

Chapter 1

POLICE ROLE AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Standards in this chapter relate to the basic role and authority of police departments.

When a department defines its role, two broad purposes are served. First, officers are made aware of the actions and attitudes expected of them and can therefore act without hesitation in consonance with departmental policy. Second, members of the public are provided with a general standard by which they can measure the performance of the department. Written policy defining the functional role should set forth the department's purpose or mission, goals, and basic programs and priorities; the policy statement should also specify that the department intends to be responsive to, and protect the constitutional rights of the community.

Police Role

A written directive requires the formulation, annual updating, and distribution to all personnel of written goals and objectives for the department and for each organizational component within the department.

Comments: Establishing, and routinely updating, goals and objectives of the department and each component helps to ensure direction and unity of purpose and serves as a basis for measuring progress. (M M M)

A written directive establishes procedures for obtaining input from all personnel levels within the department in the development of department goals and objectives.

Comments: Obtaining the input of personnel has great value in improving the relevancy and coverage of goals and objectives; further, it enables employees to contribute to the management and operation of the department. (M M M)

A written directive requires an annual submission to the department's Chief of Police by each organizational component of a written evaluation stating the progress made toward the attainment of goals and objectives.

Comments: The intent of this standard is to ensure that the department's Chief of Police is informed, on a regular basis, of the progress toward achieving established goals and objectives. (M M M)

1.1.4 A written directive describes the department's conflict of interest guidelines.

Comments: The intent of this standard is to require each department to address conflict of interest issues, off duty, extra duty employment, and such activities. (M M M)

Limits of Authority

A written directive defines the legally mandated authority vested in sworn police officers, special constables, auxiliary constables and commissionaires.

Comments: The written directive should define the scope and limits of law enforcement authority as it pertains to the enforcement of laws and statutes. (M M M)

1.3 Use of Force

A written directive states personnel will use only the force necessary to effect lawful objectives.

Comments: Justification for the use of force is contained in the Criminal Code of Canada. (M M M)

1.3.2 A written directive states that an officer may use force that is intended or is likely to cause death or grievous bodily harm only when it is necessary for the purpose of preserving the officer or any other person from death or grievous bodily harm.

Comments: The intent of the standard is to restrict use of such force to the protection of life. (M M M)

1.3.3 A written directive governs the discharge of "warning" shots.

Comments: Warning shots pose a danger to officers and citizens. (M M M)

1.3.4 A written directive governs the carrying of issued firearms and ammunition while off duty.

Comments: The policy should specify the circumstances under which an officer may carry issued firearms and ammunition while off duty. (M M M)

1.3.5 A written directive governs the use of weapons issued by the department.

Comments: In addition to firearms, officers usually have other weapons at their disposal. The intent of this standard is to ensure proper use of such weapons. (M M M)

1.3.6 A written directive requires that a written report be submitted whenever an officer discharges an issued firearm, other than in training or for recreational purposes.

Comments: The intent of this standard is to ensure that officers who accidentally or intentionally discharge a weapon submit a written report of the incident. (M M M)

A written directive requires that only officers demonstrating proficiency in the use of authorized firearms be allowed to carry and use such weapons.

Comments: The intent of this standard is to cover the carrying and use of any firearm including shotguns, automatic rifles, handguns and other weapons, such as batons, mace and other such items. (M M M)

1.3.8 A written directive requires each officer to qualify at least every two years with any firearm that the officer is authorized to use.

Comments: The written directive should describe the qualifications requested. (M M M)

A written directive requires that only issued weapons and ammunition meeting authorized specifications be used in the performance of duty.

Comments: Control should be maintained for reasons of safety and civil liability. The standards outlined in the Regulations of the Police Act shall apply. (M M M)

1.3.10 A written directive requires a written report be submitted whenever an officer:

- o takes an action that results in (or is alleged to have resulted in) injury or death of another person; and/or**
- o applies force through the use of nonlethal weapons.**

Comments: The standard is intended to require a written record of the circumstances surrounding injury or death that results from, or is alleged to have resulted from, actions by officers. The report should address use of physical force, use of lethal and nonlethal weapons, or any other action resulting in injury or death, including traffic accidents. The standard is not intended to document the display of weapons by officers. (M M M)

1.3.11 The department has a procedure for reviewing incidents in which there is application of force through the use of a weapon by department personnel.

Comments: The standard provides for latitude in categorizing cases to be reviewed and should include the distribution procedure of all reports as a result of the review. (M M M)

1.3.12 A written directive requires the removal of any officer from line-duty assignment, pending administrative review, whose use of force results in a death.

Comments: The purpose of this standard is twofold: (1) to protect the community's interest when officers may have exceeded the scope of their authority in the use of deadly force and (2) to shield officers who have not exceeded the scope of their authority from possible confrontations with the community. (M M M)