

## **SANTA CLARA POLICE DEPARTMENT GENERAL ORDER 33.4**

### **TRAINING AND CAREER DEVELOPMENT: RECRUIT TRAINING**

**ISSUED: SEPTEMBER 2009**

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#### **33.4.1 Recruit Training**

Recruit police officers are required by Penal Code section 832 and POST Regulations to attend a POST Certified Academy. The recruit will not be issued his/her badge, nor will peace officer powers be bestowed until after the recruit has graduated from the Academy.

Newly hired employees with a valid California POST Basic Certificate may not be required to attend the Academy before beginning the FTO program. Individuals who have graduated from a POST-certified academy within the last three (3) years who are not currently employed by a law enforcement agency may also not be required to attend the Academy before beginning the FTO program.

#### **33.4.2 Academy Orientation**

When a new employee starts the Police Academy, the academy staff will provide the employee with the following documents:

- The organization of the academy
- The academy's rules and regulations
- The academy's rating, testing, and evaluation system
- The physical fitness and proficiency skill requirements.

#### **33.4.3 Recruit Job-Task Analysis**

The academy curriculum is designed to cover the duties of a police officer. POST has established a minimum level of training, which is currently in excess of 650 hours, with performance objectives being established for each component of the academy program.

The academy staff uses evaluation techniques designed to measure competency in the required skill, knowledge, and abilities (SKA's).

#### **33.4.4 Field Training Officer Program**

The FTO program is designed to consist of three separate phases:

- Phase 1 - Recruit officer will attend a Basic Police Academy
- Phase 2 - Trainee officer will be assigned to Field Training Officer program
- Phase 3 - Trainee officer will be assigned to solo patrol duties on a regular patrol team after release from the FTO program (lasts until the City's 18 month probationary period is completed).

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After graduation from the police academy (Phase 1), or upon hire as a lateral transfer, all sworn personnel shall complete a Field Training Officer program (Phase 2). The typical FTO program consists of a minimum of 23 weeks of training. This training includes a two week in-house session, one week of patrol observation and 20 weeks of field training.

In special circumstances, the length of the FTO program may be shortened for highly proficient trainees. Conversely, the program may also be extended when needed.

Trainees are evaluated by the use of the Standard Evaluating Guidelines (SEG's). The evaluations are performance based on how the trainee performs each shift. The FTO will complete a Daily Observation Report (DOR) at the end of each shift. The FTO will rate the trainee using the SEG's and the standard of a "solo patrol officer."

Phase 3 will consist of the trainee officer being administratively assigned to a patrol team for specified intervals, typically of approximately 3 months each. The officer will continue to rotate to various patrol teams throughout this phase. The purpose of this rotation process is to expose the new officer to a variety of shifts, calls for service and department personnel.

An officer's performance in Phase 3 is monitored by a monthly evaluation completed by their immediate patrol team supervisor. This evaluation will be documented on the Probationary Officer Evaluation Report form. The evaluations will be reviewed by the FTO Lieutenant and kept by that officer's immediate patrol supervisor. If serious problems are documented, the officer can be re-assigned to a Field Training Officer for additional training and remediation.

Prior to the conclusion of Phase 3, and typically at the 16 month mark, an oral board interview will be held. This is commonly referred to as an "exit oral." The primary goal of this interview is to review the officer's performance to date and to evaluate the officer's knowledge on areas including but not limited to department policies, procedures, CMD's, Municipal Codes and various sections of vehicle and criminal law. A secondary goal is to obtain feedback on their overall experiences with all phases of the FTO program. This information will be used to evaluate the overall suitability of the officer and to evaluate the training provided in the FTO program itself.

#### **FTO Duties:**

The primary responsibility of an FTO is to ensure that the trainee has the knowledge, skills, and abilities to work as a solo beat officer. The FTO accomplishes this task by using a combination of training and evaluation. The FTO will provide training in new areas. The FTO will also provide on-the-spot remedial training when needed. When a trainee is continuing to show deficiencies in a certain area, the FTO (along with the training cadre, if needed) will develop a more extensive remedial training plan.

The FTO will document the daily performance of the trainee in a narrative form on the daily observation report (DOR). The performance is also numerically scored based on the Standard Evaluating Guidelines (SEG).

In addition to training new officers, FTO duties may include:

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- Becoming an ARS/MDC trainer
- Teaching in-house classes, including AOT, CPA and other programs
- Monitoring and mentoring officers who are in Phase 3 of the Field Training Program
- Providing remedial training to employees as needed
- Participate on oral boards for Police Officer, Field Training Officer and other applicants
- Any other training-related duties deemed necessary by the FTO Lieutenant

FTOs are also required to train Reserve Officers out in the field as well as in the in-house portion. FTOs must train according to the Reserve Officers level of training and experience.

#### **FTO Selection & Retention:**

Recognizing that the FTO is a solo-beat officer when not training, and a one-on-one supervisor when training, it is paramount that the FTO is a role model to other officers in their actions and their ability to further the goals, policies and programs of the department.

Desirable characteristics of a Field Training Officer include: an ability to maintain professional relationships with citizens, peers, and supervisors. They must have a positive attitude, excellent communication skills, a desire and ability to teach, demonstrate maturity and integrity in performing their duties, and produce high quality and quantity of work. Additionally, FTOs should be capable of functioning well with minimal supervision, write clear and concise reports based on thorough investigations, demonstrate excellent officer safety techniques, and display good judgment in routine and stressful situations.

FTO applicants are required to be off probation and have at least three years experience as a sworn police officer. Eligible officers must submit an application to the FTO lieutenant when vacancies are announced.

An oral board consisting of three ranking members of the department will interview qualified officers. The ultimate decision on the FTO selection is made by the Chief of Police based on the recommendations of the Field Operations Captain, the ratings of the oral board, a review of the applicant's personnel file, input from the candidate's supervisors and peers, and candidate's willingness to go to Patrol teams that are understaffed by FTO's.

All FTO's will be sent to the POST FTO course, and they will also be given additional training through attendance at specialized training courses. FTO's will also be required to attend update courses as dictated by POST requirements and others as determined by the department. All FTO's will generally serve at least one year before applying for a specialized assignment.

An FTO's continuation in the program is subject to a review by the Chief of Police, who may consider the needs of the program as a factor in retention. Additionally, any adverse ratings in the FTO-specific evaluation may be taken into consideration as well as current utilization as an FTO. This review will typically occur annually or when the needs of the program dictate such a review, and will be conducted by the FTO Lieutenant with the assistance of the FTO Sergeant(s). The FTO Review Evaluation Form will be used to document the review.

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An FTO who transfers into a specialized assignment leaves the program. In the event that an FTO assigned to a traffic position transfers to general patrol duties or vice versa, their continuation as an FTO is also subject to the needs of the program.

There will be a maximum of two full-time paid FTOs assigned to each patrol team. The bid for these positions will occur by department seniority within the Field Operations Division. When an FTO bids for a team that already has two FTOs assigned to it, that FTO has the option of bidding for another team, or remaining on the team as an "as needed" FTO. This means that they will only be paid for the time they are actually training a recruit.

On occasion, an FTO may need to be moved to another team to provide shift specific training. Volunteers should be solicited among full time FTOs before one is ordered to move. If an FTO is ordered to change shifts, the change should be limited to a 3 week period, once every six months. An "as-needed" FTO should be moved only under extraordinary circumstances.

#### **FTO Sergeant Duties:**

The Field Training Sergeants are responsible for the supervision of the FTO program and review of all DOR's. They shall also prepare alternate week evaluations for each recruit. The Sergeants are also responsible for the bi-weekly review of the recruit's training guide to determine if it is up to date and properly filled out.

The FTO Sergeants will also schedule and supervise the 80-hour in-house training program.

#### **FTO Lieutenant Duties:**

The Field Training Lieutenant has the command responsibility for the field training and evaluation program. The Lieutenant maintains all records relating to the recruit's development, which includes the DOR's, weekly summaries, and memoranda on the officer's performance. The Lieutenant is also responsible for keeping the Field Operations Captain informed of the status of all trainees. If the recruit is not performing at the minimum standard of the Department, the Lieutenant will compile all the appropriate information with a recommendation of corrective action.

The FTO Lieutenant will also be the liaison with the regional academy staffs, and stay current on the curriculum presently being taught to recruits. It may also be necessary to see the academy's training records on individual recruits if training problems are encountered during the FTO phase.

#### **Termination:**

If during any phase of the field training program, it is concluded that a trainee officer should be recommended for termination, all evaluation materials will be forwarded to the FTO Lieutenant. This should include recommendations concerning retention or dismissal of the officer. The trainee officer will be advised of the recommendation only after all information has been submitted to the Chief's office through the proper chain of command. The FTO Lieutenant and at least one FTO Sergeant will discuss the termination with the officer. After the termination is

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completed, all the information gathered shall be maintained in the recruit's Personnel file for possible future reference.

Additional information on the FTO program is contained in the Santa Clara Police Department Field Training Manual.