

**LANCASTER POLICE DEPARTMENT  
GENERAL ORDERS MANUAL**

<b>Effective Date</b> September 9, 2015		<b>Amended Date</b>		<b>Directive</b> 2.07.1	
<b>Subject</b> Attendance and Job Performance					
<b>Reference</b>			<b>Approved</b>  Chief of Police		
<b>Distribution</b> All Personnel City Manager City Attorney		<b>TPCA Best Practices Recognition Program Reference</b>  2.16		<b>Review Date</b>  January 22, 2019	
				<b>Pages</b>  5	

This Operations Directive is for internal use only and does not enhance an officer's civil or criminal liability in any way. It should not be construed as a creation of a higher standard of safety or care in an evidentiary sense, with respect to third party claims. Violations of this Operations Directive, if proven, may only form the basis for a complaint by this Department, and only in a non-judicial administrative setting.

**SECTION 1 PURPOSE**

The purpose of this policy is to address the attendance requirements and performance standards for all employees.

**SECTION 2 POLICY**

It is the policy of the department that all employees will be punctual, present, and prepared for all work related assignments and training. It is also the policy of the department that all employees will perform at a level that meets the standards of the reasonable person doctrine.

**SECTION 3 PROCEDURES**

- A. All personnel are required to adhere to the following provisions regarding attendance and readiness:
1. All department employees shall report for regular duty, extra duty assignments, contract overtime assignments, court, hearings, and training at the time and place specified and shall be physically and mentally fit to perform their duties. Employees are to be properly equipped so that they may immediately assume their duties. (TPCA 2.16)
  2. Employees shall not leave any assignment; even if relieved by another officer without first notifying a supervisor, or unless necessitated by exigent circumstances.
  3. Employees should always keep themselves immediately and readily available when on duty.
  4. An employee shall contact a supervisor a minimum of one (1) hour prior to the start of his tour of duty to report he/she cannot come to work when the absence is due to illness or an emergency.
  5. All leave other than sick leave or emergency leave should be scheduled at least twenty-four (24) hours in advance.
  6. Periodically, the department will schedule mandatory training. Any member required to attend the training must attend, unless excused by the person's supervisor in advance. The written notice

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excusing the member from attendance shall be forwarded to the division or shift commander without unnecessary delay. (TPCA 2.16)

7. Employees not appearing for duty, training, hearings, court appearances or other designated assignments on time shall be in violation of this directive. Employees who fail to comply with this directive shall be subject to disciplinary action up to and including indefinite suspension.

**B. MILITARY LEAVE**

1. Military Leave will be granted in accordance with the City of Lancaster Personnel Policies and in accordance with the Section 143.075, Texas Local Government Code.

**C. PERFORMANCE OF DUTY**

1. The fundamental duty of a police officer is to serve and protect by enforcement of all federal, state and local laws and ordinances. By specific assignment, officers may be required to enforce certain laws and ordinances on a routine basis while not necessarily having to deal with others. These specific assignments do not relieve officers from the responsibility of taking prompt, effective action within the scope of all laws and ordinances when the occasion warrants. All officers are required to take appropriate action toward aiding a fellow officer exposed to dangerous situations.
2. All employees shall perform all specific duties and responsibilities assigned to them and shall perform all other duties as directed by a supervisor or a Division Commander. All duties must be accomplished at a level of performance that would meet the expectations of a reasonable person.

**D. INCOMPETENCE**

1. Any employee, who in the performance of his assigned duties, displays reluctance to properly perform his assigned duties, fails to perform his/her duties at the acceptable level of performance, or who acts in a manner tending to bring discredit upon him/herself or the department may be deemed incompetent. All employees are expected to perform at a level that would meet the expectations of a reasonable person.

**E. PHYSICAL AND MENTAL CONDITION**

1. Employees shall maintain good physical and mental health. Employees determined to be in substandard physical or mental health by competent medical authority may be transferred to assignments in keeping with their condition until they are certified to return to their regular assignments.

**F. TOUR OF DUTY**

1. Employees shall have specific hours assigned as active duty each day by their Division Commander. This assignment shall be referred to as a "tour of duty" and shall be a minimum of eight (8) hours per day, unless otherwise specified by the Division Commander. Employees are to remain at their assigned station/beat and on duty until the end of their tour of duty. Officers given special assignments (directing traffic, guarding a prisoner, etc.) shall remain at that assignment until properly relieved by another officer or until dismissed by a supervisor.

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**G. TARDINESS**

1. Employees shall report for duty at the time and place designated by the Division Commander. Habitual tardiness shall be deemed neglect of duty and shall subject the employee to disciplinary action.

**H. LUNCH/COFFEE/SMOKE BREAKS**

1. Employees working 8:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m. will have one hour for lunch. Lunch breaks taken on department property shall be taken in designated areas and not in public view.
2. Uniformed patrol officers working twelve (12) hour shifts must limit their meal breaks to forty (40) minutes. Meal breaks will not be taken during the first hour of the tour of duty or during the last hour of the tour of duty.
3. No more than two (2) uniformed officers or two (2) marked units are allowed at the same location for meal breaks during any given time period, except when uniform officers are attending departmental functions or when approved by the officers supervisor.
4. Officers must notify dispatch of their location when they are out of their unit for their meal break. Notification can be made through the in car computer, radio, in person or telephone.
5. Officers and supervisors assigned to the Patrol Division must take their meal break inside the city limits of Lancaster or along the Interstate 35E or Interstate 20 corridor adjacent to the city limits.
6. Employees may suspend their duties for two (2) fifteen (15) minute "coffee/smoke" breaks per day, one in the first half of the shift and one in the last half. Breaks will not be taken during the first or last hour of the shift. Breaks cannot be aggregated into the regular lunch break.

**I. OFF DUTY**

1. When not performing a tour of duty, employees shall be considered "off duty". However, they shall be subject to duty as needed. While off duty, officers are not relieved of the responsibility of taking appropriate police action on any major offense which comes to their attention.

**J. KNOWLEDGE OF CRIMINAL ACTIVITY**

1. Employees shall report to their supervisor any information in their possession regarding persons and places suspected of being involved or connected with a violation of federal, state, county, or municipal laws and ordinances relating to criminal matters or vice operations. These reports shall be submitted before the end of the tour of duty during which the employee received the information, or at the beginning of the next tour of duty in instances where the information was received while the employee was off duty.

**K. COURT ATTENDANCE**

1. Officers are required to attend municipal, county, state and federal courts to testify in criminal cases to which they have been summoned.

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2. Municipal Court

- a. Notices provided by the Municipal Court of officers required to attend Municipal Court shall be e-mailed to all supervisors by the Municipal Court Supervisor or designee. All supervisors should verbally notify their subordinates of all upcoming court date(s).

3. District/County Court

- a. In the event an officer is summoned for district court, the officer will be notified via the Dallas County Court Notify website. Officers shall reply by clicking the acknowledging link, which will take them to the court notify website log in screen. The officer should log into his account and acknowledge the officer has received the notification.
- b. If an officer is routed as "Stand by" for court then the officer must contact the district attorney who sent the notification within twenty-four (24) hours before the court date and provide them with a telephone number they can be contacted. The same procedure applies to routings that indicate "No Stand By" with the exceptions of Examining Trials, ALR Hearings, all Juvenile trials, Motion to Suppress, pre-trial interviews with prosecutors and Grand Jury Hearings. If an officer is routed for any of the exemptions above the officer must report to the court at the date and time of the hearing specified on the routing notification.

4. Federal Court

- a. Officers will be notified about federal court in writing from the court.

5. When attending court, officers will wear the prescribed uniform, or appropriate civilian apparel, and shall be neat and clean in appearance. While in the courtroom, officers will pay attention to the proceedings and show proper respect for the court. Officers will not read papers, books, or literature which is not relevant to the case(s) for which they are to testify. No food, drink, or chewing gum will be taken into the courtroom. Talking when not testifying will be held to a minimum. Officers shall familiarize themselves with the specifics of each case in question. When testifying, officers will use proper courtroom procedures. They will not question the judge or the attorneys. Officers of the court will be addressed by their proper titles.

6. Refusal to testify before duly constituted federal, state, county, or local courts, grand juries, investigative committees or hearings shall constitute improper conduct and will subject the employee to disciplinary action.

**L. COURT NOTIFICATION REQUIRED FOR CERTAIN EMPLOYEES**

1. Sworn and civilian members who are subject to being routed to court must comply with the notification requirements prescribed in this section.
2. Employees who are subject to the notification requirements must notify the Municipal Court and the Dallas County District Attorney's Office when they become unavailable for court during specified dates and times due to a leave.

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3. The notifications must be made without unnecessary delay once the leave request is approved.
4. Notification of the Dallas County District Attorney's Office will be made using the Court Notify system. All approved leave time should be entered into the Court Notify system by the officer as soon as possible.
5. Notification of the Municipal Court may be made by memorandum or by return-receipt email.

**M. SCOPE OF RESPONSIBILITY**

1. All members of the department shall know and comply with all aspects of this directive.
2. All Division Commanders and supervisory personnel are responsible for ensuring compliance with the provisions and intent of this directive.