

# CAREER DEVELOPMENT

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## **I. PURPOSE**

It is the purpose of this policy to define the career development program of this agency which is designed to improve the skills, knowledge and abilities (SKA) of all personnel in order to successfully meet departmental tasks and objectives.

## **II. POLICY**

The ability of this agency to meet current and long-range goals and objectives in an efficient and effective manner is largely dependent upon the level of skill, knowledge and ability that members bring to their individual assignments, duties and responsibilities. Therefore, it is the policy of this law enforcement agency to provide, to the degree possible, counseling, training and professional development opportunities and assistance to members in choosing, preparing entering and progressing in agency job assignments and job specialties as well as individual professional growth opportunities that will promote productivity, efficiency and effectiveness in job performance and improve the overall level of job satisfaction.

## **III. PROCEDURES**

### **A. Career Development Program Overview**

This agency's career development program is based on career counseling and in-service training.

1. Career counseling offers guidance to individuals for choosing, preparing for and entering into and progressing in job assignments and serves to identify:
  - a. the skills, knowledge and abilities of each employee relative to present and future job assignments.
  - b. in-service training requirements; and
  - c. the extent to which training fulfills the employee's and department's expectations and needs.
2. In-service training shall be provided in order to:
  - a. maintain and enhance employees SKAs needed to perform the duties and responsibilities of the assigned job and to stimulate interest or professional skills in specialized assignments; and
  - b. provide advanced levels of instruction for specialized assignments and enhance an employee's overall potential for upward mobility and job satisfaction.

3. In addition to career counseling and in-service training, this agency shall encourage and favorably consider an employee's efforts to continue his/her formal education and shall, to the degree possible, facilitate such efforts through adjustment of work schedules and related responsibilities. Employees who receive a broad general education have a better opportunity to understand the community and society in which law Enforcement operates, communicate more effectively with citizens and are better equipped to employ new ideas and concepts in their work.
4. This agency's chief executive shall appoint an administrator of the career development program who will be responsible for ensuring that the program meets organizational requirements and goals. The administrator shall evaluate the career development program annually, provide a detailed report on career development program activities and suggest program changes to the chief executive.
5. The plan administrator shall ensure that all command and supervisory personnel receive orientation training necessary to provide career development opportunities to all personnel within their command who wish to take advantage of them. The orientation training shall include information on:
  - a. general counseling techniques;
  - b. SKA assessment techniques;
  - c. Salary, benefits and training opportunities within the department;
  - d. Educational opportunities and incentive programs;
  - e. Awareness of the cultural background of ethnic groups in the program, when applicable;
  - f. Record-keeping requirements and techniques;
  - g. Availability of outside resources; and
  - h. Affirmative action requirements as they relate to providing equal opportunities for self-development and advancement within the agency.
6. The plan administrator shall ensure that appropriate files and records are maintained to administer and evaluate the program to include, but not be limited to the following:
  - a. SKA inventories completed by officers on an annual basis.
  - b. Career specialty and proficiency training records;
  - c. Current inventory of resources used in the career development program to include a description of the external and internal training and related resources available, trainers and contact persons.

**B. SKA Inventory**

The SKA inventory is a key component of this agency's career development program and shall be maintained by the agency's training coordinator. Copies of these documents, which will include the course content, name of attendee and performance of the attendee (if applicable), shall be made available to this agency's personnel function and to the individual employee's supervisory officer/career counselor. The inventory will be used to:

1. Identify the formal education, training and capabilities of all newly hired employees to include:
  - a. educational background;
  - b. training courses completed;
  - c. work experience;
  - d. vocational or other skills;
  - e. foreign language skills;
  - f. special interests.
2. The SKA inventory will also be used:
  - a. in conjunction with the job analysis data, to assist in establishing agency training requirements;
  - b. in conjunction with employee performance evaluations, to assist career counselors in identifying training and related opportunities for members who need to overcome weaknesses or who wish to pursue career specialties; and
  - c. to assist the agency's personnel function in matching employee skills and interests with specialized assignments and job opportunities. (Note: the personnel function shall maintain an inventory of career specialties within this agency together with the SKAs needed for each specialty.
3. The SKA inventory shall be administered on an annual basis to all sworn personnel to document training received, whether department-sanctioned or self-initiated. Employees are required to supply this information to the training coordinator together with appropriate documentation.
4. A copy of the employee's training record will be forwarded to each employee on an annual basis for review and verification.

**C. Career Counseling**

Career counseling services to link identified employee career needs, desires and individual skills (SKAs) with available resources that will assist in the attainment of those personal and departmental goals and objectives.

1. In order to adequately provide career counseling services, command and supervisory personnel shall be trained to:
  - a. assess the SKAs of individual employees;
  - b. assess the SKAs required by the department for specialized assignments;
  - c. prepare a career planning schedule;
  - d. utilize the resource inventory;
  - e. administer a performance evaluation; and
  - f. provide feedback and recommendations to the employee.
2. Designated career development counselors shall:
  - a. conduct, at the time of each eligible employee's annual performance evaluation, a frank and open discussion of the member's strengths and weaknesses as they relate to current duties and responsibilities;

- b. determine whether the employee is interested in receiving career counseling as provided herein and provided such counseling as requested; and
  - c. an assessment of the in-service training required by his/her personnel in order to assist them in meeting career goals.
3. Command personnel shall ensure that all career counseling is conducted in accordance with this policy and will provide the following information to the agency chief executive or his designee on an annual basis:
    - a. the total number of employees under his/her command who received career counseling during the specified period.
    - b. the number of personnel whose career goals tend toward management, supervision, investigative assignments or Specialized assignments.
    - c. An assessment of the in-service training required by his personnel in order to assist them in meeting career goals.
  4. Career counseling is not mandatory and employees who do not wish to receive such counseling shall inform their supervisor at the time of their performance review. Counselors shall record this fact at the time of the interview.

**D. In-Service Training**

This agency shall provide proficiency and career specialty in-service training as an essential component of the career development program. Proficiency training shall provide job-related instruction designed to refresh basic skills and provide additional SKAs necessary to maintain competence in job assignments. Career specialty in-service training shall concentrate on areas of individual interest and specialization consistent with the employee's career goals to enhance upward mobility and/or job satisfaction. The training coordinator will maintain and update all employee training records.

The department will be required to provide the mandatory in-service training hours prescribed by the Delaware C.O.P.T. on an annual basis. The content of this training will contain CPR, AED and First Responders recertification (if deemed necessary by C.O.P.T.) and, at a minimum, sixteen additional hours of career related training.

1. Proficiency training will be scheduled on a periodic basis by this agency's training coordinator.
2. Career specialty training will be scheduled on an individual basis through supervisory personnel and the training coordinator prior to or upon assignment to a specialized duty.
3. In-service training for supervisors (sergeants and lieutenants) shall include, but not be limited to, the following:
  - a. Establishing objectives;
  - b. Planning and evaluating organizational performance;
  - c. Decision making;
  - d. Problem identification;

- e. Fiscal management;
- f. Organizational behavior.

**E. Short-Term Training Assignments**

Where practical and eligible, sworn personnel will be given the opportunity to be temporarily assigned to specialized work units of their choice which are consistent with their career goals and interests. These assignments provide officers with a better understanding of the duties responsibilities, skills and abilities pertinent to these assignments and allow them to make informed career decisions.

1. Short-term assignments are intended primarily for the use of field operations officers, although intra-bureau/unit assignments may be approved for purposes of cross training or to meet valid employee development needs.
2. Supervisory personnel may participate in short-term assignments without loss of rank or status and shall return, in grade, to an equal or greater assignment than that which was vacated.
3. In order for an officer to be eligible for these assignments, he/she must:
  - a. not be on probationary status;
  - b. not have received disciplinary action within the prior 12 months;
  - c. meet the performance standards established for his/her regular duty assignments; and
  - d. not have served in another short-term assignment within the prior six-month period.
4. Officers interested in short-term assignments shall submit a written application to their immediate supervisor detailing their interest, qualifications and the assignment's applicability to their career goals and objectives.
  - a. Following supervisory and command approval, the application shall be submitted to the agency's personnel function which will attempt to match the request with the first available opening in the applicable unit or section.
  - b. Application shall be submitted to the section or unit commander where short-term assignments are available. Commanding officers of each unit or section may select assessment techniques they feel most appropriate to judge candidates to include interviews, practical tests, written exams or other methods.
  - c. All applications shall remain active until the applicant is assigned to the requested duty or deemed unqualified, is transferred to a position outside field operations, is promoted to a higher rank than sergeant or withdraws his/her request.
5. The performance of officers on temporary assignment for a period of one month or more shall be evaluated against program standards developed by the applicable commanding officers.

**F. Educational Leave / Scheduling Academic Study**

This agency will grant leave to employees for the purpose of undertaking academic or vocational instruction consistent with the career development objectives of the employee and the needs of the agency.

1. Paid leaves of absence will normally be approved if same involves attendance at a state or federal academy, workshop or job-related seminar or training for which any tuition or expense would be paid from the agency's training budget.
2. Commanding officers may exercise discretionary latitude in realigning work schedules of employees who are pursuing academic or other departmentally authorized career development training so that they may attend classes. Such adjustments may not conflict with procedures for assigning officers to watch schedules and must be administered equitably.

**G. Professional Affiliation**

This agency recognizes the value of participation by members in professional associations and related organizations having goals and objectives compatible with the law enforcement profession. This agency encourages officers to participate in such organizations recognizing that they are often beneficial to the career development of the individual and the attainment of agency goals and objectives. Affiliations of this nature are of three general types:

1. Law enforcement alumni associations are composed of graduates of academies or other programs such as the FBI National Academy, the Southern Police Institute or the Northwestern University Traffic Institute.
2. Professional service associations are organizations composed of members who share common interests and goals in professional development of the law enforcement profession, such as the International Association of Chiefs of Police.
3. General law enforcement associations are composed of members who are eligible to join by virtue of their law enforcement employee status such as this state's law enforcement officers association.

ORDERED and EXECUTED this 15<sup>th</sup> day of April, 2013

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Christopher Workman  
Chief of Police