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## Police Training Officers

### 417.1 PURPOSE AND SCOPE

The Police Training Officer (PTO) program is intended to provide a standardized program to facilitate the officer's transition from the academic setting to the actual performance of general policing duties of the Fargo Police Department.

It is the policy of this department that all new police officers must successfully complete the PTO program. The PTO program is designed to prepare the new officer to perform in a patrol assignment and to acquire all of the skills needed to operate in a safe, productive, and professional manner. It also prepares officers to become better problem solvers in the daily performance of their duties.

### 417.2 DEFINITIONS

**Lateral Police Officer** - An officer who has previous law enforcement experience with another agency.

**Police Training Evaluator (PTE)** - A PTO assigned to a recruit officer during midterm or the final evaluation period of the PTO program.

**Police Training Officer (PTO)**- PTO's are experienced patrol officers who are assigned to the Neighborhood Services Division (NSD), selected by the Department to mentor, coach, train, and evaluate recruit officers in the application of their previously acquired law enforcement knowledge and skills.

**Recruit Officer** - Any entry level or lateral police officer who has been newly appointed to the department, and has not graduated the PTO program.

### 417.3 POLICE TRAINING OFFICER

PTO's are a vital part of the PTO program. They have numerous responsibilities to include:

- (a) Review the recruit officer's work and facilitate the learning for recruit officers.
- (b) Complete required training documentation in a timely manner.
- (c) Exhibit patience and professionalism with all recruit officers, coworkers, and the public.
- (d) Maintain their own skills and abilities as required to perform the essential duties of a police officer.
- (e) Attend in-service training as required.
- (f) Uphold the Department's Vision, Mission, and Values in pursuit of organizational goals.
- (g) Adhere to all department standards of conduct and serve as a role model for other officers.
- (h) Display leadership, a positive attitude, strong work ethic, and professional appearance.

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#### 417.3.1 SELECTION PROCESS

A PTO shall be selected based on the following requirements:

- (a) A strong desire to help new recruit officers learn and develop.
- (b) A minimum of two years of patrol experience with the Department.
- (c) Demonstrated ability as a positive role model both inside and outside the Department.
- (d) Ability to receive positive and critical feedback, as well as constructive evaluation from supervisors and peers.
- (e) Possess and demonstrate effective communication, organizational knowledge, and leadership skills.
- (f) Display knowledge and understanding of department policies and procedures, as well as applicable law and policing best practices.

#### 417.3.2 PTO TRAINING

An officer selected as a PTO shall successfully complete a PTO course approved by the Department prior to being assigned as a PTO. PTO's are expected to attend on-going training to improve and enhance their policing skills. They are also expected to stay up-to-date on changes to department policies, procedures, local, and state laws.

#### 417.3.3 PTO RANK

PTO's who have successfully trained at least one recruit officer and obtained approval of the PTO Administrator, shall be allowed to wear a double chevron on the sleeves of their uniforms, as long as they remain in good standing with the Department and are actively involved in the training of new recruits.

PTO's shall fall within the Department's chain of command in accordance with the Organizational Structure and Responsibilities policy (200). PTO's are appointed by the Department and not are considered a promotional position.

#### 417.3.4 REMOVAL FROM PTO DUTIES

PTO's who fail to satisfactorily maintain their skills, professionalism, or leadership may be removed from their appointed status as a PTO by the Neighborhood Services Division commander.

### **417.4 POLICE TRAINING SERGEANT**

The Police Training Sergeant (PTS) is the direct supervisor of a recruit officer assigned to their shift or area of responsibility.

The responsibilities of the PTS include:

- (a) Meeting bi-weekly with the recruit officer and their assigned PTO to discuss the recruit's performance, training expectations, and learning progress.
- (b) Reviewing all recruit officer and PTO documentation.
- (c) Ensuring all training documentation is properly filed.
- (d) Handling short-term scheduling issues as needed.

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- (e) Providing guidance to the assigned PTO when necessary.

### **417.5 POLICE TRAINING OFFICER PROGRAM ADMINISTRATOR**

The PTO Program Administrator should be a Neighborhood Services Division (NSD) lieutenant, who has experience and familiarity with the PTO program. The PTO Administrator's responsibilities include, but are not limited to:

- (a) Overseeing the overall operations of the PTO program.
- (b) Providing updates about recruit training to the executive command staff.
- (c) Overseeing the overall selection and training of the PTO's.
- (d) Identifying and recommending updates or changes to department policies and procedures related to the PTO program.
- (e) Addressing disciplinary or conduct issues within the PTO program in accordance with the Personnel Complaint policy (1009).

### **417.6 POLICE TRAINING OFFICER PROGRAM COORDINATOR**

The PTO Program Coordinator shall be selected from the rank of sergeant within the Neighborhood Services Division (NSD) by the PTO Program Administrator and the NSD commander. The responsibilities of the PTO Coordinator include, but are not limited to:

- (a) Providing leadership to the PTO training team and ensuring communication about the program is shared with all team members.
- (b) Establishing recruit schedules and PTO assignments.
- (c) Facilitating PTO meetings and retreats.
- (d) Ensuring PTO performance reviews are completed and proper follow-up is conducted.
- (e) Advising and assisting the cadre of Police Training Sergeants.
- (f) Monitoring individual PTO performance and keeping the PTO Administrator updated about their performance.
- (g) Ensuring all training documentation is complete and maintained.
- (h) Attending Board of Evaluator (BOE) meetings.
- (i) Participating in the selection and training of new PTO's, BOE members.

### **417.7 RECRUIT OFFICER TRAINING REQUIREMENTS**

The Department reserves the right to add curriculum and/or increase any of the training phase timeframes as deemed appropriate to ensure recruit officers are provided with sufficient training to meet operational needs and community expectations. Recruit officers shall successfully complete all facets of the PTO program to maintain employment with the Fargo Police Department. This includes all weeks of phase training (A-D) as prescribed by the Department, which is minimally 12 weeks, a two-week midterm evaluation, a one-week non-traditional training period, and a two-

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week final evaluation. The length of the training program may be extended for individual recruit officer's if it is determined additional time is needed for development.

The training period for lateral police officers may be shortened to a minimum of eight (8) weeks depending on their demonstrated performance and level of experience. The lateral police officer must also pass a final evaluation.

To the extent possible, recruit officers should be assigned to a variety of PTO's, shifts, and geographical areas during the training program.

#### **417.8 TRAINING DOCUMENTATION**

Documentation of the recruit officer's performance in the PTO program is an important component of the training process and shall be completed as outlined below. All documentation shall become part of each recruit officer's permanent training record.

##### **417.8.1 RECRUIT OFFICER DOCUMENTATION**

Recruit officers shall complete a weekly learning journal summarizing their training experiences. This single document consolidates all daily activity for the week, Each journal shall include the following forms in the format provided by the Department:

- (a) Call Experience Tracking Form - Completed weekly using LERMS to research the number and type of calls for service the recruit responded to.
- (b) Report Experience Tracking Form - Completed for each case generated during the week, identifying the report type and outcome (e.g. Arrests, Citations, Long Form Complaints, etc.).

A Resource Development Project (RDP) shall be assigned to the recruit on the first day of Phase A and is due on the last day of Phase D.

Additionally, each recruit shall be assigned one Problem-Based Learning Exercise (PBLE) on the first day of Phase C. The PBLE is intended to be a three-week project that is expected to be completed by the last day of Phase C. Each recruit officer shall present their PBLE to the Board of Evaluators (BOE) during the final BOE meeting.

##### **417.8.2 PTO/PTE DOCUMENTATION**

PTO's and PTE's shall review the recruit's weekly journal and submit a brief summary of the recruit's overall progress. Detailed performance observations shall be documented in the Coaching and Training Report (CTR) or the Coaching and Training Evaluation (CTE) as appropriate.

PTO's shall complete a weekly CTR for each recruit and PTE's shall complete a CTE during midterm and final evaluations, which shall include:

- (a) A selection for each core competency (Achieved, Developing or Not Achieved) and documentation supporting each selection that includes detailed observations and examples regardless of category selected. If identified as developing or not

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achieved, additional documentation shall be provided to include a plan to address the performance issues noted.

- (b) A summary of the recruit's performance and a recommendation of "Pass" or "Additional training" shall be provided by the PTO in week three of the CTR and by the PTE in week two of the CTE.

PTO's shall complete a check-in on the recruit officers RDP near the middle of each training phase, but no later than the end of each training phase.

PTO's training in Phase C shall review the recruit officer's PBLE utilizing the provided PBLE rubric and document the review using the PBLE evaluation rubric.

### **417.8.3 PTS DOCUMENTATION**

PTS's shall review each recruit's weekly journal and comment and/or initial the document to verify review, ensuring that it is fully completed for the assigned week and meets documentation expectations pursuant to this policy.

PTS's shall also complete a weekly PTS summary to confirm that all documentation is complete and approved, noting whether the CTR meets documentation standards, and provide an overall assessment of the recruit's progress. Upon submission of the PTS summary, overtime slips for the PTO may be approved.

PTS's shall also review and comment on the check-ins for the recruit officer's RDP and PBLE.

### **417.9 BOARD OF EVALUATORS**

The Board of Evaluators (BOE) shall be made up of sworn staff representing each division who have experience in the PTO program. The BOE members assigned to divisions other than Neighborhood Services maintain an inactive status, but are still considered part of the PTO program. Members are selected by the PTO Coordinator and PTO Administrator based on the member's past performance as a trainer.

The BOE shall meet and determine successful completion by the recruit officer at the conclusion of the midterm and final evaluation periods. During a convened BOE meeting, the members shall discuss the recruit's performance after a thorough review of any relevant training documentation. The PTO Coordinator may require the PTO and the assigned PTS to be present and provide their observations and opinions regarding the recruit's performance. At the conclusion of the meeting, the BOE shall submit a written recommendation to the PTO Coordinator concerning the recruit officer's continuation, extension, removal, or graduation from the program. The Chief of Police, following a recommendation from the PTO Administrator, shall have the final determination regarding a recruit officer's graduation from the program.

The BOE shall consist of no less than three members during a convened meeting.

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### **417.10 EXTENSIONS TO TRAINING**

Occasionally, recruit officers may need additional time to learn the skills needed to be a successful police officer. The Department recognizes not every recruit officer will complete training at the same pace as others, and extensions to the training program may be necessary.

Each extension of training is unique to the individual recruit officer and can vary in length. The goal of the training extension will be to continue substantial progress towards successful graduation. Training extensions shall be followed by an evaluation period to assess the progress of the recruit officer.

#### **417.10.1 LEARNING ACTIVITY PACKAGE (LAP)**

When a recruit officers training is extended due to performance or learning issues, the assigned PTO, PTS, and the PTO Coordinator shall create a learning activity package (LAP) for the recruit officer. The LAP shall contain the following:

- (a) A summary of the recruit officer's training deficiency.
- (b) The expected outcomes and learning objectives of the training extension.
- (c) Detailed tasks and activities which should help the recruit officer overcome their training deficiency.
- (d) A list of resources which can be used by the recruit officer and the PTO to help in the recruit officer's learning.

The LAP shall be given to the recruit officer prior to the start of the training extension and a copy of the LAP shall be retained in the recruit officer's training documentation.

#### **417.10.2 COMPLETION OR CONTINUATION OF EXTENSION**

An extension period shall be followed by an evaluation period to further assess the recruit officer's progress. A training extension period will end once it's determined a recruit officer has satisfactorily achieved the objectives of the assigned LAP by the BOE. If the BOE determines the recruit officer has not achieved the objectives of the LAP, the BOE will determine if a continuation of the original LAP is needed or decide if a new LAP is necessary.

### **417.11 FAILURE TO COMPLETE THE PTO PROGRAM**

If it is determined by the BOE and the PTO training team that the recruit officer is not making sufficient progress towards the completion of the PTO program, the process for removal from the program shall be initiated upon the approval of the PTO Administrator and the Neighborhood Services Division (NSD) commander. The process shall include:

- (a) A recommendation to the Chief of Police to remove the recruit from training. If approved, the recruit officer shall be placed on paid administrative leave immediately.
- (b) The NSD commander shall meet with the recruit officer to explain the investigative process as well as the option to resign from the position prior to initiating a formal complaint.

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In the event the recruit officer does not voluntarily resign, a formal personnel complaint shall be initiated by the PTO Administrator. The Professional Accountability Unit shall conduct the investigation in accordance with the Personnel Complaints Policy (1009).

#### **417.12 PTO PROGRAM COMPENSATION**

Police Training Officers shall receive one (1) hour of overtime each day they are assigned an officer in training. Compensation for all other PTO related meetings, including the BOE, shall be approved and compensated pursuant to the Compensation Policy (1019).

#### **417.13 REVISION DATE 08/12/2025**