

Cobb County Police Department

Policy 6.09

FIELD TRAINING OFFICERS

Effective Date: May 1, 2016
Rescinds: Policy 6.09 (January 12, 2013)
Related Orders: FTO Manual; Georgia POST FTO Program
Issued By: Chief J.R. Houser Page 1 of 7
The words “he, his, him,” which may appear in this policy, are used generically for clarity and ease of reading. These terms are not meant to imply gender and relate to all employees of the Department.

It is the policy of the Cobb County Police Department to utilize competent, well trained officers for the duties of field training of police recruits. All newly hired officers will undergo a field training program of at least four weeks duration. The principles of the Field Training Program are established by the Georgia Peace Officers Standards and Training Council (POST) Field Training Officer Program course.

The appointment of an officer as a Field Training Officer (FTO) is not a promotion and the officer will not obtain any proprietary interest in the appointment. FTO status may be appointed or withdrawn at the discretion of the Chief of Police or the Director of the Cobb County Department of Public Safety Training Center (CCDPSTC). The assignment of an FTO to a unit within the Department or to the Department of Public Safety is at the discretion of the Chief of Police or the Director of the CCDPSTC, and will be based upon the training needs of the Department.

I. SELECTION PROCESS TO BE A FIELD TRAINING OFFICER

A. Time-in-Service Requirements

Generally, in order to be considered for an FTO position, an officer must have three years of continuous, uninterrupted service with the Cobb County Police Department (from the date of release from Phase II) prior to applying for the position. An officer with prior police experience may be considered after two years of continuous service with the Cobb County Police Department.

B. Performance Standards

1. The officer shall have received a minimum rating of Good Performance on the two most recent Annual Performance Appraisal Forms.
2. Must be able to perform the essential functions of an FTO with or without reasonable accommodation.

3. Must have no serious disciplinary action (generally a suspension of three or more day's duration) within two years prior to consideration for an appointment as an FTO.
4. Must not have a pattern of negligent or reckless driving.
5. Must be a POST certified law enforcement officer in good standing.
6. Must possess a POST Field Training Officer Certification.
7. Must not be under investigation by Internal Affairs, except with approval by the Chief of Police.
8. Must be willing to work overtime when necessary to accomplish training, and participate in all mandatory field training functions such as counseling sessions, FTO meetings, etc.

C. Training Requirement

Prior to submitting a letter of interest, the officer must attend and successfully complete the Georgia POST Field Training Officer Course at the CCDPSTC.

1. Officers who have completed the course elsewhere may be considered on a case by case basis.
2. An officer who has previously been a Department Field Training Officer and was deactivated in good standing, or an officer who attended the Field Training Course more than three years prior to activation, may be required to attend refresher training in the area of field training prior to activation.
3. An FTO returning from military service may be required to attend refresher training in the area of field training.

D. Procedures for Designation as a Field Training Officer

1. An officer who desires to be an FTO must submit a Field Training Officer Program Application through his chain of command to the precinct/unit commander.
2. The precinct/unit commander, or his designee, will evaluate the officer on the Field Training Officer Applicant Evaluation Form. The officer will be evaluated on his performance over the previous 12 months in the following areas:
 - a. Field Performance (stress, critical incidents, etc.)
 - b. Self Initiated Activity
 - c. Officer Safety

- d. Report Writing Skills
- e. Knowledge of Traffic Codes
- f. Knowledge of Criminal Procedure
- g. Adherence to Department Policies
- h. Demeanor and Professionalism

An officer must be rated at a minimum of “Meets Standards Well” (a rating of 5) in all the listed areas. The rating criteria are the Field Training Officer Rating Terminology included as Appendix A of this policy. The sum of the numerical ratings may be used for assistance in determining the most suited officer (among several officers) to be an FTO. Only the most suited officers should be selected to be FTOs.

- 3. The officer will further be evaluated on the following attributes:
 - a. Demonstrated work ethic; and
 - b. Demonstrated proficiency in communication skills with the public, peers and superiors.
- 4. The officer’s immediate supervisors (sergeant or lieutenant) will complete the *Field Training Officer Applicant Evaluation Form* on the selected officer and submit the form to the Precinct Commander. If an officer is not selected by his precinct/unit commander, the precinct/unit commander will inform the applicant of the reasons that he was not selected, and recommendations on a course of action in order to be reconsidered at a future date.
- 5. The Precinct Commander, if he concurs, will then forward said Applicant Evaluation and a Memorandum through the Chain of Command to the Chief of Police requesting that the selected officer be appointed as an FTO.
- 6. The Chief of Police may then appoint the selected officer as an FTO.
- 7. All FTOs must be renewed annually.
- 8. An officer may not submit more than one request for activation every twelve (12) months.

E. Pay Procedures

- 1. Upon appointment as an FTO, appropriate documentation will be forwarded to Cobb County Human Resources for a pay adjustment to Police Officer III, consistent with the Cobb County Compensation Policy. At the discretion of the Chief of Police, he may recommend that an officer

receive a pay adjustment for being assigned to a specialty team as well as Police Officer III pay.

2. The Field Training Program Manager assigned to the CCDPSTC will maintain a roster of active FTOs, and ensure that the Cobb County Department of Public Safety Personnel Unit has a current roster.

F. FTO Insignia

Active FTOs will wear the Department-issued chevrons and FTO Pin as described by policy.

II. FIELD TRAINING OFFICER REVIEW PROCESS

- A. Upon conclusion of Phase II for each recruit, the supervisor will complete a Field Training Officer Training Evaluation on the FTO. The evaluation is not required for temporary recruit assignment or rotation, but is required for recruits whose training is terminated. The documentation will be forwarded to the Field Training Manager. The FTO will not be eligible to receive another recruit until the review has been received by the Field Training Program Manager.
- B. Upon release from Phase II of training, the recruit officer will complete a critique on his Field Training Officer by using the FTO Feedback form. This critique should be completed again in six months. Each critique will be forwarded directly to the Field Training Program Manager upon completion.
- C. During the Performance Evaluation process, the FTO's knowledge, skills, abilities and qualifications will be reviewed by his Chain of Command and the Department of Public Safety (DPS) Police Academy Director, by use of the FTO / Police Officer III Renewal Requirements form. The DPS Police Academy Director will forward the review to the Department of Public Safety Personnel Unit.

III. RELIEF OF TRAINING DUTIES AND REVOCATION PROCESS

A. Voluntary Resignation

An FTO who wishes to resign as a field trainer must submit a request through his chain of command to the Deputy Chief of Precinct Operations. The FTO's training chain of command will be notified in the same manner.

Unless directed by the Field Training Program Manager, an FTO is obligated to continue the field training of any recruit assigned to him, regardless of whether the FTO has submitted a letter of resignation. The FTO will maintain FTO status and will be compensated (in accordance with the pay procedures set forth in this policy) until conclusion of the recruit assignment.

B. Temporary Relief

1. An FTO may be temporarily relieved from training duties with no loss of pay at the recommendation of the FTO's precinct/unit commander, a Deputy Chief, the Chief of Police, or the Director of the CCDPSTC. The purpose of the temporary relief will be documented in the FTO's training file.
2. If there is an administrative or disciplinary investigation that may affect the FTO's ability to appropriately train a recruit, the Chief of Police and the Director of the CCDPSTC shall be notified by the investigating party at the earliest possible opportunity.

C. FTO Revocation

FTO status may be revoked at the discretion of the Chief of Police or Director of the CCDPSTC based upon the training needs of the Department. Examples for revocation include, but are not limited to, recommendation for revocation by the FTO's chain of command, demonstrated poor training ability, disciplinary action, performance issues that impact on the FTO's ability to properly train, or other needs of the Department.

IV. LIAISON WITH THE CCDPSTC

- A. The Field Training Program Manager is the primary liaison for the FTOs and the recruit officer's chain of command on recruit training issues. Any training issues involving the recruit may be formally or informally discussed with the Field Training Program Manager by the recruit's FTO or chain of command.
- B. Training documentation is to be sent to the Field Training Program Manager in a timely manner. The Field Training Program Manager will be notified in writing of serious misconduct or serious training issues.

V. IN-SERVICE TRAINING OF FIELD TRAINING OFFICERS

- A. The Field Training Program Manager may require an FTO to attend training specifically designed to improve the Field Training Program. Failure of an FTO to attend training when requested to do so may constitute cause for the FTO's appointment to be revoked.
- B. A representative of the CCDPSTC (generally the Field Training Manager) should meet with all Field Training Officers at least annually (excluding those FTOs selected after the meeting). This meeting can be either a formal meeting with minutes, or formal training for POST credit (lesson plan and class roster). The purpose of the in-service meeting or training is to discuss issues pertaining to recruit training, from mandate training through the field training process. Any updates to the program (legal or otherwise) will be trained upon, with appropriate written documentation for this training.

VI. FIELD TRAINING OFFICER MANUAL

- A.** The CCDPSTC will create (and revise as necessary) a Field Training Officer Manual. The Manual will serve as a training resource and a reference manual for FTOs and the chain of command, serving the administrative purpose of a Standard Operating Procedure.
- B.** The Field Training Officer Manual will address the rotation of recruit field assignments, guidelines for the evaluation of recruits by FTOs and reporting responsibilities of FTOs and others in the recruit's chain of command.

APPENDIX A

FIELD TRAINING OFFICER RATING TERMINOLOGY

- Rating Number 1 UNACCEPTABLE** – The officer has failed to perform his job duties in such a manner that he has been required to attend remedial training, or his performance has jeopardized the unit’s ability to perform its mission.
- Rating Number 2 IMPROVEMENT NEEDED** – A significant improvement is needed to meet acceptable standards.
- Rating Number 3 IMPROVEMENT STILL NEEDED TO MEET PERFORMANCE STANDARDS** – Not acceptable. Slightly below minimum standards indicates that some improvement is required.
- Rating Number 4 MEETS MINIMUM PERFORMANCE STANDARDS**
- Rating Number 5 MEETS PERFORMANCE STANDARDS WELL** – Slightly above minimum.
- Rating Number 6 EXCEEDS PERFORMANCE STANDARDS** – A rating of 6 indicates that the officer functions at a level above what is expected.
- Rating Number 7 OUTSTANDING** – A rating of 7 means that the officer performs his duties in a manner far exceeding what is expected.