

# Germantown Police Department

## Policies and Procedures

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**Number:** 1-28  
**Effective Date:** February 2, 2005  
**Subject:** Written Directive System  
**Previous Revisions:**

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### I. PURPOSE:

The purpose of this policy is to formally establish a consistent format for written orders, directives and policy statements to ensure proper preparation, indexing and distribution.

### II. DISCUSSION:

The Germantown Police Department recognizes the importance of personnel receiving current information and consistent direction. An efficient written directive system is invaluable in achieving this goal. The written directive is the primary means by which policy and procedure is developed, revised and maintained. Department personnel are responsible for familiarizing themselves with any written documentation pertaining to their respective assignments. It is the individual employees' responsibility to maintain a current copy of each written directive in the binder provided by the department.

### III. DEFINITIONS

- A. **Written Directive** – Any written document used to guide or affect the performance or conduct of department employees. The term includes policies, procedures, General Orders, Special Orders, Bulletins, Personnel Orders, Rules and Regulations, memoranda and instructional material.
- B. **General Order** – A written directive issued by the Chief of Police as a permanent directive concerning methodology and/or procedures. The General Order may also be used for the issuance of policies and procedures that will be included in Policy Statements which have not yet been issued.
- C. **Policy/Procedure Manual** – A collection of policies, procedures, rules and regulations and/or other written directives.
- D. **Memorandum** – A written communication that contains directives or advisories which does not create or alter policy of the department. A memorandum is generally used to clarify or inform.

- E. **Personnel Order** – A written directive issued by the Chief of Police designating a change in the status of department personnel (i.e., transfers, promotions, awards, classification changes, demotions, etc.).
- F. **Special Order** – A written directive, possibly a temporary order, issued by the Chief of Police relating to a particular circumstance or situation such as a special event or parade.
- G. **Policy Statement** – A written directive that is a broad statement of agency principles. Policy statements may be characterized by such words as “may” or “should” and usually do not establish fixed rules or set procedures for conduct or a particular activity, but rather provide a framework for development of procedures and rules and regulations.
- H. **Procedure** – A written directive that is a guideline for carrying out department activities. A procedure may be made mandatory through the use of “will,” “shall” or “must” rather than by “should” or “may.” Procedures sometimes allow latitude and discretion in carrying out an activity. Procedures will be incorporated within issued Policy Statements or will be released in the form of General Orders.
- I. **Training Bulletin** – A written directive providing information relative to matters which require special explanation or training. This form may also be utilized to announce and/or schedule training for department employees.
- J. **Legal Bulletin** – A written opinion prepared by the City Prosecutor, legal advisor or State or County Attorney General’s Office intended to provide interpretation of case law and/or revised or new legislation relating to the functions of the department.
- K. **Rules and Regulations** – Duties, codes of conduct and responsibilities that govern the conduct of employees of the department.

#### IV. PROCEDURES

The Germantown Police Department has formally instituted the following forms of written directives and communications:

##### A. General Order

1. General Orders may be drafted by personnel at the supervisory level within the Department and submitted via the chain of command to their respective Division Commander. The Division Commander will review the proposed General Order and forward to the Chief of Police for review and consideration.

2. If approved by the Chief of Police, the General Order is codified and given an effective date by the administrative support staff.
3. The administrative support staff will be responsible for printing and maintaining copies of the General Order. The administrative support staff will direct the distribution of General Orders to the appropriate Division Commander. Division Commanders will ensure distribution of General Orders to their appropriate unit or shift supervisors to distribute to all department personnel.
4. The original General Order will be maintained by the administrative support staff. In addition to hard copies, computerized records will be maintained.
5. The Command Staff will be responsible for updating and/or revising General Orders. Outdated General Orders will be purged by the administrative support staff. Purged General Orders will be retained in a historical file in the administrative support staff files.
6. General Orders will be sequentially numbered using the year as a prefix followed by a three-digit number. The three-digit number will reflect the order in which the directives are issued throughout a given calendar year. The assigned number will be prefixed by the letters "GO" (ex. GO-2004-001).
7. General Order subject matter will be presented in paragraph form and written under the following prescribed *headings*:
  - a. Subject;
  - b. Number;
  - c. Effective Date;
  - d. Cancellation Date (if needed);
  - e. Prepared by; and
  - f. Approval.

The *body* of the directive will be formatted as follows:

- a. Purpose;
  - b. Discussion;
  - c. Definitions (if needed); and
  - d. Action
8. Supervisors will give all employees roll call training on each General Order. The employee will then insert each General Order numerically in their policy and procedure manual.

**B. Personnel Order**

1. The Personnel Order is a directive which will be issued by the Chief of Police. This type of directive will be restricted to personnel matters such as: assignments, transfers, promotions, awards or other special recognition, professional certification, employment terminations and disciplinary announcements. Each Personnel Order will, in itself, constitute the necessary authority for executing whatever action may be prescribed within it.
2. To facilitate future reference and access, a coded number will be displayed on the Personnel Order. Assigning Personnel Order numbers and maintaining the numbering system is the responsibility of the administrative support staff of the Chief of Police.
3. The coded number will include a series of letters and digits based on the prefix "PO" followed by a hyphen and the four-digits of the current year and a three-digit number indicating the number of Personnel Orders issued during the year (ex. PO-2004-001).
4. The original of the Personnel Order will be maintained in the office of the Chief of Police, with copy(ies) distributed as required.

**C. Memorandum**

A memorandum is a written communication that contains directives or advisories which does not create or alter policy of the department. A memorandum is generally used to clarify or inform. Memoranda may be prepared by any employee of the department using standard memorandum form. Numbering will not be necessary. The employee who originates the memorandum should retain a copy of the original. Each memorandum will be initialed and dated by the employee who prepares it.

**D. Special Orders**

1. Special Orders may be originated by the Chief of Police or at the command staff level. All Special Orders must be signed and approved by the Chief of Police.
2. Special Orders relate to temporary or special circumstances usually of known duration. (ex. special event, program, detail, etc.)
3. To facilitate future reference and access, a coded number will be displayed within the appropriate space on the heading. The number will be prefixed by the letters "SO", and will be in the same format as General and Personnel Orders (ex. SO-2004-001).

4. Assigning Special Order numbers and maintaining the numbering system is the responsibility of the administrative support staff of the Chief of Police.
5. When the Special Order is signed by the Chief, the original will be retained and filed in the Chief's office. A copy of the Special Order will be returned to the Division Commander(s) for distribution.

**E. Policy Statements**

1. Only the Chief of Police may approve and issue Policy Statements.
2. Policy Statements will be prepared by members of the Command Staff, unless otherwise directed by the Chief.
3. Policy Statements will be written in narrative form using the following headings:
  - a. Purpose;
  - b. Discussion (if needed);
  - c. Policy;
  - d. Procedure;
  - e. Review Process; and
  - f. Cancellation
4. Policy Statements will be numbered by chapter and section. Each Policy Statement will be cross-indexed by the subject matter and will be distributed to all personnel.
5. The final page of an approved Policy Statement will be signed by the Chief of Police.
6. The original Policy Statement will be retained and filed in the office of the Chief.
7. Purged Policy Statements will be retained in a historical file in the office of the Chief.
8. Policy Statements will be placed in the policy and procedure manual in proper order.
9. The Training Office will maintain an inventory of policy manuals. The Training Office Supervisor will be responsible for the issuance of manuals to new personnel.

F. **Training Bulletins**

1. Training Bulletins will be prepared and issued as needed by or under the direction of the Training Office staff.
2. A numbering system will be maintained by the Training Office to facilitate cross-indexing by number and subject matter.

G. **Legal Bulletins**

Legal Bulletins will be issued by the Chief of Police upon receipt.

H. **Rules and Regulations**

1. Only the Chief of Police may approve and issue rules and regulations. Rules and Regulations will be maintained by each employee in their policy and procedure manual.
2. Originals will be maintained, updated and purged as necessary by the administrative support staff.
3. Revisions or new additions may be suggested in writing through the chain of command by any employee of the department.
4. Revised or new Rules and Regulations will be issued in the form of General Orders until incorporated into policy.

I. **Accountability**

1. To ensure accountability for written directives, commanding officers will require all personnel who receive written directives to acknowledge receipt, comprehension and compliance by signing receipt forms. Supervisory personnel will document on the receipt form all training that the employee received regarding the written directive.
2. Supervisory personnel will ensure that receipts are completed as soon as possible and promptly returned to the office of the Chief. The administrative support staff will file and permanently retain all receipts.
3. Non-sworn personnel are required to read, review and maintain all written directives even though the subject matter may not be directly applicable to their job function. When the directive is not directly applicable to the employee's job function, their commanding officer will hand write the words "not applicable" on the face of the receipt form. Under these circumstances,

the employee's signature is required on the receipt only as an acknowledgement of the receipt and general comprehension of the directive.

**J. Review of Proposed Policy and Procedure Directives**

Proposed directives concerning policy, procedure and rules and regulations will be reviewed by command members of the department. Representatives of the employee groups directly affected by the directive may also be included in the review process. A review, comment and suggestion process will be conducted as necessary during command staff meetings with the Chief of Police.

**K. Authority to Issue or Modify Directives**

Only the Chief of Police or his/her designate has the authority to issue, approve, modify or cause to be issued, modified, revoke or supersede General Orders, Special Orders, Personnel Orders, Policy Statements or Rules and Regulations.

**L. Retention**

1. Each commanding officer will be responsible for maintaining files of department directives and of those issued within their own command. The availability and currency of these files will be items of interest for staff inspections.
2. Each employee is required to maintain current General Orders, Policy Statements and Special Orders in the Department's policy and procedure manual. Compliance will be monitored and assured through line and staff inspections.
3. Copies of written directives will also be posted on department bulletin boards which personnel are required to be familiar with.

**V. REVIEW PROCESS**

An annual review of this policy will be conducted to determine if it should be revised, cancelled or continued in its current form.

This order shall remain in effect until revoked or superseded by competent authority.