



Division 01 Administration and Organization

Chapter 01 - Policy and Procedure Development, Organization, and Administration

January 2009

POLICY

There shall be a policy and procedure system that governs the administration and operation of the Department.

DEFINITIONS

Directive - administers a program or a course of action that has a limited duration.

Document – For the purposes of this policy, Directives, General Orders, and Fire/EMS Memorandum shall be referred to as documents.

Document Assignment – Task to develop or revise a new or existing General Order or Directive.

Fire/EMS Memorandum - Official Departmental communication for announcements, information, notification, or to provide clarification on the implementation of policy or procedure that is disseminated with a discard date.

General Order – Primary document, issued by authority of the County Fire Chief, that establishes policy, procedure, regulation, standards, guiding principles, programs, or acceptable methods of operation used by the Department.

Policy and Procedure Coordinator – Administrator of this process who provides overall management of the preparation and distribution of Directives, Memorandum, and General Orders.

Project Manager - Manages a document assignment.

PROCEDURES

1. General Provisions

Adherence

Members shall familiarize themselves with, and conform to, applicable policy, procedures, and regulations. Supervisors shall lead, manage, and command subordinates within said guidelines and philosophy.

While intended to be comprehensive, it is not practical to expect that all possible situations will be documented herein. Therefore, all members shall exercise responsible conduct, sound management, common sense, and reasonable judgment—respectively.

Application

General Orders shall supersede any conflicting information except local, State, or Federal regulations.

There are also legislative and regulatory documents that directly affect Fire/EMS Department operations. Some are applicable by virtue of employment or membership, i.e., Subtitle 16 of the Prince George's County Code; others are applicable when involved in certain operations, such as the Maryland Medical Protocols for Emergency Medical Services Providers and certain provisions of Title 29 of the Code of Federal Regulations.



2. Review and Revision of Existing Documents

Review Cycle

A review of all documents shall take place January 1 through May 30, annually. Specific General Orders shall be assigned to each Major and Manager for review. The Policy and Procedure Coordinator shall ensure that pending policies are identified for incorporation into the appropriate General Order during the review cycle.

By June 1, Majors and Managers shall submit documentation to the Policy and Procedure Coordinator, which attests to the review of the General Orders and specifies the necessity for a document's revision, deletion, or if no changes are needed. A recommendation to delete a General Order must be accompanied by concise justification that will support the recommended action.

Revision Process

For each General Order that will be revised, the Major or Manager must designate a Project Manager who will follow the procedures outlined in the Document Assignment Process referenced below. Final drafts must be submitted to the Policy and Procedure Coordinator by August 31.

This policy shall in no way limit the Fire Chief's authority to implement new policies and procedures, or revise existing ones, independent of the standard review process. Moreover, policies that must be revised to maintain compliance with local, State, and/or Federal regulations shall be updated immediately.

Review Process

A review group shall critique all final drafts and provide comments by October 15. Reviewers shall be comprised of personnel representing the following entities:

- Office of the Fire Chief
- Each Command
- Local 1619
- The Fire Commission
- The Volunteer Fire & Rescue Association
- Departmental Attorney

The Project Manager for each final draft shall review the comments submitted by the Review Group, make appropriate revision, and submit the draft to the Policy and Procedure Coordinator by November 1.

The Policy and Procedure Coordinator will finalize all proposed General Order packages and submit the final documents to the Fire Chief for approval by November 15.

New orders will be implemented by January 1, or at the discretion of the Fire Chief.

Exception: New or revised General Orders will normally be submitted for review during the review process unless immediate implementation is necessary as determined by the Fire Chief or his designee.

3. Issuance of New Documents

The Policy and Procedure Coordinator shall be notified when a document is under development.

An assigning Lieutenant Colonel, Major, or Manager shall designate a Project Manager, who shall be responsible for goal and objective identification, overall planning, coordination, resource management, review, and preliminary approval of the final draft.



The Project Manager shall periodically provide the Policy Procedure Coordinator with updates on the progress of the task.

Requests for resources (personnel, administrative, data collection, research material, fiscal, or logistical) shall be made through the Chain-of-Command or to the Policy and Procedure Coordinator, as appropriate.

4. Document Assignment Process

The Project Manager shall ensure that a systematic process is followed and shall document aspects of the assignment that are essential to understanding why the provisions in the document were established or selected.

Typically, the Document Assignment Process may include the following steps:

- Organization of a workgroup, when appropriate.
- Identification of the specific topic to be addressed.
- Review of existing documents related to the topic and integrates by inclusion or reference.
- Conduct research, data collection, and analysis as appropriate.
- Gather input from departmental members as appropriate.
- Consider regulatory guidelines and industry standards and best practices.
- Obtain evaluative feedback and general comment.
- Revise, as deemed appropriate, and draft final document.
- Provide a final draft and project file to the Policy and Procedure Coordinator.

5. General Orders and Directive Format

Each General Order or Directive shall be arranged in a simple outline format, divided into sections as follows:

- Policy Statement
- Definitions – new or unique terms, obscure content, or vocabulary that is significant to the General Order
- Procedures - describes general and specific provisions; when required for clarity, a responsibilities section may be delineated herein
- References – lists authoritative information used to develop the General Order or other documents that are relevant to its implementation.
- Forms/Attachments – a list of forms and/or attachments described in the General Order

Subsections and sub-details shall be formatted in the similitude of this document. The Policy and Procedure Coordinator must approve significant variations to this format.

6. General Table of Contents Organization

General Order shall be categorized into divisions by subject matter. Each document within a division will be assigned a number and referred to as a chapter. Directives will be designated in the same manner in added to the table of contents based on whether it amends an existing document or in a new policy or procedure.

The Policy and Procedure Coordinator shall determine the number of divisions and their titles. An updated table of contents shall be distributed with each new document or update. An index shall be developed and added to the General Orders, when feasible.

7. Distribution and Maintenance



Distribution

A copy of all new or revised General Orders, Directives, or Memorandums shall be submitted to the Policy and Procedure Coordinator prior to departmental distribution. Master documents (hard and electronic) shall be forwarded to the Policy and Procedure Coordinator for maintenance.

A summary of each new document or a synopsis of the revisions shall be provided when new or revised existing documents are distributed, as appropriate. New General Orders, Directives, or Memorandums shall be assessable to all stations and worksites via multimedia formats.

Maintenance

Each station and worksite shall maintain a copy or provide access to the above-referenced documents to promote effective operations and reference.

Each Command, the Policy and Procedure Coordinator, and the Office of the Fire Chief shall maintain supporting references.

Battalion Officers and Volunteer Chiefs shall ensure that field personnel under their command are aware of and review newly distributed documents.

Majors and Managers shall ensure that office personnel under their command are aware of and review newly distributed documents, as appropriate.

8. Suggestions

Recommendations regarding the development, revision, or deletion of a Document may be forwarded to the appropriate Major or Manager, who is responsible for that subject matter.

Suggestions or recommendations for improving this system, or any issue related to a specific Document, may be submitted to Administrative Compliance via County email, at any time.

REFERENCES

N/A

FORMS/ATTACHMENTS

N/A