



Sheridan Police Department  
Policies and Procedures  
6.2  
Chapter 6 – Training & Development  
Section 2 – New Officer Training

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Signature:

New officer training is designed with the intent of producing a positive and highly motivated police officer capable of meeting or exceeding standards of the department.

### 6.2.1 Overview of the Field Training Officer Program

- A. The field training officer (FTO) program provides a basis for all trainees hired by the police department to begin their training in police work. The FTO program is supplemented by the department's in-service training program, the Wyoming Law Enforcement Academy Peace Officer or Communications Officer Basic Course, additional courses at the Wyoming Law Enforcement Academy, and other department sponsored training.
- B. Every trainee, regardless of prior experience, must complete the field-training program prior to being released for full duty. To provide the trainee with a wide resource base, a variety of well-qualified certified officers are used to assist in the training process as well as non-sworn personnel to assist in orienting the trainees to various functions of the department.
- C. The overall intent of the FTO program is to provide a strong base for newly hired trainees in the department to build their skill levels so that they may provide the best possible service to the citizens of Sheridan. The training program has the following specific objectives:
  - 1. Provide training for trainees in departmental procedures and the statutory requirements of their positions;
  - 2. Assist in evaluating the skill level of the trainees during the training period and identify areas which require further training;
  - 3. Prepare trainees to work in the community with an understanding of their role and the expectations of this agency and community; and
  - 4. A way to assess the trainee's adaptation to police work and to aid in determining if continued employment is appropriate.
- D. The standard field training program for officers will be a program consisting of four phases. Each phase is approximately one month in length, except the final phase which will generally be 80 work hours.

### 6.2.2 Operation of the Field Training Officer Program

- A. The FTO program coordinator will prepare a training schedule. As the training process progresses, the FTO program coordinator, shift sergeants and corporals will make frequent reviews of the trainee's progress.
- B. During the training program, various tests will be administered by the FTO to test the trainee's knowledge and skill base. If deficiencies are encountered, remedial training will be scheduled.

### 6.2.3 Personnel Responsibilities

A. Field Training Officer Coordinator

1. The FTO program coordinator with approval of the patrol operations lieutenant is responsible for the overall management of the training program including the updating of procedures used, training schedules, training materials, selection of training officers, evaluation of the training process and employment retention recommendations.
2. The FTO program coordinator will periodically review the trainee's progress. The coordinator shall review all daily observation reports, periodic evaluations and any other information relative to the training progress. The FTO program coordinator is responsible for maintaining and securing the trainee's training files. Upon completion of the trainee's field training, all written materials will be forwarded to the patrol operations lieutenant with employment retention recommendations. The patrol operations lieutenant will review this material and then forward all written materials compiled during the trainee's field training to the office of the Chief of Police with a recommendation as to whether or not the trainee should be retained by the department to complete his or her trial service period.
3. The FTO coordinator will arrange classroom training and remedial training as needed.

C. Shift Supervisor

1. A shift supervisor will review the trainee's progress whenever a trainee is assigned to his or her shift. Supervisors will supervise new officers closely keeping in mind that the trainee may not be familiar with all the requirements of the job in making duty assignments and call designations.
2. Deficiency in the trainee's performance will be immediately noted to the FTO with recommendations as to the potential for remedial training improvements.

D. Field Training Officer

1. The FTO is the primary evaluator of the trainee's progress during the training program. Training officers will strive to be fair and unbiased in their evaluation of the trainee's progress and make every effort to see that materials are presented in a proper fashion and assist whenever possible in helping the trainee successfully complete the FTO program.
2. The FTOs will adhere to the schedule provided by the FTO coordinator and training materials contained in the field training manual. Field training officers will not deviate from materials presented in the field training manual without express permission of the operations supervisor. Inconsistencies in work performance and failing to comply with the departmental standards by the trainee will be discussed with the trainee and noted on daily observation reports. When difficulties are encountered that the trainer does not feel he or she can adequately resolve, he or she will notify the shift supervisor and the FTO program coordinator so that the situation can be dealt with in a timely fashion. FTOs should not request any discretionary time off that would be in the scheduled training period. The trainee shall not request discretionary time off until they have satisfactorily completed the field training program.
3. Since the role of the FTO is primarily that of an instructor and coach during the training process, the trainer will assist the trainee in learning the materials contained in the training manual. A system to review training materials should be as follows:
  - a. Have the trainee read the material;
  - b. Review what the trainee has read;
  - c. Demonstrate the use when possible;

- d. Have the trainee perform and demonstrate the material;
  - e. Evaluate the performance either by review or through the testing process administered by the FTO following the completion of each phase.
- 4. When another officer initially presents the training materials, the FTO must review the information with the trainee. When another training officer is used for supplemental training the assisting training officer will strive to make sure that philosophical conflicts between trainers are kept to a minimum to provide the trainee with a stable training philosophy.

#### E. Trainee

- 1. Each trainee, regardless of prior experience, must complete the field training program prior to being released for a duty assignment. As previously noted, this program consists of several methods of training using a variety of instructors, evaluation and testing methods. Trainees are instructed to follow the training outlines and adhere to the directions provided by the trainers.
- 2. In the event of discrepancies between trainers, the issue should be addressed with the FTO Coordinator who will research the issue and provide direction to the trainee.
- 3. The trainee will complete any assignments as directed by the training officer unless the assignment is an illegal act, a violation of department rules and regulations, or the trainee feels that he or she cannot adequately perform in a safe manner. If safety is an issue, then the trainee should inform the FTO of that situation rather than complete the task and risk harm to the trainee, another police officer or a citizen.

### 6.2.4 Field Training Manual

- A. The field training manual is a comprehensive instructional manual reflective of the Sheridan Police Department's strong commitment to providing quality training to sworn personnel during the course of their employment.
- B. The training manual includes the instruction blocks and research and reading materials specifically designed to supplement the instruction blocks. The manual provides a written record of how and what areas the trainee was trained on and this record is retained by the department after the trainee has finished the field training program.
- C. Prior to being used, all field training program materials are reviewed and approved by the operations supervisor and the chief of police.
- D. Using the Training Manual
  - 1. Outlines for each phase are contained in the field training manual. Each outline contains specific topics to be reviewed, materials that must be covered, and reading assignments.
    - a. Each outline must be initially reviewed by the trainee and training officer and later reviewed by the designated FTO. Training officers must initial and date the areas on the outline that have been completed.
    - b. The FTO must review and initial the completion of the reading assignments.
  - 2. Trainees are assigned a variety of reading materials including: statutes, policies, technical reading, rules and regulations, and city ordinances.
    - a. The assignments are designed to supplement the topics on the outline and should be read prior to reviewing the topic areas with the training officers.
    - b. Test questions are taken from some of the reading assignments. Trainees will notify the FTO when the reading assignments are completed.

- c. All materials needed to complete reading assignments and to review topic areas will be available to the trainee from the program coordinator.
- 3. The field training manual includes a checklist to assist in ensuring that training is preparing the trainee for the types of duties that the trainee will be handling after training.
- 4. Tests will be administered upon completion of the training materials in a specific phase. If a test cannot be completed as scheduled the FTO will notify the FTO program coordinator. Tests will be administered by the FTO. The FTO coordinator will supply the test and the answer sheet as requested by the FTO.
  - a. Tests will be a combination of multiple choice, true/false, fill in the blank, and practical exercises.
  - b. Each trainee will review the test with the FTO prior to the testing date.
- 5. Daily observation reports are a fundamental component of the field training manual.
  - a. Prior to beginning the field training program, a copy of the form and the definitions will be given to each trainee and reviewed.
  - b. Standardized evaluation guidelines will be followed with emphasis on consistency between acceptable and unacceptable performance.
  - c. The forms will be completed by the assigned FTO at the completion of each shift. The trainee and the FTO must initial the evaluation sheet. The evaluation forms will be retained by the FTO and reviewed with the program supervisor at the scheduled meetings.

#### **6.2.5 Wyoming Law Enforcement Academy**

- A. The Sheridan Police Department will utilize the Wyoming Law Enforcement Academy for basic training. Probationary officers shall attend and successfully complete all required phases of the Wyoming Law Enforcement Academy basic program within one year from the date of hire (Wyoming Statute 9-1-704).
- B. The patrol operations lieutenant shall be the primary contact and maintain a working relationship with the staff of the Wyoming Law Enforcement Academy, keeping the channels of communication open, in order to monitor the progress of trainees and provide input into the academy training program.
- C. The patrol operations lieutenant or designee will act as liaison with the officers who are in the academy.
- D. Officers attending the Wyoming Law Enforcement Basic Academy are considered on-duty and shall abide by all department policies, rules, and regulations as well as academy regulations.
- E. Requests from the Wyoming Law Enforcement Academy for an employee to assist their staff with training shall be forwarded to the patrol operations lieutenant, who will coordinate the employee's participation.

#### **6.2.6 Field Training Officer Selection**

- A. The selection process for FTOs is critical to a successful program as many of the values, tactics and attitudes of the FTOs are transmitted to inexperienced officers. Many factors will be taken into consideration during the selection process. See section 4.3.3. Specific factors for FTO consideration include, but are not limited to, the following aspects of job performance:
  - 1. Experience;
  - 2. Temperament;

3. Teaching skills;
  4. Communication skills; and
  5. Disciplinary history.
  6. Past performance
  7. Adherence to department values.
- B. Successful FTOs must be able to assume a leadership/mentorship role and be willing to make a commitment to the field training program.
  - C. Field training officers must successfully complete an approved FTO training as directed by the FTO coordinator.
  - D. Continuing training for FTOs should include instructor development and first line supervision.