


POLICY 106	WRITTEN DIRECTIVES AND DEPARTMENTAL COMMUNICATIONS	
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A. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to establish a formal system of Department written directives and standardize Departmental written communications.

B. POLICY

It is the policy of the Fort Lauderdale Police Department that all policies, standard operating procedures (SOPs), written orders, memorandums and bulletins be described in writing and available to all Department members. The Department establishes a standardized format and indexing system for written directives and written orders and encourages input from all levels in the Department in developing and updating written directives. The Department will disseminate all new and/or updated written directives within ten (10) days of their approval. When feasible, members will be notified at least 10 working days prior to the effective date of any new and/or revised policy and/or SOP.

Department members are notified of new and revised directives via email. Department members are required to access their email account within two hours of the start of their shift each day that they are on duty. All department policies and SOPs are disseminated via PowerDMS. Department members are required to read, and electronically sign all new and

or revised policies and SOPs and other written directives in PowerDMS within ten working days.

C. DEFINITIONS

1. Accreditation Manager – The member designated by the Chief of Police responsible for maintaining the accreditation of the Department.
2. Action Plans - Action Plans are issued to correct a crime trend, organizational deficiency, unusual occurrence or other issue requiring a formal, documented plan.
3. General Order (G.O.) – Written directive issued by authority of the Chief of Police that provides a method of disseminating information in a timely manner. General Orders contain information which members are responsible for knowing or acting on. General Orders may announce changes in policies or procedures. If a General Order announces a permanent change in a policy, it will take precedent until integrated into the Department Policy and updated electronically in PowerDMS and the Information Systems Network. General Orders may also announce policies or direct procedures which concern a specific circumstance or event, or which are of a temporary nature or involve only specific segments of Department activities.
4. General Staff – Sworn members of the rank of lieutenant and above, category 4 civilian managers/supervisors and above, union representatives and other members as determined by the Chief of Police.
5. Information Bulletin – Written directive that contains information that is of a general nature which may or may not require action.
6. Policy – Written directive that establishes the policies and procedures of the Department and is included in the Department Policy Manual. Department Policies establish procedures for carrying out Department activities and are applicable to all members. In cases of conflict, policies take precedent over SOPs.
7. PowerDMS – Policy and Training management software utilized by the Fort Lauderdale Police Department to store and track receipt of departmental policies, SOPs, Legal Bulletins, training, and other documents as deemed appropriate by the agency.
8. Senior Staff – Sworn members of the rank of Captain and above, Support Services Lieutenants, Internal Affairs Commander and the Legal Advisor.
9. Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) – Written directive issued by authority of the Assistant Chief of the affected function that establishes the policies and procedures pertaining to a specific unit or function of the Department. SOPs establish procedures for carrying out activities within a specific bureau. SOPs are issued to members of specific units or members who perform a specific task. In cases of conflict, policies take precedents over SOPs.

10. Written Directive – Written document used to direct the actions of Department members, establish Department policies and procedures or convey information to Department members. Department directives are Department Policies, Standard Operating Procedures and General Orders, Training Orders, Information Bulletins, Legal Bulletins, Memorandums and other directives that direct Department activities.

D. SCOPE AND APPLICABILITY

All members, sworn and civilian, shall be responsible for reading, and signing all policies SOPs, and other written directives in PowerDMS, and obeying all applicable written directives.

E. DEPARTMENT POLICY

1. Department Policies are issued under the authority of the Chief of Police. Any member of the Department may propose changes or additions to policies and procedures. Such proposals will be reviewed, adopted or rejected subject to the approval of the Chief of Police.
2. Department members will sign a receipt for their issued Policies and Procedures via PowerDMS.
3. Policies will be numbered and indexed in the following chapters:
 - a. Chapter 1, Administration
 - b. Chapter 2, Crimes and Offenses
 - c. Chapter 3, Special Operations
 - d. Chapter 4, Health & Employee Welfare
 - e. Chapter 5, Arrests & Custody
4. Adding or Amending:

Unless otherwise determined by the Chief of Police the following process will be utilized for adding or amending policies:

 - a. Proposals for amendments or additions to Department Policies will be submitted to the Staff Inspections Office. Formatting for changes in an existing policy will utilize the strike-through and bold-underline method of illustrating changes. (i.e. **New**; ~~delete~~)
 - b. The Accreditation Manager will assign a policy number to new policies.
 - c. The Staff Inspections Office will assign a unique number to each policy amendment. The number shall consist of the letters 'PA', the year the proposal was submitted, followed by a number indicating the numerical

order in which the proposal was submitted (i.e., PA 2001-001, PA 2001-002, etc.).

- d. The Staff Inspections Office will distribute the proposed change or addition to sworn General Staff members, pertinent civilian managers, FOP president or their designee, and the member proposing the change. The policy shall include a concurrence form with a suspense date of at least 10 working days.
 - e. Upon receipt of the proposed change or addition, members shall review the proposal, note their concurrence, non-concurrence, or waiver, and make such comments and or amendments, as deemed appropriate, and return the proposed policy to the Staff Inspections Office by the due date indicated on the Concurrence Form.
 - f. The Staff Inspections Office will review comments submitted for accreditation standard compliance. The Staff Inspections Office will assimilate the comments into a "proposed policy" and will make a recommendation for changes as appropriate. The Staff Inspections Office will contact the comment's author when necessary.
 - g. The Staff Inspections Office will present the proposed policy to Senior Staff for review.
 - h. Senior Staff shall recommend to the Chief of Police the final form for the proposed changes or additions.
 - i. The Chief of Police may approve or reject the proposed change or make other changes, as he/she deems appropriate.
 - j. The approved policy will be returned to the Staff Inspections Office.
 - k. The Staff Inspections Office will maintain the original master copy of the policy. The master will have a cover sheet signed by the Chief of Police. In addition, the Staff Inspections Office shall maintain an electronic copy of the policy and make it available to Department members via PowerDMS and the Information Systems Network.
 - l. The Staff Inspections Office will maintain an electronic and hard copy archive of revised and deleted policies.
5. Policy Review:
- a. Policy review is the method by which every policy is reviewed as needed, for example changes in laws, ordinances, procedures, accreditation standards etc., or once every three years.
 - b. High liability policies shall be reviewed annually.

- c. Every policy will be assigned to a specific Assistant Chief who shall designate an individual as the policy content expert for the purpose of the Policy Review.
- d. The Staff Inspections Office will schedule all Department Policies for review.
- e. When a policy is scheduled for review, the Staff Inspections Office will send an electronic copy of the policy, with an e-mail memorandum, to the designated Bureau Assistant Chief. The Assistant Chief will forward the review to the designated individual. The memorandum will advise the individual that the policy is due to be reviewed to ensure that it is current and complies with state statute, City Ordinance, City Policy and Department practice.
- f. The review will be assigned a suspense date of thirty (30) days for return to the Staff Inspections Office.
- g. Policies not returned by the due date will be considered in compliance and the Assistant Chief of the affected Bureau has concurred that no changes are needed.
- h. Changes to the policy will be indicated using the bold/underline and strikeout method (i.e. **New**; ~~delete~~).
- i. The Staff Inspections Office will review the recommended policy amendments to ensure the policy complies with accreditation standards.
- j. Based on the recommendations, the Accreditation Manager will:
 - (1). Distribute the policy to General Staff and Senior Staff, if the recommended changes are procedural in nature and may affect Department members outside the reviewing unit;
 - (2). Distribute the policy to Senior Staff for review when the recommended changes are minor in nature and do not affect members outside the reviewing unit; or
 - (3). Make the recommended amendments to the policy and present the policy to the Chief of Police for his/her signature when there is no change in procedure, or the changes are minor in nature.
- k. Format:
 - (1). "High liability" policies shall have a yellow header.
 - (2). Policies will be formatted using the formal outline.
 - (3). The following rules will apply when constructing a policy:

(a). If applicable, there will be a purpose and policy statement at the beginning of the policy.

(b). Major sections will begin with capital letters (i.e., A., B., C.)
Use the formal outline system of numbers and letters for each level as follows:

A. PURPOSE: (what is the purpose of the document?).

B. POLICY: (all policies should contain a policy statement: "It is the policy of the Fort Lauderdale Police Department...").

C.

1.

2.

a.

b.

(1).

(2).

(a).

(b).

1).

2).

a).

b).

1].

2].

a].

b].

(4). Every page shall have the policy number and page number printed on the bottom (i.e. 106 – Page 1 OF #). Every page except the first page will have the revision date printed on the bottom of the page (i.e. Revised 07/01). The first page will have the revision date, and the date of publication or effective date listed in the policy header.

1. Dissemination and Archiving:

(1). The Staff Inspections Office shall store and archive Department Policies.

(a). New and existing policies are archived in hard copy and electronically.

(b). Superseded policies shall be archived in, at least, hard copy.

(2). The Staff Inspections Office shall assign appropriate index numbers to policies.

- (3). The Staff Inspections Office shall be responsible for the updating and electronic distribution of new or amended policies.
- (4). Distribution and receipt of policies shall be tracked via electronic signature in PowerDMS.
- (5). The Training Unit shall create an account in PowerDMS for all new Department members.

F. STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURE (SOP)

- a. Standard operating procedures are issued by individual units, divisions or bureaus. They apply to members assigned to that unit, division or bureau and to those members performing tasks for the individual unit, division or bureau.
 - b. Standard operating procedures are issued under the authority of the Assistant Chief of the affected function. The supervisor, captain, manager, major or assistant chief of the individual component is responsible for creating standard operating procedures for their function.
 - c. Where a conflict exists in any standard operating procedure with Department Policy, City Policy or other Department order, the Department Policy, City Policy or other Department order will take precedence.
 - d. Standard operating procedures are not numbered; rather they are named in accordance with the applicable unit or procedure.
 - e. An index for Standard Operating Procedures is available via the computer network and via PowerDMS.
2. Format:
- a. Standard operating procedures are formatted using the formal outline format described for policy.
 - b. The Department logo and title of the standard operating procedure will be on the first page of the standard operating procedure.
 - c. The title of the standard operating procedure shall be on the top of all subsequent pages.
 - d. Each page shall have a footer containing:
 - (1). the revision date in the lower right corner (i.e. Revised 06/16/97);
 - (2). the page number centered.
3. Amendments and Review:

Unless otherwise determined by the Assistant Chief, the following process will be utilized for adding or amending SOPs:

- a. Proposals for additions or amendments to a standard operating procedure shall be submitted to the unit supervisor responsible for the standard operating procedure.
- b. The unit supervisor responsible for the standard operating procedure shall determine if the amendment or addition is appropriate.
- c. If deemed appropriate, the addition or amendment shall be submitted for approval, via the chain of command, to the Assistant Chief of the affected Bureau.
- d. The Assistant Chief may circulate the proposed amendment or addition to other members for input and review.
- e. Prior to final approval, the Assistant Chief shall submit the standard operating procedure to the Staff Inspections Office for review. The Staff Inspections Office shall ensure it complies with accreditation standards and is properly formatted.
 - (1). If the standard operating procedure is in compliance, the Staff Inspections Office shall attach an approval cover sheet and return the SOP to the Assistant Chief for their signature.
 - (2). If the standard operating procedure is not in compliance, the Staff Inspections Office supervisor will notify the Assistant Chief. The Assistant Chief will ensure the SOP is brought into compliance.
- f. All Standard Operating Procedures shall be reviewed as needed or once every three years.

4. Publication and Distribution:

- a. Upon final approval by the Assistant Chief, the Staff Inspections Office shall distribute the SOP via PowerDMS to all department members.
- b. The Staff Inspections Office will maintain the master SOP, Concurrence Form and Approval Cover Sheet. The Staff Inspections Office will also maintain an electronic version of the document. The standard operating procedure is also available via the Information Systems Network.
- c. Distribution and receipt of SOPs shall be tracked via electronic signature in PowerDMS.

5. Archiving:

The Staff Inspections Office will archive and maintain an electronic copy of all revised and out of date standard operating procedures.

G. GENERAL ORDERS

General Orders contain information which members are responsible for knowing or acting on and provide a method of disseminating information in a timely manner.

1. Purpose:

- a. General Orders may announce changes in policies or procedures.
- b. If a General Order announces a permanent change in a policy, it will take precedent until integrated into Department Policy.
- c. General Orders may also announce policies or direct procedures which concern a specific circumstance or event, or which are of a temporary nature, or involve only specific segments of Department activities.

2. Format:

- a. General Orders will be numbered sequentially beginning with G.O. followed by the year and a three-digit number (i.e. G.O. 2001-001, G.O. 2001-002, etc.) and shall be published as frequently as needed.
- b. General Orders may, and often will, contain more than one item of information. Each item will be numbered and separated from other items in the order.

3. Submission and Approval:

Items for inclusion in a General Order shall be routed through the chain of command to the Assistant Chief of the submitting member's bureau.

- a. Members who wish to have information published in a General Order shall compose the information as a Word Document. The document must be in completed form including proofing and spell checking. It must be readable, properly worded and ready for publication.
- b. The proposal shall be submitted through the chain of command to the member's bureau Assistant Chief. The Assistant Chief will review the proposal both for content and structure and, if approved, forward it to the Staff Inspections Office. If not approved, the Assistant Chief will return it to the member with an explanation.
- c. The Staff Inspections Office shall compile all submitted items and electronically forward the proposed General Order to the Chief of Police for approval.
- d. General Orders announcing changes in policies or SOPs may be approved verbally by the Chief of Police.

4. Distribution

- a. The Staff Inspections Office shall produce and distribute General Orders electronically to all Outlook users.
 - b. Distribution and receipt of General Orders shall be tracked with a delivery and/or read receipt via Outlook. General Orders announcing a change in procedures not covered by an SOP or policy will be distributed via PowerDMS. Department personnel are required to read and electronically sign for any General Order distributed via PowerDMS.
5. Members are responsible for reading and complying with General Orders. Users are required to send a return receipt if prompted by the sender.
 6. Members returning from an absence are responsible for reading and complying with any General Orders published during their absence.
 7. General Orders shall be indexed, tracked and archived by the Staff Inspections Office.
 8. The Staff Inspections Office shall maintain the master file of all General Orders.
 9. General Orders must be issued by the Chief of Police or designee.
 10. At least once a year the Staff Inspections Office shall review General Orders published via PowerDMS to ensure they are still relevant. All outdated General Orders will be archived in PowerDMS.

H. INFORMATION BULLETINS

Information Bulletins are a common and significant way the department disseminates information to members. Information contained in the bulletin may inform members of an event, advise of a change or direct members to take a specific action. As with all departmental communications members are expected to fully read any distributed Information Bulletin.

1. Purpose:
 - a. Temporary upgrades due to the absence of a higher-ranking member.
 - b. Members ill or in distress.
 - c. Announcements of special events.
 - (1). Blood drives
 - (2). Promotion and retirement ceremonies, etc.
 - d. Any other general information which members may or may not be held responsible for knowing or complying with.

2. Format:
 - a. Information Bulletins shall be numbered sequentially beginning with I.B. followed by the year and a three-digit number (i.e. I.B. 2001-001; I.B. 2001-002; etc.) and shall be published as frequently as needed.
 - b. Information Bulletins may, and often will, contain more than one item of information. Each item will be numbered and separated from other items in the bulletin.
3. Submission and Approval:

Items for inclusion in an Information Bulletin Order shall be routed through the author's chain of command to the respective Assistant Chief for approval. The Assistant Chief shall review the item and, if approved, have the item published in the next Information Bulletin.
4. Distribution:
 - a. The Support Services Bureau shall produce and distribute Information Bulletins electronically to all Outlook users.
 - b. Distribution and receipt of Information Bulletins shall be tracked with a delivery and/or read receipt via Outlook.
 - c. The Support Services Bureau shall maintain the master file of Information Bulletins.

I. MEMORANDUMS

1. Memorandums are utilized for both internal and external formal Departmental written communications.
2. Memorandums are utilized for formal communication between the Police Department and other City Departments.
3. Memorandums are utilized for any communications within the Department that are not suitable for General Orders or Information Bulletins.
4. Memorandums are especially suited for formal communications between individuals.
5. Numbering, Tracking and Archiving Memorandums:
 - a. The secretaries of the Chief of Police and the Assistant Chiefs shall issue tracking numbers for memorandums issued by their respective bureaus.
 - b. Any member issuing a memorandum shall contact their bureau secretary to obtain a memorandum number.

- c. Memorandums shall be numbered sequentially with numerical designation for the year and month followed by a sequential number (i.e. 01-01-01).
 - (1). Memorandum numbers generated by the Operations Bureau shall be followed by the letter “O” (i.e. 01-01-01 O).
 - (2). Memorandum numbers generated by the Investigative Bureau shall be followed by the letter “I” (i.e. 01-01-01 I).
 - (3). Memorandum numbers generated by the Support Services Bureau shall be followed by the letter “S” (i.e. 01-01-01 S).
- d. The Chief’s secretary and the secretary of each Assistant Chief shall track all memorandum numbers issued by them and maintain an index containing the memorandum number and subject.
- e. The Chief’s secretary and the secretary of each Assistant Chief shall archive all memorandums issued by their bureau either by hardcopy, electronically or both.

6. Formatting:

Memorandums are formatted as follows:

Memorandum #01-01-01

DATE:

TO:

FROM:

SUBJECT:

Text of memorandum

J. ACTION PLANS

- 1. Action plans are departmental communications issued based on the need to correct a crime trend, organizational deficiency, unusual occurrence or other issue requiring a formal documented plan.
- 2. Action plans may be initialized by any Department member; however, every action plan must be approved via the chain of command by the Bureau Assistant Chief.
- 3. Once the action plan is concluded, the final report must be reviewed and approved by the Assistant Chief of the affected bureau.
- 4. An Offense Report (O.R.) number will be assigned to every action plan.

5. Action plans in effect for more than six months require a semi-annual status report by the supervisor/manager responsible for the plan.
6. Copies of all active action plans will be filed in the Crime Analysis Unit.
7. All completed action plans will be archived in the Records Division.
8. Format:
The page layout of an action plan will be at the discretion of the Bureau Assistant Chief. Every action plan must:
 - a. Contain an implementation and suspense date;
 - b. Contain an offense report number;
 - c. State the problem to be addressed;
 - d. State the goal of the plan; and
 - e. State who is responsible for the action plan and provide space for staff review signatures through and including the Assistant Chief of the affected bureau.

K. LEGAL BULLETINS

1. Legal Bulletins are issued by the Department's Legal Advisor and are meant to provide legislative updates, new case law, clarification of Florida State Statutes/ municipal ordinances, etc.
2. Legal Bulletins will be numbered sequentially beginning with L.B. followed by the year and a two-digit number (i.e. L.B. 2023-01, L.B. 2023-02, etc.) and shall be published as frequently as needed.
3. Legal Bulletins shall be disseminated electronically by the Legal Advisor's Office. Department members are required to read and electronically sign all Legal Bulletins in PowerDMS.
4. The Legal Advisor's Office shall maintain a master file with copies of all Legal Bulletins including those that are archived.
5. At least once a year the Legal Advisor's Office shall review the Legal Bulletins published in PowerDMS to ensure they are still relevant; all outdated Legal Bulletins will be archived.

L. PURGING WRITTEN COMMUNICATIONS

1. All written Departmental communications shall be purged in conformance with:

- a. State of Florida, General Records Schedule for State and Local Government Agencies (Schedule GS1).
 - b. State of Florida, General Records Schedule for Law Enforcement, Correctional Facilities & District Medical Examiners (Schedule GS2).
2. Copies of the schedules shall be available in the Records Division, and in PowerDMS.

M. EMAIL, ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATION AND INTERNET

1. All of the mentioned methods of departmental communications may be disseminated by hard copy or through an email message.
 - a. All sworn and non-sworn members have been provided with an Outlook account used to send and receive email communication.
 - b. Members with an Outlook mailbox are required to access their email account within two hours of the start of their shift each day that they are on duty.
 - c. Members will be responsible for checking and completing all required tasks sent electronically by Department training platforms on a weekly basis.
 - d. Members are further required to read messages and maintain the account so that new messages may be received. This includes regularly responding to, deleting, and downloading sent documents in the Members Inbox, Personal Message Management Portal, Junk E-mail, and Deleted Items folders. Users are also required to send a return receipt if prompted by the sender.
 - e. Electronic mail is provided and intended to be used for work related activity. It is recognized that personal messages may be sent or received on an infrequent basis. While the system will provide sender-to-receiver confidentiality, users of the system are advised that once in the system ALL electronic communication is subject to public access including messages sent via the CAD, i.e. car to car.
 - f. Employees' electronic mail signatures shall be limited to the employee's name, assignment and contact information. Personal messages, slogans, mottos, etc. are not permitted.
 - g. The employee is solely responsible for professional conduct while using the network, and accepts complete responsibility for obeying rules and accepted standards. This would include, but not be limited to, prohibiting the placing of unlawful or unauthorized information on the system and the use of obscene, abusive or otherwise objectionable language.

- h. All Lieutenants and above are required to receive text messages. The requirement for Sergeants and other employees to receive text messages is at the discretion of their respective A/Chiefs.

2. INTERNET USAGE

- a. The use of the City's computer system is to be restricted to city purposes only.
- b. Only free, public domain files are to be accessed or downloaded. If files are to be downloaded to the city's host computer, authorization from Information Systems is required. Information Systems will address the detection of computer viruses and their elimination.
- c. Sexually explicit software detected on the City's computer system or accessed via a city-owned computer is not appropriate and will result in disciplinary action.

3. TELECONFERENCING / VIDEOCONFERENCING

Teleconferencing / Videoconferencing programs such as Zoom, Go To Meeting, Microsoft Teams etc., are provided for business use only. Employees are responsible for professional conduct and dress while utilizing these programs.