




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 1-3		Effective Date March 25, 2024	Review Date March 8, 2024	Reviewing Division Administration
Subject ORGANIZATION AND AUTHORITY		<input type="checkbox"/> New Policy <input type="checkbox"/> Replaces: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Revised:		This policy shall apply to personnel assigned to the following divisions: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> All Personnel <input type="checkbox"/> Patrol Division <input type="checkbox"/> Administration Division <input type="checkbox"/> Investigation Division
References				
<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between; align-items: center;"> <div style="text-align: center;">  <hr style="width: 100%;"/> Chief of Police or Designee </div> <div style="text-align: center;"> <hr style="width: 100%;"/> March 25, 2024 Date </div> </div>				

I. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to describe the organization of the Winchester Police Department, outline its rank structure, and assign responsibilities, functions, and duties.

II. POLICY

The Winchester Police Department is established by Virginia Code and local ordinance, and consists of a Chief of Police and other full and part-time officers and non-sworn employees as determined by the City Manager and City Council. The chief executive of the Department is the Chief of Police, appointed by and subordinate to the City Manager and City Council. The Chief of Police, in turn, appoints police officers who are charged with enforcing the laws of the Commonwealth of Virginia and all the ordinances of the City of Winchester. The criminal jurisdiction of the Department is limited to one (1) mile beyond the City boundary, except when another Department requests assistance via a mutual aid request, or when enforcing laws on property owned by the City, but outside its boundaries. The traffic enforcement jurisdiction of the Department is limited to the City’s geographical limits. The organization of the Department should support the effective and efficient accomplishment of Department responsibilities and functions according to community oriented policing principles.

III. PROCEDURES

A. Organizational Structure

1. The Chief of Police is responsible for the direction of all activities of the Department.
2. Direction from the Chief of Police is accomplished through written and oral orders, as well as by personal leadership. Written policies take the form of rules and regulations, general orders, and other policies as needed.
3. The Department consists of a Chief of Police, Deputy Chief of Police, captains, lieutenants, sergeants, corporals, detectives, animal control officers, civilian employees, communications specialists, and as many police officers as the Chief of Police, the City Manager, and City Council determine are required to protect and serve the community and otherwise support or carry out the Department's objectives.
4. For purposes of this manual, "employee" or "personnel" refers to both sworn and non-sworn members of the Department.

B. Chain of Command

1. The Chief of Police has full control over Department activities. In absence of the Chief of Police, the Deputy Chief of Police will assume duties as the Acting Chief of Police.
2. Supervisors should, without specific instructions, undertake required details and assignments necessary to carry out the business of the Department. Supervisors should be guided in the assignment of personnel by the number of officers available for duty and the necessity to assign personnel where they will be most useful.
3. Each employee is responsible to only one supervisor at any given time.

C. Span of Control

For any major event in which all or most Department personnel will be on duty, plans for the event will clearly delineate the incident command, command structure and outline the span of control.

D. Authority and Responsibility

1. At each rank within the Department, personnel are given the authority to make necessary decisions for the effective performance of their responsibilities. Through community-oriented policing, the Department is committed to fostering an organizational climate that rewards employees for initiative, innovation, citizen engagement, and problem solving.
2. Each employee should be held accountable for the use of, or failure to use, delegated authority. Any employee with questions concerning his or her delegated authority should refer the matter to the on-duty supervisor or

member of the Command Staff for prompt resolution. Legal questions may be referred to the Commonwealth's Attorney and/or the City Attorney.

3. All employees should report any gross or improper use of authority or failure to accept authority through the chain of command immediately.
4. Supervisors are held strictly accountable for the condition and preparedness of the personnel assigned to them.
5. Supervisors are responsible for the good order and sanitary condition of Department offices, vehicles, and equipment.
6. Supervisors are responsible for the efficiency, discipline, and morale of employees under their charge. Supervisors should receive, document, investigate or cause to be investigated all complaints by citizens and allegations of employee misconduct.
7. Supervisors should ensure that employees have been supplied with all appropriate written policies and should instruct them thoroughly on all oral and written orders. Supervisors should regularly review and instruct subordinates in pertinent laws, ordinances, and necessary skills.
8. Supervisors should closely observe the performance and behavior of all probationary employees assigned to them. When required, supervisors should submit detailed, written reports which may include the probationer's appearance, ability, work ethic, discipline, efficiency, initiative, and general adaptability to police work, and should make a recommendation about offering the employee permanent employment.

E. Direction and Obedience to Orders

As the chief executive of the Department, the Chief of Police has full authority and responsibility for the management, direction, and control of the operation and administration of the Department. Both state law and Department policies define certain responsibilities that the City Manager shares with the Chief of Police.

IV. ORGANIZATIONAL CHART

The following organizational chart denotes chain of command and intradepartmental relationships and responsibilities:

