



HOWARD COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE

GENERAL ORDER ADM-02 DEFINITIONS & TERMINOLOGY

EFFECTIVE MAY 1, 2007

Revisions 09/22/2009

This General Order contains the following numbered sections:

- I. POLICY
- II. ORGANIZATIONAL DEFINITIONS
- III. PERSONNEL DEFINITIONS
- IV. OTHER TERMINOLOGY
- V. CANCELLATION

I. POLICY

It is the policy of the Howard County Sheriff's Office to establish certain terms and verbiage to facilitate crystalline communication between its members in both written and oral communications.

II. ORGANIZATIONAL DEFINITIONS

- A. HCSO: The Howard County Sheriff's Office
- B. Division: The primary subdivision of the Office of the Sheriff.
- C. Section: The primary subdivision of a Division.
- D. Unit: The primary subdivision of a Section composed of a group of deputies performing related tasks and often operating in unison.
- E. Detail: A subdivision of a Division, Section, or Squad where the members are assigned to a specialized task.
- F. Sector: A geographical subdivision of Howard County to which one or more deputies are assigned.
- G. Supervisory Area: A geographical subdivision of Howard County comprised of one or more sectors.
- H. Shift: A scheduled period of time during which a group of members are assigned to work.
- I. Headquarters: The facility that houses the Sheriff and his staff.

III. PERSONNEL DEFINITIONS

- A. Personnel: All persons on the HCSO payroll.
- B. Members: All personnel who are sworn deputy sheriffs.
- C. Employees: All personnel other than sworn deputy sheriffs.
- D. Rank: Official grade or position, on a scale classifying personnel.
- E. Precedence of Rank: The following is the precedence of rank, in descending order:

1. Sheriff
 2. Chief Deputy (Major)
 3. Lieutenant
 4. Sergeant
 5. Corporal
 6. Deputy
- F. Seniority: Among members of the same rank, precedence is based upon length of service at that rank.
- G. Supervisor: Any personnel having permanent supervisory responsibility for other members or employees, or any member holding the rank of Corporal or higher.
- H. Commissioned Officer: A member holding the rank of Lieutenant or higher.
- I. Non-Commissioned Officer: A member holding the rank of Corporal or Sergeant.
- J. Shift Supervisor: A member who has supervisory responsibility for a shift.
- K. Deputy in Charge (Duty Officer): A member below the rank of Corporal who has temporary supervisory responsibility for a detail, geographic point, crime scene, or Operations Division.

IV. OTHER TERMINOLOGY

- A. Chain of Command: The line of authority which extends from the Sheriff through a single person at each level of supervision to the level of execution.
- B. On Duty: The period of time during which members are actively engaged in the performance of HCSO duties.
- C. Off Duty: Any period of time during which members are not on duty.
- D. Tour of Duty: The hours in which an employee or member is scheduled or required to work.
- E. Shall/Will: Indicates, in orders or directives, that the action is mandatory.
- F. Should: Indicates, in orders or directives, that the action is advisable.
- G. May: Indicates, in orders or directives, that the action is permissible.
- H. Lawful Order: Any order, verbal or written, issued by a Supervisor, which is not in violation of any law, ordinance, or HCSO policy.
- I. Line Authority: Direct operating authority delegated by the Sheriff through each level of supervision until the level of execution is reached. Line authority determines the need, time, and place for action.
- J. Staff Authority: Derives from assignment within the HCSO rather than from rank, and includes only authority over personnel performing functions related to that assignment.
- K. Through Official Channels: Through the hands of a single supervisor in each level of the Chain of Command.
- L. Tense of Words: In written orders and directives, words used in the present tense also imply the future tense.
- M. Plurality of Words: In written orders and directives, the use of the plural includes the singular and the use of the singular implies the plural.

V. **CANCELLATION**

This General Order cancels and replaces General Order ADM-02, Definitions & Terminology, dated December 1, 2003.

Authority:

James F. Fitzgerald
Sheriff