


<b>POLICY 106</b>	<b>WRITTEN DIRECTIVES AND DEPARTMENTAL COMMUNICATIONS</b>	
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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, 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 completion.

### **C. DEFINITIONS**

1. Accreditation Manager – The member designated by the Chief of Police responsible for maintaining the accreditation of the Department. Unless otherwise designated, the Sergeant of the Staff Inspections Office shall be Accreditation Manager.

2. Action Plans - Actions 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 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 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 precedents over SOPs.
7. Senior Staff – Sworn members of the rank of Major and above and the Executive Officer, CID Captain(s), SID Captain(s), Administrative Support Captain(s), Staff Support Captain(s), Internal Affairs Major and Legal Advisor.
8. 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.
9. 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 maintaining copies of all policies and all SOPs applicable to them 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 CD. The Training Unit shall maintain a file of all Policies and Procedures CD receipts.
3. Department members are responsible for policies they have received and must turn in their up-to-date policy manual or cd upon separation from the Department.
4. 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
5. 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 Staff Inspections Sergeant 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 General Staff. 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, General Staff members shall review the proposal, note his/her concurrence or non-concurrence

and make such comments and or amendments, as he/she deems 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 General Staff members' review comments. The comments will be used or discounted. The Staff Inspections Office will assimilate the comments into a "proposed policy." The Staff Inspections Office 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 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 the Information Systems Network.
- l. The Staff Inspections Office will maintain an electronic and hard copy archive of revised and deleted policies.

6. Policy Review:

- a. Policy review is the method by which every policy is reviewed as needed.
- b. 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.
- c. The Staff Inspections Office will schedule all Department Policies for review.
- d. 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.

- e. The review will be assigned a suspense date of thirty (30) days for return to the Staff Inspections Office.
- f. Changes to the policy will be indicated using the bold/underline and strikeout method (i.e. **New**; ~~delete~~).
- g. The Staff Inspections Office will review the recommended policy amendments to ensure the policy complies with accreditation standards and other Department and City Policies.
- h. Based on the recommendations, the Staff Inspections Sergeant 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 signature when there is no change in procedure or the changes are minor in nature.
- i. Format:
  - (1). "High liability" policies will be printed on goldenrod colored paper. Digital versions of 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).

- (4). Always use at least two subdivisions for a category.
- (5). 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 listed in the policy header.

j. 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). The Staff Inspections Office will have department Policies & Procedures CD's available for those who need replacement copies.
- (5). The Training Unit shall distribute department Policies and Procedures CD's to all new Department members.
- (6). The Staff Inspections Office shall be responsible for responding to all public records requests for Department Policies.

## **F. STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURE (SOP)**

- a. Standard operating procedures are issued by individual units, divisions or bureaus. They apply to individuals assigned to that unit, division or bureau and to those individual 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 his/her 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.
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. The Staff Inspections Office shall provide a concurrence form to be signed by each member in the chain of command.
  - 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 his/her 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.
4. Publication and Distribution:
- a. Upon final approval by the Assistant Chief, the Staff Inspections Office shall distribute the SOP electronically to the affected Division.
  - 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 will be made available via the Information Systems Network.
5. Archiving:
- a. The Staff Inspections Office will maintain an electronic archive of all revised and out of date standard operating procedures.
  - b. Assistant Chiefs shall maintain a hard copy of their bureau's standard operating procedures.
  - c. The Staff Inspections Office shall archive all standard operating procedures electronically.

## **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 the Department Policy Manual stored electronically in the Information Systems Network.
  - 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 and properly worded ready for publication. The Staff Inspections Office will not write or rewrite General Orders.
  - 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. The Chief of Police will return the G.O. to the Staff Inspections Office via e-mail noting his approval or disapproval.
  - e. The Staff Inspections Office will retain the Chief's e-mail as proof that the Chief has approved the G.O., and retain the distribution e-mail to document the distribution.
4. Distribution

- a. The Staff Inspections Office shall produce and distribute General Orders electronically to all outlook users.
  - b. The Assistant Chief of each bureau will determine where General Orders shall be posted in their respective bureau, and shall assign responsibility for printing and posting General Orders for the members of their bureau.
  - c. Designated members in each bureau will print and post hardcopies for all members who do not have access to electronic copies.
5. Members are not required to sign for General Orders but are responsible for reading and complying with General Orders.
  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 his designee.

#### **H. TRAINING ORDERS**

1. Training Orders shall be produced by the Training Unit under the authority of the Chief of Police.
2. The Training Unit shall develop a standard format for Training Orders.
3. Training Orders shall be issued by the Training Unit directing members to attend scheduled training.
4. Training Orders shall be issued to the supervisor of the affected member either electronically or by hard copy.
5. Supervisors are responsible for notifying members of Training Orders.
6. Once notified, members are responsible for attendance at all scheduled training.

#### **I. 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 Administrative Support Division shall produce and distribute Information Bulletins electronically to all outlook users.
  - b. The Assistant Chief of each bureau will determine where Information Bulletins shall be posted in their respective bureau and shall assign responsibility for printing and posting Information Bulletins for the members of their bureau.
  - c. Designated members in each bureau will print and post hardcopies for all members who do not have access to electronic copies.
  - d. Information Bulletins shall be printed on white paper.
  - e. The Administrative Support Division shall maintain the master file of Information Bulletins.

**J. MEMORANDUM**

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 specially 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

**K. ACTION PLAN**

1. Action plans are 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.

**L. LEGAL BULLETIN**

1. Legal Bulletins are issued by the Department's Legal Advisor and are meant to provide legislative updates, case law or clarification of Florida State Statute or municipal ordinances.
2. The format of the Legal Bulletin will be at the discretion of the Legal Advisor.

3. A Legal Bulletin shall have a tracking number assigned and shall be disseminated electronically by the Legal Advisor's Office. The Legal Advisor's Office shall maintain a master file and index of all disseminated Legal Bulletins.
4. Legal Bulletins shall be authored by the Legal Advisor's Office. The Legal Advisor's Office shall keep a hard copy file of all Legal Bulletins.

#### **M. 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, Staff Inspections Office and through the Department's Information Systems network.

#### **N. 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 designated 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. The email accounts can be accessed from their respective desk computers, their laptop computers, or from one of the terminals located in the patrol write-up room, booking facility or outside training. All exceptions must be approved by the Chief of Police or his designee.
  - c. 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.
  - d. 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 provided sender-to-receiver confidentiality, users of the system are advised that once in the system ALL electronic mail is subject to public access including messages sent via the CAD, i.e. car to car.

- e. Employees' electronic mail signatures shall be limited to the employee's name, assignment and contact information. Personal messages, slogans, mottos, etc. are not permitted.
- f. 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.
- g. All Lieutenants and above are required to receive administrative pages via either cell phone or alpha pager. The requirement for Sergeants and other employees to receive administrative pages 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.