

# HOWELL POLICE DEPARTMENT GENERAL ORDER



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**CHAPTER: 16**

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**SUBJECT: EARLY WARNING SYSTEM**

**EFFECTIVE DATE:**

February 28, 2019

**ACCREDITATION  
STANDARDS:**

2.2.3

**SUPERSEDES ORDER #:**

V2C16 (Dated 04/07/17)

V2C16 (Dated 02/22/18)

**BY THE ORDER OF:**

Chief Andrew A. Kudrick, Jr.

**PURPOSE:** The purpose of this general order is to establish a personnel early warning system.

**POLICY:** It is the policy of this department to implement and utilize an early warning system for tracking and reviewing incidents of risk and provide timely intervention consistent with the New Jersey Attorney General's Law Enforcement Directive No. 2018-3.

## PROCEDURE:

### I. EARLY WARNING SYSTEM

- A. The Early Warning System is designed to detect patterns and trends before the conduct escalates into more serious problems. As such, employees must understand that the early warning system is not identical to the disciplinary process. Although it is possible that disciplinary action may be taken as the result of evidence that rules and regulations were violated, this is not the sole or even primary intent of the system. The primary intent of an early warning system is to address potential problems through the use of appropriate management and supervisory strategies before formal discipline is warranted.
- B. Many different measures of employee performance (actions or behaviors) can be regularly examined for patterns or practices that may indicate potential problems. These performance measures shall include, but are not limited to, the following documented indicators:
1. Internal complaints, whether initiated by another employee or by a member of the public and regardless of outcome;
  2. Civil actions filed against an officer, regardless of outcome;
  3. Criminal investigations or complaints made against an employee;
  4. Any use of force by an officer that is formally determined or adjudicated to have been excessive, unjustified or unreasonable;
  5. Domestic violence investigations in which the employee is an alleged subject;
  6. All domestic violence incidents (regardless of whether or not a complaint or TRO/FRO was issued).
  7. An arrest of an employee, including on a driving under the influence charge;
  8. Sexual harassment claims against an employee;
  9. Vehicular collisions involving an officer that are formally determined to have been the fault of the officer;
  10. A positive drug test by an officer;
  11. Cases or arrests by the officer that are rejected or dismissed by a court;
  12. Cases in which evidence obtained by an officer is suppressed by a court;
  13. Insubordination by the officer;
  14. Neglect of duty by the officer;
  15. Vehicular pursuits;
  16. Off-Duty Contact with Law Enforcement Agencies as a result of personal conduct.

17. Unexcused absences or sick time abuse; and
  18. Any other indicators, as determined by the agency's chief executive.
- C. Generally, three (3) instances of questionable conduct or performance indicators (as listed in section B, above) within a six (6) month period would initiate the early warning system process.
  - D. If one incident triggers multiple performance indicators, that incident shall not be double or triple counted, but instead shall count as only one performance indicator.

## **II. ADMINISTRATION OF EARLY WARNING SYSTEM**

- A. The early warning system is primarily the responsibility of the internal affairs unit; but, any supervisor may initiate the early warning process based upon their own observations. Emphasis should be placed on anticipating employee problems before it results in improper performance or conduct.
- B. Internal affairs shall conduct a manual or computerized audit of its records to determine if an employee has the emergence of a pattern, practices or trend of inappropriate behavior or misconduct. In addition to the regular data audits by internal affairs, the internal affairs supervisor shall audit an individual employee's history any time a new complaint is received.
  1. Using this information and their experience, internal affairs investigators may be able to identify employees who may need remedial/corrective intervention even before such is indicated by the early warning system data audit.
- C. If the audit indicates the emergence of a pattern, practices or trend of inappropriate behavior or misconduct, the internal affairs investigator shall consult with the employee's supervisor and/or division commander.
- D. The internal affairs supervisor and the employees supervisor and/or division commander shall review the information provided by internal affairs along with any other relevant information from department records for the purpose of initiating a course of intervention designed to correct/interrupt the emerging pattern, practice or trend.
  1. If the audit indicates that the early warning system has returned an incorrect identification or "false positive," that conclusion should be documented.
  2. If the audit reveals that an employee has violated department rules and regulations or general orders, the supervisor in consultation with the internal affairs unit should proceed with an internal investigation and possible disciplinary action.
  3. If the audit reveals that the employee has engaged in conduct, which indicates a lack of understanding or inability to comply with accepted procedures, the supervisor shall consult with the internal affairs unit to determine the appropriate course of remedial/corrective intervention.

- E. At least every six (6) months, internal affair's personnel shall audit the agency's tracking system and records to assess the accuracy and efficacy of the tracking system.

### **III. SUPERVISORS**

- A. An employee's first line supervisor is usually the first member of the department to encounter and document specific incidents that affect an employee. It is essential for the supervisor to speak with the employee, document these incidents and report findings to their division commander and if warranted, the internal affairs supervisor. The success of this program relies heavily on the first line supervisor's participation and involvement.
- B. If a supervisor has initiated remedial/corrective intervention, the internal affairs unit shall be formally notified of such efforts. This information shall be documented and appropriate copies forwarded to the internal affairs unit for filing.
  - 1. No entry should be made in the employee's personnel file, unless the action results in disciplinary/corrective action.
- C. If the remedial/corrective intervention was training, documentation shall be filed in accordance with the department's general order governing training (remedial training).
- D. Supervisors shall forward all documentation as required by department general orders established to assist in a comprehensive audit. This data shall minimally include: use of force reports, vehicle pursuit reports, and attendance records.

### **IV. DIVISION COMMANDERS**

- A. In addition to the regular data audits conducted by internal affairs, the division commanders shall periodically audit an individual employee's history. Using this information and their experience, the commander may be able to identify employees who may need remedial/corrective intervention even before such is indicated by the early warning system data audit.
- B. When under early warning system monitoring, the employee's division commander and supervisor shall meet with the employee to discuss the situation in depth to:
  - 1. Identify problems or potential problems;
  - 2. Determine short and long-term goals for improvement;
  - 3. Come to a consensus commitment on a plan for long-term improved performance;
  - 4. Advise of the monitoring process and the repercussions of future sustained transgressions.
- C. Generally, personnel should expect to remain under intensive monitoring and supervision for at least three (3) months when an early warning flag is triggered or until the supervisor concludes that the employee's behavior has been remediated (whichever is longer).

- D. Supervisor/Employee Meeting
1. All supervisor/employee meetings shall be thoroughly documented, which will be forwarded to the Chief of Police or his designee. The affected employee and supervisor shall meet on a regular basis, minimally monthly, to discuss progress towards the agreed upon goals and objectives.
  2. All regular monthly progress/status reports shall be submitted to the Chief of Police or his/her designee through the chain of command.
  3. An additional six (6) months of documented monitoring is required following removal from the early warning system. Monthly monitoring reports from the direct supervisor are required.
- E. Any statement made by the officer in connection with the early warning system review process may not be used against them in any disciplinary or other proceeding.

**V. REMEDIAL/CORRECTIVE INTERVENTION**

- A. Supervisory or command personnel may initiate remedial/corrective intervention to correct behavior. Remedial/corrective intervention may include, but is not limited to:
1. Training;
  2. Retraining;
  3. Counseling;
  4. Intensive supervision;
  5. Fitness for duty examination;
  6. Employee Assistance Program, when warranted, if available;
  7. Peer counseling.
- B. Internal disciplinary action, remedial/corrective intervention, and fitness for duty examinations are not mutually exclusive and should be jointly pursued if and when appropriate.
- C. When remedial/corrective intervention has been undertaken, the Chief of Police shall ensure that such actions are documented in writing. No entry should be made in the employee's personnel file, unless the action results in a sustained investigation. If the remedial/corrective intervention is a training program, attendance and successful completion of that program should be noted in the employee's training record.
- D. All reports shall be forwarded to the Chief of Police for review. These reports have the same confidential status as Internal Affairs documents and are subject to the same disclosure and retention regulations and guidelines.

## VI. MONMOUTH COUNTY PROSECUTOR'S OFFICE NOTIFICATIONS

### A. Domestic Violence Protocol

1. For all incidents where it is alleged that a law enforcement officer committed an act of domestic violence or was the victim of domestic violence, regardless of whether or not complaints and/or a temporary or final restraining order has been issued, the Chief of Police or his/her designee shall promptly notify the Monmouth County Prosecutor's Office Professional Responsibility and Bias Crime Unit by emailing [mcpopru@mcponj.org](mailto:mcpopru@mcponj.org).
2. All police officers of the Howell Police Department are required to identify themselves as law enforcement officers to responding officers when their off-duty conduct results in a police call, regardless of whether or not complaints and/or a temporary or final restraining order has been issued. The involved off-duty police officer shall also be required to self-report the incident to Internal Affairs. Said identification will ensure that the responding police department may notify the involved officer's agency of said police call. Notification is not required when the police involvement consists of minor traffic infractions where no injury was sustained by any party. A police officer's failure to make such notification may result in departmental discipline in accordance with departmental policy and procedures.
3. This notification should include the following information:
  - a. Agency name;
  - b. Officer's name;
  - c. Victim's name, if other than officer;
  - d. Reported date/time;
  - e. Date of incident, if other than reported date/time;
  - f. Incident location, including municipality;
  - g. Assigned case number;
  - h. Nature of incident;
  - i. Injuries sustained by victim;
  - j. Witness names;
  - k. Criminal complaint and/or TRO/FRO issued;
  - l. Assigned personnel, e.g., (local law enforcement officer, internal affairs officer); and
  - m. Copies of all police reports and relevant paperwork, e.g., (complaint, TRO, VNF, etc.).

4. All emergent matters shall be reported directly to the Monmouth County Prosecutor's Office Professional Responsibility and Bias Crime Unit by calling 732-577-8700.
5. The Howell Police Department shall provide to the Monmouth County Prosecutor's Office Professional Responsibility and Bias Crimes Unit a listing of any and all calls where it is alleged that a law enforcement officer committed an act of domestic violence or was the victim of domestic violence, regardless of whether or not complaints and/or a temporary or final restraining order has been issued to include, but not limited to:
  - a. All incidents that occurred within their jurisdiction in the past three (3) years;
  - b. All out of county and/or state notifications of domestic violence calls involving law enforcement officers;
  - c. Verification that if an officer from another county, state or out of state agency was involved that notification has been made to the involved officer's employing agency.
6. It is the continuing responsibility of the Professional Responsibility and Bias Crimes Unit to open a file, review the incident, and investigate the matter further, if necessary.

B. Fitness-for-Duty Protocol

1. The Chief of Police or his/her designee shall make notification to the Monmouth County Prosecutor's Office Professional Responsibility and Bias Crimes Unit by emailing [mcpopru@mcponj.org](mailto:mcpopru@mcponj.org) to include, but not limited to the following:
  - a. Any time an officer is sent for a fitness for duty evaluation regardless of the reason for the evaluation;
  - b. Any time an officer is disarmed, regardless of the reason for the disarming;
  - c. Any time the early warning system results in the law enforcement officer being counseled, disciplined, sent for a fitness for duty evaluation, or disarmed; or
  - d. Any time the early warning system indicates the officer has received three (3) citizen complaints within a six (6) month period, regardless of the reason.
2. All emergent matters shall be reported directly to the Monmouth County Prosecutor's Office Professional Responsibility and Bias Crime Unit by calling 732-577-8700.
3. When a law enforcement officer has been disarmed, regardless of the reason and prior to the Howell Police Department rearming the officer, the Monmouth County Prosecutor's Office must be provided with a copy of the corresponding fitness-for-duty report and a written plan regarding the rearming of the officer. This written plan should include whether or not the

rearming will be conditional or unconditional. If it is a conditional rearming, the agency must notify the Monmouth County Prosecutor's Office of all the terms of the conditional rearming, and the duration of the conditional rearming.

4. In addition, whenever the Howell Police Department sends any officer for a fitness-for-duty evaluation, the Chief of Police or his/her designee is also required to submit to the physician, psychiatrist or psychologist an itemized list of the documents it forwarded to him/her along with the documents it submitted. A copy of this itemized list must be maintained in the agency's internal affairs file and made available to the Monmouth County Prosecutor's Office upon request.
5. It is the continuing responsibility of the Professional Responsibility and Bias Crimes Unit to open a file, review the incident, and investigate the matter further, if necessary.

## VII. GUARDIAN TRACKING

- A. The Howell Police Department shall utilize the Guardian Tracking System as a means of documenting officer's activities and actions in the performance of their duties. The Guardian Tracking System shall serve as a database for positive recognition, as well as the foundation for the early warning system.
- B. The Guardian Tracking System shall be utilized by all divisions within the agency and will have strict reporting requirements delegated to supervisors of all ranks.
  1. Peer-to-peer. Officers of equal rank shall be afforded the opportunity to make entries into the Guardian Tracking System. These entries shall be based upon an officer's observations of another officer(s) in the performance of his / her duties, which invoke positive recognition for actions taken that may otherwise not have been reported. Once an entry is made into the system, it shall not be posted and viewable until it receives supervisory approval.
  2. Sergeants. Sergeants shall be responsible for documenting actions of their subordinates in the Guardian Tracking System. These entries shall include, but are not limited to:
    - a. Positive remarks and recognition for officers.
    - b. M.V.R. / B.W.R. reviews as required by the Mobile Video / Body Worn Recorders Policy.
  3. Lieutenants. Squad and division Lieutenants shall be responsible for documenting certain actions of their subordinates in the Guardian Tracking System. These entries shall include, but are not limited to:
    - a. Any imposed discipline issued to officers under their command. The entry will be made under the appropriate category listing and the narrative only needs to state "See attached" (Which will refer to the uploaded relevant disciplinary document).
    - b. Recognition for officer's who submit extraordinary monthly reports shall be entered into the Monthly Activity Recognition category.



- c. Performance deficiencies that are identified / addressed at the squad level and not as an internal affairs matter shall be entered under the "Performance Deficiency" option. If these issues are not resolved, these entries shall serve as the progressive scale for further evaluation.
    - d. All incidents of employee injuries shall be entered into the Guardian Tracking System. The narrative only needs to state "See attached" (Which will refer to the uploaded Injury Investigation Reports and Meaningful Review).
- 4. Operations Captain. The Operations Captain shall be responsible for documenting certain actions of subordinates within the agency in the Guardian Tracking System. These entries shall include, but are not limited to:
  - a. All instances in which the use of force deployed by an officer required the completion of the Use Of Force report. The narrative only needs to state "See attached" (Which will refer to the uploaded Use Of Force Report and Meaningful Review).
  - b. All motor vehicle pursuits. The narrative only needs to state "See attached" (Which will refer to the uploaded Police Pursuit Report and Meaningful Review).
  - c. Employee involved motor vehicle crash investigations. The narrative only needs to state "See attached" (Which will refer to the uploaded crash report, meaningful review and investigative conclusion). Employee involved motor vehicle crashes with deer / animals do not require entry into the Guardian Tracking System.
- 5. Administrative/Investigations Captain. The Administrative/Investigations Captain shall be responsible for documenting all notification and outcomes of Tort Claims in the Guardian Tracking System.
- C. Any pattern of sick time use. This entry shall include the reason(s) detailing the pattern or misuse of sick time.
- D. All minor complaints made by the public which are addressed outside of the Internal Affairs Unit shall be uploaded into the Guardian Tracking System. In these circumstances, the supervisor making the entry must include the resolution that was noted and if the officer acted appropriately.

## VIII. COURT ADJUDICATION

- A. This Howell Police Department has established guidelines for the documentation of court cases which conclude with a dismissal of charges or suppression of evidence. The purpose of this documentation shall be to determine if charges are being dismissed or evidence is being suppressed based upon improper policy or procedure, officer error or an error within the court system.
- B. Officers Responsibilities:
  - 1. It shall be the responsibility of each individual officer to self-report any

instance in which a court case concludes with a dismissal of charges or suppression of evidence. The officer shall report the facts of the dismissal of charges or suppression of evidence to their immediate supervisor within 24 hours of becoming aware this outcome

2. This policy shall apply to cases involving both motor vehicle summonses and criminal complaints.
3. This policy shall apply to cases adjudicated in any municipal or superior court, both in and out of Monmouth County.
4. This policy recognizes the prosecutions ability to issue plea bargains in traffic and criminal cases. Therefore, officers are not required to self-report dismissals of charges that are in conjunction with a plea bargain in which the defendant accepted a guilty plea on a lesser charge in lieu of proceeding to a trial.
5. This policy recognizes that the court system may not make officers aware of dismissal of charges or suppression of evidence. Therefore, officers shall not be held accountable for failing to notify their immediate supervisor of the dismissal of charges or suppression of evidence when it occurs without their knowledge.
6. This policy also recognizes the fact that, on occasion, certain pre-selected defendants may be eligible to have their charges (both motor vehicle/criminal) administratively dismissed due to their cooperation and/or input within a complex/advanced criminal investigation. If an administrative dismissal was issued due to the defendant's cooperation in a distinct investigation, this policy shall NOT apply.

B. Supervisor Responsibilities:

1. Upon being notified by a subordinate of a dismissal of charges or suppression of evidence, the supervisor shall make an entry for the officer into the Guardian Tracking System under the category "Court Adjudication." As mentioned above, if the rationale for the dismissal was administrative in nature (example provided, where defendant cooperated with a distinct investigation, earning charge consideration on his/her behalf), this policy shall NOT apply and no such entry or supporting documentation will be entered into the Guardian Tracking System, as this information will still be considered STRICTLY CONFIDENTIAL.
2. This entry shall document any facts related to the dismissal of charges or suppression of evidence relayed from the officer.
3. The supervisor may request additional information from the officer pertaining to the dismissal of charges or suppression of evidence at a later date. If additional information is obtained which the supervisor believes is pertinent to the dismissal of charges or suppression of evidence, the supervisor shall document this under the initial entry of "Court Adjudication" in the Guardian Tracking System.

C. Howell Municipal Court:

1. This policy shall be forwarded to the Howell Municipal Court for their review.

2. It is requested that the Howell Municipal Court Prosecutor notify the Howell Police Department Administrative Captain of the dismissal of charges or suppression of evidence which occurs without the knowledge of the officer who issued the charges. The Administrative Captain may make the entry of "Court Adjudication" in the Guardian Tracking System, or forward the information to the officer's immediate supervisor for review and entry into the Guardian Tracking System.

## **IX. ANNUAL REVIEW**

- A. The Howell Police Department shall review its early warning system on an annual basis during the month of January. The Chief of Police or his/her designee shall provide a letter to the Monmouth County Prosecutor's Office documenting proof of such review. The review shall include, but not be limited, to the following:
  1. Number of audits conducted;
  2. Number of employees flagged;
  3. Number of instances where remedial/corrective action was taken;
  4. Number of internal affairs cases opened as result of early warning system;
  5. Changes in number of internal affairs complaints with reference to flagged indicators and whether they have increased/decreased;
  6. Number of notifications made to the Monmouth County Prosecutor's Office.

## **X. NOTIFICATION TO SUBSEQUENT LAW ENFORCEMENT EMPLOYER**

- A. If any officer who is or has been subject to an Early Warning System review process applies to or accepts employment at a different law enforcement agency than the one where he or she underwent the Early Warning System review process, it is the responsibility of the prior or current employing law enforcement agency to notify the subsequent employing law enforcement agency of the officer's Early Warning System review process history and outcomes. Upon request, the prior or current employing agency shall share the officer's Early Warning System review process files with the subsequent employing agency.

## **XI. NOTIFICATION TO COUNTY PROSECUTOR**

- A. Upon initiation of the Early Warning System review process, the Chief of Police or a designee shall make a confidential written notification to the County Prosecutor or his/her designee of the identity of the subject officer, the nature of the triggering performance indicators, and the planned remedial program. Upon completion of the Early Warning System review process, the Chief of Police shall make a confidential written notification to the County Prosecutor or his/her designee of the outcome of the Early Warning System review, including any remedial measures taken on behalf of the subject officer.

## **XII. PUBLIC ACCESSIBILITY AND CONFIDENTIALITY**

- A. The Early Warning System policy shall be made available to the public upon request and shall be posted on the agency website.