



GENERAL ORDER ADM-17 ORGANIZATIONAL DIRECTION AND STRUCTURE

EFFECTIVE JULY 7, 2021

This General Order contains the following numbered sections:

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I. POLICY

The Howard County Department of Police (HCPD) shall maintain an organizational structure based on function, unity of command, delineation of responsibility, accountability, and the effective delegation of authority under which the HCPD can operate effectively and efficiently.

II. DEFINITIONS

- A. Terminology utilized in this Order is defined in General Order ADM-03, [Definitions and Terminology](#).
- B. The term "Supervisor" denotes all sworn officers at the rank of Sergeant and above and all civilian supervisors and managers.

III. ORGANIZATIONAL DIRECTION

- A. The HCPD is committed to a structured chain of command with commensurate authority and responsibility in providing continuity and unity of command.
- B. Authority and Responsibility¹
 - 1. The success of the HCPD requires that responsibility be accompanied by the necessary authority. Authority to execute the required activity of the organizational component shall be delegated by the Chief of Police through the chain of command to individual members.
 - 2. Members will be given the authority to make decisions necessary for the effective execution of their responsibilities at every level of the organization.
- C. Delegation of Authority
 - 1. The Chief of Police shall be responsible for the overall performance of the organization.
 - 2. To assist the Chief of Police in accomplishing the goals and objectives of the HCPD, members shall be delegated authority to perform the duties of their assignments.
- D. Accountability²
 - 1. Members shall be held accountable for their overall performance and the performance of the members under their immediate supervision.³ This accountability shall include the use of or failure to use delegated authority in accomplishing the responsibilities of their position.

¹ CALEA 11.3.1a

² CALEA 11.3.1b

³ CALEA 11.3.2

2. All members shall be organizationally accountable to only one (1) supervisor at any given time. Each organizational component shall be under the direct command of only one supervisor at any given time.⁴

E. Span of Control

1. Supervisors will be given specific areas of assignment over which they have supervisory or command responsibility at all times.
2. Supervisors will not have an excessive number of members under their immediate control. As a general policy, the span of control will not exceed twelve (12) members.

F. Chain of Command⁵

1. The Chain of Command shall be the line of authority that extends from the Chief of Police through a single person at each level of supervision to the level of execution.
2. The following is the precedence of rank for all sworn officers, regardless of assignment, in descending order:
 - a. Chief of Police;
 - b. Major (Deputy Chief);
 - c. Captain;
 - d. Lieutenant;
 - e. Sergeant;
 - f. Corporal;
 - g. Technical Corporal;
 - h. Police Officer First Class (PFC);
 - i. Police Officer; and
 - j. Probationary Police Officer.
3. Civilian Supervisors shall be integrated into the chain of command as appropriate, based on their functional scope and assignment as established by the Chief of Police.
4. Regarding issuing orders, a PFC, Police Officer, and Probationary Police Officer shall be considered equal in rank.
5. The rank of Technical Corporal may be established at the discretion of the Chief of Police for the duration of an approved assignment. Once the assignment is changed or terminated, the officer will return to the rank of PFC.

G. Command in Absence of the Chief of Police⁶

1. When the Chief of Police is out of town and/or otherwise scheduled to be unavailable to command the HCPD, the County Executive will designate, in writing, an "Acting" authority.

⁴ CALEA 11.2.1

⁵ CALEA 12.1.2d

⁶ CALEA 12.1.2a & b

2. In the unexpected absence of the Chief of Police, the Deputy Chief with the most time in grade will assume command of the HCPD until the Chief returns or the County Executive appoints a new or Acting Chief of Police.
 3. Should all the Deputy Chiefs be unavailable in the unexpected absence of the Chief of Police, the command of the HCPD shall rest with the most senior Captain, based on time in grade. The senior Captain shall maintain command until he is relieved by a Deputy Chief, the Chief of Police, or until the County Executive appoints a new or Acting Chief of Police.
- H. Command Protocol⁷
1. Command protocol in single incidents involving members of different functional assignments will be determined by rank.
 2. A ranking member's appearance on the scene does not automatically place him in charge of that scene unless he assumes control and announces he is taking control consistent with General Order OPS-27, [Incident Command System](#).
- I. Obedience to Orders⁸
1. Members shall be required to obey any lawful order from a higher-ranking member, including such an order relayed by a member of the same or lesser rank.
 2. Members who are given an otherwise proper order that conflicts with a previous order, rule, regulation, or directive shall so inform the Supervisor issuing the order causing the conflict.
 - a. If the higher-ranking member issuing the order does not alter or retract the conflicting order, the order shall stand and members shall obey the order. The responsibility for the conflict shall be upon the higher-ranking member; members shall not be held responsible for having disobeyed the previously issued order, rule, regulation, or directive.
 - b. Members shall not obey an order that they know or should know would require them to commit a criminal act. If in doubt as to the legality of the order, members shall request that the issuing member clarify the order or confer with a higher authority.
 3. Occasions may arise requiring a supervisor to issue an order to members outside the supervisor's immediate responsibility. Nothing in this General Order shall prevent this from occurring.
- J. Joint Patrol/CIB Investigations⁹
1. The patrol officer assigned to the call will be in charge of the crime scene unless:
 - a. Relieved by a detective called to the scene; or
 - b. Relieved by a higher-ranking member.
 2. The on-scene detective assigned to the incident will be in charge of the scene unless relieved by a higher-ranking officer.
 3. In all instances where a superior relieves the officer or detective at the scene, that higher ranking officer will then assume control and responsibility for the situation.

⁷ CALEA 12.1.2c

⁸ CALEA 12.1.3

⁹ CALEA 12.1.2c

- K. Regular Command Staff Meetings shall be conducted bi-weekly unless deemed otherwise by the Chief of Police.¹⁰ Additional meetings or supplemental staff meetings will be scheduled at the discretion of the Chief of Police.

IV. ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE¹¹

- A. This General Order shall define the HCPD organizational structure and functions and shall be made available to all personnel. It shall be updated as needed.
- B. The HCPD shall be divided into five (5) primary command structures:
 - 1. The Office of the Chief of Police (OCP);
 - 2. The Field Operations Command (FOC);
 - 3. The Special Operations Command (SOC);
 - 4. The Criminal Investigations Command (CIC); and
 - 5. The Administration Command (ADMIN).
- C. All members ultimately fall under the command of the Chief of Police; however, the majority of the organizational components report to a Deputy Chief of Police or Executive Director.
- D. The HCPD organizational structure shall be depicted graphically on an organizational chart that is made accessible to all personnel and reviewed and updated as needed.¹² The current approved organizational chart shall be maintained as an Appendix to this General Order, published on the HCPD shared network drive within the General Orders Directory, and uploaded to PowerDMS.
 - 1. The organizational chart shall be maintained in PowerDMS to illustrate the basic organizational structure of the HCPD for all primary components.
 - 2. Should changes or additions to the organizational structure occur, they may be reflected on an update to the organizational chart prior to a revision to this General Order. In that event, the organizational chart will take precedence over the narrative text of this General Order.
- E. Certain components and positions of the HCPD may have written directives detailing their specific responsibilities.

V. OFFICE OF THE CHIEF OF POLICE

- A. The Chief of Police shall be the highest-ranking officer within the HCPD.
 - 1. Under the general direction of the County Executive, the Chief shall be responsible for administering the HCPD in accordance with applicable laws and regulations and for ensuring that organizational objectives are met.
 - 2. The Chief shall apply principles of organizational management including long- and short-range planning, fiscal management, discipline, personnel management, and the evaluation of police service delivery.
 - 3. The Chief shall hold final responsibility for the preparation of the HCPD annual budgets and control of police expenditures.

¹⁰ CALEA 12.1.4

¹¹ CALEA 11.1.1

¹² CALEA 11.1.1

4. The Chief of Police shall direct and coordinate the activities of all organizational components of the HCPD to see that goals and objectives are being achieved efficiently and effectively.
 5. The Chief shall participate in the County Executive's staff meetings and regularly hold police staff meetings to formulate plans and programs, identify and solve problems, discuss policy and procedural issues, and facilitate the exchange of information.
- B. Chief of Staff: A Lieutenant shall be assigned as the Chief of Staff.
1. The Chief of Staff shall manage the day-to-day activities of the OCP via the administrative staff.
 2. The Administrative Officers assigned to Executive Protection shall report to the Chief of Staff.
 3. The HCPD shall maintain an Honor Guard managed by the Chief of Staff to represent the HCPD at police funerals, parades, official dedications, VIP details, or other functions as determined by the Chief of Police.
- C. Budget/Fiscal Section (BFS)
1. BFS reports directly to the Chief of Police and is responsible for the technical preparation and daily administration of all HCPD budgets, including grants, and final budget preparation and management.¹³ Details of this section are outlined in General Order ADM-37, [Budget and Fiscal Procedures](#).
 2. The BFS is responsible for developing, submitting, and managing public and private grants that advance the mission of the HCPD as detailed in General Order ADM-39, [Grant Policy](#).
- D. Planning and Legislative Affairs (PLA) shall be responsible for tracking legislation at the state and county level that may impact Departmental operations; researching operational alternatives; and assisting with strategic planning and special projects.¹⁴
1. PLA shall:
 - a. Coordinate the execution of Memorandums of Understanding (MOUs) between the HCPD and other bodies. The Office of Law (OOL) shall assist in reviewing and finalizing all MOUs before they are presented to the Chief of Police for signature.
 - b. Oversee the Accreditation Coordinator and the accreditation process for the Department.
 2. The Accreditation Coordinator is responsible for ensuring compliance with CALEA standards by collecting, reviewing, and uploading proofs. Additional duties are outlined in General Order ADM-58, [Accreditation Policy](#).
- E. Office of Public Affairs (OPA) reports directly to the Chief of Police.
1. The role of the OPA shall be to communicate effectively with the public and the media. Specific duties are outlined in General Order ADM-14, [Media and Public Relations](#).
 2. The office handles all marketing and public relations for the HCPD including the Annual Report, the HCPD website, and HCPD's traditional and social media presence.
- F. The Professional Standards Bureau
1. Internal Affairs Division (IAD) shall be responsible for:

¹³ CALEA 17.2.1

¹⁴ CALEA 15.1.1

- a. Ensuring the integrity of the HCPD by thoroughly and objectively investigating complaints of member misconduct and maintaining an early identification warning system regarding employee performance as detailed in General Order ADM-02, [Internal Investigations](#).
 - b. The implementation and coordination of all disciplinary actions and procedures instituted by the Office of the Chief of Police.
2. The Quality Assurance Division (QAD)
- a. Staff Inspections Section shall provide objective fact finding, analysis, and reporting to the Chief of Police. Staff Inspection Section duties are enumerated in General Order ADM-06, [Staff Inspections and Quality Assurance](#).
 - b. The Liquor Inspector shall ensure that all applicable liquor laws are enforced; inspections of liquor establishments are conducted; process liquor license applications; and conduct background investigations on the applicants for the Howard County Liquor Board.
 - c. The Policy Coordinator is responsible for the development and revision of HCPD policies and procedures; administration of PowerDMS; and forms control. General Orders ADM-01, [Written Directives](#), and ADM-59, [Publications and Forms Control](#), detail these duties.

G. Legal Advisor

1. The Chief of Police shall utilize a Legal Advisor assigned to the HCPD by the County's Office of Law (OOL).
2. This advisor shall represent the HCPD in administrative hearings and civil proceedings, and issue legal opinions concerning police directives and varied police matters.

VI. FIELD OPERATIONS COMMAND (FOC)

- A. The FOC shall be responsible for providing police patrol twenty-four hours per day, 365 days per year.¹⁵ Services chartered by legal mandate including the prevention and detection of crime, apprehension of criminal offenders, and enforcement of criminal and motor vehicle laws shall be the primary responsibilities of this Command.
- B. The Deputy Chief for FOC shall maintain an administrative staff comprised of both civilian personnel and sworn police officers to provide adequate support services and project management, to include a crime analyst.
- C. Northern and Southern Patrol Districts
 1. Each district shall have a Commander responsible for the district station and operations of the district. A Deputy Commander shall be assigned to provide support services and project management. Appropriate administrative staff comprised of civilians and police officers shall be assigned to each district.
 2. Watch Commanders shall be assigned to the Patrol Districts to provide command responsibility and accountability in the absence of the Chief of Police and other Senior Command Staff Officers. Watch Commanders responsibilities are detailed in General Order OPS-51, [Watch Commander Duties and Responsibilities](#).

¹⁵ CALEA 41.1.1a

3. Each Patrol District shall be divided into beats to provide for the continuous delivery of around-the-clock police services to the community through preventive patrol; maintenance of public order; discovery of hazards; response to citizen needs for services; investigation of crimes and incidents; arresting offenders; traffic direction and control; provision for emergency services; and the reporting of information to appropriate organizational components.
 - a. Patrol officers shall conduct varied follow up investigations as appropriate.
 - b. Bicycle patrol units shall be assigned, trained, and maintained to supplement patrol operations as outlined in General Order OPS-17, [Police Bicycle Patrols](#).
 4. Officers may be assigned to each patrol district to function as a District Detective who shall be responsible for investigations that have been determined to be too time consuming or requiring of extensive out-of-county follow-up for Patrol Officers to conduct. District Detectives shall investigate all juvenile runaway cases.
 5. Each District may be assigned a Traffic Officer whose primary responsibility is to increase traffic enforcement and visibility on roadways designated by the Patrol Districts. Traffic Officers are responsible for aggressively enforcing motor vehicle violations, particularly speeding, impaired drivers, occupant protection, and other unsafe driving behaviors.
 6. Administrative Officers (AO) are sworn members who handle the day-to-day necessities of maintaining the building and equipment within it. The AO ensures the fleet of patrol vehicles are properly maintained; assists in assigning vehicles for use; and works with the Fleet/Facilities Section to procure new vehicles when needed. The AO reports directly to the Deputy District Commander and works with and gives assignments to the district Cadet.
 7. Duty Officers (DO) are responsible for answering telephone calls to the station, directing callers and walk-ins to the appropriate resource, and taking reports that meet the TRU requirements. DOs report directly to the Deputy District Commander.
 8. Cadets may be full-time or seasonal paid civilians. Cadets may conduct a multitude of operational and administrative duties; assist in the transport of patrol vehicles between stations and repair facilities; and help maintain the cleanliness of the station and required supplies within the station. Cadets conduct parking enforcement and assist patrol officers with traffic-related details. They provide assistance to the District Commander, Deputy District Commander, and AO. Cadets report directly to the Deputy District Commander.
- D. Education and Training Division (E&T)
1. E&T duties are detailed in General Order ADM-44, [Education and Training](#).
 2. E&T tracks HCPD certifications including Instructor, Firearms, and First Responder.
 3. The Firearms Section shall be responsible for the coordination of qualifications and maintenance of HCPD firearms, electronic control devices, and impact munitions systems.
 4. Training Section¹⁶
 - a. The Entry-Level Unit shall be responsible for the administration of entry-level and lateral officer academy training, including the development of curricula for training that meets Maryland Police Training and Standards Commission (MPTSC) mandates and classroom instruction.

¹⁶ CALEA 33.2.1b

- b. The In-Service Unit shall be responsible for the administration of in-service training that meets MPTSC mandates, as well as curriculum development, classroom instruction, and evaluation.

VII. SPECIAL OPERATIONS COMMAND

A. Community Services Bureau

- 1. The Community Outreach Division (COD) shall provide community service-oriented police support with regards to crime prevention, working with community organizations, and positive interaction with citizens to foster and maintain strong community ties. General Order OPS-25, [Crime Prevention and Community Relations](#), details specific functions and duties of the COD Sections.

a. Community Outreach Section

- i. The Multicultural, Senior, and Asian Liaison Officers work with specific populations of Howard County to build positive community relations, address specific topics of interest, and encourage citizen participation in HCPD programs and services.
- ii. District Community Resource Officers (DCROs) help address community needs and concerns in areas not covered by the NCRO Section.
 - a) DCROs shall be responsible for community presentations and meetings, crime prevention outreach, and working with the Maryland Community Crime Prevention Institute.
 - b) They shall maintain lists of community group leaders for their designated areas and maintain ongoing communication to identify and address concerns within those areas.

b. Mental Health Section

- i. The Mental Health Section focuses on improving mental health training for police officers through its 40-hr Crisis Intervention Training and by providing initial and refresher mental health training to HCPD members; coordinates resources available to persons and families of persons with mental health issues; and examines calls for service to the HCPD that involve persons experiencing a mental health crisis. The Mental Health Section makes presentations to community partners and stakeholders regarding mental health call response by police
- ii. Chaplains: The HCPD will solicit the services of local clergy from various faiths who wish to volunteer their time to form and maintain a Police Chaplain Program. Chaplain duties are outlined in General Order ADM-08, [Police Chaplain Program](#).

- c. Pathway Patrol Section is responsible for year-round monitoring of the pathways throughout Howard County focusing on high visibility, routine community interaction, crime prevention presentations, and enforcement efforts.

- d. The Neighborhood Community Resource Officer Section (NCROs) shall be responsible for outreach and enforcement in high-population, high-calls-for-service areas specifically identified and designated by the Department.

- i. These officers are responsible for maintaining ongoing contact with Village managers, business owners, church leaders, and other contacts within their designated areas.

- ii. They are responsible for receiving and addressing community concerns within their areas and passing information to other HCPD sections, when appropriate, for more intensive investigations.
 - iii. NCROs shall work with various community, county, and state entities to address quality of life problems in their designated areas and serve as the HCPD liaison officer to community members.
 - e. The Victim Assistance Section shall provide crisis intervention, advocacy, and support services to the victims and witnesses of crime.
 - i. Assistance may include emotional support, referral to specific provider agencies for focused follow-up services, assistance with filing court papers and monetary claims, court accompaniment, guidance through the criminal justice process, and evaluation services for referral to trauma debriefing.
 - ii. Staff members provide transitional support to the State's Attorney's Office Victim Assistance Unit during prosecution and act as liaisons between victims and officers.
2. Youth Division shall coordinate the Law Enforcement Explorer Post, the Youth Police Academy, organize and/or participate in community recreational youth programs.
 - a. The School Resource Officer Section (SRO) Sections will assign specially trained SROs to designated schools to increase police visibility and to initiate proactive intervention strategies in a collaborative effort with students, staff, parents, and the community.
 - b. Youth Programs shall coordinate activities in support of the HCPD commitment to the development and perpetuation of programs designed to prevent and control juvenile delinquency and reduce the future incidence of criminal and anti-social behavior.
 - c. Diversion Coordinator administers all aspects of the Diversion and Teen Court programs to include an assessment of eligibility; administration of program services; coordination of community resources between offenders, parents, and victims; and participation in various community-based organizations.

B. Special Operations Bureau

- 1. Emergency Response Division (ERD)
 - a. The Tactical Section (TAC) shall be specially trained and equipped to handle a wide variety of high-risk situations including hostage and barricade situations, diplomatic security, and warrant service.
 - i. TAC may be utilized to supplement patrol operations in high crime areas or during special or large-scale events.
 - ii. The Tactical Section will be comprised of both full-time officers and decentralized members.
 - a) Decentralized Tactical members hold other primary assignments within the agency but are available for any incident, as needed.
 - b) Decentralized members are afforded the same level of training as full-time members and will be issued the specialized equipment necessary to perform their duties as members of the decentralized tactical team.

- c) For all intents and purposes, when an HCPD written directive references the Tactical Section this shall include the Decentralized Tactical Section.
 - b. K-9 Section
 - i. K-9 teams undergo a variety of training activities under the direction of the designated canine trainer. Additional specialized canine resources, e.g. explosive detection dog, may also be assigned to this unit under the command of the ERD.
 - ii. General Order OPS-14, [K-9 Program](#), provides additional details on the K-9 Section.
 - c. Specialized Support Section
 - i. The HCPD may maintain an Auxiliary Program utilizing specially trained uniformed volunteers who are not sworn police officers but perform specified duties and certain limited responsibilities as outlined in General Order OPS-29, [Police Auxiliary](#).
 - ii. The Volunteer Mounted Patrol (VMP) shall consist of volunteers who travel parks, pathways, and other designated locations by horse, as a high visibility deterrent to crime. They are not sworn members but serve as a public relations tool, provide information to citizens, and watch for and report violations and concerns.
 - iii. The Emergency Services Unit (ESU) is a decentralized group of specially trained officers that respond to crowd control situations, including civil disturbances that exceed the capabilities of personnel who would respond during normal patrol coverage.
 - a) The ESU shall provide HCPD with a tactical response to situations that have the potential for civil unrest or disruption.
 - b) The ESU shall be utilized to respond to missing person events where the manpower, experience, and urgency necessitate such a response.
 - d. Critical Incident Negotiation Team (CINT) shall respond to dangerous or life-threatening situations, usually involving a hostage or barricaded subject, as detailed in General Order OPS-49, [Critical Incident Negotiations Team](#). The Team Supervisor shall report to the ERD Commander.
- 2. The Traffic Management Division (TMD) shall be responsible for the development, implementation and maintenance of comprehensive traffic safety programs that include strategic enforcement and educational activities. These traffic safety programs will support the Maryland Strategic Highway Safety Plan (SHSP), aimed at reducing highway fatalities and serious injuries on county roads and highways.
 - a. The Traffic Enforcement Section (TES) shall be primarily responsible for the investigation of life-threatening injury and fatal collisions. TES shall also be responsible for traffic safety programs, the coordination of selective traffic enforcement programs, collaboration with the Department of Public Works and other county departments in developing strategies to improve traffic conditions, reducing collisions on high-risk roadways, and processing and staffing of Special Event Permits.

- b. The Crossing Guard Section provides uniformed personnel at school crossings designated by the Department of Public Works, Traffic Engineering Division.
 - c. The Automated Enforcement Section (AES) shall be responsible for working with contracted vendors to use technology as an additional enforcement tool to enhance traffic safety. AES shall also be responsible for reducing residential and commercial false alarm calls through education and enforcement.
 - i. The Red Light Cameras Enforcement Unit works to reduce red light running and related collisions by enforcing violations of §21-202(h) of the Transportation Article of the Annotated Code of Maryland. The unit accomplishes its goals by operating and issuing civil citations in accordance with the program's enabling statute, §21-202.1 of the Transportation Article.
 - a) Members assigned to the unit are responsible for assessing new and existing enforcement sites, reviewing data and imagery captured by camera systems, and issuing civil citations to facilitate a change in driver behavior at intersection approaches.
 - b) The Red Light Cameras Enforcement Unit is responsible for acting in the capacity as manager and quality control for red light camera program partners affiliated with the Regional Automated Enforcement Center (RAEC).
 - ii. The False Alarm Reduction Unit is responsible for enforcement of the Howard County Code, Title 17, Public Protection Services, Subtitle 7, Alarms. This includes ensuring alarm users and alarm companies are registered and imposing civil fines for false alarms. The False Alarm Reduction Unit provides educational material to assist alarm users to reduce false alarms.
 - iii. The School Bus Cameras Enforcement Unit uses camera technology on school buses to reduce drivers illegally overtaking stopped school buses in violation of § 21-706 of the Transportation Article of the Annotated Code of Maryland. The Unit's goal is to facilitate a safer environment for school children boarding and departing school buses by changing driver behavior to abide traffic laws as they pertain to school buses. The unit accomplishes its goal by operating and issuing civil citations in accordance with §21-706.1 of the Transportation Article, and Howard County Code Title 21, Subtitle 7. The program operates in cooperation with the Howard County Public School System (HCPSS) and a memorandum of understanding executed by and between HCPSS and the County.
 - d. The Automated Speed Cameras Enforcement Section utilizes speed monitoring systems to conduct speed enforcement and issues civil citations in an effort to change driver behavior in school zones.
- C. Operational Support Bureau (OSB)
- 1. Operational Preparedness and Support Division (OPSD) The OPSD shall coordinate the response to any threat situation that affects force protection. The OPSD shall provide support and strategic planning about a wide variety of special events and weather emergencies in the County and the region.
 - a. Technical Support Section provides direct administrative support and manages special assignments for the Operational Support Captain.

- b. Drone Unit (decentralized) reports to the Technical Support Section and allows trained and authorized members to deploy Small Unmanned Aircraft Systems (sUAS) when the use is appropriate in the performance of official duties and where the collection and use of any audio/video recordings or other data originating from or generated by the sUAS align with HCPD policy and all applicable laws.
 - c. The Intelligence Section shall manage a variety of Homeland Security grant programs, coordinate equipment acquisition and training, and supervise the HCPD representatives at the Joint Terrorism Task Force (JTTF) and Maryland Coordination and Analysis Center (MCAC). The officers that represent the HCPD at the JTTF and MCAC shall report to the OPSD Commander.
2. The Forensic Sciences Division provides forensic services in the areas of evidence collection and processing, photography, fingerprint and latent prints, computers/cell phone examinations, and CDS analysis.
- a. Digital Forensics Section: Digital Forensic Investigators will conduct impartial and objective analysis of computers, cell phones, and other digital evidence using the best available tools and procedures. They will assist in the seizure of computer and digital evidence as necessary and will provide non-forensic technical support as directed by their supervisor.
 - b. Crime Scene Unit: Crime Scene Technicians (CSTs) shall respond to crime scenes to collect, document, and preserve evidence. CSTs process evidence submitted by other members to the extent that their training allows. CSTs shall also provide digital photography support services as part of official investigations and assignments.
 - c. Latent and 10-print Units: Latent Print Examiners shall examine and maintain all latent and inked fingerprints and conduct searches on the Maryland Automated Fingerprinting Identification System (MAFIS). The ten-card custodian is responsible for inked prints for juveniles, adults, and applicants.
 - d. The Forensic Chemist receives and analyzes evidence for the presence of controlled dangerous substances (CDS). This position operates under a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the Maryland State Police Forensic Services Division (MSP-FSD) and conducts the chemical analysis at the MSP-FSD laboratory. The chemist also maintains an office at HCPD FSD to assist with the sampling and packaging from bulk seizures.
3. The Property/Evidence Section shall operate secure, centralized locations for the storage of found, recovered, stolen, and evidentiary property, and maintain detailed records of all property flow within its operation.

VIII. CRIMINAL INVESTIGATIONS COMMAND

- A. The Criminal Investigations Command (CIC) shall be responsible for providing investigative services and special operations twenty-four (24) hours per day, 365 days per year.
- B. The Major Crimes Bureau shall be responsible for conducting continuing investigations into matters of criminal activity and for identifying, apprehending, and assisting in the prosecution of those individuals responsible for such criminal activity.
 - 1. Violent Crimes Division shall be responsible for the investigation of most major crimes of violence committed against individuals, such as homicide, aggravated assault, and kidnapping.
 - a. The Violent Crimes Section shall be responsible for the investigation of homicides, shootings, serious assaults, etc.

- b. Cold Case Investigator(s) shall investigate cold case homicides and other open historical violent crimes as assigned. The investigator(s) will work closely with other detectives and agencies.
 - c. The Robbery Section shall be responsible for investigating commercial armed robberies and any street robbery that is part of an identifiable pattern or that results in serious injury of the victim.
 - d. The Grand Jury Liaison Unit shall work with the Howard County State's Attorney's Office to research criminal records of defendants who have been indicted for felony violations and identifies and designates certain individuals as habitual/serious offenders for prosecutorial action. General Order SOP CIB-07, [Court Liaison \(Grand Jury\)](#), details the responsibilities of this unit.
2. Repeat Offender Division
- a. Crime Reduction Teams Sections work closely with all units within the Department and outside agencies to gather intelligence, conduct surveillance, and map out investigative strategies to thoroughly investigate repeat offenders as well as criminal networks or street gangs.
 - i. The Firearms Investigation Unit is assigned to this section and is responsible for the collaboration with HCPD members, other law enforcement agencies, and prosecutors to ensure efficient and effective firearms investigations.
 - ii. Gang Unit will track and investigate intelligence information received regarding gang activity in the County. The unit may also work with federal and state agencies to develop intelligence regarding gangs. Additional duties are outlined in General Order OPS-69, [Gangs](#).
 - b. The Repeat Offender Proactive Enforcement Section (ROPE) will identify repeat offenders who pose a threat to public safety and whose criminal activity disrupts communities. To manage workload, multiple squads may be assigned within the Section, each with a separate Sergeant. General Order SOP ROPE-01, [Repeat Offender Proactive Enforcement](#), details the ROPE Section's duties.
 - c. Crime Analyst Unit shall support operational needs by coordinating and disseminating criminal information. Analysis of criminal incidents shall be utilized to detect trends, develop suspects, and assist with strategic planning for tactical, operational, and administrative efforts.
3. Vice and Narcotics Division (V&N) shall be responsible for the investigation of vice and controlled dangerous substance violations.
- a. Narcotics Section shall be responsible for the identification and apprehension of suspects in mid- and upper-level drug organizations working within the County.
 - b. Street Drug Section shall be responsible for the identification and arrest of street-level drug dealers and users operating within the county. The primary focus of this Section shall be the enforcement of drug laws in residential communities where drug sales are adversely affecting the quality of life for residents.
 - c. The Vice and Technical Support Section shall be responsible for the investigation of vice and organized crime activity, asset forfeiture, human trafficking, labor trafficking, the investigation and enforcement of prescription drug diversion, and the care, maintenance, storage, research, purchase, and implementation of technical surveillance equipment for covert operations.

- d. V&N Analyst: Performs intermediate technical level administrative support work which typically involves performing clerical and secretarial duties, such as data entry and document management, file maintenance of secure and confidential records, and public contact and service.
 - e. Opioid Coordinator: Performs professional level administrative work which may include some supervisory responsibility. Work includes carrying out administrative and technical tasks related to administrative support, public information, and purchasing.
- C. Special Crimes Bureau
- 1. Family Crimes and Sexual Assault Division (FCSAD)
 - a. Child Abuse/Sexual Assault Section (CASA) Sections shall be responsible for the investigation of all sexual child abuse, serious physical child abuse, adult and juvenile sex crimes, select child pornography investigations, and the investigation and registration of adult sex offenders.
 - i. All child fatalities caused by someone with the care and custody of the victim will be handled by this Section, e.g. in care of parent, babysitter, child care center, school staff, etc.
 - ii. Sex Offender Compliance Unit reports to the CASA Section. Procedures are outlined in General Order OPS-44, [Sex Offender Compliance](#).
 - b. Domestic Violence Section (DV) shall be responsible for reviewing domestic violence-related incident reports to address quality control issues, ensure the proper handling of those incidents, and follow up on domestic violence cases to ensure better outcomes for prosecution.
 - i. They shall track domestic violence cases and repeat offenders.
 - ii. This section shall assist victims of domestic violence by ensuring their safety, making appropriate referrals, and providing other means of assistance.
 - 2. Property Crimes Division
 - a. The Residential Property Crimes Section shall be responsible for the investigation of residential burglaries and major theft crimes.
 - b. The Commercial Property Crimes Section shall be responsible for the investigation of commercial and construction site burglaries and major theft crimes. The Pawn and Metal Theft Units also report to the Commercial Property Crimes Section Supervisor.
 - c. The Pawn and Metal Theft Units shall comply with applicable state and local statutes for all second-hand precious metal, pawnbrokers, scrap metal dealers, automotive recyclers and dismantlers operating in Howard County. The Units will conduct business certifications while working to deter auto thefts and property thefts through competent, professional inspections of salvage, scrap metal, and pawn operations. The Pawn and Metal Theft Units report to the Commercial Property Crimes Section Supervisor.
 - d. Special Investigations Section (SIS)

- i. The Auto Theft Unit shall investigate vehicle theft, fraudulent vehicle purchases, and coordinate auto theft investigations in cooperation with other agencies and dealerships in the region. The unit may also include a civilian auto theft prevention specialist who works in conjunction with investigators to plan and coordinate prevention programs.
 - ii. The Fraud/Forgery Unit shall investigate financial crimes involving check forgery, organized credit card or crypto-currency operations, and major incidents of fraud.
 - iii. The Fire Investigations Unit shall be assigned to work in collaboration with the Department of Fire and Rescue Services to investigate arson related crimes. Arson investigators will receive specialized training in arson detection, investigation, and prosecution.
- e. The Warrant/Fugitive Section shall receive and process District Court warrants for Howard County and outside jurisdictions. The Section shall be responsible for identifying and arresting wanted subjects and handling the intrastate transport of prisoners, as well as the extradition of out-of-State wanted subjects. The Section is also responsible for coordinating with and assisting the US Marshals Service.

IX. ADMINISTRATION COMMAND

- A. The Administration Command shall provide the management of various support services under the direction of the Executive Director. The Executive Director shall maintain an administrative staff comprised of civilian members and sworn police officers to provide adequate support services and project management.
- B. Information and Technology Bureau
 - 1. Communications Division
 - a. This division shall serve as the initial Public Safety Answering Point (PSAP) for all 911 police, fire, and medical emergency service calls.
 - i. The Division is responsible for receiving, prioritizing, routing, and dispatching all emergency and non-emergency calls for police service received.
 - ii. Division operations are separated into three main functions: police dispatch; fire and emergency medical dispatch; and emergency and non-emergency call-taking.
 - iii. Division members support all police operational components through access to METERS and NCIC computer databases.
 - iv. The Division serves as the primary point of contact for other agencies concerning hit confirmations and locates for missing and wanted persons and stolen items.
 - b. The Division is responsible for maintaining a fully functional off-site Alternate Public Safety Answering Point (APSAP) in the event the primary PSAP becomes disabled and non-functional.

2. Information Management Division
 - a. The Records Section shall serve as a centralized repository that provides police records storage, control, and retrieval in a manner consistent with confidentiality mandates. Other functions of this Section shall include entering incident-generated information into the Records Management System (RMS), disseminating reports throughout the HCPD and to the public as needed, and compiling statistics in accordance with national Uniform Crime Reporting (UCR) procedures.
 - i. Uniformed Crime Reporting (UCR) Unit is responsible for the compilation and reporting of all offense data in accordance with standards established by the State of Maryland and the Federal Bureau of Investigation. Monthly UCR reports are used to compile State and National crime statistics. Quarterly HCPD reports are completed utilizing this same data.
 - ii. Validations Unit is responsible for reviewing specified METERS/NCIC transactions for total accuracy and timeliness. Members assigned to the Unit validate all transactions made into the METERS/NCIC computer system in accordance with State and Federal guidelines. The State of Maryland or the Federal Bureau of Investigation will conduct yearly audits. Unit members are designated as the Terminal Agency Coordinator (TAC) liaison between the HCPD and the State of Maryland.
 - iii. Warrant Control Unit maintains current and accurate files for warrant control to facilitate the timely service and completion of outstanding cases to include recording, verifying, and canceling information on wanted subjects.
 - b. The Records Crime Statistical Section is responsible for the collection and analysis of confidential criminal justice data; preparing comprehensive external statistical products and reports; completing Public Information Act record compilation, review, and release; and completing and ensuring the timely submission of Uniform Crime Reports and NIBRS reports.
3. Computer Services Division shall be responsible for technical support and coordinating the maintenance of all HCPD electronic data systems.
 - a. The Computer Operations Section shall provide system administration and tracking of all key computer applications used by the HCPD to include the complete Records Management System (RMS) and Mobile Data Computer System.
 - b. Section members provide maintenance service for all system terminals, personal computers, Local Area Network (LAN), mobile data computers, and other computer peripherals.
 - c. Section personnel support agency members by providing computer training on an as-needed basis.

C. Employment Services Division (ESD)

1. The Executive Director or his designee shall be responsible for:
 - a. All employee and labor relations functions for the HCPD, including liaising with the certified bargaining organizations and participating in labor contract negotiations;
 - b. Processing grievances under the respective labor agreement and representing the HCPD during grievance meetings;
 - c. Arbitrations;

- d. administering fair employment and affirmative action programs;
 - e. Administering the promotion process as dictated in General Order ADM-29, Promotion of Sworn Personnel; and
 - f. Overseeing the Critical Incident Stress Management Team (CISM).
2. Personnel Section shall:
 - a. Act as the liaison to the County Office of Human Resources in hiring members, processing transfers, coordinating member evaluations, and handling personnel related issues.
 - b. Be responsible for personnel file maintenance.
 - c. Coordinate and manage the volunteer and intern program. The HCPD shall augment labor resources by supporting various functions with screened and approved volunteers and college interns performing technical and administrative non-enforcement tasks.
 3. The Payroll Section is responsible for the HCPD payroll function and leave status records, as well as coordinating member evaluations.
- D. The Recruitment Division shall be responsible for the recruitment of sworn officers and shall assist with the selection process for sworn officers and civilian employees.
1. The Commander of the Recruitment Division serves as the chairperson of and is responsible for the management of the Commendation Board as dictated in General Order ADM-05, Awards and Commendations.
 2. The Recruitment Section is responsible for the decentralized agency recruiters, liaising with various advertising venues, and coordinating attendance at career fairs and hiring events. The Recruitment Section Sergeant is also responsible for the Executive Secretary role of the Commendations Board as dictated in General Order ADM-05, Awards and Commendations.
 3. The Screening Section conducts background investigations of HCPD applicants and screening contracted workers who require access to HCPD facilities.
 - a. The Polygraph Unit shall coordinate examinations for applicants, conduct polygraph examinations involving criminal allegations, and maintain all polygraph equipment, as detailed in General Order OPS-70, Polygraph Examinations.
 - b. The Background Unit may conduct reviews of questionnaires, personal interviews, criminal history checks, reference checks, verification of credentials, financial data checks, and other employment requirements.
- E. The Animal Control Division shall be responsible for the enforcement of the laws pertaining to animals as mandated by the Howard County Code. This Division shall operate the Animal Control Shelter and serve as the liaison with allied animal welfare and enforcement agencies.
1. The Field Services Section shall investigate animal cruelty cases and other violations of animal control laws and perform rescue operations for animals in danger.
 2. The Facility Management Section shall accept and care for unwanted pets, administer an adoption program, and conduct humane education programs in County schools.
- F. The Fleet and Facilities Services Section is responsible for vehicle procurement and assignments and has the overall responsibility of all fleet assets. This Section is also responsible for the maintenance of police facilities, to include evaluating the Department's needs for growth.

- G. The Quartermaster Section shall be responsible for the acquisition and management of all HCPD equipment and property. The Quartermaster shall be responsible for the storage and issuance of all supplies and equipment including uniforms, office supplies, and all other police support equipment.
- H. The Wellness Coordinator will support the specific high stress needs of sworn and civilian members' mental and physical wellness by planning, developing, implementing, and monitoring total well-being initiatives to encourage a healthy, resilient, and engaged workforce.

X. CANCELLATION

This General Order cancels and replaces General Order ADM-17 Organizational Direction and Structure, dated January 31, 2018.

AUTHORITY:



Lisa D. Myers
Chief of Police