

**NIAGARA FALLS POLICE DEPARTMENT**  
GENERAL ORDER

EFFECTIVE DATE: 09/12/2013	SUBJECT:  <b>FIELD TRAINING AND EVALUATION PROGRAM</b>	Number 202.00 (NYSLEAP T-32-5)
RESCINDS: 04/15/2003	(ALSO: REFER TO FIELD TRAINING OFFICER MANUAL)	Number of pages 6

I. Purpose:

- A. The Field Training & Evaluation Program is a highly structured program designed to fill the need for on-the-job training in law enforcement. It is administered through the Training Unit to maintain content, standardization, uniformity, validity and decrease the possibility for staff vs. line conflict. Complete records are kept by the NFPD Training Unit during the trainee's stay in the program and beyond. These files are confidential in nature and available only to the Field Training Officer Personnel and those who have an organizational need to know.
- B. Training is completed in phases allowing the trainee exposure to varied skills required of a police officer and to the various shifts and geographical areas of the City. Generally, officers will complete a sixteen cycle (4 day week), agency specific program, fashioned after the San Jose National Field Training & Evaluation Model. It may be extended for training, personal and/or administrative reasons.

II. Policy:

- A. It is the policy of the Niagara Falls Police Department that it will facilitate a sixteen (16) cycle (4 day) Field Training & Evaluation Program. While the Program length may exceed sixteen (16) cycles for various reasons, it shall only be abbreviated accordingly when experienced officers are hired laterally or as new hires.
- B. The sixteen (16) cycle program has been divided into phases; hence, the name Phase Training. Each phase is a program length of time correlated to a particular set of tasks, which must be learned by each new officer. The tasks are ordered so that the trainee is exposed to the most basic and necessary tasks first. These tasks form the foundation upon which the trainee will build for the

remainder of the program and into the subsequent years of service. As a trainee progresses through the program, he or she will encounter increasingly more difficult tasks. Eventually, the trainee must be able to perform or be exposed to the majority of tasks necessary to assume the complex role of police officer.

- C. The principal vehicle for the listing of tasks is the Trainee Skills Sheet; a week-by-week assignment of responsibilities which move from the simple to the complex, the known to the unknown, as the weeks pass.
- D. PHASE I: Cycles 1-6
  - 1. Primary Field Training Officer / Daily Observation Reports
    - a. Orientation to Field Training Officer Program
    - b. Department Policy and Procedure
    - c. Patrol Procedure and Technique
    - d. Remedial Training if Necessary
    - e. Bi-Weekly & End of Phase Reports by Program Commander
- E. PHASE II: Cycles 7-10
  - 1. Recruit Changes Shift & Field Training Officer / Daily Observation Reports
    - a. Officer Safety Emphasized
    - b. Emphasis on Training
    - c. Field Training Problems & Remedial Training, if Necessary
    - d. Bi-Weekly & End of Phase Reports by Program Commander
- F. PHASE III: Cycles 11-14
  - 1. Recruit Changes Shift & Field Training Officer / Daily Observation Reports
    - a. Increased Workload for Trainee
    - b. Emphasis is on Training and Polishing Skills
    - c. Recruit Graded at least "4" in Every Category, a Minimum of 51% of the Time, During the Final Two Weeks of Phase III
    - d. "Rook Book" or Program Manual Skills Sheets Completed
    - e. Remedial Training, if Necessary, Successfully Completed
    - f. Bi-Weekly & End of Phase Reports by Program Commander

G. PHASE IV: Cycles 15 & 16

1. Recruit Returns to Primary Field Training Officer / Daily Observation Reports
  - a. More Advanced Training
  - b. Proficiency Demonstrated
  - c. Emphasis Shifting to Evaluation ONLY by Field Training Officer
  - d. Recruit Graded at Least “4” in Every Category, Every Day
  - e. Recommendation of Primary F.T.O. & Program Commander
  - f. End of Program Report by Program Commander
  - g. Program Critique

H. PHASE V: Remediation Only Phase (If Necessary)

1. Usually One or Two Cycles.
2. Recruit May or May Not Change F.T.O. & Shift / Daily Observation Reports
  - a. Identification of Remedial Training Need(s) & Lesson Plan Formulation.
  - b. Completion of Remedial Training Form by F.T.O.
  - c. Recruit Graded at Least “4” in Every Category, Every Day
  - d. Recommendation of F.T.O. & Program Commander

III. Officer Deployment:

- A. While in phase training, the trainee and the Field Training Officer will normally be considered a one-officer car until the trainee has reached the level of performance to justify otherwise. In the earlier stages of training, the Field Training Officer must consider the trainees safety as well as his / her own. As the program progresses, the Field Training Officer and the trainee can be considered to be a two officer team. This will, however, be determined by the Shift Commander and Program Commander.
- B. The trainee shall not be assigned separately from the Field Training Officer; safety and liability issues dictate this. While it is tempting under some circumstances to use the trainee as one would use a non-trainee, the drawbacks far outweigh the apparent benefits.

IV: Rotation:

- A. During the training period, the trainee will rotate through various shifts. This method will expose the trainee to varied conditions that each officer must face in his / her career. Failure to assign a trainee to different shifts can lead to problems manifesting themselves at a time when little could be done to correct them. It is necessary to learn whether or not a new officer can adjust physically and mentally to various working hours with different activity loads.
  - B. Through different assignments, the trainee also is acquainted with the geographical areas of work. The trainee must demonstrate an ability to find locations with which he / she is not familiar and an understanding of the policing problems of various areas. The trainee should also demonstrate an understanding of different cultures, ethnic groups and circumstances encountered during different assignments. Standardized, uniform training and exposure is a basic tenant for the program; the Program Commander or his designee is responsible for ensuring varied assignments.
- V. Remedial Extension Policy:
- A. The program duration is sixteen (16) cycles but problems sometimes occur which make it difficult to always adhere to the set time limit. These problems can have their source in training performance or be administrative in nature.
  - B. The training period may be extended to allow sufficient time for the trainee to master complex tasks necessary to complete the program. This is not a guarantee that every trainee has the right to an extension. The decision to extend will be based on a review of performance and other information available as well as recommendations of the Training Director, Field Training Officers and program staff. An extension is not to be viewed as (punishment) but is an opportunity to (catch up) and to have problems remediated.
  - C. The extension may be handled in several ways. The trainee may continue to work with the same Field Training Officer or may be assigned to a different Field Training Officer on any shift. A decision may even be made to utilize an outside resource. The extension will be tailored to fit the training needs of the trainee. This is a difficult time for the trainee and a time when they might (give up) or (decide) to fail. It is the responsibility of the Field Training Officer to see that the extension is viewed from a positive prospective and is a strategy that will lead to success. The foundation for a decision to extend is whether or not the cause is viewed as something that can be remediated or corrected. Extensions occur frequently and are not granted by the program staff unless the probability of success is anticipated!

- D. Upon graduation from the Program, all probationary officers will be assigned to a temporary shift pending departmental shift change and seniority policy. Officers will be considered probationary for their first year of employment commencing on the day they are hired and ending on their anniversary date.

#### VI. Daily Performance Evaluation:

- A. The Daily Performance Evaluation is completed each day by the Field Training Officer. This report is a permanent record of the trainee's progress as well as problem areas and remedial efforts to resolve them. The Daily Performance Evaluation is normally completed and discussed with the Trainee just before or at the end of the shift.
- B. The Daily Performance Evaluation reflects two (2) major areas, which are divided into thirty-one (31) categories. These categories cover the range of skills necessary to become a proficient police officer. By the end of the program, the trainee is expected to master these skills to a minimum acceptable level (4) per the standardized evaluation guidelines. A trainee's performance may be evaluated through actual performance -of a particular skill or by verbal, written or simulated testing.

#### VII. Evaluation Meetings:

- A. Evaluation Meetings are held on a regular basis. The meetings provide an opportunity for Field Training Officers to discuss the performance of their trainee, problems encountered and the ways the Field Training Officer solved those problems. The meetings provide a forum for exchanging ideas as well as information. A Field Training Officer is expected to discuss strengths, weaknesses, remedial training efforts and suggestions for the future training of the trainee assigned to him or her. Each trainee's progress in the program will be discussed at this time.

#### VIII. Probationary Period:

- A. A twelve (12) month probationary period for police officers shall commence upon appointment as Police Recruit Officer.
- B. Performance Evaluation:
  - 1. The purpose of Basic Police Training at the Niagara County Law Enforcement Academy is to prepare the Recruit Officer for entrance into the Field Training & Evaluation Program. The Recruit Officer

will be continuously monitored and evaluated during basic training. The Training Director will complete Bi-Weekly Reports similar to those completed during the Field Training & Evaluation Program. Substandard performance during basic training is grounds for dismissal, as determined by the City Administrator, upon recommendation of the Superintendent of Police.

2. The Field Training & Evaluation program is a continuation of Basic Police Training. The primary purpose of supervised field training is to prepare the Recruit Police Officer for competent solo patrol. Substandard performance during the F.T.O.E. Program is grounds for dismissal, as determined by the City Administrator, upon recommendation of the Superintendent of Police.
- C. Upon successful completion of both Basic Police Training and the Field Training & Evaluation Program, the Recruit Officer shall attain the status of Probationary Police Officer until the one year anniversary of his / her hiring date. The Probationary Officer shall then attain the status of Police Officer.