

**SAN DIEGO POLICE DEPARTMENT
PROCEDURE**

DATE: JANUARY 5, 2022

NUMBER: 1.17 – ADMINISTRATION

SUBJECT: DEPARTMENT CORRESPONDENCE

RELATED POLICY: [9.09](#)

ORIGINATING DIVISION: CHIEF’S OFFICE

NEW PROCEDURE:

PROCEDURAL CHANGE: **MINOR CHANGES**

SUPERSEDES: DP 1.1 – AUGUST 25, 2016

I. PURPOSE

This Department procedure delineates processes that shall be followed to ensure consistency in the development, processing, and dissemination of Department correspondence defined below. This procedure also provides guidance and requirements for accessing Department Announcements.

II. SCOPE

This procedure applies to all members of the Department.

III. DEFINITIONS

- A. Business Letter – an official written correspondence directed to individuals or organizations outside the City of San Diego.
- B. Department Announcement – a written communication of an informal nature not requiring compliance.
- C. Memorandum – a written correspondence designed for both inter- and intra-Departmental communications.

IV. DEPARTMENT ANNOUNCEMENTS

- A. Department Announcements shall only be issued with the specific approval of the Executive Assistant Chief.
- B. Department Announcements are appropriately used to communicate information that is advisory in nature. (Refer to Department Procedure 1.01, Department Directives, for the definitions of directives, i.e., Legal Updates, Department Orders, Policies, Procedures, and Training Bulletins.)
- NEW

 C. Recommendations for Department Announcements may be originated by any member of the Department and submitted, via the originator’s chain of command, to the Executive Assistant in the Chief’s Office for coordination of the review, approval, and dissemination.
 - 1. An electronic copy of the Announcement shall be e-mailed to the Executive Assistant.
 - 2. A printed copy of the Announcement shall be labeled “APPROVAL COPY” in the top margin, signed by the commanding officer of the originating division, and routed to the Administrative Sergeant in the Office of the Chief for coordination of the review, approval, and dissemination. The “Approval Copy” template can be found in the “F” drive (F: Templates/Department Announcement Approval Copy).
- NEW

 D. The Executive Assistant shall maintain a master copy of all Department Announcements.

V. REVIEW, APPROVAL, AND DISSEMINATION OF DEPARTMENT ANNOUNCEMENTS

- NEW

 A. The Executive Assistant shall facilitate the review, approval, and dissemination of Department Announcements.
- NEW

 B. The Executive Assistant shall ensure that Department Announcements are placed in the Resource Library on the LAN and Automated Field Reporting (AFR) systems.
- C. All Department employees shall access Department Announcements via the Resource Library.

VI. BUSINESS LETTERS

NEW

- A. Business letters shall be constructed and formatted based on the City of San Diego Standardized Correspondence Manual available in the Resource Library (under User Resource Guides/Standardized Correspondence Manual).
1. Correspondence shall be typed on official Department stationery (letterhead). Department stationery shall only be used for official purposes. The use of Department stationery other than the official Department stationery is not authorized.
 2. Incoming letters requiring a reply shall be given prompt attention. If unusual delays cannot be avoided, acknowledgement, via a telephone call, will be made within five days.
 3. All Department correspondence must include the Cost Center number of the originating division/section in the upper right corner under the reference number heading. The mail station of the originating division/section shall appear in the return address portion of the envelope.
 4. The originating division, section, or unit shall maintain a file copy of the correspondence.
 5. The letter, with a mailing envelope attached, shall be sent to the Chief of Police, via the chain of command, in the final format ready for mailing. The letter is not to be sent electronically unless prior approval is received, via the chain of command, and the correspondence is considered urgent in nature.
- B. Business letters shall only be signed by authorized Department personnel.
1. The Chief of Police or the Chief's designee shall sign the following types of correspondence:
 - a. Letters answering policy questions; and,
 - b. Complaints concerning the Department or Department members.

The signature block on letters signed by the Chief of Police shall appear as illustrated below and in accordance with the City of San Diego Standardized Correspondence Manual:

(Chief's name)
Chief of Police

2. Ranking officers may be authorized by their commanding officer to sign certain types of routine correspondence necessary for the daily operation of their section, service area, squad, team, or unit using their own signature block.

VII. MEMORANDA

NEW

A. Memoranda are designed for both inter- and intra-Departmental communications. Memoranda shall be constructed and formatted based on the City of San Diego Standardized Correspondence Manual available in the Resource Library (under User Resource Guides/ City of SD Visual and Correspondence Style Guide Manual).

1. Only the standardized memoranda format shall be used.
2. The Cost Center number of the originating division, section, or unit will appear at the end of the memorandum.
3. The body of the memorandum shall contain the appropriate message.
4. Abbreviations shall not be used. Time shall be indicated as 9:00 a.m. rather than 0900 hours, and dates shall be spelled out (e.g., January 1, 2010).
5. The originating division, section, or unit shall maintain a file copy of the memoranda.

B. Intra-Departmental Memoranda (communication within the Department)

Signature block

1. Commanding officers or section and unit supervisors may use their own signature block as author of memoranda originating from their division, section, or unit, and in accordance with the City of San Diego Standardized Correspondence Manual.
2. When writing on behalf of a higher-ranking individual, that individual's name shall be placed on the signature block.

C. Inter-Departmental Memoranda (communication with other City Departments)

1. The format for memoranda to other City Departments will be the same as those outlined above with the following exceptions:

- a. The signature block of the Chief of Police will appear as illustrated below and in accordance with the City of San Diego Standardized Correspondence Manual.

(Chief's name)
Chief of Police

- b. The Assistant Chief or director in charge of the division authoring the memoranda may empower commanding officers or other designees to use their own signature block.
 - c. The following types of memoranda will be transmitted via the Mayor's Office (refer to the City of San Diego Standardized Correspondence Manual regarding memoranda via notation):
 - (1) Memoranda addressed to Council members.
 - (2) Memoranda regarding City policy.
2. Only the Chief of Police or the Chief's designee shall sign letters of commendation or memoranda to the Mayor, Council members, or other high-ranking officials.
 3. Generally, names of Police Department personnel should not be used when responding to inquiries from other City Departments. Instead, reference shall be made to "an officer of the Department" or "a lieutenant from the Department," rather than "Officer Doe" or "Lieutenant Doe."