Ithaca Police Department
120 East Clinton Street
Ithaca, New York 14850

General Order Number: 205

Field Training and Evaluation Program

Issuing Authority: Chief John Barber

Effective Date: May 11, 2015

Rescinds/Supersedes: All previously issued directives

Review Date: May 2017

Applicable NYSLEA Standards: 12.8; 32.5

Number of Pages: 4

I. Purpose
A. This written directive establishes a formalized Field Training and Evaluation Program designed to provide new officers with experiential training in the field under the close and direct supervision of a trained and experienced field training officer.

B. Field training provides the opportunity for the officer to take the lessons learned in the classroom and apply them in actual real life circumstances.

C. Experienced officers who may have transferred from another police agency are provided the opportunity to learn the community and the departmental specific policies and procedures of the Ithaca Police Department.

D. The program also provides the field training officer the opportunity to observe and evaluate the recruit.

II. Definitions

A. Entry Level Officer – Recruit level with no prior training or experience OR less than one (1) year experience with another agency. Will be on probation for a period of eighteen (18) months.
B. Lateral Transfer Officer – Minimum one (1) year experience and training with another agency. Will be on probation for a period of six (6) months.

C. Trainee Officer – An officer being trained in the Field Training Officer Program. Refers to both the Entry Level Officer and Lateral Transfer Officer.

D. Field Training Officer (FTO) – The officer assigned to train a Trainee Officer.

E. Primary FTO – The FTO that is assigned to oversee the daily performance of the Trainee and report same to the Field Training Officer Program Coordinator.

F. Field Training Officer Program – The mechanism utilized by members of the Ithaca Police Department to evaluate a Trainee Officer’s performance.

G. Field Training Officer Manual – The structured guide utilized by members of the Ithaca Police Department to implement the training standards established in the Field Training Officer Program and document the performance of a Trainee Officer.

H. Field Training Officer Program Coordinator – The staff officer assigned to implement and supervise the Field Training Officer Program.

III. Policy

A. The Trainee Officer shall be designated as a Probationary Police Officer upon successful completion of the academic portion of Academy training and approval by the Chief of Police. The officer shall then complete a program of Field Training, the minimum length of which is:

1. Entry Level Officer 540 hours minimum
2. Lateral Transfer Officer 400 hours minimum

B. Failure of any Trainee Officer to successfully complete the Field Training Officer Program shall result in involuntary termination from employment.
IV. Organization of the Field Training Program

A. The Chief of Police shall designate the assignment of Field Training Officer Program Coordinator.

B. Field Training Officers shall be responsible for:

1. Field training and related evaluation of the Trainee Officer’s response to training.

2. Completion of daily observation reports during each tour of duty.

V. Qualifications of Field Training Officers

A. Field Training Officers shall:

1. Be a police officer with at least three (3) years of experience with the department, unless waived by the Chief of Police;

2. Possess the skills, knowledge and abilities essential for successful performance of the position of police officer;

3. Exhibit skill in a variety of areas, including courtesy and interpersonal relationships, the ability to manage and evaluate police performance under a wide variety of circumstances; the ability to recognize and successfully manage potentially violent situations, maturity, fairness, impartiality, and dependability.

B. Appointment as a Field Training Officer

1. Successful completion of the NYS Division of Criminal Justice Services Police Field Training Officer Course.

2. Successful completion of the NYS Division of Criminal Justice Services Instructor Development Course.

3. An officer meeting the minimum qualifications may be considered for appointment after making a request to the Field Training Officer Coordinator.
4. Any police officer designated as a Field Training Officer who does not perform adequately shall be removed from the program by the Field Training Officer Coordinator or the Chief of Police.

VI. Evaluation Process

A. The Trainee Officer and the FTO will submit daily and weekly evaluation reports to the FTO Program Coordinator.

B. The FTO Program will be set up in four phases to assist the Trainee Officer in the learning process. After each phase, there will be a meeting with the assigned FTO's, the FTO Program Coordinator, Operations Sergeant, and the Chief of Police or his/her designee to evaluate the progress of the Trainee Officer. Trainee Officers that do not meet the standard to proceed to the next phase will have their training extended for a designated amount of time and reevaluated after that period.