lateral officers.
- C. The FTEP for lateral/probationary officers with performance deficiencies deemed to be remedial may be extended for a maximum of six (6) weeks beyond the standard program length.
1. The decision to extend the training period will be made by the Deputy Chief of Field Operations based on the evaluations completed by the FTOs. The Education & Training (E&T) Division Commander will be consulted in this decision.<sup>4</sup>
  2. The Chief of Police will make the final decision regarding the dismissal of a lateral/probationary officer.
- D. FTOs will discuss daily performance with lateral/probationary officers. Lateral/probationary officers and Squad Sergeants will electronically submit through the Automated Daily Observation Report and Evaluation (ADORE) program all Daily Observation Reports as an acknowledgement that they have reviewed the document and may also submit written comments.<sup>5</sup>
- E. The Field Training Officer must direct, guide, explain, and demonstrate the fundamentals of police work until the FTO is satisfied that the lateral/probationary officer completely understands how and why duties are performed in a certain manner.
- F. For operational purposes, an FTO lateral/probationary officer team will always be considered a one-officer unit. A lateral or probationary officer in field training will never be used as a solo patrol officer.
- G. Lateral and probationary officers released from the FTEP will be evaluated every two (2) months by their Squad Sergeant until the end of the probationary period. These written evaluations are intended to track and inform the lateral/probationary officer of his development and needed improvement.
1. The evaluations will go through the chain of command to the officer's District Commander.
  2. The E&T Division will retain them as part of the lateral/probationary officer's training records.
  3. A lateral/probationary officer's probationary period shall not be extended due to performance related issues.

#### **IV. CLASSIFICATION OF FIELD TRAINING OFFICERS**

- A. All FTOs must be willing to train and evaluate lateral and probationary officers as directed by the Field Training Officer Handbook. FTOs must be willing to fulfill three primary roles:
1. A police officer assuming full patrol responsibility;
  2. A trainer; and
  3. An evaluator of lateral/probationary officers.
- B. The field training and evaluation program will consist of three types of FTOs:
1. Primary FTOs will be responsible for training and evaluating the lateral/probationary officer during Phase 1 and Phase 4 of the FTEP. Primary FTOs will be responsible for training lateral officers during the FTEP.

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<sup>4</sup> CALEA 33.4.3d

<sup>5</sup> CALEA 33.4.3g

2. Secondary FTOs will train and evaluate the lateral/probationary officers during Phases 2 and 3 of the FTEP.
3. Alternate FTOs, upon supervisory approval, shall assume the duties of an FTO in the absence of a Primary or Secondary FTO.
  - a. In the absence of an Alternate FTO, a Corporal or Sergeant will assume responsibility for the lateral/probationary officer for the duration of the patrol shift.
  - b. A lateral/probationary officer will not be assigned to train with a non-certified FTO.

**V. PROGRAM ADMINISTRATION**

- A. The FTEP will be conducted according to this General Order and the procedures set forth in the Manual.
- B. All training in the FTEP will occur in a planned, organized sequence and will be identified in the Manual. All Primary, Secondary, and Alternate Field Training Officers, including Corporals, Sergeants, and Watch Commanders, will attend training on the use of ADORE.<sup>6</sup>
- C. Probationary and lateral police officers will be judged and evaluated against standardized evaluation guidelines that clearly define acceptable and unacceptable performance.<sup>7</sup>
- D. The responsibilities of the FTO include:
  1. Providing lateral and probationary officers with instruction, direction, supervision, guidance, and experience so they may develop good judgment, efficiency, and good habits of conduct and appearance; and
  2. Accurately and fairly completing the Daily Observation Reports through the use of ADORE for each lateral and/or probationary officer assigned to them, indicating performance and progress.<sup>8</sup>
  3. ADORE entries shall be completed for every workday completed including non-evaluation days. ADORE Daily observation reports entries on non-evaluation days will not contain evaluation content or commentary but will document productivity and training received by the Probationary or Lateral officer. ADORE entry on non-evaluation dates document the day worked, the officer working with the PO or Lateral, and program hours needed to be satisfied.
- E. The responsibilities of the Squad Sergeant include:<sup>9</sup>
  1. Supervise the FTOs;
  2. Promoting the goals and procedures of the FTEP;
  3. Supporting the FTOs by providing assistance as necessary;
  4. Identifying potential officers as candidates for the role of FTO;
  5. Monitoring and evaluating the conduct of officers under their command in their capacity as

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<sup>6</sup> CALEA 33.4.3e

<sup>7</sup> CALEA 33.4.3g

<sup>8</sup> CALEA 33.4.3h

<sup>9</sup> CALEA 33.4.3c

6. FTOs;  
Monitoring and evaluating the lateral and probationary officer's performance and progress by periodically reviewing Daily Observation Reports;
  7. Review and electronically forward Daily Observation Reports completed by FTOs under their command;
  8. Meet at least weekly, both individually and jointly, with FTOs and lateral/probationary officers under their command to review the lateral/probationary officer's performance and progress;
  9. Assign alternate FTOs in the temporary absence of the lateral or probationary officer's assigned FTO;
  10. If at any time during the FTEP period a lateral or probationary officer is not performing at a satisfactory level, a recommendation for remedial training, counseling, extension of the FTEP period, or termination may be initiated; and
  11. Work with FTOs on their squad to develop remedial training that may assist with the lateral or probationary officer's deficiencies.
- F. The Watch Commander's duties include those listed in V.E.1. through 5. and:
1. The Watch Commander will ensure that alternate week evaluation sessions are held to allow FTOs and other parties designated by the Watch Commander to review the progress and performance of lateral and probationary officers. These meetings are intended to allow collective evaluations and suggestions for improvement of lateral/probationary officer performance among FTOs and supervisors.<sup>10</sup>
  2. Completing End of Phase reports through the use of ADORE for each lateral/probationary officer assigned to their platoon.
  3. Notifying the Deputy District Commander of any use of leave by a lateral/probationary officer during any phase of the evaluation program.
- G. The E&T Division Commander has support responsibilities that include:
1. Developing and maintaining the Manual, to include:
    - a. Detailed descriptions of the duties and responsibilities of the FTO, the lateral/probationary officer in field training, and the E&T Division Sergeant;
    - b. A description of the training phases occurring in the FTEP;
    - c. Standardized evaluation guidelines for rating lateral/probationary officers;
    - d. A schedule of weekly training activities to be covered during the FTEP; and
    - e. Reference materials for FTOs.
  4. Provide twenty-one (21) hours of training for newly selected FTOs, training for supervisors, and refresher training for experienced FTOs. The refresher training will be a minimum of seven (7) hours every three (3) years. The purpose of this training is to re-familiarize all designated FTOs with the requirements of the FTEP.<sup>11</sup>
- H. The Deputy Chief of Field Operations or his designee has responsibility for administration of

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<sup>10</sup> CALEA 33.4.3g

<sup>11</sup> CALEA 33.4.3e

the FTEP to include:

1. Designating a coordinator to provide day-to-day direction and oversight for the program;
2. Final selection of FTOs;
3. Coordinating the assignment of probationary and lateral officers to FTOs;
4. Liaison with the Commander of the E&T Division should any training issues arise with a lateral/probationary officer in the program;<sup>12</sup>
5. Periodically advising the Chief of Police and the E&T Division Commander on the progress of lateral and probationary officers in the program; and
6. The Deputy Chief of Field Operations will make the final decision, after consultation with the Watch Commander for the lateral/probationary officer and the E&T Division Commander, on the extension of a lateral/probationary officer's FTE period.

**VI. FIELD TRAINING OFFICER SELECTION AND REMOVAL**<sup>13</sup>

- A. FTOs will be selected from the Patrol Districts.
- B. To be eligible to serve as either a primary or alternate FTO, an officer must submit a memorandum requesting consideration through his chain of command to the Deputy Chief of Field Operations.
- C. Applicants must have at least three (3) years of police service, have completed probation, be in good standing, and have an evaluation that reflects a capacity to perform FTO duties.
- D. The applicant's Sergeant, and then his Lieutenant, will endorse the memorandum with "Recommended" or "Not Recommended" and document the reasons for their decision.
- E. The Deputy Chief of Field Operations will consider the comments made by the applicant's supervisors, the applicant's personnel records, and the applicant's disciplinary action record, and will make the final selection.
- F. Upon selection and completion of training, the FTO will be issued a Field Training Officer (Specialty) Insignia, to be worn on the right shirt/coat pocket as governed by General Order ADM-13, [Uniform and Professional Appearance](#).
- G. An FTO may be removed from his position in the following ways:
  1. Voluntarily;
  2. The E&T Division or a District Commander may make a recommendation for removal; or
  3. The Deputy Chief of Field Operations decides removal is in order.
  4. Information supporting the FTOs removal will be placed in the officer's personnel file and a copy of the document will be forwarded to the E&T Division for informational purposes.

**VII. PROGRAM EVALUATION**

- A. Within 180 days of the conclusion of an FTEP, the E&T Division Commander will report to the Chief of Police through the Deputy Chief of Field Operations on the coordination and effectiveness of the FTEP. The E&T Division Commander will specifically consider:

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<sup>12</sup> CALEA 33.4.3d


<sup>13</sup> CALEA 33.4.3b

1. Overall compliance with this General Order and the procedures established in the Manual;
2. Structured, written evaluations from lateral and probationary officers completing the FTEP;
3. Structured, written evaluations from a random sampling of FTOs and their supervisors; and
4. Recommendations from the Deputy Chief of Field Operations.

**VIII. CANCELLATION**

This General Order will cancel and replace ADM-27, Field Training and Evaluation Program, dated July 28, 2020.

AUTHORITY:

  
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