

ELIZABETH POLICE DEPARTMENT GENERAL ORDERS



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SUBJECT: ACCREDITATION

EFFECTIVE DATE:

September 23, 2020

ACCREDITATION STANDARDS:

1.9.11

BY THE ORDER OF:

Chief Giacomo Sacca

BY AUTHORITY OF:

Police Director Earl J. Graves

SUPERSEDES ORDER #:

PURPOSE The purpose of this general order is to establish the concept of accreditation and to memorialize the process to achieve and maintain an accredited status.

POLICY It is the policy of the Elizabeth Police Department to meet or exceed all applicable accreditation standards promulgated by the New Jersey State Association of Chiefs of Police (***NJSACOP***) and to maintain accredited status at all times.

PROCEDURES

I. DEFINITIONS

- A. Accredit means to certify as meeting official requirements; to provide with credentials.
- B. Profession is an occupation requiring extensive education, such as law.
- C. Written directive is any written document used to guide or affect the performance or conduct of department employees. Any law, ordinance, public policy, executive order, guideline, directive, general order, special order, personnel order, etc. binding upon the agency or employees of the department.

II. GENERAL

- A. The goals of accreditation are to:
 - 1. Strengthen crime prevention and control capabilities;
 - 2. Formalize essential management procedures;
 - 3. Establish fair and non-discriminatory personnel practices;
 - 4. Improve the delivery of service to the community;
 - 5. Solidify interagency cooperation and coordination, and;
 - 6. Boost citizen and staff confidence in the department.
- B. The benefits of accreditation include:
 - 1. A stronger defense against lawsuits and citizen complaints – Accredited agencies are better able to successfully defend themselves against lawsuits, tort claims, and citizen complaints. Many accredited agencies report a decline in legal action against them.
 - 2. Greater accountability within the department – Accreditation standards provide the Chief of Police with a proven management system of written directives, effective training, clearly defined lines of authority, and routine processes that support decision-making and resource allocation.
 - 3. Support from government officials – Accreditation provides objective evidence of an agency's commitment to excellence in leadership, resource management, and service delivery. Thus, government officials are more confident in the agency's ability to operate efficiently and meet community needs and expectations.
 - 4. Increased community advocacy – Accreditation embodies the concept of community oriented policing. It creates a forum in which police and citizens work together to prevent and control crime. This partnership helps citizens understand the challenges confronting the law enforcement community and gives the law enforcement community a clear direction concerning community needs and expectations.

5. Recognition for Excellence – Accreditation is a most coveted award that symbolizes professionalism, excellence, and competence. It requires written directives and training to inform employees about policies and practices; facilities and equipment to ensure employees' safety; and processes to safeguard employees' rights. Both the community and agency can take pride in their department, knowing that it represents the very best in policing.

III. ACCREDITATION PROCESS

- A. The accreditation process involves five basic phases:
 1. Voluntary application;
 2. Self-assessment"
 - a. During this time, this department's written directive system will be continuously reevaluated to maintain compliance with established national standards promulgated by **NJSACOP**.
 - b. Further objectives of this phase include:
 - 1) Achieve compliance with the standards;
 - 2) Establish proof of compliance with the standards;
 - 3) Facilitate the on-site review.
 3. On-site review – The on-site review phase consists of **NJSACOP** assessors visiting this agency with the purpose of verifying compliance with the standards. The on-site assessment team will review the accreditation files, interview employees, and visit with the community to determine if the department practices the tenets it has established.
 4. Final review and decision – Following the on-site review, **NJSACOP** will review this department's entire process and decide whether this agency has met the goals we ourselves have set. Only when completely satisfied would it award accreditation status.
 5. Maintain compliance and re-accreditation – Maintaining compliance is the fifth phase of accreditation. This is where the processes established are maintained for the good of the public and the department. Subsequent on-site reviews follow every three years.

IV. ACCREDITATION MANAGER

- A. The Chief of Police shall appoint a person to oversee the accreditation process. This person is known as the accreditation manager.
- B. This position reports directly to the Chief of Police. The accreditation manager is responsible for performing his/her duties with a minimal degree of supervision. Emphasis is on coordinating accreditation activities.

- C. The accreditation manager shall have staff and functional authority over all employees of this department in matters pertaining to accreditation, the accreditation process, and subsequent reaccreditation activities.
- D. Duties and responsibilities include:
1. Receives assignments and sets work priorities, coordinating them to meet deadlines in order to assure an efficient workflow throughout the department.
 2. Reviews a wide variety of complex and technical issues concerning law enforcement standards and the accreditation process.
 3. Meets regularly with the Chief of Police and key employees to identify needs and report progress on accreditation efforts.
 4. Assists in identification and development of new programs, systems, procedures, or equipment to improve performance of the department in compliance with applicable standards.
 5. Provides liaison to **NJSACOP** for all accreditation matters including but, not limited to:
 - a. Notifying the **NJSACOP** Law Enforcement Accreditation Program Manager by email that he/she is the accreditation manager of record for this department;
 - b. Applying for and attending new accreditation manager training with the **NJSACOP** or an authorized agent of the **NJSACOP** within one year of assignment as accreditation manager;
 - c. Ensuring that the required annual reports are submitted to the **NJSACOP** Law Enforcement Accreditation Program Manager each year on the anniversary of this department receiving accredited status.
 6. Attends **NJSACOP** network meetings.
 7. Keeps abreast of all aspects of the accreditation process, including proposed changes or amendments to the standards, assessing the impact on current policies and procedures of the department.
 8. Provides or causes accreditation training for agency employees.
 9. Assigns, directs and coordinates groups of employees to achieve plans of action, makes recommendations to the Chief of Police, and other activities that meet compliance with applicable accreditation standards.
 10. Causes the drafting of new written directives or assigns writing projects to others to achieve accreditation objectives.
 11. Maintains master and archive files for department written directives.

12. Maintains **NJSACOP** individual standard report files or their electronic equivalent.
- E. Normally, the accreditation manager will assign tasks and projects to personnel. Research and development projects shall be conducted in addition to regular duties. Projects and tasks may be assigned to individual employees, teams of employees, vendors and/or contractors or to the entire department depending on the scope of the task or project.
- F. Achieving accreditation will involve various studies and surveys to assess a wide range of existing policies, practices, and procedures. Full cooperation with these surveys is mandatory and binding upon all employees of this department.

V. SUPPLEMENTAL

- A. The accreditation process is not secret and shall be open to public scrutiny. Interested citizens shall be permitted to inspect and review **NJSACOP** standards or their electronic equivalent at all times, upon request.
- B. The accreditation manager shall ensure that the **NJSACOP** standards or their electronic equivalent are kept current and shall replace them with updated versions when they become available.
- C. Full cooperation by all employees of this department is mandated.