

# COVINGTON POLICE DEPARTMENT STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURE

**Subject:** HONOR GUARD

**Date of Issue:** 05-20-2014

**Number of Pages:** 5

**Policy No.** A265

**Review Date:** 04-25-2017

**Distribution:** ALL SWORN

**Revision Date:** 12-14-2017

## **I. Purpose**

To establish and provide guidelines for a specialized unit of the Covington Police Department to be known as the Honor Guard.

No greater tribute is paid to a member for his or her service to the Covington Police Department and the citizens of Covington than to be honored by the department's Honor Guard. The Honor Guard attends various ceremonies and functions to show the department's support for, and recognition of the sacrifices by those who have served and protected society.

## **II. Statement of Policy**

It shall be the policy of the Covington Police Department to train, maintain and support an Honor Guard to represent the department at funerals, civic functions and other venues or events.

## **III. Definitions**

The Covington Police Department shall be represented by the CPD Honor Guard at various federal, city and civic sponsored functions; funerals conducted by the CPD or other local law enforcement agencies for line of duty deaths, and any other venue as directed by the Chief of Police.

When directives are administered, the following "Tier" terms shall describe the duties of the Honor Guard

A. **Tier 1:** Ceremonial Honor Guard – the CPD Honor Guard are specially trained and equipped to provide Color Guard, ceremonial or honorary pallbearers and the appropriate honors due to both active and retired members, whether sworn or civilian, of the CPD. These details will require all team members to set aside all businesses and be present to provided Honor Guard services. The Honor Guard shall be activated to serve the Covington Police Department and its members in the below outlined events:

1. *Fallen Covington Police Officers (active or retired);*
2. Immediate family members of Covington Police Officers (if requested);

3. Fallen City of Covington officials/Active or Retired
4. Fallen Law Enforcement Officer killed in the line of duty within the State of Georgia (A minimum of 2 Honor Guard will represent the CPD when manpower is available)
5. When activated the CPD Honor Guard will provide the following services as necessary;
  - a) Color Guard;
  - b) Ceremonial or Honorary Pallbearers;
  - c) Bag Pipe;
  - d) Bugler(s);
  - e) Firing Party;
  - f) American Flag;
  - g) The draping of the deceased member's assigned vehicle;
  - h) Participation in funeral and interment (depending upon location);
  - i) Funeral escorts; and
  - j) Casket /vigil watch

B. **Tier 2:** Honor Guard - the CPD Honor Guard are specially trained and equipped to provide Color Guard, ceremonial or honorary pallbearers and the appropriate honors due for the following out of agency services to include, but not limited to and within a 40 mile radius from Covington, GA:

1. Covington Citizen Honorariums: e.g. for immediate family members of active or retired City officials, civic leaders, strong supporters of the police department.
2. *Retired officers of any law enforcement agency*
3. *Active or retired officers of any Federal law enforcement agency;*
4. Parades
5. Official Law Enforcement functions
6. Civic events
7. *When activated the CPD Honor Guard will provide the following services as necessary;*
  - a) Color Guard;
  - b) Active or Honorary Pallbearers;

- c) Bag Pipe (if requested);
- d) Bugler(s);
- e) Firing Party;
- f) American Flag;
- g) Casket /vigil watch

C. **Tier 3:** For any ceremonies and functions or other purposes as directed by the Chief of Police or his designee. Note: the Chief of Police or his designee reserves the right to authorize the use of the Honor Guard based on manpower availability, overtime requirements, nature of the request, etc...

- 1. *Active or retired officers of any law enforcement agency in the State of Georgia.*
- 2. *Active or retired officers of any Federal law enforcement agency;*
- 3. *National and State memorial services: e.g. National Law Enforcement Memorial Week, Medal of Honor Award ceremonies etc...*
- 4. *Civic events*
- 5. Unless directed by the Chief of Police, funeral participation will not be provided to any person whose death is by his or her own intention, or to any person whose death was the result of his or her own involvement in criminal activity.

#### IV. **Honor Guard Commander**

The Honor Guard Commander shall:

- A. Designate an official to serve as the official in charge of the Honor Guard during his/her absence
- B. Recruit volunteers from throughout the CPD for the CPD Honor Guard
- C. Arrange for training and provide Honor Guard personnel for designated events.
- D. Support the Standard Operating Procedures utilized by the CPD Honor Guard for ceremonies and functions.
- E. Determine uniform and equipment items that provide a distinctive appearance to the Covington Police Department Honor Guard.

**V. Selection Procedure**

- A. The Unit is open to all non-probationary officers who volunteer to participate in the Honor Guard Program. Selection to participate is considered to be a privilege and an honor.
- B. An Officer or official shall submit the application form
- C. The Patrol Division Captain shall have the responsibility for coordination of Honor Guard activities and shall select the members of the Honor Guard based on letters of interest submitted by sworn members of the department. No applicant will be denied membership based on sex, race, religion, or ethnic background. All applicants will receive equal consideration for membership.
- D. Once selected, Honor Guard members shall be placed on an Honor Guard probationary status for a minimum of ninety (90) days prior to becoming a permanent member of the unit. Upon successfully completing the probationary period, the member will be presented with a departmental "Honor Guard" ribbon bar. The bar shall be worn in accordance with SOP A200, Awards and Commendations

**VI. Regulations**

- A. Members of the Honor Guard shall attend training and activations when required.
- B. Participation as a member of the CPD Honor Guard shall be voluntary and considered a privilege and an honor, and commitment is a requirement.
- C. Members are expected to be available on short notice for training, parades, funeral details, or other approved details as representatives of the Covington Police Department.
- D. When detailed, members of the CPD Honor Guard shall project the most positive, professional image, in both appearance and demeanor.
- E. Members shall follow the grooming standards according with SOP A060. However in keeping with the professional appearance and uniformed display of an Honor Guard team, members shall not have any facial hair and must be clean shaven when performing the duties as an Honor Guard.
- F. When activated, members of the CPD Honor Guard shall fall under the authority of the Honor Guard Commander
- G. The CPD Honor Guard shall consist of not less than a combination of nine (9) officers and officials, reasonably distributed among the various divisions of the CPD.
- H. Members shall be removed from the Honor Guard upon the recommendation of the Commander to the Patrol Division Captain for documented cause, including, but not limited to:
  - 1. Chronic tardiness or absences from training and/or activation locations

2. Lack of availability for ceremonies, events, functions, etc.
3. Inability to perform Honor Guard duties required during training or activation, to include, but not limited to, drill maneuvers, walking any length of distance, and prolonged standing.
4. Lack of professional appearance outlined in this policy.
5. Lack of professional demeanor and/or violation(s) of the Code of Conduct (SOP A195)

**VII. Training**

A minimum of four (4) hours per month shall be utilized for the purpose of drill practice for all Honor Guard members, unless duly excused by the Honor Guard Commander.

**VIII. Activation**

- A. Activation of the Honor Guard shall come from the Chief of Police or his designee. Once activated, members shall fall under the authority of the Honor Guard Commander.
- B. All Honor Guard members shall report for duty when and where assigned unless otherwise excused by the Honor Guard Commander.
  1. On duty personnel shall be utilized if possible.
  2. Overtime is authorized, when applicable.
  3. The Commander shall notify the necessary supervisors of the unit's activation. Members shall ensure their immediate supervisor is aware of the activation.
  4. Members shall project the most positive, professional image in appearance and demeanor.

**IX. Honor Guard Uniform**

The members of the Honor Guard shall be issued uniforms and equipment to be used exclusively for activations and details for the unit.

**X. Uniform Maintenance**

Uniforms and equipment shall be maintained in a superior condition due to the high visibility typical of Honor Guard units. Such clothing shall be altered to fit the body contour of individual officers as needed, but always in good taste.

***This SOP supersedes any SOP previously issued.***

BY ORDER OF THE CHIEF OF POLICE:

*Stacey L. Cotton*

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Chief of Police