

CITY OF MILWAUKEE FIRE AND POLICE COMMISSION 2025 POLICY REVIEW



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Introduction

Pursuant to Wis. Stat. § 62.50 (1m), the Fire and Police Commission (FPC) is required to perform an annual policy review of “all aspects of the operations of the police and fire departments of the city.” This review is responsive to that requirement.

While the responsibilities for the daily management of the police and fire departments fall on the respective chiefs, until mid-2023, the FPC had the responsibility and authority to approve and/or modify all policy decisions for the departments, pursuant to state statute and then-FPC Rule IV, Section 3. All new and amended policies for the police and fire departments were reviewed by the Chair and the Executive Director of the FPC and all substantive changes to policy were placed on a regular meeting agenda for public comment and review and approval by the full Board.

In June 2023, Wisconsin Act 12 was approved by the State Legislature. Under Act 12, the chiefs of the police and fire departments, rather than the FPC, are now authorized to establish policies relating to the control and management of their departments, whereas prior law authorized the FPC to do so. The act further provides that the city may suspend or modify policies established by the police or fire chief only if the suspension or modification is approved by two-thirds of all members of the Common Council. The FPC is still required to conduct an annual policy review of all aspects of the operations of the police and fire departments. The act also provides that the FPC may advise the Common Council regarding any recommended policy changes. FPC Board Rules were subsequently amended to be consistent with this legislation. See FPC Rules II, § 3; IV, § 3.

In response to Act 12, FPC Rules were further amended to require that the chiefs of both departments provide the FPC with a copy of any new or amended policy within 48 hours of the policy’s creation or amendment. FPC Rules II, § 3(b)1. In addition, the new rules require the police department to provide the Board with any newly amended or created policy no less than 30 calendar days before the policy’s effective date. FPC Rules II, § 3(b)3. The rules also provide that the FPC Board may provide notice to the public of any adopted policy change through a communication file on the Board’s regular agenda. At any such meeting, the Board may hear public comment regarding the policy change, request information from the department, and recommend to the fire chief or chief of police that he or she amend or suspend the policy. If a chief, in his or her discretion, declines to implement the Board’s recommended policy change, the Board may recommend to the Common Council that it modify or suspend the policy. FPC Rule IV, § 3.

In February 2025, the Common Council approved an ordinance requiring the FPC Executive Director to:

Provide to the common council a monthly report summarizing any new policy relating to the control and management of each department issued by the fire chief or the chief of police since the last report. A new policy includes a modification of an existing policy. The report shall include any changes to the policy recommended by the board of fire and police commissioners. The executive director shall further provide a written communication to the common council, not less than annually, listing the new policies of the fire and police departments that have been issued since the last written communication. The written communication shall contain the date that the common council was informed, any action taken by the common council, and any changes to the policy recommended by the board of fire and police commissioners.

Method of Analysis

This analysis was performed using data available online on the City of Milwaukee’s website, including in its Legistar legislative research system. Also reviewed were FPC memos on department-proposed policy changes. Dates of department reviews were obtained from MFD and MPD.

This is not a listing of all Milwaukee Fire Department (MFD) standard operating guidelines (SOGs) and Milwaukee Police Department (MPD) standard operating procedures (SOPs). Personnel policies, office procedures, and other policies that do not directly affect the public were omitted. Only those policies that materially relate to the operations of the police and fire departments were included in this review. The review focused primarily on identifying those policies that have not been updated or reviewed for a considerable period of time and those likely to need significant amendments. The analyst’s memoranda describing each new policy or the changes made to each existing policy reviewed by the FPC Board and the Common Council’s Public Safety Committee are attached to this report as Appendix A.

Suggestions as to policies that may benefit from amendment due to the age of the last update are this analyst’s suggestions only and do not necessarily imply a need for change.

Milwaukee Fire Department Standard Operating Guidelines

Some of MFD’s SOGs can be found on its [website](#). Those in the tables below that are underlined contain links to their full text on the website. Those that were reviewed or revised during 2025 are shown in boldface.

According to MFD, the changes are “operational strategy updates to remain current in best practices for emergency response tactics and department capabilities.” The new SOG, Battery Electric Bus, was reviewed by the FPC’s Board in February 2025 and is included in the memoranda attached to this report.

- SOGs revised in 2025:
 - 3.1 AUTOEV (Auto Fire – Electrical Vehicles)
 - 26.2 RIVERK (Kinnickinnic [KK] River Swift Water Rescue Assignment)
 - 26.3 RIVERM (Menomonee River Swift Water Rescue Assignment)
 - 26.4 FBRESP (Fireboat Response)
 - 38.0 TEMS (Tactical Emergency Medical Services Response)
 - 40.0 TIMM (Timmerman Airport Response)

- New SOGs in 2025
 - 25.2 BEB (Battery Electric Bus)

MFD SOGs last written or revised 2020 through 2025:

MFD SOG Number	Title	Year Written/Revised
3.0	AUTO FIRE	2022
3.1	AUTO FIRE – ELECTRICAL VEHICLES	2025
4.0	AUTO EXTRICATION	2020
6.1	WE Energies First Responder Handbook	2024
8.0	EMERGENCY RESPONSE (MACHINE ENTRAPMENTS)	2020
9.0	FLIGHT FOR LIFE	2021
10.0	FLUSH FLUIDS	2020
12.0	FULL (STRUCTURE FIRE)	2020
12.2	SMOKE ASSIGNMENT	2020
12.3	FIRE AND IDLH LIFE SAFETY SEARCH PROCEDURES	2021
13.0	DECONTAMINATION GUIDELINES	2024
14.0	GARAGE FIRE	2020
19.0	INVESTIGATIVE RESPONSE	2020
22.0	PETROLEUM SPILL	2020
24.0	RUBBISH	2020
25.0	STREETCAR	2020
25.1	STREETCAR SCREAMER	2020
25.2	BATTERY ELECTRIC BUS	2025
26.1	DIVE ASSIGNMENT	2020
26.2	KK RIVER SWIFT WATER RESCUE ASSIGNMENT	2025
26.3	MENOMONEE RIVER SWIFT WATER RESCUE ASSIGNMENT	2025
26.4	FIREBOAT RESPONSE	2025
27.1	FULL HAZMAT	2020
27.2	LIMITED HAZMAT	2020
27.3	BALLOT BOX/EARLY VOTING LOCATIONS	2024
27.4	ELECTION DAY RESPONSE	2024
28.0	HEAVY URBAN RESCUE TEAM ASSIGNMENT	2020
33.1	LITHIUM-ION BATTERY EMERGENCIES	2024
33.2	ELECTRICAL VEHICLE SUPPLY EQUIPMENT	2024
35.0	INCIDENT MANAGEMENT PLAN	2020
35.4	STRUCTURE FIRES, GREATER ALARMS AND HIGH-RISE DISPATCHING	2020
35.7	DEMONSTRATION/PROTESTOR DEVICE REMOVAL	2024
35.8	LARGE AREA INCIDENT MANAGEMENT PLAN	2020
36.0	RESPIRATORY PROTECTION PROGRAM	2024
37.0	HENRY MAIER FESTIVAL PARK RESPONSE PLAN	2020
38.0	TACTICAL EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES RESPONSE	2025
38.1	ACTIVE SHOOTER	2021
40.0	TIMMERMAN AIRPORT RESPONSE	2025
41.0	COMMUNICABLE DISEASE EXPOSURE REPORTING POLICY	2022
42.0	MASS CASUALTY	2024

MFD SOGs last written or revised prior to 2020:

MFD SOG Number	Title	Year Written/Revised
0.0	FOREWORD	2019
1.0	ALARM SOUNDING	2019
2.0	APPLIANCE FIRE	2012
5.0	CARBON MONOXIDE	2019
6.0	ELECTRICAL TROUBLE	2019
7.0	ELEVATOR STUCK	2012
9.1	FLIGHT FOR LIFE/HEMS	2015
11.0	FORCIBLE ENTRY	2012
12.1	RIT 1 (MAYDAY-RIT ALARM)	2019
16.0	GRASS FIRE	2012
17.0	FURNACE TROUBLE	2012
15.0	GAS LEAK	2019
18.0	HIGH-RISE FIRE RESPONSE	2019
20.0	LOCK OUT	2012
21.0	LIMITED RESPONSE	2012
23.0	UTILITY POLE FIRE	2019
29.0	SUSPICIOUS CALL	2013
30.0	EMERGENCY POLICY ASSIST	2017
31.0	TREE FIRE	2013
32.0	WATER LEAK	2012
33.0	WIRES DOWN	2019
34.0	OUT OF CITY FIRE RESPONSE	2017
35.7	CIVIL UNREST INCIDENT MANAGEMENT PLAN	2019
39.0	FIRE INVESTIGATION UNIT UTILIZATION AND RESPONSE	2019

EMS SOGs last written or reviewed 2020 through 2025:

Title	Year Written/Reviewed
EMS FIELD OPERATIONS	2024
EMS PRACTICAL SKILLS STANDARDS	2024
CONCEALED CARRY WEAPONS HANDLING	2023
INCIDENT REPORTING	2024
PARAMEDIC FIRST RESPONSE	2024
GAIT BELT	2024
BLS TRANSPORT UNITS	2024
BARIATRIC RESPONSE OPERATIONS	2024

EMS SOGs last written or reviewed 2020 through 2025 (cont'd):

Title	Year Written/Reviewed
LUCAS 3 AUTOMATED CHEST COMPRESSION DEVICE	2021
PARAMEDIC PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT LEAVE	2024
PRIVACY PRACTICES	2024
EMS SUPPLY ORDERS	2024
CONTROLLED SUBSTANCE MANAGEMENT	2024
TACTICAL EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES (TEMS) PROGRAM	2024
PET OXYGEN MASK	2024
SAFE PLACE FOR NEWBORNS	2024
OXYGEN SUPPLY - TRANSPORT UNITS	2024
PVT AMBULANCE PROVIDER RESPONSES	2024
EMS EQUIPMENT RECOVERY	2024
EMT LICENSE INFORMATION DHS 110	2024
FILE OF LIFE	2024
TRANSPORT OF MFD AND MPD PERSONNEL	2024
DISPOSAL OF EMS WASTE	2024

Most MFD guidelines are technical in nature, so they do not change often, nor are they controversial in nature. Two which are potentially of significant public interest are 11.0 Forcible Entry, and 30.0 Emergency Police Assist. The Forcible Entry guideline was last revised in 2012 and the Emergency Police Assist guidelines were last revised in 2017. These two may thus warrant a review by MFD to ensure they are consistent with current standards.

Milwaukee Police Department Standard Operating Procedures

The MPD Code of Conduct and MPD SOPs can be viewed on the department's [website](#). Of the SOPs with material operational impact, the following tables list SOPs of note reviewed and modified during 2025. All contain links to the full text (with redactions of sensitive information) of the SOP online.

MPD SOPs Modified During 2025

The table below lists all MPD SOPs of note that were reviewed and modified during 2025.

Of particular significance were the changes to or adoption of:

- SOP 082 – [Training and Career Development](#)
 - Added the recruit training requirements for the new lateral transfer police members since the first class started in September 2025. Those requirements are consistent with requirements under the MOU for recruiting lateral transfers and are as follows:
 - 1. Police officers who laterally transfer to the Milwaukee Police Department from an in-state law enforcement agency shall complete a 6-week training course prior to assignment to a patrol position. The course

will provide an orientation to the department to include training in Phase IV of the recruit officer basic training (e.g., Active Bystandership for Law Enforcement (ABLE), Crisis Intervention Team (CIT), De-escalation, Fair and Impartial Policing, Procedural Justice).

- 2. Police officers who laterally transfer to the Milwaukee Police Department from an out-of-state law enforcement agency shall complete the full 25-week training academy prior to assignment to a patrol position. The training will include Phase IIV of the recruit officer basic training.
- SOP 270 - [Field Training and Evaluation Program](#)
 - Added the field training requirements for the new lateral transfer police members.
 1. Weeks 1 through 3: An OIT [Officer In Training] hired as a lateral transfer from another law enforcement agency shall be assigned to a training district with a field training officer (FTO), and are subject to daily observation and evaluation.
 2. Week 4: An OIT shall work a full work week with a FTO or field training sergeant and shall perform duties as a solo patrol officer, subject to evaluation only. The FTO shall act as a field performance evaluator and not participate in the OIT's action unless a need to override is presented.
 3. An OIT hired as a lateral transfer shall work a minimum of 16 days during this 4-week period with an FTO or field training sergeant.
 4. Phase VII: Probationary period – 7 monthly evaluations to be completed by the probationary member's sergeant. Members hired as a lateral transfer from an in-state law enforcement agency shall have 15 monthly evaluations to be completed by the probationary member's sergeant. Members hired as a lateral transfer from an out of state law enforcement agency shall have 10 monthly evaluations to be completed by the probationary member's sergeant.
- SOP 610 – [Towing of Vehicles](#) - Updated the reference to the newly created ordinance for impounding vehicles used in reckless driving offenses and the requirements for officers to follow. Towing a vehicle used in reckless driving is not optional for the officer; the language used is “members shall.”
- SOP 710 – [Victim Witness Rights and Assistance](#)
 - Updated the purpose statement to emphasize that an effective response to the needs of crime victims is an integral part of the department's mission.
 - Added the physical, psychological, and social needs that crime victims experience and that officers should be aware of when speaking to them.
 - Added requirements members must follow when responding to calls for service involving crime victims.
 - Added when members explain the process involved in the prosecution of their case that the explanation should include the member informing the victim of the general

direction that the investigation will take, how the department will proceed, who will be responsible for further follow up, and whether the victim should expect to be contacted.

- Added members must document in their report that the victim was properly informed of their rights and available protections and was provided with information relating to referrals.
- Added if the victim is in need of further assistance from an outside source or agency or requests additional services, the investigating member or victim advocate shall make reasonable efforts to connect the victim with the appropriate service providers.
- Added the required training members must receive related to responding to crime victims and that members must be familiar with governmental and community-based victim support and advocacy organizations.
- Added a link to the MPD Quick Reference Guide that was created to provide resources to department members with a quick reference to the many community partners who offer education, faith-based, health, youth, and community housing services.
- Added members must be attentive to crime victims with special needs and/or the cultural needs of crime victims.

SOP Number	Title	Effective Date
CITIZEN INTERACTION		
070	CITATION PROCEDURES	10/30/2025
085	CITIZEN CONTACTS, FIELD INTERVIEWS, SEARCH AND SEIZURE	12/26/2025
112	SEXUAL ASSAULT	2/13/2025
114	DOMESTIC VIOLENCE	12/17/2025
120	OPERATING WHILE INTOXICATED	7/23/2025
140	JUVENILE PROCEDURES	7/24/2025
160	PERSONS WITH MENTAL ILLNESS	9/5/2025
165	HOMELESS PERSONS	4/24/2025
175	ADMINISTRATION OF NALOXONE	10/27/2025
180	MISSING PERSONS	10/6/2025
190	LIMITED ENGLISH PROFICIENCY AND HEARING-IMPAIRED PERSONS	2/13/2025
460	USE OF FORCE	12/26/2025
570	PUBLIC INFORMATION POLICY	6/19/2025
610	TOWING OF VEHICLES	12/16/2025
710	VICTIM/WITNESS RIGHTS AND ASSISTANCE	1/15/2025
727	DEATH NOTIFICATION	12/16/2025
910	CIVIL DISTURBANCE AND CROWD MANAGEMENT	4/3/2025

SOP Number	Title	Effective Date
PROPERTY		
560	PROPERTY	9/5/2025
INVESTIGATIONS		
390	LICENSED PERSON-PREMISE INVESTIGATIONS	12/4/2025
450	PERSONNEL INVESTIGATIONS	11/13/2025
453	OFFICER-INVOLVED DEATHS AND OTHER CRITICAL INCIDENTS	6/4/2025
725	CRIME SCENE INVESTIGATIONS	8/4/2025
750	AUDIO-RECORDED INTERVIEWS AND INTERROGATIONS	7/16/2025
VEHICLES		
630	VEHICLE THEFTS, PRIOR AUTHORITY VEHICLE USE, AND THEFT BY FRAUD	2/13/2025
640	DEPARTMENT-OWNED VEHICLES	6/16/2025
650	VEHICLE CRASHES	12/26/2025
660	VEHICLE PURSUITS AND EMERGENCY VEHICLE OPERATIONS	3/17/2025
665	TIRE DEFLATION DEVICES	4/3/2025
EQUIPMENT/TECHNOLOGY		
466	PATROL RIFLE	2/24/2025
470	BALLISTIC SHIELD	12/16/2025
730	IN-CAR CAMERA SYSTEMS	4/7/2025
745	SHOTSPOTTER GUNSHOT LOCATION SYSTEM	2/14/2025
OTHER		
010	ABSENCE	5/5/2025
082	TRAINING AND CAREER DEVELOPMENT	11/13/2025
150	COURT PROCEDURES	12/26/2025
270	FIELD TRAINING AND EVALUATION PROGRAM	10/27/2025
340	UNIFORMS, EQUIPMENT AND APPEARANCE	10/27/2025

The remaining SOPs have either been reviewed by MPD or approved by the FPC at least as recently as 2019.

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