

## 2.2 RANK

As peace officers, sworn members of the Department have a special responsibility to act or take command in situations calling for law enforcement action. These situations may be regular operations such as the command of a patrol shift or might be an emergency situation such as a disaster.

Sworn police personnel are distinguished by rank, which is assigned in terms of level of responsibility within the chain of command. The descending order of rank in the Department is as follows:

- **Chief of Police**
- **Deputy Chief**
- **Police Commander**
- **Police Lieutenant**
- **Police Sergeant**
- **Police Corporal**
- **Police Officer**

### **Civilian Chain of Command**

- **Manager**
- **Administrator**
- **Supervisor**

### 2.2.1 COMMAND AUTHORITY – WATCH COMMANDER

Revised March 2, 2015

In the absence of the Chief of Police and/or sworn command staff, the on-duty Watch Commander shall be the ranking authority of the Department. This authority includes, functional responsibility and supervision for all on-duty personnel in the Department and incidents citywide. The on-duty Watch Commander will remain on-duty until relieved by a subsequent Watch Commander, who shall carry the same authority and responsibility.

### 2.2.2 COMMAND OF SCENE – INCIDENT COMMAND

At the start of any police incident, the senior patrol officer or ranking patrol officer present shall assume command and direction of police personnel in a manner to assure the most orderly and efficient accomplishment of the police task. When two or more share the highest rank and no one has been designated as in command, the officer having seniority in rank shall be in command. This officer shall remain in command until relieved by a supervisory or command officer of higher rank. The mere presence of a ranking or senior officer at the scene shall not indicate his/her assumption of command. The ranking or senior officer shall remain in an advisory capacity unless he/she specifically assumes command.

Supervisory or command officers should consider assuming the role of incident commander when any of the following circumstances exist:

- Multiple crime scenes or related incidents
- Significant deployment of resources
- When the current incident commander could be better used in a different capacity, e.g., operations officer
- When the ranking supervisor or command officer determines that their expertise would be better served as incident commander
- When other agencies are involved
- When significant political circumstances exist
- When he/she has begun to give direction and/or orders

Careful consideration should always be given prior to assuming the role of incident commander to ensure a smooth transition of incident leadership.

### **Assumption of Command**

The senior or ranking officer assuming command at the scene must advise the officer in command at the time he/she is being relieved. When an officer assumes command, he/she also assumes all responsibility for the successful completion of the operation.

At the conclusion of the tactical phase of the incident, command may be relinquished to the ranking officer from the investigative detail that will conduct any required follow up investigation.

### **2.2.3 DUTY CHIEF ON CALL**

Unusual or emergency situations may require the attention of the Department's senior command staff. In order to facilitate the handling of unusual situations that occur, an On-Call Duty Chief will be designated as the first senior level command officer to be notified. The Duty Chief will be a resource to the Watch Commander via pager or telephone on a daily basis during the hours of 1700 to 0800 Monday through Friday and 24 hours on weekends and holidays. The Watch Commander shall refer to the Critical Incident Notification Guide for mandatory notifications to the Duty Chief.

The Office of the Chief of Police will compile the Duty Chief roster from the ranks of Deputy Chief and Commander. The Duty Chief roster will be distributed to all command personnel, patrol lieutenants, the Communications Division, and the headquarters business desk four weeks in advance of the assignment dates.

### **Duty Chief Responsibilities**

- Assist the Watch Commander in evaluating the situation and ensure the necessary procedures are being taken to resolve the problem
- Make the necessary notifications as outlined in the Duty Chief Notification Guide
- May use the Watch Commander or Communications supervisor to help make the notifications. Some of the notifications may be made by other means at a later time based upon the circumstances of the event as determined by the Duty Chief.
- Must respond to particular situations to assist the Watch Commander as identified on the Duty Chief Notification Guide
- Shall call the Chief's Office each morning, prior to 0800 hours, to verify that appropriate notifications have been made

Select this link for the most current [CRITICAL INCIDENT NOTIFICATION GUIDE](#).