


TEXARKANA POLICE DEPARTMENT

GENERAL ORDERS MANUAL

SUBJECT	Field Training Program		
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APPROVED BY		ALEAP Standards	3.11, 3.12, 3.13,3.14,3.15

I. Purpose and Scope

- A. The purpose of this policy is to establish the Texarkana Police Department's Field Training Program. It will define the training criteria used in the program and will establish operational guidelines for all personnel involved in the Field Training Program.

II. Policy

- A. It is the policy of the Texarkana Police Department to implement, control and administer a Field Training Program that serves to improve the quality of its police officers by providing systematic training to newly appointed police officers who have graduated from any law enforcement training academy certified by the State of Arkansas or those who have prior law enforcement experience and hold law enforcement certificates from recognized states.
- B. While the Field Training Program is one phase of the Department's overall process of evaluating and screening probationary officers, it is intended to provide a measurement indicating the relevant level of performance exhibited by newly appointed officers. The program enables the supervisor to evaluate whether or not the officer should be retained by the Department while facilitating the supervisor's ability to document an officer's level of performance.
- C. As a component of the Department's continual training process, the Field Training Program is designed to place a maximum emphasis on post-academy training in an "on-the-job" environment. The program provides a curriculum that is based on the most frequent tasks and duties of police officers. The program assists new officers by teaching them how to best make the transition from what they learned in the training academy to competently performing general law enforcement patrol duties in the field.
- D. The Patrol Division Commander will coordinate the Field Training Program and ensure all elements incorporated within the Program are met in accordance with the guidelines set forth within the Field Training Manual. The Patrol Commander will designate a Patrol Squad Commander as the Field Training Lieutenant (FTL) and one patrol shift supervisor from Alpha/Charlie and Bravo/Delta (1 each) as the Field Training Sergeants (FTS) who shall be responsible for the operational requirements that surround the Agency's Field Training Program.

III. Procedure

- A. The Texarkana Police Department's Field Training Program is an approach to the field training of recruit officers based on a system of formal, standardized and structured teaching and evaluation techniques.

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The objective of the program is to train the officer to a level that he/she can function in a safe, skillful and professional manner.

- B. From the first day of the Field Training Officer's (FTO) observation and extending through the final evaluation at the conclusion of the program, documentation checklists guide the recruit officer's path of instruction. The learning process—which begins with the recruit's academy training—will continue to be integrated with practical field instruction. The recruit officer must learn to relate his/her acquired knowledge to the field assignments he/she encounters.
- C. The Department's Field Training Lieutenant (FTL) shall have the overall responsibility for administering the field training program. The Field Training Sergeants (FTS) will ensure that all assigned FTO's cover all of the instructional material. In addition, the FTS shall ensure all Daily Observation Reports (DOR), weekly evaluation reports and all other applicable documentation is completed in accordance with Agency protocol.
- D. The recruit officer—who is the primary focus of the Field Training Program—shall undergo an intensive thirteen (13) week field training cycle immediately upon the recruit's return from a state approved law enforcement training academy. Except under the following conditions and parameters, the program shall not be abbreviated:
 - 1. Should the recruit have prior law enforcement experience, the recruit may—upon the recommendation of the FTO, the FTS, the FTL and the Uniform Patrol Division Commander—undergo an abbreviated version of the Field Training Program of not less than six (6) weeks in duration.
- E. In order for the Field Training Program to be successful, it is important for the recruit officer to become exposed to as many different types of situations as possible. In a similar sense, it is beneficial for the recruit officer to become exposed to the various styles of policing among the Agency's FTO's. Therefore, the Field Training Program will expose the police recruit to a minimum of three (3) separate FTO's during the course of the thirteen (13) week program period.
- F. With the exception of Section D (1) above, the Agency's Field Training Program shall be divided into three (3) separate phases. These phases of training shall occur as follows:
 - 1. **Phase One—Teaching Phase**
 - Phase one of the program shall be six (6) weeks in duration. The first two days of this phase will find the recruit seated on the passenger's side of the police unit in an observation mode. This observation period will enable the police recruit to become familiar with the police vehicle, the geography of the City (as it relates to the beat boundaries) and radio procedures. During this first two-day period, the FTO will not evaluate the police recruit's performance, as this period is intended to allow the recruit an opportunity to observe the FTO in the field and allow for an adjustment period.
 - This six (6) week period is further divided into three (3) separate two-week periods wherein FTO's assigned to a patrol squad handle the recruit's Phase One training in each respective two-week training period.
 - Phase one starts with the FTO's managing **all** of the work and assigned duties while the recruit **observes**. The phase ends with the FTO's doing the **majority** of the work and duties while the recruit **assists**.
 - 2. **Phase Two—Teaching, Developmental & Confidence Building Phase**
 - Phase two of the program shall be six (6) weeks in duration. Phase Two becomes increasingly complex and allows the recruit to become more familiar with his/her new role. The recruit

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should be handling the majority of the workload giving the FTO an opportunity to review the recruit thereby ensuring the recruit is prepared for Phase Three.

- This six (6) week period is further divided into three (3) separate two-week periods wherein FTO's assigned to a patrol squad handle the recruit's Phase Two training in each respective two-week training period.
- The recruit's FTO Manual must be completed prior to the recruit's advancement into Phase Three.

3. **Phase Three—Testing Phase (Ghost Phase)**

- Phase three of the program shall be one (1) week in duration. This final week of the training program is commonly referred to as the recruit's "Ghost Phase", as the recruit is largely expected to perform in the field entirely on their own abilities. During this phase, the recruit will return to his/her initial FTO.
- The assigned FTO will accompany the recruit officer inside the unit; however, the FTO's function is that of an observer, and the FTO shall only intervene when necessary to preserve the safety, to prevent the violation of Department policy or to prevent a violation of either State or Federal Law.

G. Chain-of-Command

1. The chain-of-command is basic to the structure of the Field Training Program. As in all chains-of-command, the police recruit shall not violate the basic tenant of how communication flows between the various levels of the Agency.
2. In the chain-of-command governing the training program, the police recruit's direct supervisor is his/her assigned FTO. Police recruits should respond directly to his/her FTO for assistance.
3. Unless the urgency of a situation dictates an immediate need for the police recruit to waiver from his/her chain-of-command, the recruit shall refrain from relying on others within the Agency for advice or direction. Although the police recruit has access to a variety of shift supervisors, the recruit shall obey the integrity of the chain-of-command system within the training program.
4. Squad Commanders (Lieutenants) are informed of the status of all recruits on a weekly basis and are allowed input to the training procedure for the recruit through the FTS in an advisory nature. This procedure is necessary to ensure proper training while ensuring the absence of conflicting information. This will also enable a more efficient and effective response to handling training problems that may arise with a recruit.
5. To facilitate communication, the Field Training Program's chain of command is as follows:
 - (a) Chief of Police;
 - (b) Uniform Patrol Division Commander;
 - (c) Field Training Lieutenant;
 - (d) Field Training Sergeant;
 - (e) Field Training Officer; and
 - (f) Recruit Officer.

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H. Intensive Remedial Training

1. Intensive Remedial Training (IRT) is an integral part of the Field Training Program. The Uniform Patrol Division Commander shall have the authority to place a police recruit into IRT for a period not to exceed four (4) weeks.
 2. A police recruit's placement into IRT is directly dependent upon an FTO's written documentation that specifically identifies recurring problems within an identifiable area of the evaluation process. The Patrol Division Commander may—upon recommendation from the FTO and the FTS—place the police recruit within IRT. During this four week period, the recruit may be assigned to multiple FTO's in order to enhance the recruit's training experience.
 3. IRT allows the FTO to work with the police recruit on the specific area of unacceptable performance and is intended to bring the recruit in a position to meet the program's standardized guidelines—or those guidelines established through Department standards—without pressure to meet the normal program schedule. When placed within IRT, the recruit's normal program schedule is placed on hold until the conclusion of IRT.
 4. Placement into IRT may occur at any time during or at the end of Phase Three (3) but in any event before beginning Phase four (4). IRT is a positive process which is remedial in nature and solely intended to bring the recruit into an acceptable level of performance; therefore, there shall be no negative stigma placed upon a recruit for placement within IRT.
 5. The potential for remedial training also applies during the remainder of the officer's probationary status, even if the officer has been assigned to work alone. If a training deficiency is identified, the officer may be returned to an FTO for remedial training.
- I. Only when a recruit officer has demonstrated the ability to satisfactorily meet the standards as prescribed by the training program does the officer "graduate" from field training to full duty.
1. In the event the police recruit is unable to meet the necessary standards of the Field Training Program, he/she is then subject to termination by the Chief of Police. Documentation completed by the FTO, the FTS, the FTL, Patrol Division Commander and/or other members of the Department's administration during the Field Training Program should reflect not only the deficiencies of the recruit officer, but also a thorough description of the remedial steps taken to assist the recruit officer in overcoming these deficiencies.

IV. Evaluation System

- A. During the thirteen (13) week Field Training Program, recruit officers will be assigned to an FTO who shall observe and evaluate the recruit in an effort to measure the recruit's potential success as a police officer. This evaluation process is based upon a standardized performance evaluation procedure utilizing evaluation techniques designed to measure competency in required skills, knowledge and abilities.
1. Under normal circumstances, the police recruit will not become separated from his/her FTO. If separation become necessary, the shift supervisor will assign the recruit to a temporary FTO, or the supervisor could elect to personally accompany the recruit. In either circumstance, the officer who acts as the recruit's FTO will generate a Daily Observation Report during the corresponding period of evaluation.
- B. The police recruit's performance as he/she progresses through the training program is recorded in written evaluations. The following evaluations have been incorporated into the training program and will be completed by the FTO:

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1. **Daily Observation Report (DOR)**—The FTO shall evaluate the police recruit on a daily basis in twenty-five (25) separate categories. Using the Standardized Evaluation Guidelines, the FTO will rate the police recruit’s performance in each category that corresponds to the categories the FTO witnessed the recruit perform each and every day of training. Each category must receive a rating, and depending upon the recruit’s performance or whether the specific task/activity was observed by the FTO, each category will be classified as unacceptable, acceptable, superior, not observed or recruit is not responding to training.
 - a. To ensure the DOR and every rating that follows will be equal and standard throughout the Department, the Field Training Program relies heavily on Standardized Evaluation Guidelines. These Standardized Evaluation Guidelines act as behavioral anchors and provide a written definition of unacceptable, acceptable and superior levels of performance for each of the twenty-five (25) separate categories.
 - b. The standards set forth in these guidelines shall be applied to all police recruits regardless of their individual level of experience or other incidental factors. Through the strict application of the behavioral definitions contained within the guidelines, the rating of any recruit performance by one FTO should match the rating of any other FTO. This approach helps to ensure the ratings throughout the Agency are impartial, objective, consistent and valid.
 - c. Any rating consisting of a 1, 2, 4, 5 or NRT (not responding to training) shall be accompanied with specific comments that demonstrate the FTO’s decision to rate the recruit in this manner. This will provide the recruit with direct feedback on his/her performance while recording vital training information necessary for quality control purposes.
 - d. Except for extraordinary circumstances, the DOR should be completed at the end of every shift and presented to the police recruit for his/her review. This provides the police recruit with an opportunity to ask questions he/she failed to ask earlier during the day and will reinforce the instruction and applicable critiques issued to the recruit by the FTO.
 - e. No evaluation will be given during the recruit officer’s first two-day period in Phase One of training (Observation Week); however, the assigned FTO will complete a DOR on each observation day that includes the annotation “No evaluation given----Observation Day”.
 - f. When the DOR has been completed, the FTO will present the form to the police recruit for review. All of the generated DOR’s will stay with the police recruit during the entire Field Training Program and will be downloaded on a weekly basis to the Department’s server for additional review by the Field Training Sergeant and the Patrol Commander.

2. **Weekly Progress Report (CLEST Form F-13)**
 - a. In addition to the DOR’s, the FTO’s are responsible to complete a Weekly Progress Report that serves to summarize the police recruit’s performance for that particular week. The recruit will be rated in eight (8) separate categories that include Appearance, Cooperation and Loyalty, Interest and Attitude, Public Contact, Judgment, Driving Ability, Report Writing and General Progress to Date. The FTO will assign a rating to each specific category that includes ratings of Inadequate, Fair, Average, Good and Outstanding.
 - b. All Weekly Observation Reports completed at the conclusion of the police recruit’s sixth (6th) week within a phase shall be classified as End of Phase Reports. These reports shall be completed the same as the standard Weekly Progress Reports.
 - c. Once CLEST F-13 Weekly Progress Reports have been completed and reviewed by the FTO and the police recruit, they will be downloaded to the Department’s server for further review. Squad Commanders may, at any time, make comments in addition to those made by the FTO

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or the FTO Sergeant and forward any CLEST F-13's that need to be brought to the attention of the Patrol Division Commander via the chain of command.

3. Field Training Officer Evaluation Report (CLEST Form F-14)

- a. CLEST Form F-14 shall be completed by the FTO following the recruit's completion of Phase Three (Ghost Phase). The written summary must document the facts and circumstances observed during the recruit's training that demonstrates the FTO's recommendation to the Uniform Patrol Commander on whether the recruit should or should not be released to full-duty. The FTO must endorse the form in blue ink before forwarding the form to the Patrol Commander.

4. Field Training Record (CLEST Form F-15)

- a. CLEST Form F-15 shall be completed by the Field Training Sergeant. The form should be completed as soon as practicable following the recruit's satisfactory completion of the Field Training Program. Following completion, the form must be forwarded to the Chief of Police for his signature. The Field Training Sergeant must ensure the completed CLEST Form F-15 is forwarded to the Commission on Law Enforcement Standards and Training along with a copy of the recruit's Field Training Manual.

5. Instructional Guidelines (CLEST Form F-16)

- a. The Texarkana Police Department has identified twenty-nine (29) separate groups of skills and/or tasks the Agency believes every qualified officer must perform proficiently. These skills and or tasks have been divided among the first two phases of the training program with the least difficult addressed within phase one and the most difficult addressed in phase two.
- b. The F-16 contains columns situated alongside the respective skill or task the FTO utilizes to document when the police recruit has received the training and further documents at what point these tasks or skills were either demonstrated or practiced. The FTO assigned within a particular phase shall ensure all of the respective tasks/skills assigned to that particular phase of training are properly documented on the F-16.
- c. The F-16 serves to document the skills/tasks the police recruits have been taught. In addition, the F-16 allows the Commission of Law Enforcement Standards and Training to grant sixty (60) additional hours of documented training when it has been completed by a Certified Field Training Officer.

V. Field Training Officers

- A. The selection process for the position of Field Training Officer is crucial to the success of the Field Training Program since many of the values, tactics, and attitudes of FTO's are transmitted to inexperienced officers. FTO's must be leaders and role models, not only for the recruit officers, but among their peers as well. FTO's are required to attend a CLEST approved or equivalent FTO training course prior to assuming FTO responsibilities.
- B. When a FTO position within the Department becomes available, the Field Training Lieutenant in conjunction with the Personnel and Training Section will post an announcement seeking candidates who wish to be considered for inclusion to the Field Training Officer's selection list. The announcement will include the minimum requirements for the position and the deadline for application. The announcement will be sent to all sworn personnel through the use of department e-mail and will be posted on all divisional bulletin boards. Additionally, all Squad Commanders will make reasonable efforts to notify the personnel under their command who are on leave when the announcement is made.

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- C. The responsibility assigned to an FTO is demanding and challenging. To ensure that only the most qualified officers are selected for assignment as an FTO, minimum requirements have been established as guidelines for those interested in becoming an FTO. The following requirements must be met on or before the application deadline:
1. The applicant must have a minimum of three (3) years of service with the Texarkana Police Department;
 2. The applicant must hold a General Certificate;
 3. A letter of recommendation from the applicant's immediate supervisor must accompany the applicant's request for consideration;
 4. The applicant must not have had any disciplinary action during the most recent evaluation period;
 5. The applicant must be prepared to undergo additional training as determined by the Department; and
 6. The applicant must be recommended by an FTO Selection Board / Committee.
- D. The position of Field Training Officer is a privilege and carries with it a responsibility and a status within the Department that can be amended or removed either voluntarily or involuntarily. The designation of **Active FTO** and the accompanying benefits accorded therein will only be available to those officers who:
1. Maintain the standards as identified in Section C above;
 2. Continue a desire to be an active part of the Field Training Program;
 3. Continue to be an integral part of the program's success as determined by the FTS; and
 4. Are not otherwise classified as an **Inactive FTO**.

E. Status Designations—Job Assignment

1. Once an officer qualifies for and is selected to become a Field Training Officer, he/she is assigned the status of either Active or Inactive according to their current job assignment. Active and Inactive are defined below:
 - (a) **Active Status**—Meets the standards indicated above. This FTO will be used to train recruits, he/she will be eligible for all forms of compensation, and he/she will be allowed to wear the FTO Service Ribbon while on duty.
 - (b) **Inactive Status**—Meets the standards indicated above, but because of a job assignment, i.e. (Special Ops, Narcotics, CID), sickness, family emergency, discipline or other situation, this FTO may or may not be available to train recruits.
 - (1) Under special conditions, an Inactive FTO may be called upon to perform the duties of an Active FTO. If utilized, and if the FTO is used for training purposes, he/she will receive the same compensation as Active FTO's. However, while in an inactive status, this FTO will not be eligible to receive the monthly incentive pay, but he/she is allowed to wear the FTO Service Ribbon while on duty. If and when circumstances change, this FTO could be returned to Active Status depending on the needs of the program and the determination of the FTS and the FTL.

F. Status Designation—Discipline

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1. Occasionally even the best officer will suffer a setback, and Field Training Officers are no exception. When this occurs, the Field Training Sergeant (FTS) and Field Training Lieutenant (FTL) will review the situation and act according to the disciplinary procedures outlined below:
 - (a) **Inactive Status**—This FTO does not meet one or more of the minimum standards indicated above. This is the less serious of the two disciplinary designations. When it has been determined that an FTO has fallen below one or more of the minimum standards, the FTS & FTL will meet with the FTO and discuss the situation.
 - (1) Should the FTS & FTL determine the minimum standards have been violated, and there is no other remedy available, a change in status will be initiated. The FTL will notify the officer in writing of their change in status to either Inactive (Minimum Standards) or Suspended. If the FTO is moved to an Inactive status (Minimum Standards), the officer will remain in that status for not less than ninety (90) days, at which time their status will be reevaluated by the FTS & FTL.
 - (2) While the FTO is in an inactive status (minimum standards), he/she will not be eligible to receive the monthly incentive pay, but he/she is allowed to wear the FTO Service Ribbon while on duty. Under special conditions to be determined by the FTL and Patrol Division Commander, this FTO could be used to perform the duties of an Active FTO. If the FTO is used for training purposes, he/she will receive the same compensation as active FTO's.
 - (b) **Suspended Status**—This FTO does not meet one or more of the minimum standards indicated above. This is the more serious of the two disciplinary designations. When it has been determined that a Field Training Officer has fallen below one or more of the minimum standards, the FTS & FTL will meet with the FTO and discuss the situation.
 - (1) If the FTS & FTL determine the minimum standards have been violated, and the violation merits a suspension, a change in status will be initiated. The FTL will notify the Field Training Officer in writing of their status change. This FTO will remain in a suspended status for not less than ninety (90) days, at which time their status will be reevaluated by the FTS & FTL.
 - (2) This FTO will not be used to train recruits, is not eligible to receive the monthly incentive pay and will not be allowed to wear the FTO Service Ribbon while on duty. This FTO can be removed from the program at any time during their suspended status as determined by the FTL and the Patrol Division Commander.

G. Status Designations—Advancement

1. **Certified FTO**—When a Probationary FTO has completed the 40 hours of training required by the state, he/she will become a fully certified FTO. As a certified and active FTO he/she will be eligible to train recruits and receive all the incentives associated with the program. A Certified FTO can wear the FTO Service Ribbon on their uniform.
2. **FTO 1st Class**—An FTO who has been in the program for two years will become an FTO 1st Class. An FTO 1st Class will be awarded an additional service ribbon at the annual departmental awards ceremony and may wear the additional service ribbon on a daily basis as part of their uniform.
3. **Master FTO**—An FTO 1st Class who has been in the program 4 years will become a Master FTO. A Master FTO will be awarded an additional service ribbon at the annual Departmental Awards Ceremony and may wear the additional service ribbon on a daily basis as part of their uniform.

H. FTO Compensation

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1. Once an officer qualifies for and is selected to become a Field Training Officer, they are eligible to receive the following benefits:
 - (a) Active FTO's will receive four (4) hours overtime pay every month that they are a part of the program;
 - (b) Active FTO's will receive one (1) hour overtime each day they train a recruit;
 - (c) Active FTO's will be given preferential treatment when it comes to elective training by allowing them, on an annual basis, to attend a school of their choice provided the subject matter will benefit both the FTO and the FTO Program;
 - (d) Active FTO's can advance in the FTO Program achieving the status of FTO 1st Class and Master FTO; and
 - (e) Active and Inactive (Job Assignment) FTO's will be allowed to wear their FTO Service Ribbon above the name tag on their uniform while they are on duty.

VI. Ethical Treatment of Police Recruits

- A. All present and future FTO's are prohibited from ridiculing, belittling, berating, making fun of, or otherwise engaging in any type of conduct—whether in word or deed—that is designed to embarrass a recruit either publicly or privately.
- B. All conversations taking place between a Field Training Officer and his/her recruit will be kept confidential; however, conversations that impact the training of the recruit can be discussed with the FTS, FTL or the Patrol Commander. It is also possible that conversations occurring between a recruit and his/her FTO may need to be documented in his/her Daily Observation Report.
- C. The training progress of a recruit—whether positive, negative, acceptable or unacceptable—will not be discussed with other members of the Department. However, the recruit's progress may be discussed with other FTO's as needed, the FTS, FTL or the Patrol Commander.

VII. Process Review

- A. Each January, the field training Sergeants and the field training Lieutenant will meet with all field training officers to review the conduct of the FTO program and determine if any changes are required.
- B. A report of the findings of this meeting shall be forwarded to the Chief of Police for any action required.

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