
Policy, Procedures and Communications

106.1 POLICY

The Vancouver Police Department Policy Manual is hereby established and shall be referred to as the Policy Manual or the manual. The manual is a statement of the current policies, rules and guidelines of this Department. The Department policies are permanent directives and remain in full effect until amended or canceled by the Chief of Police. All members are to conform to the provisions of the Department's official policy manual.

All prior and existing manuals, orders and regulations that are in conflict with this manual are rescinded, except to the extent that portions of existing manuals, procedures, orders and other regulations that have not been included herein shall remain in effect, provided that they do not conflict with the provisions of this manual.

Violations of any provision of any policy or approved Department procedure contained may form the basis for department administrative action, training, or discipline. Inadvertent, minor violations should be first viewed as a training issue.

106.2 DEFINITIONS

Department Memorandums - are issued by the Chief of Police, Assistant Chief of Police, or Commander, or at their direction, to disseminate information or provide for new or revised procedures that will assist employees in properly carrying out their duties.

Department Procedure Manuals – contain procedures that generally pertain to operations of a specific division or unit.

General Orders - are issued by the Chief of Police or Assistant Chief of Police and make immediate and/or temporary changes or additions to those provisions of the manual to which they pertain. General Orders remain in effect until such time as they are rescinded, or incorporated into the manual.

106.3 AUTHORITY

The City of Vancouver shall be considered the ultimate authority for the content and adoption of the provisions of any departmental manual and shall ensure compliance with all applicable federal, state and local laws.

106.4 POLICIES

The Policy Manual should be read as a whole and interpreted so that no word, phrase, or section is rendered meaningless or superfluous. In the event of a conflict between policies, the more applicable provision under the totality of the circumstances being considered shall generally apply.

It is recognized that the work of law enforcement is not always predictable, and circumstances may arise which warrant departure from these policies. Therefore, these policies should be followed

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by employees with any exceptions being reasonable under the totality of the circumstances and based on articulable facts and supervisory approval, if feasible.

106.5 PROCEDURE MANUALS

The Office of the Chief places responsibility on specific units and/or personnel to create and/or maintain procedure manuals on varied topics for use by Department personnel. The procedures in these manuals should be followed by employees with any exceptions being reasonable under the totality of the circumstances and based on articulable facts and supervisory approval, if feasible.

106.6 ACCESSIBILITY OF POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

An electronic version of the Policy Manual and all Procedure Manuals will be made available to all employees for viewing or printing.

The failure of any Department employee to be aware of, or acknowledge, an issued or updated policy or procedure does not exempt them from that policy or procedure.

Employees are responsible to seek clarification of any questions regarding a policy or procedure from an appropriate supervisor as needed.

106.7 CHANGES TO THE POLICY MANUAL AND PROCEDURE MANUALS

The Department recognizes that many policies and procedures must change over time due to many factors. The Chief of Police will ensure the policy manual and all procedure manuals are periodically reviewed and updated as necessary.

1. All Department members suggesting revision of the contents of the policy manual and any procedure manuals may forward their written suggestions to their Chain of Command or to the Audit Sergeant.
2. No changes to the policy manual, excepting minor grammar and similar corrections by the Audit Sergeant shall be made without authorization from the Chief of Police or the authorized designee.
3. Existing procedure manuals may be revised, changed or updated as necessary to remain current and applicable by the lieutenant or manager responsible for the manual.
 - (a) Upon updating a procedure manual, the lieutenant or manager will ensure the previous version is placed into a designated archive folder.

106.8 NEWLY ISSUED OR UPDATED POLICIES

A Department Memorandum will be sent to all employees announcing a newly issued or updated Policy or Procedure Manual.

Each new or updated Department Policy, Procedure Manual or General Order, becomes effective on the date of the announcement.