

**Oakland County Sheriff's Office**  
**GENERAL ORDERS: 1.3**



<b>SUBJECT:</b> Written Directives		<b>NUMBER:</b> 1.3
<b>EFFECTIVE DATE:</b> November 29, 2022 <b>REVIEW DATE:</b> Annually	<b>MACP Standard Impact:</b> 1.1.1 (a,b,c,e,f,g,h)	
<b>REPLACES AND RESCINDS:</b> Rules and Regulations	<b>DISTRIBUTION:</b> All Personnel	<b>NUMBER OF PAGES:</b> 6

This order replaces and rescinds all previously issued orders, procedures, rules and regulations, notices and/or practices in conflict with this General Order.

**I. PURPOSE**

It is the purpose of the order to define the structure and application of the Oakland County Sheriff's Office written directive system and provide officers and other employees with a better understanding of its importance, use, and applicability.

**II. POLICY**

The Oakland County Sheriff's Office has established a written directive system on the Oakland County Data Management System, herein after referred to as the "OCSO Hub". The purpose of the written directives is to inform employees of the rules that must be followed in the performance of their duties and to establish the basis for employee accountability, and the means to fairly evaluate employee and unit performance. It is the purpose of this policy to formally document the structure and component parts of the written directive system in a manner that will increase its utility and application, as well as provide for continuity in its development.

**III. DEFINITIONS**

- A. Central Hub for Oakland County Sheriff's Office ("The Hub"): The OCSO-Hub is the data tracking, management and statistical analysis tool utilized by the Sheriff's Office for keeping records of various law-enforcement and corrections data. The system is backed by an encrypted SQL server with redundant backups and robust user-based security protocols. It maintains employee related data, investigations data, log data, asset tracking data, and all written directives described in this document.
  
- B. Written Directives: Written directives are formal position statements of the Sheriff's Office that guide or direct the actions and activities of its employees. This includes policies, procedures, rules, regulations, special orders, memoranda, and training bulletins. **(MACP Standard 1.1.1e)**

## Oakland County Sheriff's Office

### GENERAL ORDERS: 1.3

- C. Administrative Orders: Orders issued by a Division Commander to ensure the efficient operation of a division, to enforce compliance with procedures, or to form a channel of communication to subordinate commands with a formalized order. Orders apply to division units only and do not impinge upon, establish, or modify General or Special Orders.
- D. Sheriff's Orders: Orders issued by the Sheriff relating to some specific circumstance or situation, usually of a temporary nature, that ordinarily does not affect the entire Sheriff's Office.
- E. General Order: Orders establishing broad direction by policies and procedures in performing specific duties and requirements for all members of the Sheriff's Office. General Orders are based on underlying organizational principles, goals, values, and operational philosophies.
- F. Special Orders: Orders that are generally of a special or short-term nature. They can be issued in response to a new law necessitating an immediate change in procedure or directing a policy to be applied under new circumstances. Special Orders include Administrative Directives, Training Orders, and personnel actions such as appointments, assignments, transfers, promotions, commendatory or disciplinary measures.
- G. Rules and Regulations: Guidelines to govern the conduct of all members of the Sheriff's Office. Rules define situations where no deviation or exceptions to agency-authorized actions are permitted.
- H. Terms Limiting Officer Discretion: There are three categories of terms used in the General Orders of this agency. Personnel responsible for the development of such orders and officers who carry them out shall be aware of the limitations on officer discretion that these terms convey. These terms are classified as *judgmental*, *discouraging*, and *prohibitive* in nature.
  - 1. Judgmental: The word "may" is to be used to convey the utmost discretion to officers. "May" indicates that officers should employ their best judgment in addressing a situation by relying on experience, training, the stated mission and values of this agency, and the general guidance provided in statements of agency policy.
  - 2. Discouraging: The word "should" or "should not" is used to convey the agency's desire for officer actions in given circumstances. Directives should be followed whenever reasonably possible. However, it is recognized that exceptions to desired actions can be anticipated in these circumstances that could require alternative action. Officers are therefore authorized whenever reasonable to use limited discretion to deal effectively with the situation or problem.
  - 3. Restrictive or Prohibitive: The terms "shall" or "shall not" or "will" or "will not" impose absolute requirements or prohibitions on officer actions. Considering that the full set of circumstances surrounding many situations confronted by officers cannot be fully predicted, such terms must be used with care and with the understanding that failure to abide by such restrictions may result in disciplinary action. Where deemed appropriate, however, these terms may appear in general orders, policies, and procedures, and rules.

**Oakland County Sheriff's Office**  
**GENERAL ORDERS: 1.3**

**IV. PROCEDURES**

A. General Order Development and Approval

1. The Sheriff retains authority to issue, modify, repeal, amend, revise, or approve at any time all Written Directives, Orders, Rules and Regulations and any other general order. **(MACP Standard 1.1.1a)**
2. Organization and maintenance of the OCSO Hub shall be conducted by person(s) designated by the Sheriff. The OCSO Hub shall be continuously updated by designated person(s) to reflect any change to Sheriff's Office directives.
3. Division and unit commanders may, **with the specific approval of the Sheriff**, issue directives through memoranda or administrative orders that have bearing only on the specific functions or operations of their area(s) of responsibility. Such directives shall be consistent with established agency rules, policy, and general order.
4. It is the concurrent responsibility of all division commanders to ensure that policies, procedures, and other directives affecting their area(s) of responsibility reflect the best practices for accomplishment of organizational and division activities, duties, and responsibilities. To this end, division commanders and their designees are responsible for ensuring that:
  - a. Required development, updates, and refinements of all agency orders affecting their area(s) of responsibility are identified and that these requirements are forwarded in a timely manner to the Office of the Sheriff, and
  - b. A written explanation and justification of proposed and currently active directives is prepared and kept current. This justification/discussion may include but is not limited to the legal basis and requirements for the policy; reference to and adherence to professional standards or practices, compliance with Sheriff's Office philosophies, directives, standards, and protocols; and related information that supports, explains, and substantiates the policy position, and
  - c. The order does not conflict with an already established directive.
5. Modification of directives shall be coordinated by the Office of the Sheriff. Designated person(s) shall forward drafts of such documents for review and comment to personnel as designated by the Sheriff. The process shall take place via the route as designated by the Data Management System (Virtual Academy) and the Electronic File System (OCSO HUB). **(MACP Standard 1.1.1c)**
6. Final drafts of directive statements and supporting justification documents and personnel comments shall be reviewed by the Sheriff or his/her designee for approval or other action.
7. Copies of changes to agency directives shall be distributed and shall become effective immediately from the date of distribution.
8. Approved General orders, Sheriff Orders, Rules, Administrative Orders and Special Orders shall be distributed to all sworn personnel and other appropriate members who are required to document that they have received, read, and understand the directive. Where necessary, training regarding the policy shall be conducted concurrently with policy distribution. **(MACP Standard 1.1.1g)**

**Oakland County Sheriff's Office**  
**GENERAL ORDERS: 1.3**

- a. Directive manuals, including updates and changes to written directives, may be distributed electronically through the Virtual Academy platform, and stored in the OCSO Hub. Personnel are required to monitor all Oakland County Sheriff's Office communications related to changes of written directives. Tracking of receipt of said changes may take place electronically or through any other manner approved by the Office of the Sheriff. **(MACP Standard 1.1.1f,g)**

**B. Manual Components**

The Sheriff's Office orders shall be available on the Oakland County Sheriff's Office computer network accessible to all members and stored in the OCSO Hub. Members may print individual portions for their own use. The electronic manual for each section shall contain the following components:

1. Table of Contents  
Sequential listing of topics covered in the manual and their location in the document.
2. Department's Source of Legal Authority  
The statutory authority granting police powers to the organization.
3. Agency Mission and Values Statement  
The overall mission statement and the values adopted by the Oakland County Sheriff's Office that form the foundation for policy, procedures, and rules. **(MACP Standard 1.1.1d)**
4. Orders  
Individual statements of policy and accompanying procedures regarding duties, responsibilities, and tasks of both sworn and civilian personnel.
5. Authorized Forms  
A link to all forms authorized for use by the Sheriff's Office.

**C. Organization of Directives**

Each order statement will contain the following information: **(MACP Standard 1.1.1b)**

1. Name of the Agency  
The Oakland County Sheriff's Office name shall be on each page of the document.
2. Type of Directive  
Directives will be designated as General Orders, Sheriff Orders, Administrative Orders, Rules and Regulations or Special Orders.
3. Subject  
Policies, general orders, and rules will be identified by the topic or issue under consideration.
4. Order Number  
The number identifying the sequential placement of the order in the electronic manual.

**Oakland County Sheriff's Office**  
**GENERAL ORDERS: 1.3**

5. Effective Date  
Indicates the date the policy will be placed in force.
6. Review Date  
The date on which the policy is required to undergo formal review, though modifications may be made at any time as required.
7. Approval  
"Issued By" the Sheriff, indicating final approval of the policy.
8. Reference  
Provides links to related Sheriff's Office general orders and rules and regulations that relate to or have bearing on understanding and use of the present policy (for instance, "motor vehicle search" referenced to "obtaining search warrants").
9. Rescinds/Replaces/Amends  
Indicates a former directive issued under the same or similar title that has been deleted or modified by the present general order.
10. Number of Pages  
The total number of pages contained in the policy statement or rule.
11. Order Statement  
Each order statement will conform to the following format and provide the indicated type of information where applicable:
  - a. Purpose  
The policy will be introduced by a succinct statement concerning what the directive is about and what it is attempting to relate.
  - b. Policy  
The policy statement identifies a general requirement and provides guiding principles for exercising judgment. Rather than providing officers with precise guidance as found in procedures, the policy statement establishes the rationale and overall approach to a problem, situation, issue or concern. As such, it often draws upon the agency's philosophy and values to provide direction.
  - c. Definitions  
New or unfamiliar terms or words will be defined. This includes new, uncommon, or unusual terms, expressions, phrases, to include words or phrases used in law or not generally used in the police profession.
  - d. Procedures  
Procedures will be included in each policy statement to the degree necessary to provide officers with sufficient guidance to carry out the policy in accordance with agency requirements. Procedures provide a method for performing an operation or means for proceeding on a course of action.

**Oakland County Sheriff's Office**  
**GENERAL ORDERS: 1.3**

**V. Retention**

All approved Written Directives, as defined in this order, will be retained in accordance with the State of Michigan Records Management Services, General Retention Schedule – Local Law Enforcement Agencies (or subsequent acts), and available to the public as required by the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA). Historical archives of prior (repealed, revised, or updated) Written Directives will be stored electronically in the Sheriff's Office network or shared drive, or stored electronically in the Data Management System (OCSO Hub). **(MACP Standard 1.1.1h)**

**VI. Revision Responsibility**

Revisions shall be the responsibility of the Office of the Sheriff and/or his/her designee.



**ISSUED BY:** Sheriff Michael J. Bouchard