

Early Warning System

Index Code: 302.6

Effective Date: 05/15/12 rev. 7/1/2022

I. Purpose

The purpose of this directive is to establish an early warning system to identify agency employees who may require intervention efforts, and assist supervisors and managers in taking appropriate intervention actions to help avoid negative consequences for the employee, fellow employees, the Office of the Sheriff, and the public.

II. Policy

A comprehensive personnel early warning system is an essential component of good discipline in a well-managed law enforcement agency. The early identification of potential problem employees, and a menu of remedial actions, can increase agency accountability and offer employees a better opportunity to meet the agency's mission and values statements.

An agency should not be faced with investigating an employee for a serious case of misconduct only to find out there was an escalating pattern of less serious misconduct, which could have been prevented through early intervention. Failure to develop a comprehensive personnel early warning system can lead to the erosion of public confidence in the agency's ability to discipline itself, and place the public and agency employees at greater risk.

It is the policy of the Office of the Sheriff to establish a system for tracking and reviewing incidents of risk to the agency and the involved employees. The Early Warning System (EWS) will be used as a management tool to identify employees whose behavior is problematic and to provide a form of intervention to correct that performance.

III. General Procedures

It is a duty of all supervisors to directly monitor the performance and behavior of personnel under their command on a daily basis. The EWS is a tool to assist supervisory personnel in monitoring employee performance. Supervisory personnel will be familiar with authorized alternative actions they may take in response to personnel

exhibiting behavioral problems, with or without information provided through the EWS.

IV. Reporting Procedures

A. The Chief Deputy with assistance from the Administrative Services Commander, is responsible for establishing and administering the Early Warning System and generating reports specified in this directive. The Chief Deputy will receive copies of the following when a review of an employee is initiated:

1. Complaints lodged by one employee against another.
2. Complaints lodged by a member of the public against an employee. (Copy must be sent to the Police Accountability Board.)
3. Incidents of domestic abuse.
4. Administratively defined improper actions or conduct.

B. Performance based and related information will also be included in the EWS, to include, but not limited to:

1. Departmental accidents.
2. Use of force incidents
3. Pursuits, both within and outside of policy.

C. The Chief Deputy or designee will collect and report on the aforementioned data and information by comparing it to historical norms of all employees functioning in the same or similar assignments. Norms will be updated on an ongoing basis for each behavioral or performance indicator. Reports on individual employees based on deviations from those norms will be distributed to respective organizational supervisors.

D. Though reports are developed on a routine basis for all employees, through the Performance Evaluation Process, additional reports will be generated whenever an employee has exceeded the threshold established by the Office of the

Sheriff requiring supervisory review and intervention. The agency threshold established is as follows:

1. Two or more complaints against personnel within a twelve month period.
2. Two or more preventable departmental accidents within a twelve month period.
3. Any combination of three or more departmental accidents (preventable and non-preventable) within a twelve month period.
4. Three or more uses of force within a twelve month period.
5. A combination of three or more complaints against personnel and uses of force.

E. Reports will provide a brief summary of complaints, uses of force incidents, and/or performance indicators and their respective dispositions when available. Reports will draw no conclusions, nor make any determinations concerning job performance. Reports are intended to assist supervisory personnel in evaluating and guiding their subordinates. Reports alone will not form the basis for disciplinary action.

F. Supervisors will review reports with the subject employee and encourage them to provide insight concerning the incident and problems identified in the report.

V. Intervention and Progress Reports

A. The subject employee's supervisor and commander, or their designees, will meet to discuss the report and other relevant information to determine if corrective actions are warranted. These actions may include, but are not limited to the following:

1. Refer the employee to an agency-authorized mental health professional or other health care provider.
2. Refer the employee to an authorized Employee Assistance Program.
3. Require the employee to participate in appropriate agency authorized training.
4. Initiate reassignment.
5. Conclude that the employee's actions do not warrant immediate need for corrective action.

B. A report of action recommendations and justification for those recommendations will be

forwarded through the chain of command to the Undersheriff.

C. Once approved, the employee will follow the plan to successful completion. The employee's progress will be monitored and formally reported to the Sheriff at intervals prescribed in the plan. Indications of employee compliance or non-compliance, including evidence of completion of the agreed upon plan, should be included in the employee's personnel file for future reference.

VI. Annual Evaluation and Report

Each year the Undersheriff will review the operation of the program and report to the Sheriff in writing on the program's status, including the number of interventions, the results of those interventions, and any suggestions for changes in the program.

VII. CALEA References: 35.1.9a, 35.1.9b, 35.1.9c, 35.1.9d, 35.1.9e & 35.1.9f.

VIII. Proponent Unit: Administrative Services

IX. Cancellation: Directive dated 05/15/12

Sheriff Gary Hofmann