Organizational Structure and Responsibility

200.1 PURPOSE AND SCOPE

The organizational structure of the Department is designed to create an efficient means to accomplish the mission and goals and to provide for the best possible service to the public.

200.2 DIVISIONS

The Chief of Police is responsible for administering and managing the Fargo Police Department and overseeing personnel assigned to the Office of the Chief. In addition, there are three operational divisions in the Police Department:

(a) Professional Standards Division

(b) Neighborhood Services Division

(c) Criminal Investigations Division

200.2.1 OFFICE OF THE CHIEF

The Office of the Chief includes the Chief of Police, Assistant Chief of Police, Public Information Officer, Administrative Assistant, and the Payroll/Procurement Assistant. This office has operational and administrative responsibilities over the entire department. The Assistant Chief serves as the operational conduit and supervisor for division commanders and is responsible for department budgets and grants, project management, emergency management, fleet, and serves as the head of the Department in the absence of the Chief.

200.2.2 PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS DIVISION

The Professional Standards Division is commanded by the assigned Division Commander, whose primary responsibility is to provide general management, direction and control of the Professional Accountability Unit, the Training and Development Unit, and the Records Unit. This includes oversight of department personnel investigations, use of force, civil litigation, open records, and all academy, in-service, and regional training. Division personnel may also liaison with identified city and state committees or boards relative to oversight and accountability issues.

200.2.3 NEIGHBORHOOD SERVICES DIVISION

The Neighborhood Services Division is commanded by the assigned Division Commander, whose primary responsibility is to provide general management, direction and control of the Patrol Unit and Specialized Services Unit. The Patrol Unit provides immediate response to a variety of public safety concerns, proactively enforces laws and ordinances, conducts investigations and engages the public. The Specialized Services Division consists of the Community Engagement Team, School Resource Officers, Community Service Officers, and a variety of specialty teams (SWAT, Negotiations, Canine, etc.). Division personnel may also liaison with a variety of community organizations, service providers, and other criminal justice entities.

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200.2.4 CRIMINAL INVESTIGATIONS DIVISION

The Criminal Investigations Division is commanded by the assigned Division Commander, whose primary responsibility is to provide general management, direction and control of the Criminal Investigations Unit, the Narcotics Unit, the Intelligence and Analysis Unit, Metro Area Street Crimes Unit, and the Property and Evidence Unit. Division personnel conduct investigations of serious and/or complex crimes, as well as enforce and investigate narcotics offenses, locate and arrest wanted persons, analyze and disseminate data department-wide, and collaborate with various state and federal partners. Division personnel may also liaison with with a variety of specialized service providers, community organizations and providers, as well as other criminal justice entities.

200.3 COMMAND PROTOCOL

200.3.1 SUCCESSION OF COMMAND

The Chief of Police exercises command over all personnel in the Department. During planned absences the Assistant Chief of Police shall be the acting Chief of Police. In the event both the Chief and Assistant Chief are on a planned absence, a Division Commander shall be designated to serve as the acting Chief of Police.

Except as designated above, the order of command authority in the absence or unavailability of the Chief and Assistant Chief is as follows:

(a) Senior ranking Division Commander

(b) Senior ranking Shift Commander

(c) Senior ranking Sergeant

All department employees shall acknowledge the Department’s rank structure and follow the established chain-of-command whenever possible and/or practical. In the absence of a supervisor or command officer, the following personnel shall be recognized as being in command until relieved by a supervisor or command officer:

(a) Police Training Officer (PTO) - if present and determined by the individual officer's tenure with the department.

(b) Senior officer on scene - determined by the individual officer's tenure with the department.

200.3.2 UNITY OF COMMAND

The principles of unity of command ensure efficient supervision and control within the Department. Generally, each employee should be accountable to one supervisor at any time for a given assignment or responsibility. However, any supervisor may temporarily direct any subordinate if an operational necessity or safety issue exists. Identified and specially trained supervisors may have additional operational authority pursuant to department policy or assignment (e.g., Canine, SWAT, etc.),

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200.3.3 ORDERS

Members shall respond to and make a good faith and reasonable effort to comply with lawful orders of superior officers and other proper authority.

200.3.4 UNLAWFUL AND CONFLICTING ORDERS

No member is required to obey any order that outwardly appears to be in direct conflict with any federal law, state law or local ordinance. Following an unlawful order is not a defense and does not relieve the member from criminal or civil prosecution or administrative discipline. If the legality of an order is in doubt, the affected member shall ask the issuing supervisor to clarify the order or confer with a higher authority.

Members given an otherwise proper order which conflicts with a previous rule, regulation, procedure, order, or directive, shall respectfully inform the command officer, supervisor, or superior officer issuing the order of the conflict. If the command officer, supervisor, or superior officer issuing the order does not alter or rescind the conflicting order, the conflicting order shall be obeyed. Under these circumstances, the outcome for the conflicting order shall be the responsibility of the command officer, supervisor, or superior officer issuing the order.

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