



MILWAUKEE POLICE DEPARTMENT

STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURE

475 – MILITARY DEPLOYMENT / REINTEGRATION

GENERAL ORDER: 2026-21
ISSUED: May 14, 2026

EFFECTIVE: May 14, 2026

REVIEWED/APPROVED BY:
Assistant Chief Craig Sarnow
DATE: April 10, 2026

ACTION: Amends General Order 2023-58 (November 2, 2023)

WILEAG STANDARD(S): 2.4.2

475.00 PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to establish operational guidelines to assist department members when they are activated for military deployment. These guidelines are to include but are not limited to the pre-deployment, deployment and post-deployment phases of military activation. Further, this policy will assist the member with reintegration upon their return from military active duty to civilian police service.

This policy excerpts strategies from the Department of Defense, Wisconsin Department of Justice Law Enforcement Standards Board (LESB) and the Department of Veterans Affairs to assist with reintegration, retraining and positive re-acclimating of returning veterans. It also is in conformance with the Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act (USERRA), which guarantees the rights afforded to veterans and returning veterans under this and other laws.

475.05 DEFINITION OF TERMS

A. DEPLOYMENTS

1. Long Term Deployment

A deployment of 181 days or more. For a long term deployment, the training cycle will be the successful completion of phases one and/or two depending on duty assignment.

2. Medium Deployment

A deployment of at least 31 days, but less than 181 days. For a medium deployment, the training cycle will be the successful completion of phases one and/or two depending on duty assignment.

3. Short Term Deployment

A deployment of 30 days or less. For a short term deployment, the training cycle will be phase one of the program only (phase two may be added if deemed necessary).

B. OTHER DEFINITIONS

1. American Legion Police POST 415

Chartered in 1939 and is unique to other American Legion Posts in that all its members are either employed or retired Milwaukee Police officers. Post 415 will provide military service banners for display at the member's work location during deployment for those members who desire one.

2. CONUS

A military deployment within the continental United States.

3. Dryhootch

A private organization that provides support to returning veterans through a partnership with the Veteran's Affairs Administration.

4. In-Theater

An overseas deployment, in a "hot zone", combat zone or potential combat zone.

5. Labor Organizations

The Milwaukee Police Association (MPA) and the Milwaukee Police Supervisor's Organization (MPSO) are the two labor organizations that represent sworn members of the department. Both labor organizations are resources that work with their members during the various stages of military deployment.

6. Military Exit Interview

The intent of a military exit interview is provide direct interaction with a deploying member, provide information and to determine the needs of the member and their family. A military exit interview will be informal and is voluntary; however, the MLO must make every attempt to conduct this interview either in person or via telephone prior to deployment. The military exit interview will be documented on *Military Exit Interview Checklist* (form PM-28E) and will only document that the interview was conducted and the information that was provided to the deploying member. If the MLO is unable to complete the military exit interview, then the box "Unable to Complete" should be marked with the reason for non-completion cited.

A military exit interview will be conducted with a departing member that addresses:

- a. The estimated length of time of deployment, if known.
- b. If the deployment is CONUS or OCONUS.
- c. A family point of contact (if desired by the member).

- d. The assigned military point of contact for the member.
- e. E-mail address, mailing address or contact phone number for the member.
- f. An explanation of what to expect from the department when they return from deployment (e.g., training cycle / military service mentor assignment, training objectives, the return interview).

Note: A member's participation in the military exit interview is voluntary and he/she is not required to answer any of the above questions.

7. Military Liaison Officer (MLO)

The Military Liaison Officer (MLO) is a supervisor that plays a vital role in maintaining lines of communications among the deployed member, the member's family and the department. The Office of the Chief will appoint the MLO and an assistant MLO. Both positions are delegated assignments which are not eligible for additional compensation, outside of labor contract provisions. The MLO, at the discretion of the Chief of Police or designee, may be temporarily assigned to the Human Resources Division, if the need arises. The MLO will also maintain a group of Military Service Mentors (MSM's) to work in partnership with returning veterans, according to this policy.

8. Military Return Interview

A military return interview documents the description of deployment and what was experienced, (combat or rear area), and an assessment of a member's needs for the reintegration to civilian police work. The military return interview will be informal, but participation by the returning member is mandatory. The military return interview will be documented on *Military Return Interview Checklist* (form PM-29E), and will only document that the interview was conducted and the information that was provided to the returning member.

9. Military Service Banner

If desired by the member, a military service banner will be created by American Legion Police Post 415. Accompanying the military service banner will be the member's photo and information about the member to be displayed at the member's work location while he/she is deployed. The information about the member shall be generated by the member's commanding officer, or their designee.

10. Military Service Mentor (MSM)

A MSM is a police partner who is assigned to patrol duties. An MSM works directly with a returning veteran, through the transition cycle and provides assistance with reintegration. Prior military service is a prerequisite to serve as a MSM. A MSM is preferably a Field Training Officer (FTO) or FTO supervisor, has training experience, is a member of the Wellness Team, or has crisis negotiation team

training. The MSM is a voluntary position and not subject to additional compensation, outside of labor contract provisions. To be a MSM, a member must apply and be selected by a panel that consists of the Military Liaison Officer (MLO), a Human Resources Division representative, a Training Division representative and the Wellness Team coordinator or designee.

11. OCONUS

A military deployment outside the continental United States.

12. Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD)

Post Traumatic Stress Disorder is a traumatic stress that differs from other stress in that it is a reaction to terrifying events or repeated exposure to danger. PTSD can be treated by psychotherapy, medication and self-help techniques. PTSD can be: acute (lasting 1-3 months), chronic (lasting 3 months-years), or delayed (beginning months to years after the trauma).

13. USERRA – Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act.

The USERRA act of 1994 protects service member's and veteran's employment rights.

14. Wellness Team

The purpose of the Wellness Team is to provide a core group of personnel who are trained to provide confidential support, information, clergy and mental health professionals to employees who are seeking assistance whether it is related to a critical incident, day-to-day work stress or personal life stress.

475.10 PRE-DEPLOYMENT (WILEAG 2.4.2)

When a member receives verbal or written orders to deploy, the member must notify the Human Resources Division and the MLO as soon as possible. The duties, functions and responsibilities for each involved entity are as follows:

A. FUNCTIONS/DUTIES OF HUMAN RESOURCES DIVISION

1. As soon as practicable, notify the MLO when notice of a deployment is received.
2. Ensure proper documents are filed for establishment of pay into direct deposit, along with providing information on how to contact the department when returning from deployment for reestablishing pay and benefits.

B. FUNCTIONS/DUTIES OF THE MLO

1. Assist the deployed member and his/her family in preparing for deployment.
2. Coordinate, conduct & document the military exit interview on *Military Exit*

Interview Checklist (form PM-28E). Military exit interviews are an important component to the success of the program. The departing member is highly encouraged to participate, but their participation will be voluntary (in full or in part).

3. Will ensure proper notifications are or have been made to the member's commanding officer, the member's respective assistant chief of police, the Wellness Team coordinator, Human Resources Division – Payroll and the member's affiliated labor organization.
4. If a military service banner is desired by the deploying member, contact American Legion Police Post 415 and provide the member's photo, branch of service, and anticipated service dates for incorporation into a military service banner.

C. FUNCTIONS/DUTIES OF THE TRAINING DIVISION REPRESENTATIVE

1. A Training Division representative will assist the MLO with the military exit interview.
2. The Training Division representative will be responsible for the storage of the member's equipment until the member is ready to return to police duty.

D. FUNCTIONS / DUTIES OF THE WELLNESS TEAM REPRESENTATIVE

At the request of the deploying member, a Wellness Team representative will be available to meet with the departing member and/or their family to provide information and resources.

E. FUNCTIONS / DUTIES OF THE MEMBER'S COMMANDING OFFICER

1. Assist the MLO in discharging his/her duties when requested by the MLO and when possible.
2. The commanding officer will have the discretion to go below minimum staffing levels to allow the deploying member to use discretionary time off (holiday, compensatory time, vacation) to get personal affairs in order prior to deploying.
3. The commanding officer or designee shall be responsible for the completion of the *Separation Checkout Sheet* (form PS-25), the collection of the member's equipment, and the conveyance of the member's equipment to the Training Division for storage until the member is ready to return to police duty.

F. FUNCTIONS/DUTIES OF THE MEMBER'S LABOR ORGANIZATION

The member's affiliated labor organization will assist the member with benefits, and other matters related to the members separation.

G. FUNCTIONS / DUTIES OF AMERICAN LEGION POLICE POST 415

If desired by the member, American Legion Police Post 415 will provide a military

service banner to be hung at the member's work location. Accompanying the banner will be the member's photo, branch of service and length of deployment.

475.20 DEPLOYMENT

During extended periods of deployment, the member will generally be assigned to the Human Resources Division during the time of separation. During the deployment period, the MLO will be responsible for:

- A. Remaining in contact with the deployed member, via phone and/or e-mail.
- B. If approved and supported by the deploying member, maintain periodic email and/or phone contact with the member's family to assess any logistical and/or support needs and make referrals where required.
- C. Making periodic phone contact with the deployed member's point of contact in the United States.
- D. Be a resource to the deployed member and his/her family by providing department assistance during the deployment.
- E. When possible, contacting the member about 30 days prior to the member's estimated return date to verify the return date and provide the member with information on where to report upon return. The member has a specific time frame to notify the department of their return to work, dependant on length of service, under USERRA as listed below:
 1. Short term deployment (30 days or less): Member reports to their next (pre-deployment) regularly assigned shift, however the returning member is permitted at least 8 hours of rest at their "home of record" prior to starting the next shift.
 2. Medium deployment (at least 31 days, but less than 181 days): Member must provide notification to the Human Resources Division within 14 days of completion of service.
 3. Long term deployment (181 days or more): Member must provide notification to the Human Resources Division within 90 days following completion of service.

475.25 POST-DEPLOYMENT

A. OVERVIEW OF POST-DEPLOYMENT

1. Unless directed otherwise by the MLO, the returning member must notify the Human Resources Division of their return to duty. The Human Resources Division will contact the MLO, who will assist the member with direction as to where and when to report to duty.
2. The reintegration-training program consists of two (2) phases for members returning to patrol assignments or those who anticipate returning to a patrol

assignment shortly after return.

3. For members returning to non-patrol assignments, reintegration-training will consist only of phase one. Upon return to police duty, the member will generally be assigned to temporary administrative duty at the Training Division, but will have no police powers until the completion of phase one of reintegration. When the member returns and reports for duty after a deployment, the MLO and a member of the Training Division, will conduct a mandatory military return interview to determine what was experienced while deployed and to assess the member's training needs. The military return interview will be documented on *Military Return Interview Checklist* (form PM-29E).
4. Following completion of the military return interview, the member will be referred to the Wellness Team co-coordinator(s). The Wellness Team co-coordinator(s) will contact the member and provide military appropriate mental health information and assist the member with referrals if necessary. Wellness Team referrals may include, but are not limited to the city of Milwaukee Employee Assistance Program (EAP), department mental health providers, Dryhooch or the Department of Veterans Affairs. Any referrals made will be confidential and will be provided to assist the returning member with any mental health needs.
5. All returning members must show competency in all skills prescribed by the Training Division, in phase one, before being returned to full duty status. The member will be returned to full duty status with full arrest powers by order of the Chief of Police / assistant chief of police and will be fully vested with all department equipment, including their firearm and badge, after successful completion of phase one.

6. Reintegration to a Patrol Assignment (Phase Two)

The length of phase two will be based on the length of the member's deployment and the member's ability to successfully complete the tasks and benchmarks within the phase. The final decision as to the length of this phase will be a cooperative decision made by the MLO, the MSM, and/or Training Division staff. With the concurrence of the MLO and the Training Division director upon completion of phase two, the member will be assigned back to their previously assigned work location, subject to the needs of the department and those of the returning member.

7. Reintegration to a Non-Patrol Assignment

After completion of phase one, members returning to non-patrol assignments will be returned to police duty.

B. PHASE ONE - RETRAINING

1. USERRA prohibits an employer from requiring a blanket "fitness-for-duty" evaluation. A graduated reintroduction program is suggested which allows for:

- a. Department and legal updates – Mission critical updates and/or refreshers on department policies and procedures (to include daily roll call publishing's, roll call video review, SOP review, legal/statutory updates, etc).
 - b. Firearms qualification.
 - c. Defense and Arrest Tactics (DAAT) refresher - designed to review DAAT nomenclature, procedures and tactics. This will include segments intended to “reprogram” muscle memory from military weapons systems to civilian equipment and weapons.
 - d. Emergency Vehicle Operation and Control (EVOC) training to assist in transition from tactical driving to domestic driving.
 - e. Vehicle contacts refresher.
 - f. Professional communications skills refresher.
2. The MLO along with the Training Division director or designee will establish a program that minimally incorporates the above listed items.

Note: For deployments of less than one year, the training time will be at the discretion of the Training Division director, based upon the needs of the returning member.

For a deployment of one year or greater, the WI Law Enforcement Standards Board (LESB) mandates at least 24 hours of formal re-training be conducted in the above topic matters.

C. PHASE ONE - BENCHMARKS:

The MLO will work with the Human Resources Division, the returning member, and the Training Division to facilitate fulfilling the following required benchmarks (not in any particular order):

1. Placement of the member on administrative status until the completion of phase one.
2. Schedule, complete and document the *Military Return Interview Checklist* (form PM-29E).
3. Schedule and complete a return meeting with the member's commanding officer. Choose and assign a MSM for phase two. In the absence of an MSM being available, the MLO shall work in conjunction with the member's commanding officer to find an acceptable partner to conduct ride-alongs with the returning member during their fieldwork reintegration. A fellow military veteran is preferred for this portion of the returning member's fieldwork reintegration.
4. If desired by the member, devote a segment of time at the member's roll call

(returning member's choice) for command staff to officially recognize the member's return from active military duty and for the presentation / retirement of the member's military service banner.

5. Assist the returning member in completing the necessary paperwork for the military service recognition device (as indicated in SOP 490.25). If the member desires, they may elect to have the device awarded during the November awards ceremony.
6. Conduct an inspection of the member's stored equipment for serviceability and return of equipment to the member (all equipment will be returned with the exception of the badge and firearm, which will be returned upon successful completion of phase one).
7. Scheduling and completion of a medical exam and/or drug test, if required (determined by length of deployment).

D. PHASE TWO (FIELD DEPLOYMENT)

The primary function of field deployment is to reacclimatize the member to fieldwork as a patrol officer. The returning member will work with their MSM, or approved partner, in a field environment on a two-person squad. The MSM will assess the member's ability to perform fieldwork and retrain as necessary. Members will be accessed to ensure proper tactics are utilized and that the member is able to perform basic administrative functions, according to benchmarks established by the Training Division. The MSM will also take the appropriate time to retrain on new technologies, such as squad cameras, body worn cameras, computer systems, report writing and citation procedures, etc. Phase two will last until the member again feels comfortable performing the required duties of a patrol officer and has satisfied the prescribed benchmarks of phase two.

E. COMPLETION OF PHASE TWO

1. The MSM, or approved partner, will keep the commanding officer or designee verbally abreast with the progress of the member during phase two. In addition, the MSM will document in writing all training efforts on a *Department Memorandum* (form PM-9E) and submit the memorandum to the member's commanding officer immediately after completing phase two. The commanding officer will review the submitted documents for completeness and will forward the completed file to the MLO, who will in turn disseminate the files as follows:
 - a. Master file – Training Division (member's personnel file)
 - b. File copy – MLO
 - c. File copy – Human Resources Division (member's personnel file)
2. In the event a member does not satisfactory complete phase two of reintegration and/or the MSM, or approved partner, has concerns for the returning member's mental health, the commanding officer must be notified immediately. If job performance is preventing satisfactory completion of phase two, a *Department*

Memorandum (form PM-9E) must be completed by the MSM, or approved partner, detailing the returning member's unsatisfactory completion of this phase. The MLO, along with the following (as needed): the member's commanding officer, the Training Division director and the Wellness Team coordinator will independently evaluate the concern(s) and provide whatever assistance or guidance is required to assist the member in returning to police duty.

475.30 SIX MONTH FOLLOW-UP

The MLO and the member's commanding officer will conduct a 6-month meeting with the member to follow-up on needs associated with re-acclimation, to include, but not limited to: training, employee health and wellness and overall assimilation back to normalcy. This meeting will be documented on the member's employee evaluation, noting that the member was deployed for military service, any awards or medals that were earned during military service, the employee's progression and work performance during the rating period.

475.35 REFERENCES

- A. Wilenet
- B. "Law Enforcement Leader's Guide on Combat Veterans" (2010)
- C. International Association of Chiefs of Police and Bureau of Justice
- D. "Returning Military Veterans" (FBI Law Enforcement Bulletin August 2010)
- E. "Managing PTSD and Other Combat-Related Stress Reactions"
(U.S. Army Handbook date 2005 "Channing-bete.com" item # PS938334)
- F. Wisconsin Law Enforcement Standards Board



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