



Lunenburg Police Department

Policy Number: 4.35	Subject: Essential Functions of a Police Officer
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Issuing Authority: <i>Chief Thomas L. Gammel</i>	

I. COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS POLICE OFFICER TASK LIST

A. Patrol And Incident Response

1. Provide back-up to other police personnel.
2. In response to a report of child abuse, observe and evaluate the physical or mental condition of the child, notify the appropriate agencies, and/or place the child in protective custody to protect the child from physical or mental harm.
3. Respond to a crime in progress and secure the area to effect an arrest.
4. When confronted with victim(s), conduct patient assessment and administer immediate care to prevent further injury, trauma, or death.
5. Communicate/negotiate with a hostage taker to reduce his/her anxiety and prevent the loss of life pending arrival of hostage negotiator.
6. Appraise the situation, separate individuals, and discuss the grievances to restore order at a domestic dispute.
7. Use communications equipment (e.g., radio, computer, telephone) to exchange information relative to official duties (e.g., reporting status and location to dispatcher, maintaining contact with other agencies).
8. Operate a Department vehicle at a high rate of speed, using emergency lights and siren and maintaining public safety, to respond to emergency calls for service.
9. Request assistance from other police personnel.
10. Respond to an alarm, secure area, and inspect for entry to protect life and property and apprehend the violator or violators.
11. Participate in a large scale coordinated search for one or more persons (e.g., escapees, mental patients, lost people, etc.) to locate or apprehend the person(s).
12. Separate individuals in a fight or disturbance (not a domestic dispute) to restore order and minimize injury to those individuals or property.

13. Operate a Department vehicle under non-emergency conditions within a specific geographic area to observe and detect unusual activities or circumstances, or violations of the law in order to deter crime and provide service to the public.
14. Protect one or more persons (confidential sources, witnesses, etc.) to provide for the safety and security of the person(s) and the public.
15. Respond to incidents requiring your presence as specified in Departmental policies.
16. Maintain current information such as names, faces, and previous arrest records of known criminals believed to be in the area.
17. Observe and check entrances to buildings and premises to maintain security of property.
18. Identify a person as disturbed (e.g., mentally, emotionally) or incapacitated (e.g., drunk, epileptic) and detain that person in order to provide for placement.
19. Erect physical barriers, bodily serve as a barrier, issue verbal commands, and/or utilize the necessary degree of authority to effect the safe, peaceful, and orderly flow of a crowd of people.
20. Patrol a specific geographic area on foot to observe and detect unusual activities or circumstances, or violations of the law.
21. Serve on special details to help maintain peace (e.g., abortion demonstrations, animal rights).

B. Traffic Enforcement

1. When outside of vehicle (e.g., making a traffic stop), monitor pedestrian or vehicular traffic to reduce risk of injury to self or others and take evasive action when necessary.
2. Conduct field sobriety tests to determine probable cause for breath or blood test and/or arrest for alcohol or drug use.
3. Protect an accident scene to allow for a determination of the facts of the accident.
4. Direct/reroute traffic, place emergency signaling devices (e.g., flares) or take other necessary action to ensure a safe and orderly flow of traffic when confronted with unusual traffic conditions (e.g., accidents, stoplight out, parades).
5. Determine the status (e.g., stolen, disabled) of a stopped or abandoned vehicle, including checking for inhabitants (e.g., children, victims).
6. Estimate vehicle speed visually or use speed detection equipment (e.g., radar, lydar, vascar, stopwatches) to determine the speed of a vehicle.
7. Stop vehicles for cause and check for required documents, defective equipment (e.g., headlights, tires), and other violations to issue citations or warnings and to aid in the safe and legal operation of vehicles on the road.
8. Issue a citation to a traffic violator.
9. Impound or supervise impounding of equipment or vehicles left on the roadway.

C. Investigations

1. Identify and collect evidence at a crime scene to preserve that evidence for use in an investigation.
2. Protect a crime scene from contamination by controlling access to the scene and erecting physical barriers to preserve the evidence of a crime.

3. Document the elements of a crime and identify potential witnesses and suspects to produce a prosecutable case.
4. Evaluate evidence (e.g., article, substance) to determine its relationship to an investigation.
5. Transport evidence to various locations (e.g., lab, court), maintaining an unbroken chain of custody.
6. Canvass the neighborhood, asking questions of persons in order to locate and identify one or more witnesses, victims, or suspects of a crime.
7. Inspect a suspected controlled substance to make a preliminary determination of its identity and request further lab tests as needed.
8. Determine the probable facts of the incident from examination and comparison of statements and other evidence.
9. Interview and take written statements from the general public, witnesses, victims, or suspects to obtain and record information pertinent to the enforcement, regulatory, and service functions of the Department.
10. Evaluate individuals to determine their credibility and/or manner in which they should be handled (e.g., during interrogations).
11. Identify assets for potential seizure at a crime scene.
12. Observe one or more persons, places, and/or things to collect information and evidence of criminal activities.

D. Arrest-Related Activities

1. Display or discharge a Departmentally approved firearm to protect self and/or the public.
2. Display or utilize a Departmentally issued non-firearm weapon (baton, spray) in a defensive manner to control one or more persons in accordance with Department policy.
3. Search one or more persons for weapons, fruits of a crime, or contraband to effect an arrest, protect oneself and the public, and/or to obtain evidence.
4. Search a vehicle for weapons, fruits of crime, or contraband to effect an arrest, protect self and the public, and/or to obtain evidence.
5. Distinguish between felony and misdemeanor classifications when making arrests.
6. Search a building for individuals, weapons, fruits of a crime, or contraband to effect an arrest, protect self and the public, and/or to obtain evidence.
7. Physically restrain or subdue a violent or resisting individual or arrestee to protect self, the person being restrained, and the public, or to effect custody of an arrestee.
8. Determine applicability of Miranda when arresting and detaining suspects.
9. Signal a felon to stop (e.g., emergency light, siren, P.A.) in order to effect an arrest or contain the felon and await backup.
10. Make judgments about probable cause for warrantless searches.
11. Operate a Department vehicle at a high rate of speed, maintaining public safety and in compliance with Departmental pursuit policy, to pursue and apprehend one or more violators.
12. Determine whether suspects require medical attention.
13. Physically restrain or control a non-violent individual or arrestee to protect self, the person being restrained, and the public, or to effect custody of an arrestee.

14. Ensure prisoners are held and detained in compliance with Departmental policy and applicable statutes.
15. Legally force entry into building to apprehend suspect and/or evidence.
16. Record the arrest of an individual (e.g., fill out forms, photograph) to document that arrest and possible detention.
17. Pursue a suspect or violator on foot.
18. Review computer and/or booking sheet to obtain information about booked suspects (e.g., criminal history, outstanding warrants).
19. Make recommendations for strip or body cavity search.
20. Transport person(s) (e.g., witness, victim), maintaining safety, for some official purpose.

E. Evidence/Property Management

1. Ensure the secure storage of evidence and property in the designated location.
2. Ensure the maintenance of chain of custody for evidence.
3. Release property or evidence to authorized individuals.

F. Record And Report Management

1. Write narrative reports (e.g., incident reports, intelligence reports) providing complete, accurate and consistent information.
2. Summarize in writing the statements of witnesses and complainants.
3. Fill in forms requiring specific information accurately and completely.
4. Record information required by Department guidelines in proper logs.
5. Document incoming communications (e.g., requests for information, training) and communicate that information to other personnel as necessary.
6. Maintain logs (written and/or computerized) of activities occurring during the shift (e.g., accidents, significant incidents) to maintain a record.

G. Court

1. Appear and testify as a witness in an official proceeding (e.g., traffic court, trial, Civil Service hearing) to assist in fulfilling the Department's role in the judicial and administrative process.
2. Review search and arrest warrants prior to presentation to judge or prosecutor for signing.
3. Review and discuss the details of a specific investigation with prosecutor to plan investigatory strategy, prepare for a court presentation, etc.
4. Prepare search or arrest warrants.

H. Community Relations

1. Communicate with neighborhood youths to facilitate police-community relationships and deter criminal behavior.

2. Participate in cooperative operations (e.g., Task Forces, executing warrants) to address community conditions and crime.
3. Contact the immediate family of an individual (in person) or notify uniformed personnel to provide information to the family concerning that person's injury or death.
4. Attend meetings (e.g., community meetings, concerned citizens) to discuss and exchange information, address problems, coordinate and develop plans of action, etc.
5. Provide information upon request to individuals and groups (e.g., business people, neighborhood groups) to increase awareness of potential victimization and deter crime.
6. Provide assistance and information to civilians seeking help (e.g., directions, explanations of municipal codes and ordinances, referrals to other Department personnel or other agencies/entities).
7. Maintain current information about available social agencies and their roles for use in referring citizens seeking help.
8. Discuss police actions with relatives of prisoners or complainants.

I. Police Department Property Management

1. Clean and inspect weapons.
2. Conduct inventory of assigned vehicles and equipment to ensure that necessary equipment is available when needed.
3. Recognize vehicle and/or equipment damage or malfunctions(s) and ensure that necessary repairs are performed.
4. Maintain clothing and personal equipment to satisfy inspection requirements.
5. Maintain personal copies of Departmental directives as required by Department policy.

J. Supervision

1. Attend or conduct roll call.
2. Determine whether or not to terminate vehicle pursuits based on location of pursuit, weather, severity of crime, etc.
3. Visit hospital to check on officers involved in shooting incidents.
4. Ensure investigative activities (e.g., court affidavits, court-ordered surveillance, searches) are executed in compliance with legal requirements.
5. Monitor radio traffic to keep informed of personnel activities and ensure proper assignment (e.g., need for backup, reassignment of officers).
6. Monitor subordinates who have contact with seized property (e.g., narcotics).
7. Attempt to resolve conflicts that arise between subordinates.
8. Field check activities of subordinates to monitor performance and compliance with Department policies, procedures and applicable laws.

K. Personnel Evaluation And Counseling

1. N/A

L. Personnel Assignment And Coordination

1. N/A

M. Training Delivery

1. N/A

N. Command

1. Assume command at hostage/barricaded suspect situations pending arrival of command staff and specialized units.
2. Establish staging area at serious incident scene for briefing of personnel, etc. pending arrival of the command staff and specialty units.
3. Direct evacuations to ensure the safety of police personnel and the public.
4. Recognize emergency situation and implement emergency mobilization plan.
5. Monitor police activity by radio.
6. Assume command at incident scene during routine situations, issue assignments, orders, and instructions to personnel to coordinate, direct, and assist them with their activities (e.g., rerouting traffic, securing crime scene, evidence collection).
7. Attend briefings to discuss tactical plans and assignments when required.

O. Internal/External Communications & Coordination

1. Monitor police activity by radio.
2. Notify dispatcher of special conditions that may affect or are affecting sector operations as required by Department procedures.
3. Communicate with other Department personnel informally to discuss and exchange information (e.g., intelligence), address problems, etc.
4. Monitor and respond to routine communications (e.g., phone).
5. Consult with superior to provide/receive assistance with assigned operational activities and keep him/her apprised of potential developments/problems.
6. Request documents in records systems (e.g., pictures, criminal histories, etc.).
7. Notify other Police Department units of unusual situations and conditions as necessary and appropriate.
8. Contact other police Departments and law enforcement agencies (e.g., FBI) for information and assistance.
9. Communicate with individuals from other city/state/federal agencies/entities to exchange information and accomplish work objectives.
10. Respond to requests for information from superior personnel.
11. Answer investigative inquiries from other law enforcement agencies or refer inquiry appropriately.
12. Contact outside agencies and organizations (e.g., social service agencies) for information.

P. Research And Planning

1. Read and review professional literature, technical journals, and newsletters to determine their application to Division operations and to keep abreast of current practices and developments.
2. Make suggestions to improve the effectiveness or efficiency of Department units.

Q. Financial Management

1. N/A

R. Professional Development

1. Participate in in-service training and recertification programs including firearms, policies, and practical/tactical exercises (e.g., defensive tactics) to receive information and develop skills.
2. Read and keep up-to-date on federal, state, and local statutes/ordinances and court decisions to ensure appropriate enforcement and investigatory activities.
3. Read internal reports and training materials to keep current on procedures and issues.
4. Read and keep up-to-date on Departmental policies and procedures to ensure appropriate enforcement, investigatory, and administrative activities.
5. Read outside literature (e.g., texts and journals) to keep current on law enforcement topics.