



# Fitchburg State University Police Department

**Subject:** Organization and Administration

**Reference:** IACLEA: 1.1.1; 1.1.5; 1.1.6  
MPAC: 12.1.2, 12.1.3

**Rescinds:** Rules and Regulations 7.0

**Effective Date:**  
July 8, 2019

**Revised Date:**  
November 4, 2020

**By Order of:** Michael Cloutier, Chief of Police

**General Order**

# 1.1.1

**PURPOSE:**

To provide employees with a clear understanding of the reporting relationships and accessibility to a supervisor. To specify the order of precedence which has been established to provide communication, direction, and responsibility for the Fitchburg State University Police Department operations 24 hours a day.

The intent of this policy is to ensure that officers and employees have a clear understanding of the organizational structure of the department, including the chain of command and supervisory authority, and to promote adequate supervision, guidance, and coordination of effort in delivering law enforcement services.

**PROCEDURE:**

**A. Chief of Police**

1. The Chief of Police has the responsibility for the management, direction, and content of the operations and administration of the Fitchburg State University Police Department. The Chief may designate who is to be in charge of the department in his/her absence should the chief be incapacitated, off duty, out of town, on vacation, sick or otherwise unavailable or unable to command.
2. The Chain of Command to be used in normal day-to-day operations and all internal communications are:
  1. Chief of Police
  2. Lieutenant (Operations, Administrative)
  3. Sergeant (Administrative, Detective, Operations)
  4. Police Officer / Dispatcher

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All Command Staff (Chief and Lieutenant) are available during non-business hours via phone in emergency situations. *IACLEA 1.1.1. a*

B. Command responsibility automatically goes to the highest-ranking person present, established first by rank, second by date of the appointment, unless otherwise designated by the Chief.

1. In the case of patrol officers, the officer assigned to a case or investigation will automatically be responsible for its handling.

1. Officer assigned to a case is also responsible for delegating an officer to conduct additional follow up if they are plan to be out on schedule days off.

2. In the absence of a supervisor, the senior patrol officer present should take charge when circumstances dictate to ensure compliance with Department guidelines and Massachusetts General Laws.

*IACLEA 1.1.1.b*

C. Supervisory Personnel

1. Supervisors will be accountable for the performance of personnel under their immediate control and will be the Commanding Officer of their assigned shift.

2. In the absence of any supervisor, the senior patrol officer or other officer designated by the Chief may supervise patrol officers when delegated to do so or when immediate circumstances dictate.

D. Patrol Officers and Other Employees

1. Patrol Officers and other police department employees and volunteers shall obey the lawful orders of supervisory officers whether given directly or relayed through another employee of the same or lesser rank.

2. In the absence of the employee's supervisor, the employee will report to the supervisor of the next highest rank.

*IACLEA 1.1.5. a & b, 1.1.6*

E. In field situations involving personnel of different functions, the supervisor/officer with the expertise and training for a particular incident shall be in charge.

F. In exceptional circumstances (disasters, large disturbances, hostage situations) the following command protocol will be followed:

1. Chief of Police
2. Lieutenant
3. Sergeant
4. Police Officer

When assistance from outside law enforcement agencies is utilized in any of the above exceptional circumstances, the department will utilize the Incident Command System

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and order of precedence will be described in that system.

IACLEA 1.1.5. c

### G. Administrative/Civilian Personnel

1. In the absence or unavailability of an immediate supervisor, personnel will report to the next highest ranking supervisor, or the senior officer present in the absence of a supervisor.

### H. Conflicting Orders

1. In the event that an officer/employee receives conflicting or incomplete orders, they shall bring it to their immediate supervisor's attention, where practical, to resolve the issue. If the supervisor who has issued the conflicting order does not alter or retract it, the order shall stand and the officer and/or employee shall obey, yet not be held responsible, for disobedience of any prior order, rule or directive.
2. It is incumbent on the person who receive an order from a supervisor of a higher rank than one's immediate supervisor to inform their immediate supervisor of the order given, which allows the two supervisors the ability to clarify any orders.

### I. Unlawful Orders

1. No supervisor shall knowingly issue any order which is in violation of any law. No officer is required to obey an order which is contrary to the laws of the United States or statutes of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. Such refusal to obey however is the officer's responsibility and he/she shall be strictly required to justify this action.

### J. Instructions From Dispatcher

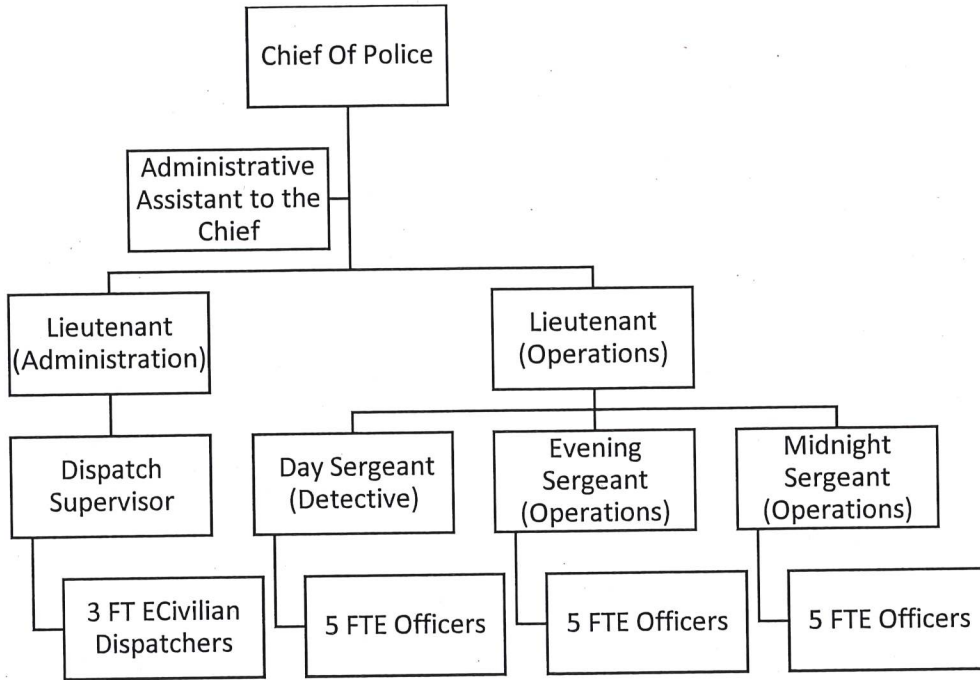
1. All messages transmitted over the police radio system by any officer or employee shall be direct and concise and shall conform to all Departmental radio procedures and the rules and regulations of the Federal Communications Commission. No officer shall fail to obey or refuse to take cognizance of any communication, (whether via radio, telephone, computer, or orally in person), transmitted by or conveyed directly from the Dispatcher, unless instructed to do so by a Supervisor.

Approval:

  
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Chief of Police

11/04/2020  
Date

DEPARTMENT ORGANIZATIONAL CHART:



**26: Full-Time Employees**  
21 Sworn Members  
5 Non-Sworn Members

IACLEA 1.1.1.c