WINCHESTER POLICE DEPARTMENT OPERATION ORDER
NOTE: This policy is for internal use only, and does not enlarge an employee's civil liability in any way. It should not be construed as the creation of a higher standard of safety or case in an evidentiary sense, with respect to third party claims. Violation of this policy, if proven, can only form the basis of a complaint by this department, and then only in a non-judicial administrative setting.

Number 2-75		Effective Date May 20, 2020	Review Date May 7, 2020	Reviewing Division Administration
Subject **Communications Officer Training Program – ECC**	☐ New Policy ☐ Amends ☐ Replaces: ☒ Revised:			**This policy shall apply to personnel assigned to the following divisions:** ☐ All Personnel ☐ Patrol Division ☐ Administration Division ☐ Investigation Division ☒ ECC Personnel
References **VLEPSC: TRN.03.02**				

Amanda L. Behan
Chief of Police or Designee

March 23, 2023
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Date

I. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to establish uniform guidelines and procedures for training new employees by Communications Training Officers.

II. POLICY

It shall be the policy of Winchester Emergency Communications shift personnel to understand procedures for training new employees.

III. DEFINITION

A. Communications Training Officer (CTO)

One who provides on-the-job training, serves as a guide, model, instructor, mentor, teacher, and counselor to personnel newly assigned to a position. The Communications Training Officers offer fundamental orientation on the how, why, where, and when of operating in the new position, documents the training and performance of the assigned person, and works with the training supervisor to coordinate, develop, and assure effective and comprehensive training.

B. Trainee

A newly hired, reassigned, or newly promoted communication specialist with a communications training officer for instruction, evaluation, oversight, and guidance.

C.   Daily Observation Report (DOR)

Form for daily use to provide detailed documentation and evaluation of performance spanning the entirety of job related functions over the course of a shift.

D.   Coordinator

An ECS appointed by the ECC Director to oversee the Communications Training Officer Program. The COTP Coordinator works directly with the ECC Director and other CTOs to ensure the success of the COTP.

IV.   COTP DESCRIPTION

A.   COTP Goals

The primary goals of the COTP are:

1.   To enable and assist recently selected communications officers in learning how to perform effectively in their new position within the department;

2.   To familiarize the newly placed communications specialist with the relevant policies and procedures of the department;

3.   To clarify department performance expectations for the position, primarily based on tasks of the most frequent assignments within the position;

4.   To provide the opportunity for the trainee to learn how to apply the knowledge and skills obtained at the basic emergency communications academy, and to learn all applicable legal requirements relevant to the performance of his or her duties;

5.   To provide an objective assessment of the trainee's performance strengths and weaknesses within the new position, through the use of evaluation techniques designed to measure competency in the required skills, knowledge, and abilities; and

6.   To generate thorough records documenting performance, including details in support of further training, reassignment, or ending the particular assignment or the probationary communications specialist's employment with the department.

B.   COTP Characteristics

1.   For trainees with no prior emergency communications experience, the COTP shall last a minimum of six (6) training months.

2.   For trainees with emergency communications experience, the COTP shall last a minimum of four (4) training months. Trainees with prior emergency

communications experience must demonstrate competent ability based upon the expectations and requirements of the department standards of performance.

3. The COTP coordinator, in conjunction with the ECC Director, will make all decisions regarding the COTP duration for a trainee, including program extensions or reductions.

4. No trainee shall be released from the COTP prior to completing the minimum program duration and successfully demonstrating acceptable levels of performance.

5. Where possible, trainees will be assigned to CTOs on different shifts to maximize the training opportunity and exposure to variations of calls for service.

6. Rehired emergency communications specialists are subjected to entering COTP. The duration of the COTP, as well as the areas to be covered, will be determined by the ECC Director.

7. At any time during the COTP, the COTP coordinator may recommend to the ECC Director and the Deputy Chief, that the employment of a probationary communications specialist be terminated. Recommendation for termination of employment shall be based on documented ongoing problems, and in conjunction with the trainees' non-responsiveness to training initiatives designed to overcome the documented deficiency.

8. Upon receiving approval from the ECC Director authorizing final solo release of the trainee, the Director will meet with trainee to discuss where they will be placed on the schedule based on what is best for covering the center with adequate staffing.

9. It will be the responsibility of the COTP coordinator to assure the trainee has attended required courses for certifications during the first 2 years of employment.
   a. DCJS academy;

   b. CPR certified;

   c. VCIN certified;

   d. Emergency Medical Dispatch (EMD) certified (as available);

   e. At least one (1) police ride along (minimum of eight (8) hours);

   f. At least one (1) fire/rescue ride along (minimum of (8) hours).

C. COTP Components

1. The ECC Director will appoint an emergency communications specialist to serve as the coordinator and supervisor of the COTP. The appointed ECS will have attended the initial CTO training program and have experience as a CTO.

2. For every scheduling working day (including on the job training, observation days, classroom and sick days) the CTO will complete a Daily Observation Report (DOR) and review it with the trainee at the end of each shift.

3. The CTO will provide written explanation regarding performance for that particular training period in the narrative portion of each section of the DOR which should include specific references to incidents or work handled.

4. CTOs will use the department approved testing (written/practical) to determine if the trainee will move on to the next phase of training. The CTO will document on the trainee checklist every time a test is given and when a trainee is cleared from each phase of training as well as the DOR for that day. Phases of training include:

    a. Non-emergency call taking;

    b. Police Radio/dispatching;

    c. Emergency call taking both police and medical;

    d. Fire and Rescue Dispatching.

V. **RESPONSIBILITIES**

A. CTO Responsibilities

1. The CTO serves his or her assigned trainee in the following capacities:

    a. A role model who exemplifies excellence in carrying out the various duties of communications work;

    b. A trainer who assesses the training needs of the trainee and is able to apply the training techniques appropriate to meet those needs;

    c. An evaluator who gives critical feedback and clear direction to guide the trainee to a higher level of competence. Standardized evaluation guidelines will form the basis for the trainee's performance rating and must be strictly followed during this process;

    d. A counselor who must develop a trusting and open relationship, be perceptive of the trainee's strengths and weaknesses as they relate to job performance, and utilize positive performance management

techniques to advise the trainee in professional development and career planning; and

2. While assigned to a trainee, if the CTO will be absent from duty, the CTO should coordinate with his or her immediate supervisor for another CTO to train the trainee. This will require the approval of immediate supervisor including confirmed notification of another CTO. If under circumstances another CTO is not available when the regularly assigned CTO is absent, the trainee will be assigned to perform a previously cleared training phase, observe a position, ride along, or other training assignments. A Daily Observation Report, "CTO Unavailable" will be completed for that day. In addition, efforts should be made so that the CTO is not scheduled for any training that does not include the CTOs assigned trainee.

3. CTOs shall complete the following evaluations and reports in reference to any trainee they are assigned:

    a. The DOR is:

        (1) Designed with standards for evaluating the performance of the assigned trainee;

        (2) Used to document all performance observations made during their duty tour, both positive and negative, and all applicable training conducted by the CTO;

        (3) Submitted at the end of the trainee's scheduled shift;

        (4) Reviewed by the CTO's fellow CTOs and ECC Director, who must sign and date the DOR in addition to the CTO and trainee.

        (5) The CTO must give the DOR to the trainee at least fifteen (15) minutes before the end of shift to allow the CTO to review with the trainee the evaluation and ask any questions.

B. <u>COTP Coordinator Responsibilities</u>

The COTP coordinator shall manage the COTP and perform the following:

1. Observation of trainees and CTOs;

2. Provide feedback to trainees and CTOs;

3. Review daily observation reports and other documentations;

4. Schedule and monitor trainee assignments and rotations;

5. Develop, perform, and document COTP and CTO evaluations;

6.   Delegate and monitor COTP related objectives to CTOs not currently assigned an active trainee;

7.   Keep ECC Director notified of trainee status, training, and scheduling;

8.   Coordinate extension and early release considerations; and

9.   Coordinate and document termination considerations.

VI.   PROCEDURES

A.   Trainee Assignment

1.   During the COTP, trainees will be assigned to at least three (3) different CTOs by the COTP coordinator and ECC Director unless otherwise approved by ECC Director.

2.   CTO assignments will be made as soon as possible to assist the CTO and his or her supervisor with scheduling vacations, special assignments, training, etc.

B.   CTO Selection Criteria

1.   The following criteria shall be required of all CTO candidates:

a.   When applicable, a minimum of satisfactory ratings in all rated categories of the City of Winchester Employee Performance Evaluation, with preference given to above average ratings for the previous two (2) years;

b.   Continual demonstration of positive performance such as demonstrating responsibility, showing maturity, having an outstanding attitude toward their role in the community, and showing initiative;

c.   Have the recommendations of their immediate supervisor and ECC Director; and

d.   Demonstrate a strong desire to mentor, guide, and counsel new or reassigned Communications specialists.

2.   The following years of service criteria shall be required for all CTO candidates:

a.   For a CTO assigned to the Emergency Communications Center, shall have at least four (4) years minimum as an ECS, with a

minimum of one (1) year after completion of the COTP with the Winchester Police Department;

C.   Communications Training Officer Selection Procedures

    1.   Personnel wishing to be appointed as a CTO must meet the proficiency requirements established in GO 1-22

    2.   CTO applicants are generally selected based on their interest, maturity, trustworthiness, job knowledge, communication skills, employment history, performance evaluations, and positive written recommendation by an immediate supervisor.

    3.   Continued appointment and involvement as a CTO is subject to review by the COTP coordinator, the ECC Director, and Deputy Chief.

D.   Training for CTO

    1.   All CTOs must attend a department approved CTO training course on all related procedures and responsibilities before they are assigned as a CTO.

    2.   New CTOs will work closely with other CTOs to establish themselves as a CTO and become familiar with the COTP.