

# City of Hartford Police Department

## Field Training Program

### **PURPOSE AND SCOPE**

This policy provides guidelines for field training that ensure standardized training and evaluation; facilitate the transition from the academic setting to the actual performance of general law enforcement duties; and introduce the policies, procedures and operations of the Police Department. The policy addresses the administration of field training and the selection, supervision, training and responsibilities of the Field Training Officer (FTO).

### **POLICY**

It is the policy of the Hartford Police Department that all newly hired or appointed officers will participate in field training that is staffed by members of the police department and supervised by trained and qualified FTOs.

### **FIELD TRAINING**

The Department has minimum standards for field training, which are of sufficient duration to prepare officers for law enforcement duties. The field training is designed to prepare officers for a patrol assignment and ensure they acquire the skills needed to operate in a safe, productive and professional manner, in accordance with the general law enforcement duties of this department. Field training includes procedures for:

- (a) Issuance of training materials to each officer at the beginning of his/her field training.
- (b) Daily, weekly and monthly evaluation and documentation of the officer's performance.
- (c) A multiphase structure that includes:
  - 1. A formal evaluation progress report completed by the FTOs involved with the officer and submitted to the Lieutenant and/or Chief.
  - 2. Assignment of the officer to a variety of shifts.
  - 3. Assignment of the officer to a rotation of FTOs in order to provide for an objective evaluation of their performance, when staffing allows.
- (d) The officer's confidential evaluation of their assigned FTOs and the field training process.
- (e) Retention of all field training documentation in the officer's training file including:
  - 1. All performance evaluations.
  - 2. Documentation that the officer has successfully completed field training.

### **FIELD TRAINING PROCESS**

The field training program shall be coordinated and divided into four training and/or evaluation "steps", with at least three FTOs, when available, while assigned to various patrol shifts. Each of these steps

represents time spent on different tasks and learning experiences. In this manner, the officer is exposed to the multiple responsibilities required of a police officer. The FT process shall have a minimum of four weeks and a standard of four months of field training depending on the officer's experience.

Prior to beginning step one will be an administrative week, consisting of five days (day shift), of administrative processing and tours. Following the administrative week, the four-week program begins as follows:

**Step One:** Designed to last fourteen training days, with a minimum of twelve evaluation days. The FTO will provide structured training and verbally review the formal Daily Observation Report (DOR). The DOR is designed to ensure the officer is receiving specific feedback concerning their on-the-job performance. The officer should be performing 25% of the workload by the end of this step.

**Step Two:** Designed to last fourteen training days, with a minimum of twelve evaluation days. The officer will be assigned to a new FTO for the duration of this step unless manpower dictates. The FTO will continue the officer's Training Lesson Plan instructional responsibilities, along with formal performance feedback utilizing the DOR. The officer should be performing 50% of the workload by the end of this step.

**Step Three:** Designed to last fourteen training days, with a minimum of twelve evaluation days. The officer will again be assigned to a new FTO unless manpower dictates. The FTO will complete the Training Lesson Plan review areas previously covered on a time-available basis. Formal performance feedback utilizing the DOR will continue. The officer should be performing 75% of the workload by the end of this step.

**Step Four:** Designed to last a minimum of seven days, each of which are evaluation only. The FTO assigned to this step will be the same FTO from Step One, availability permitting. This step comprises the "Shadow Period", during which time the FTO shall accompany the officer in the patrol vehicle while dressed in non-uniform clothes. The purpose of the Shadow Period is to afford the officer the opportunity to provide patrol service in a solo fashion; the officer will perform all the duties and responsibilities required to handle a call for service or other activity without the FTO's assistance. During Step Four, the FTO is responsible for thoroughly evaluating the officer's performance in order to provide the department with a report of the officer's readiness and capability to provide solo patrol services in a courteous, safe, effective, and efficient manner. The FTO will not intervene or assist the officer unless there is a direct threat to the officer's safety, the public's safety, or if the quality of the police service delivery would be compromised. The officer should be performing 100% of the workload during this step.

#### **EXTENSION OF TRAINING - RECYCLE**

The FTO has the latitude to recommend an extension of the training period beyond the minimum number of scheduled days in each training and evaluation step. This extension may be granted when problems are identified which would hinder the officer's performance or if the officer is behind schedule to the point that they could not be expected to catch up under normal circumstances. The extension of training or "recycle" allows the department to work with the officer on specific problems. No stigma is attached to an officer who receives a recycle period. The extension of training should be viewed as a

positive decision to assist the officer to get back on track. The recycle will be presented by the FTO and approved by the Chief. This decision will be documented and placed into the officer's training file.

### **ACCELERATION OF TRAINING PROGRAM**

Depending on the officer's previous experience and the ability to master the qualities and abilities necessary to be placed on solo patrol, it is possible the officer may be accelerated through one or more steps. In order to be accelerated to the next step, the officer must have all of the lesson plans for the step completed. The decision to accelerate will be made by the Chief of Police. The officer will still have a minimum of 4 weeks of field training.

### **EVALUATION GUIDELINES FOR FIELD TRAINING OFFICERS**

The Hartford Police Department FTOs are trained in and utilize the DeWolf model of field training and evaluation. Using this model, the officer's performance will be evaluated using thirty-one distinct performance categories to assess quality of work. Each of the standard evaluation guidelines behaviorally describe the various expectations for task accomplishment by defining the criteria for superior, acceptable, and unacceptable performance levels. The total of the officer's shift performance in an evaluation area is translated into a numerical rating between one and seven; one being the lowest score and seven being the highest score. The numerical rating of four indicates the officer's shift performance in that area is the same as could be expected from a minimally acceptable field officer employee. The exact numerical rating must be determined by conformity with the standardized evaluation guidelines and their behaviorally anchored rating scales. The FTO will utilize the following thirty-one criteria to formally record and report on the officer's performance:

(a) Performance Tasks:

1. Driving Skill: Stress Conditions
2. Driving Skill: Non-Stress Conditions
3. Orientation Skill: Stress Conditions
4. Orientation Skill: Non-Stress Conditions
5. Field Performance: Stress Conditions
6. Field Performance: Non-Stress Conditions
7. Officer Safety: General
8. Officer Safety: With Suspicious Persons/Arrestees
9. Situation Management: Verbal Skills
10. Situation Management: Physical Skills
11. Report Writing: Form Selection/Organization/Details
12. Report Writing: Grammar/Spelling/Neatness
13. Report Writing: Appropriate Time Usage

14. Computer Skills
15. Self-Initiated Field Activity
16. Problem Solving/Decision Making
17. Investigative Skills
18. Traffic Crash Investigation Skills
19. Radio: Use of Codes and Procedure
20. Radio: Listens/Comprehends Transmissions
21. Radio: Articulation of Transmissions

(b) Knowledge:

1. Department Policies/Procedures
2. State Criminal Statutes/Local Ordinances
3. Laws of Arrest/Search and Seizure/Criminal Procedure
4. Motor Vehicle Laws and Ordinances
5. Use of Reference Materials and Resources

(c) Attitude/Relationships/Appearance:

1. Attitude toward Police Work
2. Acceptance of Feedback: Verbal/Behavioral
3. Relationships with Citizens
4. Relationships with Department Members

(d) Appearance

1. General Appearance

Areas and tasks not observed during the shift will be recorded as Not Observed. When instruction has been provided but the officer is still unable to satisfactorily perform and/or demonstrate or explain the knowledge or skill area, a Not Responding to Training (NRT) will be noted. An NRT is an indication that a serious performance deficiency exists and must be addressed by the officer and FTO. FTOs will record the total amount of in field training instruction provided per rating category by entering the unit of minutes in the Total Training column of the DOR.

**FTO COORDINATOR** – If the City of Hartford’s police department has more than three FTOs at any time, a FTO Coordinator will be assigned with additional duties.

## **FTO SELECTION, TRAINING AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

### **SELECTION PROCESS**

The selection of a FTO will be at the discretion of the Chief of Police and the Lieutenant. Selection will be based on the officer's:

- (a) Desire to be an FTO.
- (b) Experience, which shall include a minimum of five years of patrol experience, one of which shall be with this department.
- (c) Demonstrated ability as a positive role model.
- (e) Possession of, or ability to obtain, department-approved certification.
- (f) Approval from the Chief of Police. An FTO must remain in good standing and may be relieved from FTO duties due to discipline, inappropriate conduct or poor performance.

### **TRAINING**

An officer selected as an FTO shall successfully complete a MCOLES certified (40-hour) FTO course prior to being assigned as an FTO.

### **TRAINING MATERIALS**

The FTO shall receive training materials outlining the requirements, expectations and objectives of the FTO position. FTOs should refer to their training materials or the FTO coordinator regarding specific questions related to FTO or field training.

### **RESPONSIBILITIES**

The responsibilities of the FTO include, but are not limited to:

- (a) Issuing their assigned officer field training materials in accordance with the Training Policy.
  - 1. The FTO shall ensure that the officer has the opportunity to become knowledgeable of the subject matter and proficient with the skills as set forth in the training materials.
  - 2. The FTO shall sign off on all completed topics contained in the training materials, noting the methods of learning and evaluating the performance of their assigned officer.
- (b) Completing and reviewing daily performance evaluations with the officer.
- (c) Completing and submitting a written evaluation on the performance of their assigned officer to the FTO coordinator on a daily basis.
- (d) Completing a detailed weekly performance evaluation of their assigned officer at the end of each week.
- (e) Completing a monthly evaluation report of their assigned officer at the end of each month.