Field Training Officers

417.1 PURPOSE AND SCOPE

This policy provides guidelines for field training that ensure standardized training and evaluation; facilitate the transition from the academic setting to the actual performance of general law enforcement duties; and introduce the policies, procedures and operations of the Elkton Police Department. The policy addresses the administration of field training and the selection, supervision, training and responsibilities of the Field Training Officer (FTO) (COMAR 12.04.01.17(F)).

417.2 POLICY

It is the policy of the Elkton Police Department that all newly hired or appointed officer trainees will participate in field training that is staffed and supervised by trained and qualified FTOs.

417.3 FIELD TRAINING

The Department shall establish minimum standards for field training, which should be of sufficient duration to prepare officer trainees for law enforcement duties and be in compliance with state mandates related to field training (COMAR 12.04.01.17). The field training program is designed to prepare trainees for a patrol assignment and ensure they acquire the skills needed to operate in a safe, productive and professional manner, in accordance with the general law enforcement duties of this department.

Field training (COMAR 12.04.01.17):

(a) Shall include activities designed to familiarize the individual with the duties of the officer position, as defined and administered by this department.

(b) May be conducted in conjunction with an entrance-level training program or a separate training activity provided by a law enforcement agency.

(c) Shall be no less than the Maryland Police Training and Standards Commission (MPTSC)-required duration.

(d) Shall be monitored by a certified officer, the Chief of Police or the authorized designee.

1. Trainees shall be under the direct supervision of an FTO or other approved officer as provided in COMAR 12.04.01.17(G).

(e) Should include procedures for:

(a) Issuance of training materials to each trainee at the beginning of his/her field training.

(b) Daily and bi-weekly evaluations and documentation of the trainee's performance.

(c) A multiphase structure that includes:

Copyright Lexipol, LLC 2025/09/12, All Rights Reserved.
Published with permission by Elkton Police Department

1. A formal evaluation progress report completed by the FTOs involved with the trainee and submitted to the Support Services Commander and FTO supervisor.
2. Assignment of the trainee to a variety of shifts and geographical areas.

(d) The trainee's confidential evaluation of his/her assigned FTOs and the field training process.

(e) Retention of all field training documentation in the officer trainee's training file including all performance evaluations (COMAR 12.04.01.17(H)).

417.4 FTO SUPERVISOR

The Chief of Police shall delegate certain responsibilities to an FTO supervisor. The supervisor shall be appointed by and directly responsible to the Field Operations Bureau Commander or the authorized designee (COMAR 12.04.01.17(C)).

The FTO supervisor may appoint a senior FTO or other designee to assist in the coordination of FTOs and their activities.

The responsibilities of the supervisor include, but are not limited to:

(a) Assignment of trainees to FTOs.

(b) Conducting FTO meetings.

(c) Maintaining and ensuring FTO and trainee performance evaluations are completed.

(d) Maintaining, updating and issuing department training materials to each FTO and trainee.

(e) Developing ongoing training for FTOs.

(f) Mentoring and supervising individual FTO performance.

(g) Monitoring the overall performance of field training.

(h) Performing other activities as may be directed by the Field Operations Bureau Commander.

(i) Completing and submitting a written statement to the MPTSC for each recruit upon successful completion of field training (COMAR 12.04.01.17(G)).

(j) Establishing guidelines and procedures for the evaluation of FTOs and trainees (COMAR 12.04.01.17(F).

417.4.1 FTO SUPERVISOR TRAINING

The FTO supervisor is required to successfully complete the following courses prior to appointment to this position (COMAR 12.04.01.17(C)):

(a) An MPTSC-approved supervisor training course.

(b) An MPTSC-approved FTO course.

417.5 FTO SELECTION, TRAINING AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Copyright Lexipol, LLC 2025/09/12, All Rights Reserved.
Published with permission by Elkton Police Department

417.5.1 SELECTION PROCESS

The selection of an FTO will be at the discretion of the Chief of Police or the authorized designee. Selection will be based on the officer's:

(a) Desire to be an FTO.

(b) Experience, which shall include a minimum of two years of patrol experience, two of which shall be with this department (COMAR 12.04.01.17(D)).

(c) Demonstrated ability as a positive role model.

(d) Possession of, or ability to obtain, department-approved certification.

(e) Approval by the MPTSC as an FTO (COMAR 12.04.01.17(D)).

An FTO must remain in good standing and may be relieved from FTO duties due to discipline, inappropriate conduct or poor performance.

417.5.2 TRAINING

An officer selected as an FTO shall successfully complete an MPTSC-approved FTO course prior to being assigned as an FTO (COMAR 12.04.01.17(D)).

All FTOs shall successfully complete an FTO update course approved by the MPTSC every four years while assigned to the position of FTO (COMAR 12.04.01.17(D)).

417.5.3 TRAINING MATERIALS

The FTO shall be provided the Elkton Police Department Field Training and Evaluation Program Manual which outlines the requirements, expectations and objectives of the FTO position. FTOs should refer to the Manual or the FTO supervisor regarding specific questions related to FTO or field training.

417.5.4 RESPONSIBILITIES

The responsibilities of the FTO include, but are not limited to (COMAR 12.04.01.17(F)):

(a) Issuing his/her assigned trainee field training materials in accordance with the Training Policy.

1. The FTO shall ensure that the trainee has the opportunity to become knowledgeable of the subject matter and proficient with the skills as set forth in the training materials.
2. The FTO shall sign off all completed topics contained in the training materials, noting the methods of learning and evaluating the performance of his/her assigned trainee.

(b) Completing and reviewing daily performance evaluations with the trainee each day.

(c) Completing and submitting a written evaluation on the performance of his/her assigned trainee to the FTO coordinator on a daily basis.

(d) Completing a detailed daily and bi-weekly performance evaluation of his/her assigned trainee.

Copyright Lexipol, LLC 2025/09/12, All Rights Reserved.
Published with permission by Elkton Police Department

(e) Providing the shift supervisor with a verbal synopsis of the trainee's activities at the end of each day or during any unusual occurrence needing guidance or clarification.

Copyright Lexipol, LLC 2025/09/12, All Rights Reserved.
Published with permission by Elkton Police Department