

GENERAL ORDER



DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

Title		
Police Officer Probationary Period		
Topic	Series	Number
PER	201	07
Effective Date		
February 27, 2018		
Rescinds:		
General Order 201.7 (Review Boards), Effective Date August 10, 1990		
TT-02-028-09 [Amendment to General Order 201.07 (Review Boards)]		
Related to:		
GO-PER-201.29 (Police Officer Initial Training Program)		
GO-PER-201.33 (Field Training Program)		

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I. BACKGROUND

The probationary period is an extension of the sworn police officer selection process during which the probationary officer is observed and evaluated by officials in order to determine if a permanent appointment will be granted. The probationary period provides the Metropolitan Police Department (MPD) the opportunity to train officers with respect to job tasks, conduct, observance of rules and regulations, attendance, and other job responsibilities. It provides probationary officers the opportunity to demonstrate their abilities through actual on-the-job performance and supervisors the opportunity to guide probationary officers in the successful performance of their duties.

The purpose of this general order is to establish the policy and procedures for the probationary period that each probationary officer must meet in order to obtain a permanent appointment with the Department.

II. POLICY

It is the policy of the MPD to provide a probationary period for sworn officers of 18 months from the date of initial appointment. Pursuant to the District Personnel Manual, this probationary period may be extended for up to 36 months. The probationary period will serve as an introductory period to determine if the officer has the necessary skill set and suitability to become an officer and be granted a permanent appointment.

III. DEFINITIONS

When used in this directive, the following terms shall have the meanings designated:

1. Duty status – designation of a category granted by the Department to a member as it relates to the permission and ability to engage in the full spectrum of authorized policing duties (e.g., limited duty, non-contact).
2. Probationary officer – officer who has not yet completed the probationary period and been granted a permanent appointment to the MPD.
3. Probationary officer medical evaluation – examination to screen for controlled substances and to determine the condition of a probationary officer's mental health, medical health, and physical fitness.
4. Probationary period – time period, of at least 18 months, following initial appointment in which a probationary officer performs his or her duties while obtaining the necessary training and experience to determine his or her fitness for serving as a police officer.
5. Probationary Review Board – board comprised of the MPA commanding official (committee chairperson), Field Training Program (FTP) Coordinator, and the FTP district coordinators (captains) from each police district. The Probationary Review Board shall make a recommendation to the Chief of Police concerning the retention or termination of the probationary police officer.
6. Probationary Review Panel – panel established by the Executive Director of the Professional Development Bureau or a designee who, in concert with MPA, reviews the job performance of probationary officers during the probationary period in order to recommend a permanent appointment or further review by the Probationary Review Board. The panel consists of three field training sergeants.
7. Suitability – quality or state of being acceptable for MPD employment with respect to conduct, job performance, and fitness.

IV. REGULATIONS

- A. Satisfactory completion of the probationary period shall be a prerequisite to a permanent appointment as an MPD police officer.
- B. The probationary period shall include an initial training program, a field training program, a period of service, and a recommendation from the Probationary Review Panel to the Probationary Review Board regarding the suitability of the member for a permanent appointment.
- C. All probationary officers shall be subject to the probationary review process outlined in this order.
- D. Probationary officers shall be subject to all District of Columbia laws, rules and regulations, MPD rules and regulations, and the MPD standards of conduct governing sworn MPD employees.
- E. The Chief of Police may terminate a probationary officer in accordance with applicable District of Columbia laws, rules, and regulations at any time during the probationary period, including during any authorized extension of the period.
- F. The administration of the Probationary Review Panel and the Probationary Review Board shall be the responsibility of the Metropolitan Police Academy, in concert with the Patrol Chiefs.
- G. Probationary period records shall be retained by the Human Resources Management Division of the Professional Development Bureau in accordance with the Department's records retention schedule.

V. PROCEDURES

- A. Probationary Period Length
 - 1. Each probationary officer shall satisfactorily complete a probationary period of 18 months following the date of appointment, which may be extended up to 36 months for members who spend accruable time in a less than full duty status, or fail to successfully complete probationary training requirements.
 - 2. The probationary period shall be extended in increments of full workdays in each of the following circumstances:
 - a. For each workday a probationary officer is unable to perform the full range of police duties of the position to which

assigned, including, but not limited to, periods of limited duty, extended sick leave or non-contact status;

- b. Based on the written recommendation of the Director of the Human Resource Management Division for failure to successfully complete probationary training; or
- c. Based on a written recommendation of the probationary review panel.

B. Probationary Review Panel Process

1. The Executive Director of the Professional Development Bureau, or designee, shall:
 - a. Establish Probationary Review Panels for the purpose of reviewing the records of each probationary officer and recommending to the Probationary Review Board whether or not the officer should be granted a permanent appointment upon completion of the probationary period. The Probationary Review Board shall then make a recommendation to the Chief of Police concerning the retention or termination of the probationary police officer.
 - b. Approve the scenario questions the panel asks the probationary officers.
 - c. Ensure each Probationary Review Panel has at least three sergeants serving on the panel
2. Each probationary officer shall be evaluated by a Probationary Review Panel no earlier than the 14th month, and in no case, later than the 16th month following appointment to the MPD and the Probationary Review Board no later than the 18th month following their appointment to the MPD, unless the probationary period has been extended in accordance with this general order, in which case the probationary officer shall be evaluated no later than the last day of the extension period.
3. In order to be evaluated by a panel, a probationary officer shall:
 - a. Be in a full-duty status;
 - b. Have successfully completed the probationary officer medical evaluation;

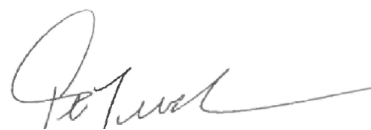
- c. Been certified by their respective district for individual patrol duties; and
 - d. Have completed his or her community project or beat book, and provide any other documents as requested by the Probationary Review Panel.
4. The employment recommendation of the Probationary Review Panel shall be based on an interview of the probationary officer and a review of the following records:
 - a. Unit personnel folder;
 - b. Two professional writing samples that were written after the conclusion of the FTO program;
 - c. Recommendation of the commanding official of the assigned element;
 - d. Written notice from the Director of the Medical Services Division stating that the probationary officer has successfully completed the probationary officer medical evaluation and controlled substance screening;
 - e. Possession of all department-issued equipment;
 - f. Background check by Internal Affairs Bureau and the Disciplinary Review Division;
 - g. History of annual or sick leave abuse; and
 - h. Any other information related to the suitability of the probationary officer to carry out police officers duties as deemed pertinent by the panel.
5. The Probationary Review Panel, following the interview and review of a probationary officer, shall recommend to the Probationary Review Board, that the officer:
 - a. Return to the Probationary Review Panel, correcting any deficiencies noted;
 - b. Be given a permanent appointment; or
 - c. Have his or her employment further reviewed by the Probationary Review Board.

6. The Probationary Review Board shall:
 - a. Review the recommendations forwarded by the Probationary Review Panel and make a recommendation regarding the suitability of the probationary officer for permanent employment or prepare final recommendation for termination, as appropriate, to the Chief of Police.
 - 1) The Probationary Review Board may request probationary officers correct any deficiencies noted or reappear before a Probationary Review Panel.
7. The Probationary Review Board may recommend terminating the employment of a probationary officer based on one or more of the following circumstances:
 - a. The officer failed to demonstrate the knowledge and skills required to perform the essential duties of a police officer.
 - b. The officer has engaged in conduct that indicates that the officer is unable or unfit to perform the duties of police officer, including, but not limited to, conduct that would have disqualified the officer for appointment.
 - c. The officer failed to obtain a recommendation for a permanent appointment after his or her third appearance before the Probationary Review Panel.
8. The Human Resource Management Division (HRMD) shall notify probationary officers, in writing, of the successful completion of their probationary period.

VI. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

- A. During the 13th month, probationary officers shall contact Medical Services Branch to schedule their Probationary Officer Medical Evaluation.
- B. Supervisory officials shall closely monitor the job performance and conduct of probationary officers and bring, through the chain of command, to the attention of the commanding official, all matters of concern, whether related to job performance or conduct, that could potentially affect the length of a probationary officer's probationary period or result in termination of employment.

- C. Commanding officials shall:
1. Ensure that probationary officers are provided the required field training, including an evaluation as to whether certified to patrol alone.
 2. Forward a certification memo to Human Resource Management Division containing the leave usage of the probationary officers after 14 months. The memo should be made to the attention of the "Probationary Review Panel".
 3. Provide sufficient staffing to allow panels to be convened as directed by the Executive Director of the Professional Development Bureau or a designee.
- D. The Director of the Metropolitan Police Academy shall:
1. Ensure that all probationary officers are tracked during their probationary period to ensure they are reviewed appropriately;
 2. Ensure all Probationary Review Boards and Panels are held, with recommendations forwarded prior to the expiration of each probationary police officer's period of probation; and
 3. Ensure that complete Probationary Review Panel and Probationary Review Board files are forwarded to the Human Resource Management Division.
- E. The Director of the Human Resource Management Division shall:
1. Ensure the duty status of probationary officers is tracked.
 2. Coordinate the results of the probationary panel, physical, and Internal Affairs Bureau and Disciplinary Review Branch checks.
 3. Provide the above information to Patrol Services (i.e., North and South) and the MPA.



Peter Newsham
Chief of Police