

**BAY CITY DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SAFETY
BAY CITY, MICHIGAN**

SECTION 4 – FIRE OPERATIONS
GENERAL ORDER

February 1, 2019
INDEX NO. 4.9

CHAIN OF COMMAND AND ISSUANCE OF ORDERS

I. PURPOSE

The purpose of this General Order is to define and establish Department standards concerning chain of command and the issuance of orders for Fire Operations employees of the Department of Public Safety.

II. RANKS OF THE DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SAFETY

A. Public Safety Director

The Public Safety Director is the head executive of the Department of Public Safety and the chief law enforcement officer of the City. The Public Safety Director reports directly to the City Manager. The Public Safety Director may delegate or grant particular authority to members of the Department as may be necessary for the efficient administration of the Department. The Public Safety Director has the ultimate responsibility for the preservation of life and property, preservation of law and order, investigation of crimes, suppression of fire, and enforcement of state laws and City ordinances. The Public Safety Director shall provide advice to the City Manager, Mayor, and City Commission on matters pertaining to Public Safety and the Department of Public Safety.

B. Deputy Public Safety Director

A sworn member appointed by the Public Safety Director as Deputy Public Safety Director acts as the Public Safety Director in the absence or incapacitation of the Public Safety Director and performs other duties as designated by the Public Safety Director.

C. Fire Chief

A member promoted by the Public Safety Director as Fire Chief generally heads the Fire Division within the Department of Public Safety.

D. Battalion Chief

A member responsible for supervising firefighting personnel and activities. A Battalion Chief commands a shift within the Fire Operations Division.

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E. Fire Captain

A member responsible for supervising firefighting personnel and activities. Supervises firefighting operations and supervises subordinate firefighting personnel.

F. Fire Lieutenant

A member responsible for supervising or assisting in supervising firefighting personnel at a fire station during an assigned shift.

G. Fire Driver / Engineer

A member responsible for the safe and efficient operation of fire pumpers, aerial trucks or other firefighting equipment along with inspecting and maintaining apparatus.

H. Fire Fighter

A member responsible for performing firefighting work in the protection of life and property; operates and assists with maintaining firefighting equipment, apparatus and facilities. Participates in rescue and fire prevention activities.

III. UNITY OF COMMAND / CHAIN OF COMMAND

The chain of command, descending from the Public Safety Director and ascending from the lowest rank, shall be preserved. Members shall not bypass their appointed supervisors, except as set forth in this General Order. Members shall not take matters directly to the Public Safety Director or Deputy Public Safety Director unless it is a matter with which their supervisor has no official concern. If a member of the Department believes that an immediate supervisor has made an unfair decision, that member may request that the next higher supervisor in the chain of command review the matter. Members shall be accountable to only one supervisor at any given time. Members shall have access to their supervisor readily available.

IV. EMERGENCY COMMAND

In the event of an emergency necessitating immediate action under a single unified command, all personnel and equipment of the Department shall be under the command of the Public Safety Director, or in the Director's absence, a designated command officer. For these purposes, an emergency is defined

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as any situation that calls for an immediate decision over and above ordinary and routine public safety activity, in which more than one division is involved. Incident Commanders shall have functional command of all members in situations requiring personnel from different functional units, unless formally relieved of such command by the Public Safety Director or their designee.

V. ABSENSE OF COMMAND OFFICERS

If a command officer finds it necessary to be absent, a ranking officer shall be designated to act in that capacity. Members who are directed to act in capacities above their ordinary or usual position shall, for the necessary time, possess the authority of that position and are accountable for the appropriate use of that authority.

VI. SENIORITY

When members are working together on routine assignments or details and are of equal rank, seniority shall not be exercised. Seniority shall be exercised in incidents requiring the use of the incident command system. All members shall strive to work together in harmony and in a spirit of cooperation rather than by authority of seniority.

VII. AUTHORITY OF FIRE CHIEF

The Fire Chief is the Division Commander of the Fire Operations Division. As such, the Fire Chief may establish for their respective divisions, written procedures that are not in conflict with Department policies and procedures, and that have been approved by the Public Safety Director. The Fire Chief, for emergency purposes, may issue orders in deviation from Department policies and procedures. Such orders shall remain in effect only for the length of time covering such emergencies.

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VIII. AUTHORITY OF SUPERVISORS

Supervisors shall constantly direct their efforts toward the intelligent and efficient performance of the functions of the Department and possessing the authority to do so, shall require their subordinates to do the same. They shall not regularly perform the duties assigned to a subordinate when the subordinate is available. Supervisors shall be responsible for their own conduct and performance and for the conduct and performance of their subordinates. When it is appropriate, supervisors will notify their superior or their supervisor of matters of concern.

Supervisors may issue orders that deviate from existing orders in an emergency for the duration of the emergency. Supervisors shall immediately report to their superior any deviation from existing orders.

Supervisors shall ensure that subordinates complete all required duties and functions required of their positions. Supervisors shall be responsible for the evaluation, training and development of their subordinates.

IX. AUTHORITY OF FIREFIGHTERS

Fire Fighters are responsible for carrying out the basic functions of the Department including protection of life and property, and suppression of fires. They shall perform all duties assigned to them consistent with Department procedures.

Members shall obey any lawful order of a superior including any order relayed from a superior by another member.

X. ISSUING ORDERS

Orders from a superior to a subordinate shall be in clear, understandable language, civil in tone and issued pursuant to Department business. No supervisor shall knowingly issue any order that is in violation of any law, ordinance or Department General Order, policy or procedure.

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XI. UNLAWFUL OR IMMORAL ORDERS

Members are not required to obey any order that is contrary to law. Responsibility for refusal rests with members and they shall be required to justify their refusal. Members who are given orders that they believe to be immoral or contrary to Department General Orders, policies or procedures must first obey the order to the best of their ability, and then may appeal for relief.

Members are required to report the receipt of unlawful or immoral orders through their chain of command.

XII. CONFLICTING ORDERS

Orders may be countermanded, or conflicting orders issued, only when necessary for the good of the Department. Upon receipt of an order in conflict with a previous order or instruction, the member affected shall advise the person issuing the second order of the conflict. Responsibility for countermanding the original order or instruction rests with the individual issuing the second order. If so directed, the latter command shall be obeyed.

By order of:

Michael J. Cecchini
Public Safety Director