



MYRTLE BEACH POLICE DEPARTMENT

ADMINISTRATION REGULATIONS AND OPERATING PROCEDURES

Subject: *Field Training Officer Program*

Number: *122-D*

Effective Date: *September 1, 2012*

Revised Date: *October 15, 2025*

Rescinds: *122 Field Training Officer Program*
122-A Field Training Officer Program
122-B- Field Training Officer Program
122-C - Field Training Officer Program

Dated: *09-01-2012*
05-01-2020
03-21-2022
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Approved By:

I. PURPOSE

The purpose of this procedure is to establish a structured program to allow recruit officers the opportunity to apply the basic skills, knowledge, and abilities obtained in the Academy classroom into the field. The program is structured to provide a formal evaluation of the recruit's progress in order to determine when the Officer is competent to perform his/her duties independently. The Field Training Officer (FTO) Program will also provide orientation training to newly hired officers who have worked in law enforcement at other police agencies.

II. OBJECTIVES

- A. To produce a highly motivated and positively motivated officer capable of meeting or exceeding the standards of performance required by the Myrtle Beach Police Department.
- B. To provide equal and standardized training to all newly hired officers and to provide remedial training in those areas where deficiencies are identified.
- C. To build on the foundation of knowledge given at the South Carolina Criminal Justice Academy, thereby creating an environment in which the trainee may develop new skills as well as increase proficiency in those acquired in the academic setting.

- D. To improve the department's screening process by providing on-the-job observations of each trainee's performance.
- E. To establish an appraisal system that is valid and job-related, utilizing a standardized and systematic approach to the documented measurement of probationary officer performance.
- F. To establish career paths within the department by providing qualified officers with additional training and opportunities to develop leadership skills.
- G. To ultimately increase the overall efficiency and effectiveness of the department by enhancing the climate of professionalism and competency demanded by the ethical standards of Law Enforcement.

III. PROCEDURE

A. RECRUIT TRAINING REQUIREMENTS PRIOR TO ASSIGNMENT TO FTO PROGRAM

- 1) Inexperienced Class I, II, III, and IV Recruits: Must successfully complete the Myrtle Beach Police Department's Pre-Service Training and graduate from the South Carolina Criminal Justice Academy. Class IV Recruits may be eligible to receive their Class IV certification through an equivalency process at the discretion of SCCJA.
- 2) Out of State Class I, II, III, and IV Transfers: Must successfully complete the Myrtle Beach Police Department's Pre-Service and graduate from the South Carolina Criminal Justice Academy's special basic or full academy. Class IV Recruits may be eligible to receive their Class IV certification through an equivalency process at the discretion of SCCJA.
- 3) In-State Certified Class I, II, III, and IV Officers: Successful transfer of South Carolina Law Enforcement Certification, and may participate in an abbreviated Myrtle Beach Police Department Pre-Service training.
- 4) All Non-Classified Employees (civilian positions): Must successfully complete the Myrtle Beach Police Department's Pre-Service Training as well as any additional training tasks designated by the Training Unit or the employee's Division Commander.
- 5) Post-Academy Training: All Class I Officer Recruits must complete the Department's Post-Academy Training Program following their graduation from the SCCJA.

B. CURRICULUM

- 1) The FTO programs of recruit training were developed using the San Jose Model. The curriculum can be found in the Myrtle Beach Police Department Field Training Module, which is reviewed and updated by the Field Training Manager.
- 2) Length of Basic FTO Programs:
 - a. The Basic FTO Program for a Class I employee who is not currently certified in South Carolina is a minimum of 41 training shifts (One four-day observation phase, two 15-shift training phases, and a seven-shift testing phase). A new employee who is an out-of-state transfer or is in-state certified may be recommended for an abbreviated FTO Program. The abbreviated FTO Program for out-of-state transfers would consist of a minimum of 27 training shifts (Two 10-shift training phases and a seven-shift testing phase). The abbreviated FTO Program for in-state certified officers would consist of a minimum of 17 training shifts (One 10-shift training phase and a seven-shift testing phase).
 - b. The Basic FTO Program for a Class II employee who is not currently certified in South Carolina is a minimum of 41 training shifts (One four-day observation phase, two 15-shift training phases, and a seven-shift testing phase). The abbreviated FTO Program for in-state Class II-certified officers would consist of 27 training shifts (A five-shift observation phase, one 15-shift training phase, and a seven-shift testing phase).
 - c. The Basic FTO Program for all Class III employees is a minimum of 17 training shifts (one 10-day training phase and one seven-day testing phase). The Field Training Manager will also assign and schedule Class III employees to attend job-specific task training (examples: Animal Control, Municipal Court, Desk Officer).
 - d. The Basic FTO Program for all Class IV employees is divided into three distinct disciplines:
 - i. Communications Phone Calls: Will consist of a minimum of 120 training hours (a combination of observation and training hours) and 36 testing hours.
 - ii. Communications Fire Radio/NCIC: Will consist of a minimum of 180 training hours (a combination of observation and training hours) and 36 testing shifts.

- iii. Communications Police Radio: Will consist of a minimum of 240 training hours (a combination of observation and training hours), and 36 testing hours.
 - e. The FTO Manager will determine the length of the Basic FTO Program and/or the On-The-Job Training Program for all other positions.
- 3) If the trainee is not performing at an acceptable level at the conclusion of any Basic FTO Program, then the trainee may be authorized up to two remedial phase extensions. The FTO Manager, along with the Training Unit command staff, will review the Trainee's Training File and make a recommendation regarding eligibility for remedial phases. The recommendation will be forwarded to the Assistant Chief and the Chief of Police for evaluation and approval. Remedial phases may be granted under the following conditions:
- a. There is a specific, identifiable problem.
 - b. During the previous weeks of training, the trainee has shown progress in the failed category area(s).
 - c. The problem is such that a specific plan can be developed or is available.
 - d. It is reasonable to believe that the remedial training would correct the problem within the time limit of the program.
 - e. To be eligible for the first remedial phase, the trainee cannot have failed more than three performance categories in their initial testing phase.
 - f. To be eligible for a second remedial phase, the trainee cannot have failed more than two performance categories in the testing phase of the first remedial extension.
- 4) A trainee who has been granted a remedial phase will be assigned to a shift and an FTO on the basis of what would best accomplish the goal of the extension.
- 5) The trainee will be assigned to remedial phases consisting of 13 shifts (6 training shifts and 7 testing shifts). *Note: For Class IV trainees only, the remedial phases will consist of 156 hours (72 training hours and 84 testing hours).

- 6) At the conclusion of any testing phase:
 - a. Trainees who pass all performance categories during the testing phase will be recommended for release from the FTO Program into solo status.
 - b. Trainees who fail one or more performance categories during the first remedial testing phase may be evaluated for a second remedial phase, reclassified to another position, or terminated from employment at the discretion of the Chief of Police.
 - c. Trainees who fail one or more performance categories during the second remedial phase will be discharged from the FTO Program and may be reclassified to another position or terminated from employment at the discretion of the Chief of Police.
- 7) The recruit's progress through the program will be closely monitored and reported by the Field Training Officers through Daily Observation Reports. The FTO is required to submit a DOR for every shift the recruit works while in the program. This continual observation/evaluation serves two purposes:
 - a. By continual evaluation of the trainee's performance under actual field conditions, specific weaknesses or deficiencies can be identified and remedial training programs developed to improve weaknesses and correct deficiencies.
 - b. Through continuous evaluation, those individuals who are unable to attain the level of proficiency expected of the Myrtle Beach Police Department may be identified and considered for reclassification or removed from employment with the Department.

C. ROTATION OF TRAINEE FIELD ASSIGNMENTS

- 1) The FTO Manager is responsible for assigning each trainee to a primary FTO for each phase of training. A trainee may be assigned to a substitute FTO when the primary FTO is unavailable (i.e., illness, training, etc.). The trainee will be assigned to a Supervisor when no substitute FTO is available.
- 2) Under normal circumstances, a trainee will be assigned to an FTO in Phase I, a different FTO in Phase II, and return to the original FTO in Phase III.

- 3) The FTO Manager may select an appropriate FTO for any approved Extension Phases.
- 4) Each trainee should be exposed to both Day and Night Shift assignments.

D. OPERATION

- 1) The Myrtle Beach Police Department's Field Training Program will be conducted by specially trained Field Training Officers (FTOs). FTOs will assume responsibilities as trainers of assigned trainees. The duties of an FTO will include the completion of appropriate forms, instruction, and evaluation of recruit performance. The FTO will follow the guidelines set forth in the Field Training Module. While remaining under the supervision of their assigned FTO Supervisors, the FTO will follow the direction of the Field Training Manager as it applies to the FTO program. The FTO Supervisor will review all incident reports completed by the trainee. The FTO Supervisor will notify the Field Training Manager of any deficiencies noted in the progress of the trainee or with the quality of the training provided.
- 2) The Daily Observation Report (DOR) and Standardized Evaluation Guidelines (SEGs) or (Performance Categories) are integral features of the program, providing a sound structure and basic foundation for the learning process that each trainee will undergo. Guidelines for the evaluation of trainees by the Field Training Officers are located in the Field Training Module.
- 3) The Field Training Manager is responsible for starting a Field Training file for each new trainee. The Field Training Files are a composition of documentation of the performance (positive or negative) of a trainee officer throughout the probationary period. The file shall be securely maintained, and the information therein treated as confidential. Only personnel with a "need to know" will be granted access to the file. (These files will be kept in the FTO Module)
- 4) The FTO is responsible for ensuring that appropriate documentation is within the FTO Module. It is the FTO Manager's responsibility to ensure that the following documents or copies of documents are included in the trainee officer's Field Training files:
 - a. Daily Observation Reports (DOR) notes and comments: A DOR will be completed for each shift worked. The FTO will review the DOR with the Trainee, who will sign and submit it.
 - b. Supervisor Bi-weekly Report

- i. Class I & II: An FTO Supervisor will complete a Supervisor Bi-Weekly Report after DOR 7 and again after DOR 14.
 - ii. Class III: An FTO Supervisor will complete a Bi-Weekly Report after DOR 7.
 - iii. Class IV:
 - 1. Communication Phone Calls & Fire Radio/NCIC: An FTO Supervisor will complete a Bi-Weekly Report after every 60 hours of training.
 - 2. Police Radio: An FTO Supervisor will complete a Bi-Weekly Report after every 80 hours of training.
 - c. End of Phase Report
 - d. Any other documentation
 - e. Extension of Training
 - f. OIT Staffing and release
 - g. FTO Critique
 - h. Program Critique
 - i. Trainee Self-Evaluation
- 5) During the FTO program, the trainee is constantly in training or in an evaluation mode. The trainee shall not be allowed to function as a solo officer without the direct supervision of a Field Training Officer. Furthermore, when an FTO/Trainee unit is dispatched, that FTO/Trainee unit should be considered a SINGLE OFFICER UNIT, NOT A TWO-OFFICER UNIT. An FTO/Trainee unit should not handle calls normally requiring two or more units. A second unit should be dispatched.

E. FTO SELECTION

- 1) Interested Class I, II, III, and IV Officers must submit a Field Training Officer Application through their Chain of Command to the Field Training Manager. The Field Training Manager, in conjunction

with the Division Captains, will review the applications and recommend qualified candidates to the Assistant Chief of Police and the Chief of Police for approval to participate in an FTO selection process. The minimum requirements for the position are:

- a. Minimum of three years of service with the Myrtle Beach Police Department as a Class I, II, III, or IV officer. Officers with at least one year of service with the Myrtle Beach Police Department and at least four years of combined service with multiple departments may be considered.
- b. Class I officers must have achieved the rank of Patrol Officer First Class.
- c. No disciplinary actions in the preceding year that included:
 - i. Written Reprimand with or without Suspension,
 - ii. Probation,
 - iii. Performance Improvement Plan, and/or
 - iv. Demotion.
- d. A completed FTO Application with their Chain of Command's approval/recommendations.
- e. Validation & Recommendation: An FTO Applicant Information Form will be sent to the following for recommendations:
 - i. Clerk of Court
 - ii. Records
 - iii. P&E Techs
 - iv. Four current FTOs for feedback
- f. Written Examination: Complete a written exam consisting of 50 questions on policies, procedures, City Ordinances & state laws with a passing score of 80% or higher.
- g. Assessment Center/Behavioral Simulation consisting of:
 - i. Interview panel based on questions and/or scenarios

- ii. Work with a current FTO for two shifts (time allowed) and graded (according to SEG's) on ability to train on specific calls for service.
 - h. Good written and oral communication skills.
 - i. Applicant recommended by their Chain of Command and the FTO Manager
 - j. Applicant approved by the Assistant Chief of Police and the Chief of Police.
 - k. Ability to successfully complete formal FTO training prior to appointment.
 - l. Two-year commitment to the FTO Unit.
- 2) An Officer selected to become an FTO must attend and pass a Field Training Officer Training Program provided by the South Carolina Criminal Justice Academy, supplemented by specific materials unique to the department (i.e. FTO module). All Field Training Officers will have their records and testing submitted to SCCJA for certification as an FTO.
 - 3) The FTO manager will prepare and present an annual FTO In-Service. All certified Field Training Officers must complete the In-Service to maintain their certification.
 - 4) No other employees are eligible to become Field Training Officers through the FTO program, but the Chief of Police may authorize similar positions for other job functions. The Division Captain will work with the Field Training Manager to determine the qualifications for trainers, identify the proper training certification program to be completed, and develop procedures for these positions.

F. INSIGNIA

- 1) Upon appointment as an FTO, the officer will be issued chevrons with a bottom rocker identifying the Officer as an FTO. All active FTOs must wear the insignia when training a recruit. FTO chevrons will be supplied by the Department's Quartermaster.
- 2) Active FTOs, who are assigned to other shifts other than Patrol, Traffic, or Waterfront (i.e., Beach Patrol, Street Crimes), and not currently assigned a recruit, must have at least one uniform bearing the chevrons and rocker in the event of an immediate assignment.

G. LEAVE OF ABSENCE

- 1) Realizing the additional demands and responsibilities of performing FTO duties placed on patrol officers, the department allows a one-time leave of absence from FTO duties, with no loss of status for a duration not to exceed six months. The officer must submit a letter of request to the Field Training Manager. The request will then be forwarded to the Administrative Captain, who will then, along with their recommendation, forward it to the Chief of Police for approval. Reinstatement to the program is automatic after six months. If the leave of absence exceeds six months, or the FTO resigns from the program, the officer may not be considered for reinstatement until eighteen months have passed. FTOs who resign from the program are subject to losing any/all incentives affiliated with being an FTO.

H. GUIDELINES FOR FTO'S AND TRAINEES

- 1) FTOs will not give homework assignments to a trainee unless it is pre-approved by the Field Training Manager, and overtime is authorized by applicable Departmental procedures.
- 2) Trainees will not use accrued annual leave while in the FTO Program unless approved in advance by the Field Training Manager. The use of sick leave by a trainee may require a doctor's note upon return. Missed training days due to absences (sick or annual) will be rescheduled prior to the trainee completing the current phase.
- 3) FTOs, trainees, and their families will not fraternize while off duty. FTOs and trainees will not date, cohabitate, etc., while in the program. If an FTO and trainee are already involved in a personal relationship when the trainee enters the FTO Program, they will be assigned to different shifts.
- 4) FTOs and trainees will not purchase meals and snacks for each other. FTOs and trainees will not exchange gifts.
- 5) Trainees will not report to duty early or remain after their shift is over, in order to ride with officers or "hang out" at the station. Trainees will not participate in "ride-alongs" with officers on days off. Trainees will not respond to calls while off duty.
- 6) Trainees will not display their badge while off duty in an attempt to obtain goods or services for free or for a discount.
- 7) Trainees will not engage in off-duty or extra-duty employment while in the FTO Program. Trainees may engage in self or secondary employment in compliance with the applicable MBPD Procedure.

I. DISCIPLINARY ISSUES

- 1) FTOs are considered "Role Models" within the Myrtle Beach Police Department. This program is considered first-line supervision due to the FTO having direct control over the assigned recruit. All FTOs will adhere to the Myrtle Beach Police Department's Rules and Regulations and must maintain in "Good Standing". Disciplinary actions taken against an FTO may result in disciplinary actions within the program. Misconduct or any violations involving FTO Regulation and/or the integrity of the program may result in disciplinary actions. The levels of discipline are listed below. The list does not require progressive disciplinary action. The totality of the circumstances will be evaluated, and appropriate discipline administered. The allegation(s) will be investigated by the FTO Manager, and their disciplinary recommendations will be forwarded to the Administrative Captain, who will forward them along with their recommendations to the Chief of Police for final approval or reassignment to the Office of Professional Standards. Discipline resulting from non-FTO issues can result in temporary or permanent suspension from the program:

- a. Informal Counseling
- b. Oral Reprimand.
- c. Written Reprimand, with or without suspension.
- d. Removal of delivered training hours.
- e. Temporary suspension from the program.
- f. Suspension from the program.

- 2) Note: If an FTO is under the 3% compensation model (see section on COMPENSATION), suspension or permanent removal from the program will result in a 3% reduction of salary. This reduction will be calculated at the FTO's rate of pay when they initially received FTO certification, NOT their current salary.

J. FTO MANAGER

- 1) The FTO manager will be appointed by the Chief of Police. As soon as practical, the FTO Manager will attend the FTO Manager Course at the SCCJA. The FTO Manager's duties include, but are not limited to:

- a. Maintaining the department's field training module, ensuring that it remains current and up to date, and reflecting any/all changes.
- b. Supervising FTOs in matters dealing with the program.
- c. Scheduling FTO assignments.
- d. Review of DORs.
- e. Operate as a "Check and Balance" for the system.
- f. Monitoring each trainee's performance during the program.
- g. Recommending Disciplinary Actions when appropriate.
- h. Providing initial and in-service training for Field Training Officers.

K. REPORTING

- 1) Upon completion of the field training period, the trainee's field training guide will be reviewed in its entirety. The FTO(s), FTO Supervisor(s), FTO Manager, and Training Lieutenant will make their recommendation to the Administrative Captain. The following options will be considered:
 - a. Does the trainee require further training in any area?
 - b. Is the trainee competent to assume solo law enforcement duties?
 - c. Is the trainee suitable for a career with the Myrtle Beach Police Department? If not, the FTO Manager will collect and document all of the trainee's deficiencies in training and forward the document to the Administrative Captain for his/her review. The Administrative Captain will make a recommendation to the Chief of Police for final disposition.

L. COMPENSATION

- 1) In 2014, FTO's were provided a 3% salary increase to compensate them for their quasi-supervisory status.
- 2) Effective September 2025, FTOs who do not receive the 3% compensation will be compensated with two hours per day (at the regular rate of pay) when they are assigned a trainee for the entire shift and complete a 'Daily Observation Report' (DOR). The

additional two hours and the name of the trainee will be clearly marked on the FTO's timesheet so that they can be properly compensated. FTOs who have been receiving the 3% will be grandfathered and not lose their pay increase; however, they will not receive the extra hours of pay when they are assigned a trainee.

- 3) FTO Supervisors are those officers who hold the rank of Corporal, Master Corporal, or Sergeant and hold a current FTO certification. The FTO Supervisors who sign off DORs will receive one hour of pay (at regular rate) regardless of the number of DORs they sign off during the shift. DORs must be signed off immediately and not carried over or spread out for additional compensation. FTO Supervisors who are receiving the 3% salary increase will not be eligible to receive the one hour of extra pay for signing off DORs. Signing the DORs will be part of their normal duty, and their 3% increase will be their compensation.
- 4) If an FTO or FTO Supervisor is reinstated after losing FTO certification for any reason, then he/she will be compensated under the pay plan described above in section 2.
- 5) FTO incentives are based on approval of the Department's budget.
- 6) All active FTOs who complete a minimum of 30 DORS will be eligible to receive a \$500 incentive, or other amount approved in the budget for that fiscal year. The FTO is responsible for applying for the incentive by completing and submitting the Incentive Request Form to the FTO Manager, who will forward it to the Chief of Police for approval. Officers may access this form in the FTO folder or on the Forms & Documents Drive.