
**Ocean City Fire Department
Standard Operating Guidelines**

Organization

Subject: Memoranda
Revised: 4-24-2012
Effective: 4-24-2012
Approved: 4-20-2012 (Fire Chief)
Section: 103.00

103.01 Purpose

To provide policy, procedure and guidelines to properly manage and control the preparation and distribution of intra-departmental memoranda.

103.02 Policy

- A. Memoranda may be initiated by different levels within the department depending upon the nature of such memoranda.
- B. All memorandums that affect the entire Fire Department shall contain termination date.
- C. Only those memorandums that are of general interest and concern to the entire Fire Department shall be placed into the Memoranda Book.

103.03 Responsibility

- A. The Fire Chief shall have the overall responsibility for control and management of the generation, distribution and proper usage of intra-departmental memoranda.
- B. All members who are authorized to originate intra-departmental memoranda shall do so in accordance with the guidelines established within this policy.
- C. Members who are charged with the care and updating of the Guidelines Manual sets are responsible for keeping the Memoranda Book current within the guidelines established within this policy.
- D. It is the responsibility of the Fire Department Officers to report all new memorandums to each Fire Department personnel under their command and to record this action.
- E. It is the responsibility of the Fire Chief to convert departmental memoranda to regular policy format and to distribute such on or before the indicated termination date.

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103.04 Initiation of Memoranda

Memoranda may be initiated within the Fire Department by utilizing the following guidelines.

- A. The following types of memoranda may only be initiated by or with the approval of the Fire Chief:
 - 1. Memoranda announcing a permanent change in departmental policy.
 - 2. Memoranda announcing a temporary change in departmental policy.
 - 3. Memoranda announcing promotions, changes of shift assignments and other official personnel actions.
 - 4. Memoranda announcing important events, which will affect the general membership of the Fire Department.
- B. Fire Department personnel may initiate memoranda for the following:
 - 1. Memoranda, which are used as a communication medium between specific individuals.
 - 2. Unofficial memoranda of general interest to the overall membership.
- C. Memoranda initiated within the Fire Department must have a purpose and should not be initiated frivolously or without true necessity.

103.05 Termination Date

The termination date of a departmental memorandum is used to indicate the date that the memorandum in question is no longer valid.

- A. All memoranda that affect the Fire Department shall have a clearly stated termination date.
- B. The time frame between the initiation of a memorandum and its termination date shall be no longer than is necessary to fulfill the function of said memorandum. For example, a memo announcing an event on a certain date would terminate on the day of said event.
- C. If the nature of the subject matter of a given memorandum does not lend itself to an inherent termination date, a time frame of not less than thirty (30) days shall be allotted between its initiation and its termination date. For example, a cover memo accompanying a new policy that contains instructions for placing the new policy into the Guidelines Manual would go into the Memoranda Book to alert Fire Department personnel of the new policy. Such a memo would have a termination date based on a time frame of not less than thirty (30) days.
- D. Memoranda shall be discarded whenever their respective termination dates are reached.

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103.06 Memoranda Book

- A. The Memoranda Book is used to contain current memoranda affecting the entire Fire Department.
- B. Only current memoranda that have not reached their termination date shall be maintained within the Memoranda Book. All expired memoranda shall be removed and discarded.
- C. Memoranda shall be maintained within the Memoranda Book in chronological order. The most recent memorandum shall be kept in the front of the Book with all memoranda filed back chronologically, toward the back of the Book where the earliest (but still valid) memoranda are kept.
- D. A copy of the Memoranda book may be maintained in electronic format.

103.07 The Cover Memo

- A. The Cover Memo is used as an instruction sheet to those members who are charged with maintaining the various copies of the Guidelines Manual.
- B. A Cover Memo is a form memo, which contains standardized instructions concerning updates to the Guidelines Manual.
- C. A Cover Memo shall accompany every change, update and new policy of the Operations Manual.
- D. Cover Memos are placed into the Memoranda Book for the period specified by the termination date.

103.08 Generation of Departmental Policy

- A. New policies and/or changes in the existing policies, which are permanent in nature shall be placed into the standard policy format via the regular established system for policy preparation.
- B. Whenever an immediate or emergency need for a new policy and/or a change in an existing policy (which will be permanent in nature) arises, a memorandum may be originated in order to expedite the immediate communication of the policy in question. In this process, the following must hold true:
 - 1. Said memorandum announcing the emergency and/or immediate (permanent) change in departmental policy shall contain a termination date of not more than one year.
 - 2. Said memorandum announcing such an immediate, permanent change shall contain a statement indicating that said policy shall be converted to regular policy format and shall be distributed for the update of the Guidelines Manual on or before the indicated termination date.

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3. Said memorandum shall be converted to regular policy format and distribution to those charged with maintaining the various copies of Guidelines Manual by the Fire Chief on or before the indicated termination date.
- C. New policies and/or changes in existing policies, which are temporary in nature are normally communicated via memoranda. Such memoranda shall contain a termination date in accordance with the time frame necessary for the temporary policy change.
- D. Any memoranda, whether permanent or temporary in nature, shall be distributed to all affected members.

103.09 Dead File

The Fire Chief shall keep a Dead File of all Memoranda, which has expired. The dead file may be maintained in electronic format. Members charged with the upkeep of the various Guidelines Manual sets should simply discard any outdated memoranda that may be in the Book.