



MILWAUKEE POLICE DEPARTMENT

STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURE

030 – WRITTEN DEPARTMENT DIRECTIVES

GENERAL ORDER: 2025-24
ISSUED: June 4, 2025

EFFECTIVE: June 4, 2025

REVIEWED/APPROVED BY:
Assistant Chief Craig Sarnow
DATE: April 25, 2025

ACTION: Amends General Order 2023-07 (February 13, 2023)

WILEAG STANDARD(S): 1.4.4

030.00 PURPOSE

To create a standard operating procedure for the proper preparation, communication, review, dissemination, cancellation, and archival of written directives to include standard operating instructions within the department.

030.05 WRITTEN DEPARTMENT DIRECTIVES (WILEAG 1.4.4)

Department-wide written directives must be endorsed by competent authority as prescribed within this policy. Endorsed written directives intended for department-wide communication shall be forwarded through the chain of command to the Office of Management, Analysis, and Planning (OMAP) for review, formatting, and internal and external publication. The Chief of Police, or designee, retains the authority to issue, modify, or approve all written department directives.

(WILEAG 1.4.4.1, 1.4.4.2, 1.4.4.3)

A. GENERAL ORDERS

1. General orders are those orders that establish or revise the department's organization, policies or procedures, and Code of Conduct. Only a general order shall create, amend, or rescind any Milwaukee Police Department standard operating procedures or Code of Conduct.
2. General orders shall be promulgated only by the Chief of Police, or designee.
(WILEAG 1.4.4.2)
3. General orders shall be read in their entirety at all roll calls for a period of 72 hours from the effective date.

B. PERSONNEL ORDERS

1. Personnel orders are those orders that specifically implement changes in personnel status such as assignments, transfers, suspensions, discharges, promotions, and department commendations.
2. Personnel orders shall be promulgated only by the Chief of Police, or designee.
3. Personnel orders relating to disciplinary action (district level reprimand, official

reprimand, suspension, termination, discharge, and modifications, corrections, and rescissions of disciplinary action) shall only be provided to the affected member, member's commanding officer, member's labor union, Fire and Police Commission, and Internal Affairs Division.

C. OFFICIAL MEMORANDUMS

1. Official memorandums provide members with information or instruction related to their employment, assignment, or duties.
2. Official memorandums provide members with information regarding the announcement and/or scheduling of training programs.
3. Official memorandums shall be promulgated on departmental letterhead and only by the Chief of Police or designee.
4. Official memorandums shall be read in their entirety at all roll calls for a period of 72 hours from the effective date.

D. DEPARTMENT MEMORANDUMS

1. *Department Memorandums* (form PM-9E) provide members with information or instruction related to their employment, assignment, or duties.
2. *Department Memorandums* should generally be promulgated on a department-wide basis by commanding officers, provided that such information pertains to their area(s) of responsibility. Civilian managers may also communicate information on a department-wide basis pertaining to their area(s) of responsibility.
3. *Department Memorandums* shall not be numbered. Commanding officers and civilian managers shall use *Department Memorandums* when authoring department-wide memorandums. They shall contain a date of issue, the identification of the issuing member, the identification of whom the memorandum is intended for, a subject or topic description, and the information or instruction to follow. The issuing member shall approve the memorandum by placing their initials next to their name.
4. *Department Memorandums* shall be read in their entirety at all roll calls for a period of 72 hours from the effective date.
5. The aforementioned procedures apply to memorandums meant for department-wide publication. In all other instances, department members may communicate in writing to their peers, supervisors, subordinates, or commanding officer by using *Department Memorandums*. When doing so, they shall ensure that, at a minimum, their name, title/rank, employee ID number, and work location are included in the closing of the communication, below their signature. Department members may also communicate informal information or messages by using form PM-11 (yellow half sheet).

E. TRAINING BULLETINS

1. Training bulletins shall be prepared by the Training Division as directed by the Chief of Police on matters related to training. In the absence of other instructions to the contrary, the information contained in training bulletins constitutes the official departmental position on the subject matter under consideration.
2. Training bulletins shall be read at all roll calls for police members for a period of 72 hours.
3. Members who have any questions regarding these bulletins shall contact a supervisor for clarification.

030.10 NUMBER SEQUENCE AND RETENTION

A. NUMBER SEQUENCE

1. General orders, personnel orders, and official memorandums shall be numbered consecutively beginning with January 1st of each year. The numbers shall consist of the directive type, year of issue, and sequence number (e.g., Memorandum 2008-01, Memorandum 2008-02). The Human Resources Division shall maintain the sequence numbers.
2. Training bulletins shall be numbered consecutively beginning with January 1st of each year (e.g., 2008-01, 2008-02). The Training Division shall maintain the sequence numbers for training bulletins.

B. RETENTION

1. Original (hard copy) general orders, personnel orders, official memorandums, and *Department Memorandums* shall be permanently retained by the Human Resources Division.
2. Original (hard copy) training bulletins shall be retained by the Training Division in accordance with existing retention schedules.

030.15 PUBLICATION AND MAINTENANCE (WILEAG 1.4.4)

A. OFFICE OF MANAGEMENT, ANALYSIS, AND PLANNING RESPONSIBILITIES

1. Publish for dissemination, a digital copy of all written directives, within the "Daily Roll Call Calendar" link of the directives intranet.
(WILEAG 1.4.4.5)
2. Archive all such written directives to the directives intranet for reference.
(WILEAG 1.4.4.5)
3. Be responsible for the dissemination of external publications (other city departments,

labor associations, etc.).
(WILEAG 1.4.4.3)

4. Update and maintain the directives intranet.
5. At minimum, review all standard operating procedures and standard operating instructions on a triennial interval from the effective or reviewed/approved by date to ensure all SOP's and SOI's remain current and to determine if any revisions shall be made to the respective SOP or SOI.

Note: SOP 660 Vehicle Pursuits and Emergency Vehicle Operations shall be reviewed by June 30th of each even-numbered year and SOP 240 Eyewitness Identification Procedures shall be reviewed biennially.

- a. Upon completion of a scheduled review that does not result in changes, an OMAP supervisor shall prepare a new version of the SOP or SOI and forward it through the chain of command to the Chief of Police for review and approval. Upon approval of the Chief of Police, an OMAP supervisor shall prepare an updated version of the SOP or SOI containing the reviewed/approved by date by the Chief of Police and publish it pursuant to this section.
- b. Upon completion of a scheduled review that results in changes, an OMAP supervisor shall prepare a new version of the standard operating procedure pursuant to 030.30(B) or standard operating instruction pursuant to 030.35(B).
(WILEAG 1.4.4.6)

B. COMMANDING OFFICER RESPONSIBILITIES

The commanding officer (or designee) of each work location shall:

1. Access the "Daily Roll Call Calendar" link of the directives intranet each day (excluding weekends and holidays) to determine whether any written directives have been published.
2. Print and place all newly published written directives on the "roll call board" at their work location.
3. Ensure that roll call information is communicated to all members at their work location.
4. Take those steps necessary to ensure that all members under their command are familiar with the content of all written directives.
5. Maintain a complete copy of the department's standard operating procedures and Code of Conduct in either printed or electronic form (e.g., CD/DVD) in the event of an intranet or network failure. This backup copy will serve as a reference for the work location in the event of any extended intranet or network outage. The backup copy should be periodically updated as needed (at least monthly). The full electronic

version of standard operating procedures can be located on the [Directives Intranet](#). The electronic version of the Code of Conduct can also be located on the [Directives Intranet](#).

C. MEMBER'S RESPONSIBILITIES

1. Department members are reminded of their responsibility to familiarize themselves with all provisions of the department's Code of Conduct and standard operating procedures/instructions/guidelines that deal specifically or generally with the duties of their rank, grade, or position within 30 days of issuance thereof.
2. Department members are encouraged to reference written directives via the directives intranet in addition to attending roll call. Members may print any such directives to aid their familiarization or to allow future reference.
3. Department members absent from duty for more than 72 hours, but less than 30 days shall reference their work location's 30-day roll call board to familiarize themselves with any written directives promulgated during such absence.
4. Department members absent from duty longer than 30 days and who are not temporarily assigned to the Training Division for remedial training shall access the directives intranet to familiarize themselves with any written directives promulgated during such absence.
5. Department members with questions regarding any written directives shall consult their immediate supervisor for clarification.

D. TRAINING DIVISION RESPONSIBILITIES

The commanding officer of the Training Division (or designee) shall:

1. Ensure that the Training Division maintains an adequate supply of the department's Code of Conduct in printed form for issuance to recruit officers during their training. (WILEAG 1.4.4.5)
2. Ensure recruit officers receive instruction on how to access standard operating procedures, standard operating instructions, and the Code of Conduct on the department's directives intranet.

030.20 ROLL CALL INFORMATION PROCEDURES

- A. Roll call information shall include written department directives as well as information pertaining to particular work locations. This information shall be kept on a "roll call board" at all work locations for a minimum of 72 hours.
- B. On-duty supervisors shall ensure that this information is presented to those members who normally attend roll call, but who were unable to be present at the designated roll call time.

- C. A shift commander or higher authority shall approve the placement of items on the "roll call board" by affixing the work location stamp and his/her rank and signature on the roll call item.

Note: Written department directives (e.g., general orders, personnel orders, official memorandums) or *Department Memorandums* issued by a captain or higher authority do not require supervisory approval for placement on the "roll call board."

- D. At district stations, the "roll call board" shall remain in the shift commander's office when not in use. At all other work locations, the "roll call board" shall be secured in an area designated by the commanding officer of the work location. It shall not be removed except for roll calls or with the permission of a supervisory officer. Department members other than supervisors shall not be allowed access to the roll call board except in the presence of a supervisor.
- E. After an item has been on the "roll call board" for a minimum of 72 hours, it shall be retained at the work location for at least 30 days. These items shall be kept on a separate "roll call board" or binder and available for review by members returning from extended absences or vacation, under the restrictions prescribed in the above paragraph.

030.25 TOPIC ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS (WILEAG 1.4.4)

- A. The department regularly communicates with its members through roll call videos, SOP updates, training updates, and other important documents. Many times the dissemination of this information requires documentation. In these instances, the web application titled "[Topic Acknowledgements](#)" will be used.
- B. When information or material is released that has been deemed by the department as requiring member acknowledgement, the "Topic Acknowledgement" section will populate with the topic and other pertinent information to be acknowledged. After a member has received the information/material in its designated format, the member will enter the Topic Acknowledgement record involved and click the "Acknowledged" check box and save the record. Members shall be required to read, acknowledge receipt of, and understand all new and revised written directives. This will serve as proof of acknowledgement for any required material.
(WILEAG 1.4.4.5)

030.30 STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURES (SOP) (WILEAG 1.4.4)

A. PURPOSE

To create procedures for department operations in an effort to guide members in the performance of their duties in conformity with department objectives.

(WILEAG 1.4.4.4)

B. DEVELOPMENT

1. The maintenance of the department's standard operating procedures is assigned to OMAP. In coordination with the affected divisions, OMAP shall be responsible for organization, review, revision, update, and purging of the department's SOPs on a continual basis per SOP 030.15(A).
(WILEAG 1.4.4.3)
2. Development and refinement of SOPs shall be coordinated by OMAP. OMAP supervisors shall create or update SOPs in accordance with existing departmental policy, accreditation standards, all federal and state laws, city ordinances, as well as the most recent union contracts and/or memorandums of understanding.
3. OMAP supervisors shall consult and share draft SOPs with the commanding officer of any affected divisions and subject matter experts when refining or creating SOPs to ensure any additions or revisions reflect best practices for the accomplishment of organizational and division operations, duties, and responsibilities.
4. Finalized draft SOPs created by OMAP supervisors shall be forwarded through the chain of command to the commanding officer of OMAP for review.
5. The commanding officer of OMAP shall review the finalized draft SOP and forward it to the executive staff for review.
6. An OMAP supervisor shall prepare the SOP for the Chief of Police's signature once the finalized draft has been approved by the Chief of Police.
7. Upon receipt of the signed copy of the SOP by the Chief of Police, a general order number shall be obtained from the Human Resources Division by an OMAP supervisor.
8. Upon receipt of the general order number, an OMAP supervisor shall place the issued and effective date within the SOP. The effective date can be delayed from the issued date for new SOPs or revised SOPs that are preceded with a *Department Memorandum*.
9. An OMAP supervisor shall forward a copy of the SOP to the executive director of the Fire and Police Commission (FPC) via email in accordance with FPC rules.
10. An OMAP supervisor shall publish a roll call and approved version of the SOP with the Chief of Police's signature pursuant to 030.15(A).
(WILEAG 1.4.4.3 and 1.4.4.4)

C. FORMAT

Standard operating procedures shall contain the following information:

1. The SOP shall include the “Milwaukee Police Department” on the top of the first page of the SOP.
2. The SOP number and subject identifying the sequential placement of the SOP.
3. The general order number for the SOP.
4. The issued date of the SOP.
5. The effective date of the SOP, which shall indicate the date the SOP shall be placed in force.
6. The reviewed/approved by date, which is the date the SOP was reviewed and approved by the respective assistant chief of police, or designee.
7. The action of the SOP, which shall be used to designate the creation of a new SOP or the amendment of an existing SOP.
8. The Wisconsin Law Enforcement Accreditation Group (WILEAG) standard(s) that the respective SOP references.
9. The purpose of the standard operating procedure, which shall be a statement describing why the SOP was created and what it is attempting to relate.
10. If necessary, definitions will be used to define new or unfamiliar words. This includes new, uncommon, or unusual terms, expressions, or phrases used in law or not generally used in the police profession.
11. Procedures will be included in each SOP to the degree necessary to provide department members with sufficient guidance to carry out the policy in accordance with departmental standards. Procedures provide a method for performing an operation or means for proceeding on a course of action.
12. The signature of the Chief of Police, or designee, indicating final approval of the SOP shall be placed at the end of the respective SOP.
(WILEAG 1.4.4.3)

030.35 STANDARD OPERATING INSTRUCTION (SOI) (WILEAG 1.4.4)

A. PURPOSE

1. To create a protocol for Standard Operating Instructions (SOI), that shall outline procedure and provide guidance:
 - a. To members assigned to specialized units.
 - b. For divisions, work locations, and units that require specialized training or knowledge.

- c. Regarding the operation of specific equipment, vehicles, or technology.
2. Standard operating instructions are intended to supplement standard operating procedures, providing detailed working instructions that do not ordinarily apply to members of the department outside of those described in subsection A.
3. Department members who are assigned to specialized units, and members who operate specific equipment, vehicles, or technology for which an SOI exists shall familiarize themselves with the standard operating instructions and shall treat them as standing orders from an officer of higher rank.
4. Standard operating instructions shall be issued and signed by the Chief of Police. No changes shall be made to an SOI without the knowledge and approval of the Chief of Police.
(WILEAG 1.4.4.2)

B. DEVELOPMENT AND DISSEMINATION

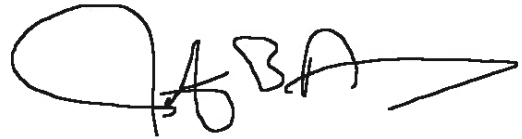
1. Division and unit commanders under the direction of the assistant chief or inspector will be responsible for the content of all written directives and standards that apply to their areas of responsibility. Commanders shall determine and approve the content of standard operating instructions that apply to their work locations, careful to ensure that they do not contradict other department directives, standard operating procedures, or the Code of Conduct.
2. The development of standard operating instructions should consider policies and procedures specific to a unit or function that are essential to the performance of specialized duties or the accomplishment of specific tasks, but are not enumerated in standard operating procedures.
3. Upon completion of new or revised standard operating instructions, commanders shall ensure that the draft is transmitted to OMAP for a review of the content and formatting.
 - a. An OMAP supervisor shall then forward the SOI to the commanding officer of OMAP for review.
 - b. The commanding officer of OMAP shall review the finalized draft SOI and forward it to the executive staff for review.
 - c. An OMAP supervisor shall prepare the SOI for the Chief of Police's signature once the finalized draft has been approved by the Chief of Police.
(WILEAG 1.4.4.4)
4. An OMAP supervisor shall forward a copy of the SOI to the executive director of the Fire and Police Commission via email in accordance with FPC rules.
5. An OMAP supervisor shall publish a roll call and approved version of the SOI with

the Chief of Police's signature pursuant to 030.15(A).

6. Commanding officers shall review standard operating instructions regularly for necessary changes, and to comply with revisions to SOP, department directives, legal updates, and law enforcement best practices.

C. RETENTION

1. Division and unit commanders may distribute either hard copies or electronic copies of standard operating instructions to their unit employees, and shall ensure that copies are backed up by electronic media, on their work location drives, or intranet site(s), and are accessible to all members under their command.
(WILEAG 1.4.4.5)
2. OMAP, through the directives intranet, shall be the central repository for standard operating instructions.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'J.B.N.' followed by a stylized flourish.

JEFFREY B. NORMAN
CHIEF OF POLICE

JBN:mfk