

# COLUMBUS POLICE DEPARTMENT



## General Order 12: Direction

CALEA Standards: 12.1.1  
12.1.2  
12.1.3  
12.2.1  
12.2.2  
Replaces: General Order 12 effective December 12, 2017  
Effective date: April 6, 2021

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## 12.1 Direction

### 12.1.1 CEO Authority and Responsibility

The Chief of Police shall have the authority and responsibility for the management, direction, and control of the operations and administration of the agency.

### 12.1.2 Command Protocol

- A. In the event the Chief of Police is not available or able to personally carry out his or her duties, he or she may delegate authority on a temporary basis. If the absence is anticipated and for an extended period, the Chief of Police shall designate, in writing, the “acting” authority. Delegation of authority should be done in the following order and manner:
1. The Deputy Chief of Police will be acting as Chief of Police by either written or verbal order of the Chief of Police.
  2. In the absence of the Chief of Police and Deputy Chief of Police, a Captain will assume command of the police department by either written or verbal order of the Chief of Police or the Deputy Chief of Police if he/she is the acting authority. Captains will assume command based on seniority.
- B. In exceptional situations where the Chief, Deputy Chief and the Captains are not available or unable to personally carry out the duties of the Chief of Police, the Chief of Police will delegate authority to command at his/her discretion. However, command of the department shall not be held by anyone under the permanent rank of Lieutenant.
- C. Any situation that may occur which involves the operation of two or more divisions of the department, the chain of command shall be as follows:
1. The senior ranking officer that is present shall be in charge pending the arrival of a higher-ranking officer, or an officer assigned to take charge of the situation.
  2. The senior ranking officer may delegate his or her in charge status to an officer of lesser rank if it is deemed appropriate and necessary by the senior ranking officer.
  3. If an operation can be anticipated and planned in advance and involves two or more department divisions, the division commanders involved or their designee(s) shall inform all participants of any special chain of command protocol that shall be applicable to that operation.

- D. For normal day-to-day operations, the command protocol will be as outlined in General Order 11.1.1. All employees are to follow the chain of command in order for communication to flow in an orderly and efficient manner. Employees are to report directly to their immediate supervisor. If a solution is not found at this step, the employee may take concerns, grievances, etc. to their immediate supervisor's immediate superior. The employee may continue through the chain of command but must avoid circumventing any level of the chain. Failure to abide by the chain of command may result in discipline.
1. In the event of the absence of supervisor, the employee will report to a supervisor in their chain of command, who may be of equal rank or higher rank to their immediate supervisor, or to the employee who assumed the responsibilities of the absent supervisor.

### 12.1.3 Obey Lawful Orders

- A. All employees of the department shall be required to obey any lawful order issued by a superior, including any lawful order relayed from a superior by an employee of the same or lesser rank.
1. In general, all department communications are expected to flow up and down the chain of command. In the event of the absence or unavailability of a person in a particular rank due to days off, vacation, etc., that rank may be skipped to the next higher or lower rank to allow for functional operation of the department.
    - a. Supervisors shall have clear authority to obtain information and/or resolve situations in an efficient and expedient manner. It is understood this may require direct communication with subordinates outside the flow of their chain of command.
    - b. The chain of command requirements are not intended to prevent direct communication between supervisory officers and subordinates, at any level, when warranted by the urgency of the situation.
  2. In the event of the absence or temporary unavailability of a ranking officer in a situation requiring supervision, the officer with the highest seniority will assume command until relieved by a superior officer.
- B. Any employee who receives an order from a superior that conflicts with an order that was previously given by the same or different superior shall respectfully make the conflict known to the superior giving the order. If the superior giving his/her order does not change the order, the employee shall obey the most recent order by the last superior, and disregard the original order.

- C. Any employee who receives an unlawful order from a superior shall respectfully make this known to the superior giving the order. If the superior giving the order does not change his/her order, the employee shall follow the grievance procedure set forth in General Order 22.4.1, beginning with an attempt to informally resolve the issue through the chain of command.

## **12.2 Written Directives**

### **12.2.1 Written Directive System**

#### **A. Agency mission statement and values:**

1. Mission statement: To protect and serve.
2. Values:
  - a. We have:
    - i. Integrity – We are honest and have strong moral principles
    - ii. Duty – We have obligations beyond our moral and legal responsibilities
    - iii. Honor – We are fair and uphold the responsibilities of the position in which we are entrusted
  - b. We are:
    - i. Loyal – We are faithful to and fulfill our commitments, obligations and duties
    - ii. Responsible – We are accountable for that which is in our power, control, and management
    - iii. Service Oriented – We are helpful
  - c. We do all this with:
    - i. Excellence – We surpass ordinary standards
    - ii. Respect – We treat all people with high regard
    - iii. Equality – We treat all people the same

- B. The Chief of Police shall have the authority to issue, modify, repeal, and approve any department written directive, except that the Board of Public Works and Safety must also approve any General Order that is issued or modified before it takes effect. If the Chief of Police changes, a bridging document should be utilized, soon after the leadership change, that indicates all policies and directives of the organization remain in effect until otherwise amended.
- C. The following members of the department are authorized to issue, modify, and approve the following formal written directives:
1. General Orders - The Chief of Police and Board of Captains with approval by the Board of Public Works and Safety.
  2. Special Orders - The Chief of Police and Board of Captains.
  3. Standard Operating Procedures – The Chief of Police, Deputy Chief of Police, or a Captain.
- D. Employees and the general public have a right to know where the department stands on a wide variety of issues. However, it is not possible to cover every conceivable situation that could occur in the day-to-day operations of the department. Thus, the department’s written directive system is not intended to be all-inclusive.
1. The department’s system includes the following formal written directives:
    - a. General Orders – contain a broad range of rules, policies and procedures for the effective execution of police services for the City of Columbus;
    - b. Special Orders – contain a narrow or specific range of rules, policies and procedures for the execution of police services for the City of Columbus; and
    - c. Standard Operating Procedures – contain information that is narrowly tailored to a specific assignment or activity, or they establish needed procedures not otherwise encompassed by General or Special Orders.
  2. The level of authority from highest to lowest are: 1) General Orders, 2) Special Orders, and 3) Standard Operating Procedures.
    - a. A lower level written directive may not contradict a higher-level written directive.

- b. The City of Columbus Personnel Policies do not take precedence over the department's written directive system, but are enforceable on all employees if a situation arises that is not covered by the department's written directive system.
  3. Each formal written directive will have a number, a topic and/or title, an effective date, and a listing of the date it was last updated.
- E. Procedures for indexing, purging and revising directives:
  1. The department should have an established system that permits rapid access to formal written directives.
  2. If a written directive is no longer valid or otherwise repealed, it should be purged from the department's formal written directive system.
  3. If a formal written directive is revised or otherwise modified, the prior version should be purged from the departments' formal written directive system, and replaced by the new version.
  4. Before any formal written directive can be revised or repealed, the revision or abolishment of the formal written directive must be approved by an authorized person as set forth in General Order 12.2.1(C).
- F. The Columbus Police Department has agency policies, which will systematically be superseded by new or revised agency policies, which will take the form of General Orders, Special Orders and Standard Operating Procedures.
- G. The Columbus Police Department has rules and regulations, which will systematically be superseded by new or revised rules and regulations, which will take the form of General Orders, Special Orders, or Standard Operating Procedures.
- H. It shall be the responsibility of every employee of the department to carry out the agency activities described throughout all formal written directives. All employees are to keep themselves informed as to the activities of the department through special notices, staff meeting minutes and roll call announcements.
- I. Procedures for review of proposed or revised formal written directives:
  1. Unless otherwise stated, all new and revised formal written directives become applicable on the effective date as indicated on the document. Any directive that is not self-canceling will remain in force until rescinded or superseded.
  2. Prior to the official issuance of any formal written directive, the Chief of Police or his/her designee may issue a draft to employees for review and input.

3. Formal written directives may be issued for distribution only to those persons or units affected, or for department-wide distribution if necessary.
4. Every formal written directive should be reviewed regularly to determine if changes should be made because of changed circumstances or occurrences during the previous year.

#### 12.2.2 Dissemination and Storage

- A. All existing, new, or newly revised formal written directives shall be disseminated to all affected employees. The department will make all formal written directives available to employees in the following manners:
  1. Hard-copy forms maintained in the following locations:
    - a. Sergeant's conference room;
    - b. Accreditation Manager's Office; and
    - c. Chief's Office.
  2. Employees can access formal written directives electronically through PowerDMS.
  3. Employees may on their own initiative copy one of the accessible hard copies or print out the electronic formal written directives, and maintain their own personal hard copy of the formal written directives. Employees who chose to do this will be responsible for updating and maintaining their personal hard copy.
  4. All new or newly revised formal written directives will be disseminated to each affected employee through PowerDMS.
- B. All formal written directives will be stored in compliance with General Order 12.2.2(A).
- C. Each employee will be required to acknowledge their receipt and review of formal written directives disseminated in accordance with General Order 12.2.2(A)(4) in PowerDMS.

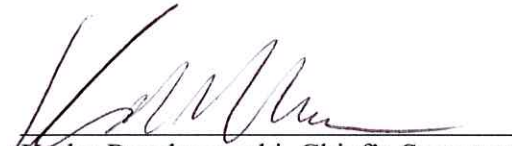
Acceptance by Columbus Police Department Captain's Board:

Date: 4-6-2021

  
Michael Richardson, Chief

Attest:

  
Steve Norman, Deputy Chief


  
Kathy Ransomanski, Chief's Secretary

  
Jay Frederick, Administrative Captain


  
Toby Combest, Uniform Captain


Acceptance by Columbus Board of Public Works and Safety:

Date: April 6, 2021

  
Jim Lienhoop, Mayor

Attest:

  
Mary Ferdon, Member

  
Luann Welmer, Clerk-Treasurer

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John Pickett, Member

**Under Governor Holcomb's Executive Order No. 20-04 the BOW held a public meeting on April 6, 2021. This document was approved electronically as reflected in the minutes.**

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Jim Strietelmeier, Member

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Brenda Sullivan, Member