3-02/090.07 - Probationary Employees - Unit Commander's Responsibilities

It is a fundamental responsibility of every unit commander to take an active role in the performance of subordinate employees and develop ongoing strategies to enhance their professional performance. Unit commanders are uniquely qualified to help form the values, shape the beliefs, and develop the character of subordinate personnel, especially probationary employees. Unit commanders are expected to not only set unit objectives, goals, and priorities, but also establish individual performance objectives to ensure every subordinate employee understands and meets the Department's expectations.

A probationary employee's initial assignment is in many ways an extension of their academy training. They should continue (and expect) to be challenged and confronted to further refine their decision-making skills. Conduct that is inconsistent with the high standards established by this Department will not be tolerated.

UNIT COMMANDER'S RESPONSIBILITIES

Within six months of a probationary employee's initial assignment to any unit, unit commanders shall review the employee's initial work habits, performance, and training records. Unit commanders shall pay particular attention to issues such as honesty, integrity, trustworthiness, and character, and any other characteristic that would enable the unit commander to determine if the probationary employee is truly suited for a career in law enforcement.

Unit commanders have an affirmative duty to initiate remedial action when a probationary employee's performance is inconsistent with the Department's Core Values or fails to meet the minimum requirements established for their position. Unit commanders shall immediately initiate remedial action when an employee demonstrates performance or work habits that are inconsistent with the Department's Core Values or fails to conform to the work standards established for the probationary employee's rank or position (for further information refer to section 3-01/050.10, Performance to Standards). This shall include, but is not limited to, cases wherein a probationary employee is named as a subject in any criminal or administrative investigation initiated by this Department or any other law enforcement agency.

> **NOTE:** This does not preclude a unit commander from initiating a comprehensive review of a subordinate's work product any time an employee begins to demonstrate behavior(s) that is/are inconsistent with the Department's Core Values and/or established standard of conduct.

PROBATIONARY EMPLOYEE UNDER ADMINISTRATIVE/CRIMINAL INVESTIGATION

Any time a probationary employee becomes the subject of an administrative or criminal investigation initiated by this Department or any other law enforcement agency, the following steps shall be followed:

- The unit commander shall immediately review the allegation(s) to determine their seriousness and validity;
- The unit commander shall review the probationary employee's initial employment application, background investigation, and any other supporting documentation and assess the documents for evidence of a trend or pattern that would indicate a correlation between undesirable pre-employment behavior and current behavior;

- In every case, the employee's probationary status shall be reviewed by the concerned division chief or division director and the undersheriff for the purpose of determining if the probationary employee shall complete the probationary period. This shall be accomplished prior to the completion of the current probationary period and, in most cases, should be accomplished prior to the completion of the pending investigation; and
- If the circumstances warrant the probationary employee be relieved of duty or placed on a modified duty status, the probationary period shall be extended for the length of time they were relieved of duty or assigned to a modified duty status.