

# **COVINGTON POLICE DEPARTMENT STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURE**

**Subject: COMMAND AUTHORITY / COMMAND PROTOCOL**

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## **I. Purpose**

To define the general authority and responsibilities of command and supervisory personnel.

## **II. Statement of Policy**

It shall be the policy of the Covington Police Department to provide proper authority to supervisory and command personnel commensurate with the duties and responsibilities granted to the respective positions. In addition, each employee is accountable for the use of delegated authority.

### **A. Chief of Police**

The Chief of Police shall head the police department of the City of Covington. The Chief of Police is the Chief Executive Officer of the following components: Administrative Division, Investigative Division, Patrol Division, and Support Services/Community Outreach Division.

1. **Authority** – The Chief of Police is the Chief Executive Officer of the department and the final departmental authority in all matters of policy, operations, discipline and budget. He exercises all lawful powers of his office and issues such lawful orders as are necessary to ensure the effective performance of the department.
2. **Responsibilities** – Through the Chief of Police, the department is responsible for the enforcement of all laws and ordinances coming within its legal jurisdiction. He is responsible for planning, directing, coordinating, controlling and staffing all activities of the department; for its continued and efficient operation; for the enforcement of all rules and regulations within the department; for the completion and forwarding of such reports as may be required by competent authority; and for the department's relations with the citizens, the city government and other agencies.
3. The Chief of Police is responsible for the preparation and submission of the department's annual budget and shall follow the budgetary process

and meet all budgetary deadlines as established by the City of Covington.

4. The Chief of Police, his designee and all of command staff shall be notified by Command Staff Paging from the 911 Center via cell phone on all incidents where there may be a question of liability to the agency or those which may result in heightened community interest. The chief shall be notified on all incidents where employees have been involved in incidents which have caused or likely to cause a loss of life or serious injury.

B. Assistant Chief of Police

The Assistant Chief of Police serves as the administrative assistant to the Chief of Police and is responsible for the daily operations of the police department. In the absence of the Chief of Police, the Assistant Chief will assume command control of all departmental matters.

C. Division Commanders

The Division Commanders are the administrative commander of each division. The Commander is responsible for the performance of management personnel under his immediate control. The span of control is not limited to management personnel and has no limits on the number of employees that may be supervised.

D. Watch Commander – Lieutenant

Authority and responsibilities – The Watch Commander shall be responsible for the performance of employees under his immediate control. The span of control of the watch commander should not exceed 15 employees. In addition to the general and individual responsibilities, the Watch Commander is specifically responsible for the following:

- a. The Watch Commander shall be responsible for his use or misuse of delegated authority.
- b. Good Order – the general good order of his command during his tour of duty to include proper discipline, conduct, welfare, field training and efficiency.
- c. Roll call – conduct of prescribed roll calls, communication of all orders or other information at roll call and inspection, and correction of his command as necessary.
- d. Reporting – reporting as required by a commanding officer.
- e. Personnel complaints – inquiry into personnel complaints against members and employees under his command in accordance with the provisions of this manual.

E. Supervisory Officers – Sergeant

Authority and responsibilities – Supervisory officers are members appointed in charge of one or more members and/or employees. In addition to general and

individual responsibilities of all members and employees, each supervisory officer is specifically responsible for the following:

- a. Supervision – A supervisory officer may be assigned to field or office duties. During his tour of duty, he must closely supervise the activities of his subordinates, making corrections where necessary and commending where appropriate. Supervisory officers are responsible for the performance of employees under their immediate control. For purposes of employees' performance evaluation, the sergeant shall be considered the immediate supervisor. In field situations, the sergeant serves as the immediate supervisor.
- b. Direction – supervisory officers must exercise direct command in a manner that assures the good order, conduct, discipline and efficiency of subordinates. Exercise of command may extend to subordinates outside his usual scope of supervision. This authority shall not be exercised unnecessarily. If a supervisor requires a subordinate other than his own to leave a regular assignment, the supervisor so directing will inform the subordinate's own supervisor as soon as possible. Supervisory officers shall be responsible for the use or misuse of delegated authority.
- c. Enforcement of rules – supervisory officers must enforce departmental rules and regulations and ensure compliance with department policies and procedures.
- d. Inspection – supervisory officers are responsible for inspection of activities, personnel and equipment under their supervision and initiation of suitable action in the event of a failure, error, violation, misconduct, or neglect of duty by a subordinate.
- e. Assisting subordinates – A supervisory officer shall have a working knowledge of the duties and responsibilities of his subordinates. He shall observe contacts made with the public by his subordinates and to available for assistance or instruction as may be required. A field supervisory officer shall respond to calls of serious emergencies, felonies in progress, assaults and others unless actively engages in a police incident. He should observe the conduct of the assigned personnel and take active charge, when necessary.

### **III. Command Protocol**

Patrol Division supervisors shall have the authority to command the activities of all patrol and/or investigative personnel in all emergency situations. Patrol supervisors may delegate a crime scene to an investigator. At such times, the investigator has the responsibility for the crime scene.

### **IV. Command of a Crime Scene**

- A. When a crime scene is ready to be turned over to an investigator, the patrol supervisor shall have the authority to notify the investigator. No other patrol personnel should notify any investigator unless upon the expressed order of the patrol supervisor on duty.

- B. Once a crime scene is turned over to investigative personnel, the investigator has the responsibility for the protection of the scene, collection of evidence, fingerprints, photographs, etc. and may direct patrol personnel to perform any specified tasks that are necessary. Investigators are responsible for informing the patrol supervisor of the status of the investigation.
- C. Investigators may request the patrol supervisor to supply a patrol officer to assist in the investigation, serve a warrant, collect evidence, or transport prisoners.
- D. When situations arise requiring the need for the SWAT team, the patrol supervisor has the authority to notify said team. When the situation is turned over to SWAT, the Team Commander shall have complete authority over the incident. The Team Commander has the authority to direct any patrol or investigative personnel to do any task or go to any location. When the situation is under control, the Team Commander will return authority to the patrol supervisor.

***This SOP supersedes any SOP previously issued.***

BY ORDER OF THE CHIEF OF POLICE

*Stacey L. Cotton*

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Chief of Police