



Command Protocol

.01 Policy

It is the policy of the Bladensburg Police Department to operate in a structured environment of command protocol, with adherence to the philosophies of unity of command, delegation of authority, and a specific chain of command.

.02 Terms

.03 Governing Legislation and Reference

Governing Legislation: N/A

Forms: N/A

.04 Procedure

A. Authority and Responsibility of Command

The Chief of Police is vested by the Town Council, through the Town of Bladensburg Charter, with the authority and responsibility for command of the management, direction, and operations of the department. Authority to act on behalf of the Chief of Police may be delegated, but the responsibility for those actions rests with the Chief of Police.

All members are vested with responsibility and commensurate authority at every level. All members are held fully accountable for the use of delegated authority, as well as the failure to use it.

Authority for decision making and action is to be delegated to the lowest level possible. Supervisors are held accountable for the performance of all members under their immediate command.

B. Unity of Command

Elements of Unity of Command within the Bladensburg Police Department include:

- Every member is accountable to only one supervisor at any given time; and,
- Each organizational component will be under the direct command of one supervisor.

In cases of emergency, a supervisor is not relieved of the responsibility to act, even though a subordinate or incident is not under the supervisor's direct command.

C. Span of Control

Whenever possible, the number of members under the immediate control of any given supervisor for normal day-to-day operations will be minimized in order to provide for effective direction, coordination, and control of members.

D. Command Protocols

Absence of Chief of Police – In the event of a scheduled absence of the Chief of Police, The Chief will designate an individual to assume the authority vested in the position. In the event the Chief of Police is unable to make such a designation, the Senior Command Officer will assume command of the department.

Exceptional situations – During exceptional situations, such as natural disasters, disturbances, other critical incidents or unusual occurrences, members will comply with the command protocols of the established Incident Command System.

Normal day-to-day operations – During normal day-to-day operations, the assigned or dispatched member will assume command responsibility unless specifically relieved.

E. Chain of Command

Members will use the proper chain of command when it becomes necessary to officially communicate with a supervisor.

In the event any subordinate submits a recommendation for improving the services provided by the Department, he or she is expected to put such recommendation in writing and to direct it to the appropriate supervisor(s) through the chain of command.

F. Breaking the Chain of Command

Breaking the chain of command is only permitted whenever a subordinate receives no satisfaction from an immediate supervisor regarding a personal or department related problem, or, whenever a subordinate has probable cause to believe that a supervisor is involved in unlawful or immoral conduct.

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G. Procedures for Communication, Coordination, and Cooperation

The Department encourages and supports the exchange of information among all members for the purpose of coordinating activities.

Staff meetings— Periodic senior staff meetings shall be conducted for the purpose of disseminating information, updating progress on specific projects, and general coordination of activities.

Email—The dissemination of current information and activities can be accomplished by sending electronic mail as permitted by direction of the Town's policy on use of the e-mail system.

Supervisor meetings—eriodic meetings as scheduled by the Chief of Police for supervisors to discuss department issues.

General employee meetings – Periodic meetings as scheduled by the Chief of Police for members to discuss department issues.

The dissemination of current crime trends, identification of emerging hot spots, and sharing of related information is accomplished through the Department's shift roll calls. Roll call is used to review daily crime analysis reports, establish priority tactical operational initiatives, disseminate investigative information as necessary, and in general coordinate the Department's activities to combat and reduce crime.

HISTORY: Adopted January 1, 2014

This General Order supersedes all other orders and memoranda in conflict therewith.

Authority:



Charles L. Owens
Chief of Police