

**GENERAL ORDER**

March 2023

Immediately

**II-01**

Distribution: All Employees

**Subject: WRITTEN DIRECTIVES SYSTEM**

Index as:	Criminal Law Updates	Memoranda
	Forms Control	SOP
	General Orders	Standard Operating Procedures (SOP)
	Instructional Order	Subject Matter Expert
	Legal Update	Written Directive System
	Legislative Summaries	

Accreditation Standards: 11.4.2, 12.2.1, 12.2.2

Cross Reference: G.O. I-01, Code of Ethics

G.O. I-02, Mission Values and Goals

Rules and Regulations of the Personnel Management System, Section 5-1

Replaces: G.O. II-01, Written Orders and Directives (April 29, 2024)

This Order consists of the following sections:

- I. Purpose
- II. Definitions
- III. Preparation of New and Revised Written Directives
- IV. Indexing, Numbering and Formatting
- V. Maintenance, Distribution, Acknowledgement and Receipt of Written Directives
- VI. Documented Annual Review
- VII. Forms

**I. PURPOSE**

- A. To ensure that the highest quality of police service is provided to the community, a Written Directive System has been prepared for the St. Petersburg Police Department to:

1. Establish clear, concise policies and procedures so employees and the public have a realistic understanding of the duties, responsibilities, and ethical standards by which this agency operates.
2. Facilitate the operations of the Department by standardizing policies and procedures.

- B. The Written Directive System consists of:

1. General Orders/Instructional Orders,
2. Interim Changes,
3. Standard Operating Procedures, and
4. Legal Updates

- C. Due to frequent changes in the law, review and modernization of procedures and needs of the community, the *Written Directive System* requires constant review and revision. Therefore, each employee is charged with the responsibility to present their ideas for revisions to the Written Directive System.
- D. The Written Directive System is for internal use only and is not intended to increase an officer's civil or criminal liability in any way.
- E. Given the nature of police work, situations will arise that are not addressed by the Written Directive System. In those instances, employees should rely on the principles outlined by G.O. I-01, Code of Ethics, G.O. I-02, Mission Values and Goals, and the City of St. Petersburg *Rules and Regulations of the Personnel Management System*, always remembering that this agency exists solely for the purpose of serving the community.

## II. DEFINITIONS

- A. Criminal Law Updates – Are received from the State Attorney's Office (SAO) on a biannual basis and distributed via the Legal Division.
- B. General Orders – Issued to announce adoption or revision of Department policy and to institute permanent programs or procedures that have Department-wide impact for the indefinite future. General Orders are binding and remain in force until revised or rescinded.
- C. Instructional Order – A General Order that relates procedures to follow in order to complete specific tasks and which affect more than one Bureau.
- D. Interim Change – A revision to an existing General Order/Standard Operating Procedure that is brought about by a change in a law, procedure, or Union agreement. An Interim Change is issued under a Chief's, or designee, memoranda.
- E. Legal Update – Prepared by the Legal Advisor, or designee, and provide direction and/or information on statutes, ordinances, and other legal topics.
- F. Legislative Summaries – Prepared annually by the Office of General Counsel, Florida Department of Law Enforcement and distributed via the Legal Division.
- G. Memoranda – May be created by any employee to provide information or to make a specific request. Memoranda issued by supervisory personnel to provide guidance to employees will not deviate from, nor conflict with, established policies or procedures. Memoranda issued to "All Personnel" are stored on CARS in the *General Orders and SOPs* folder.
- H. Originator – Any person(s) responsible for the development or revision of a Departmental policy; usually considered a subject matter expert.
- I. Periodic – Conducted or occurring at least every three (3) years.
- J. Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) – A written directive issued by the person in charge to describe procedures, duties, or responsibilities of personnel within their respective Bureau, Division, Section or Unit.

### III. PREPARATION OF NEW AND REVISED WRITTEN DIRECTIVES

#### A. General Orders

1. Proposals for new and/or substantive revisions to General Orders will be submitted to the Assistant Chief through the Chain of Command.  
Upon determination that there is a need for the proposal to move forward, the Professional Compliance Unit will be notified, and the completion of a draft will be assigned to an originator. The originator will:
  - a. Prepare a written draft of the policy, considering its effect upon operations of the various units of the Department;
  - b. Involve all levels of personnel at the conceptual phase when time and subject matter permit;
  - c. When necessary, recommend an implementation strategy; and
  - d. Forward drafts to the Supervisor, Professional Compliance Unit
2. Employees who identify discrepancies or inconsistencies in policy that do not alter current Department practices should notify the Supervisor, Professional Compliance Unit.
3. The Supervisor, Professional Compliance Unit, will
  - a. Ensure drafts are reviewed by subject matter experts and Department stakeholders.
  - b. Process the reviewed policy with recommendations via the Chain of Command to the bureau Assistant Chiefs.
  - c. Forward the reviewed policy to the Chief of Police for final review and publication.
4. All General Orders will be issued under the signature of the Chief of Police, or designee.
5. Policy changes that require immediate notice will be distributed via an Interim Change Memoranda issued by the Chief of Police referencing the affected policy.

#### B. Legal

1. Legal Updates are prepared by the Legal Advisor, or designee, to provide legal information to all personnel. Legal Updates are:
  - a. Issued in memorandum format (See SPPD Department Memorandum).
  - b. Maintained as part of the Written Directives System until obsolete.
2. The Legal Division will distribute Criminal Law Updates and Legislative Summaries when available.

#### C. Standard Operating Procedures (SOP)

1. The bureaus, divisions, and subordinate units may develop and issue Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) to their subordinates as deemed necessary by the respective commanders.
2. SOPs will be forwarded to the Professional Compliance Unit prior to publication to:
  - a. Identify any applicable accreditation standards, and
  - b. Ensure that there is not a conflict with any Order, policy, procedure, or accreditation standard. SOPs will not conflict with, be redundant of, nor supersede any Order, policy or procedure issued by a higher authority.
3. All SOPs will be processed through the Chief of Police or applicable bureau Assistant Chief.
4. All SOPs will be issued under the signature of the bureau Assistant Chief, or designee, or Commander/Manager.
5. The final version of all SOPs will be electronically forwarded to the Professional Compliance Unit.
6. Policy changes that require immediate notice will be distributed via an Interim Change Memoranda issued by the respective commander referencing the affected policy. The memorandum will replace the affected SOP, until the SOP is revised.

7. Bureau Assistant Chiefs, Commanders/Managers, or **their** designee, will initiate and manage a documented periodic review of their area's Standard Operating Procedures.

#### IV. INDEXING, NUMBERING AND FORMATTING

##### A. Indexing and Numbering

1. General Orders
  - a. Responsibility for numbering and indexing the General Orders rests with the Supervisor, Professional Compliance Unit.
  - b. General Orders are numbered consecutively with the prefix of Roman numerals for chapters as follows:
    - I. Philosophy of Policing
    - II. Administrative General Orders
    - III. Operational General Orders
    - IV. Rules of Conduct
    - V. Instructional General Orders
  - c. Instructional General Orders (Chapter V) are divided into seven (7) sections, indexed as:
    - V.1 Criminal Law
    - V.2 Criminal Evidence and Court Procedures
    - V.3 Investigative Procedures
    - V.4 Firearms
    - V.5 Miscellaneous Police Procedures
    - V.6 Command and Supervisory Procedures
    - V.7 Report Writing
2. Legal Updates – Numbered consecutively with the prefix of the year followed by Legal Update and the subject (e.g., 2025-001 Legal Update – Subject).
3. Standard Operating Procedures – All SOPs will be numbered consecutively with the prefix of Roman numerals for chapters.
4. Memoranda
  - a. All Memoranda are issued using the approved memo format (See SPPD Department Memorandum).
  - b. Memoranda issued to provide information, guidance or orders concerning a particular subject or event will be:
    - 1) Numbered consecutively with the prefix of the year of issue followed by the Memorandum number, (e.g., 2025-001, 2025-002); this number will be placed in the header.
    - 2) Issued and maintained electronically and made available on the Department's J drive and the electronic read-off system (CARS). Exceptions to this policy are determined by the Chief of Police, or designee.

##### B. FORMATTING

1. Template – All new and/or revised General and Instructional Orders (Orders) and Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) will:
  - a. Be written using Microsoft Word.
  - b. Have a one-column header followed by one-column of text which forms the body of the policy.
  - c. Use the following applicable template:
    - 1) General and Instructional Orders: (General Order Template)
    - 2) Standard Operating Procedures: (SOP Template)
2. Numbering – The issue date (month and year) is placed in the header which represents the original date of issuance. This date does not change unless there is a major revision to the Directive. The issue date (month/day/year) is also placed in the right corner of the footer.
  - a. When an Order/SOP is revised or amended, it will retain the original number (month and year). The date of revision (month/day/year) will be included in the footer of the revised Order/SOP. Revisions and additions will be highlighted in grey.

- b. When an Order/SOP is subject to a full review, it will be given a new "Issued Date" (month and year in the header and month/day/year in the footer). Any changes made will not be highlighted in the body of the Order/SOP.

- 3. Accreditation Standards – All Orders/SOPs will display applicable accreditation standards.
- 4. References – When applicable, all references to other related published documents will be included.
- 5. Replaces – All Orders and SOPs will list all published documents that are being replaced by the issuance of the new/revised Order/SOP.

## V. MAINTENANCE, DISTRIBUTION, ACKNOWLEDGEMENT AND RECEIPT OF WRITTEN DIRECTIVES

### A. Maintenance

- 1. The Professional Compliance Unit will retain an electronic copy of the current General Orders and Standard Operating Procedures on the Department's J drive and the electronic read-off system (CARS). Exceptions to this policy are determined by the Chief of Police, or designee.
- 2. Legal Division will maintain an electronic copy of current Legal Updates.

### B. Distribution

- 1. Orders and Standard Operating Procedures
  - a. A distribution notice for all new and/or revised Orders and Standard Operating Procedures will be issued electronically via the Department's email system.
  - b. Orders and Standard Operating Procedures are made available on the Department's J drive and CARS. Exceptions to this policy are determined by the Chief of Police, or designee.
  - c. General Orders available to the public are on the Department's website.
- 2. Legal Updates
  - a. Legal Updates will be issued electronically by the Legal Advisor, or designee, via the Department's email system.
  - b. The Legal Division will place an electronic copy of the Update on the Department's J drive and CARS.
- 3. New Employees – During New Employee Orientation, the employee is directed to the General Orders, Legal Updates, and applicable SOPs.

### C. Acknowledgement and Receipt

- 1. Upon the distribution of any new or revised Written Directives, every employee will promptly acknowledge receipt in CARS with their payroll number (electronic signature) within the timeframe detailed in the distribution notice.
  - a. This electronic signature acknowledges receipt and understanding of all new and/or revised General Orders, Legal Updates and applicable SOPs.
  - b. All employees are held responsible for knowledge of and compliance with the contents of General Orders, Legal Updates and the SOPs applicable to their assignment.
- 3. The Professional Compliance Unit will maintain the electronic acknowledgement.
- 4. During new employee orientation, the employee will acknowledge receipt on the New Hire Checklist.
- 5. Command and supervisory personnel:
  - a. Are accountable for implementation and compliance with new/revised policies by those under their command;
  - b. Will provide training as needed.

## VI. ARCHIVED WRITTEN DIRECTIVES

Archived Written Directives will be maintained, at a minimum, in accordance with records retention law requirements.

1. Archived General Orders and Standard Operating Procedures will be maintained by the Professional Compliance Unit.
2. Archived Legal Updates will be maintained by the Legal Division.

## VII. FORMS

### A. Responsibility

1. The Professional Compliance Unit will manage the development and control of both paper and electronic forms. The inclusion of forms into RMS does not preclude the form from being included in the form control process.
2. The Professional Compliance Unit will maintain a central registry of forms used throughout the Department to avoid duplication and coordinate the use of forms among probable users.
3. The resupply of forms is the responsibility of the various units that utilize them.

### B. Development and Modification

1. The Department units, with appropriate assistance from the Professional Compliance Unit, are responsible for developing drafts of proposed forms and any revisions to existing forms.
2. All newly developed or revised forms will be reviewed by the Professional Compliance Unit to minimize redundancy and ensure consistency in format.
3. The Departmental unit, with approval from their Chain of Command, is responsible for the design and preparation of printing proofs for the initial print run.

### C. Approval and Review

1. All bureaus and subordinate units will electronically submit a copy of any form, either in use or proposed, to the Professional Compliance Unit for approval and assignment of a control number. Excluded from this requirement are forms from other agencies, correspondence, worksheets, checklists or other forms used solely within the unit.
2. After review and processing by the Professional Compliance Unit, forms will be sent to the Assistant Chief(s) of the affected bureau(s), for review and approval prior to use.
3. The Professional Compliance Unit will review all forms on an annual basis to determine if the forms should be discontinued, revised or consolidated with another form. Unit supervisors are responsible for monitoring the use of forms in their respective units.

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Anthony Holloway  
Chief of Police