I. Policy

A relationship of trust and confidence between the department and the community is essential to effective law enforcement. It is important to establish a disciplinary process which enables the department to initiate positive, corrective action for improper conduct while at the same time protecting employees from unwarranted criticism for properly discharging their duties.

Discipline must be fair and equitable. A disciplinary action against an employee must be initiated promptly when it is evident that the action is necessary to maintain an orderly and productive work environment. Except in cases of theft or serious violations of policy or procedure that create a health or safety risk, disciplinary actions must be progressive in severity. The severity of the action should be determined after consideration of the nature and gravity of the offense, its relationship to the employee’s assigned duties and responsibilities, the employee’s work record, and other relevant factors.

It is the policy to invite any individual to bring to the attention of the department complaints about the conduct of its employees whenever that person believes an employee acted improperly. Further, it is the policy of this department to provide a thorough, fair, and expeditious disposition of complaints regarding the conduct of department employees.

Complaints will be received courteously by any employee of the department, and the department will make every effort to ensure that no adverse consequences occur to any person as a result of having brought what they believe to be a legitimate complaint or information to the attention of the department. The procedures enumerated within this directive apply to allegations of misconduct against department employees, both on- and off-duty.

II. Authority in Disciplinary Matters

The Chief of Police has authority for disciplinary action involving both sworn personnel, within the guidelines of the Law Enforcement Officers’ Bill of Rights (LEOBR, Article 27, Sections 728 - 734D, Annotated Code of Maryland), and civilian employees. (CALEA 26.1.5)

III. Definitions (CALEA 52.1.9)

A. Complaint: An allegation of misconduct made against an employee of the department.

B. Serious Allegations of Misconduct: Includes, among other acts, physical brutality, complaints which allege racial prejudice, misappropriation of monies, or untruthful statements.

C. Minor Allegations of Misconduct: Not enumerated in this directive, but include those allegations, which if sustained, would be appropriately resolved through the imposition of summary punishment or use of the MCP 30, “Supervisor’s Documentation Form.” (CALEA 52.1.1.a)

D. Brutality: The use of excessive or unjustified force by an officer in the exercise of official duties.

E. Inquiry: Both a form (MCP 302, “Internal Inquiry Form,” see Appendix A) and an inquiry process developed by the department to process and document the allegation of and the factual occurrence of minor rule violations not deserving of disciplinary action if found to have occurred. Investigations and/or inquiries done in accordance with the inquiry process are generally not done under the guidelines of the LEOBR. Additionally, documentation generated during such an inquiry will be expunged one year following the completion of the inquiry.

F. Formal Investigation: An investigation conducted by the Internal Affairs Division (IAD), or other designated department personnel, into allegations of administrative misconduct by employees of the department that, if true, would or could result in disciplinary action. These investigations are done in accordance with the LEOBR, negotiated contracts,
Montgomery County Personnel Regulations, and department directives.

G. Internal Investigative Review Panel (IIRP): A five-member panel consisting of the three assistant chiefs, the Director, IAD, and the commander of the involved officer(s). Each of these individuals is a voting member. The County Legal Advisor and Legal and Labor Relations Division attorneys are also in attendance for advisory purposes; however, they have no voting rights. IIRP meetings are facilitated by the Director, Personnel Division. The panel will convene on a regularly scheduled basis for the purpose of reviewing sustained formal internal investigations for determination of findings and recommendations for discipline.

H. Summary Punishment:
   a. Disciplinary action implemented by the highest ranking officer of a unit, or officer acting in that capacity, which may be imposed when the facts constituting the offense are not in dispute. The officer receiving summary punishment waives a hearing and accepts the punishment imposed. Article 27, Section 734A
   b. Summary punishment may not exceed three days suspension without pay, or a fine of $150.00. No other or lesser form of discipline may be included in summary punishment, as this form of punishment is restricted to suspension or fine. Article 27, Section 727(f)

I. Counseling: Supervisory counseling of subordinates is nondisciplinary corrective action. In most cases, the action taken will not be made part of the employee’s personnel record. An exception is the action taken in at-fault accidents. Counseling will be documented on the MCP 30 when appropriate. (CALEA 26.1.5)

J. Oral Admonishment: A spoken warning or indication of disapproval concerning a specific act, infraction, or violation of a policy or procedure that is usually given by the immediate supervisor and is noted for the record but does not become part of an employee’s personnel record. (CALEA 26.1.5)

K. Written Reprimand: One of the lowest levels of disciplinary action permitted under the Montgomery County Personnel Regulations (section 33.1). The letter is a written statement concerning a specific act, infraction, or violation of a policy or procedure and is included in the employee’s personnel file.

L. Forfeiture of Annual Leave or Compensatory Time: Except where prohibited by the Fair Labor Standards Act, the removal of a specified number of hours from the annual leave or compensatory time balance of an employee. The amount forfeited may not be less than 1 day nor more than 10 days. (This section is not applicable to FOP Bargaining Unit members.)

M. Suspension: The placing of an employee in leave without pay status for a specified period, not to exceed 40 hours, for a specific act, infraction, or violation of a policy or procedure. The Chief Administrative Officer may approve a suspension for more than 40 hours, but under no circumstances may a suspension exceed the number of hours scheduled for 1 calendar month. An employee voluntarily may accept a forfeiture of annual leave in lieu of suspension on an hour-for-hour basis. (This section is applicable only to FOP Bargaining Unit members.)

N. Suspension Pending Investigation of Charges or Trial: The placing of an employee in leave without pay status for an indefinite period pending investigation of charges or trial for job-related offenses. If found innocent, or the charges are dismissed, the employee must be reinstated without loss of pay. Any salary due for the period of suspension must equal the employee’s normal earnings less the amount earned in other employment obtained and engaged in during the period.

O. Demotion: The movement of an employee from one merit system position or class to another with a lower grade level assignment. This sanction may only be imposed for performance-related events.

P. Dismissal: The removal of an employee from the county service for just cause.

Q. Non-Punitive Transfer: The Chief of Police has the authority “to regulate the competent and efficient operation and management of a law enforcement agency by any reasonable means including, but not limited to, transfer and reassignment where that action is not punitive in nature and where the chief determines that action to be in the best interest of the internal management of the law enforcement agency.” Article 27, Section 728(c)

R. Unfounded: The investigation of the complaint reveals that the acts complained of did not occur.

S. Insufficient Evidence: The investigation failed to disclose sufficient evidence to prove or disprove the allegation.

T. Exonerated: The incident did occur, but the actions of the involved employee(s) were justified, lawful, and proper.

U. Sustained: The investigation disclosed sufficient evidence to prove an allegation of misconduct.
V. **Policy Failure**: The incident did occur, but there was an omission of policy or the established policy was insufficient or ineffective. The directive will be referred to the *Policy Development Section* for correction and re-issue.

W. **Administrative Closure**: An administrative conclusion used to terminate an internal investigation which cannot proceed to a normal conclusion (e.g., because of an uncooperative complainant).

X. **Declined**: Those complaints that have been deemed by the Director, IAD, on their face, to have no merit.

IV. **Filing of Complaints**

A. **Initial Procedures**

1. Individuals are encouraged to use the MCP 580, “Compliment/Complaint Form,” (see Appendix B) to document their complaints alleging misconduct. Use of the MCP 580 is not a requisite for filing a complaint. The person may, as an alternative, prepare a narrative written statement about the event including the times, dates, location, and name of the officer(s), if known. (CALEA 52.1.12)

2. An individual desiring to complain about an employee of the Department of Police either in person or by telephone, should be provided with the MCP 580 or have their complaint documented for them on the MCP 580. If an individual wishes to speak with a supervisor, they will be referred to the highest ranking on-duty supervisor. A police executive or supervisor should be notified as soon as practical after a complaint is documented. (Refer to FC 250, “Duty Commander Function,” section III.) (CALEA 52.1.12)

3. Complaint forms will be provided to any citizen upon request.

4. Complaints will be taken by any employee regardless of the duty assignment of the employee who is the subject of the complaint.

5. Complaints will be filed on the MCP 580 and forwarded, via the district/unit commander where the complaint was made, to IAD for proper dissemination.

6. A photocopy of the complaint will be given to the complainant as a receipt. (CALEA 52.1.5.a)

7. At IAD, the investigative assignment will be made and a letter of acknowledgment sent to the complainant. (CALEA 52.1.5.b)

B. **Complaint by an Employee of the Department** Any employee desiring to file a complaint against another employee of the department, will document the complaint on the MCP 580, or in memo form, including the identical information prescribed in section IV.A.1, and submit it to IAD.

C. **Anonymous or Uncooperative Complainant**

Anonymous complaints are not, per se, excluded from investigation. The information relating to anonymous complaints will be documented on the MCP 580 and forwarded directly to IAD.

D. Nothing precludes the department from investigating allegations of misconduct against police officers from whatever source consistent with law when it is determined that such investigation is in the best interests of the department or the community.

E. **Allegations of Minor Misconduct**

If a preliminary review by a district/unit commander indicates the complaint is of a minor nature, it can be handled by the employee’s supervisor. The complaint will be documented on the MCP 580 with a copy being FAXED to IAD for numbering upon receipt by the Director, IAD. IAD will contact the commander with the assigned case number. The following information will be included in the report: (CALEA 26.1.4, 26.1.8, 52.1.1)

1. Date, time, and location of the incident.

2. The name, address, and telephone number of any witness(es).

3. The details of all circumstances surrounding the incident.

F. **Allegations of Serious Misconduct** (CALEA 52.1.1)

1. Complaints alleging brutality by a police officer must be duly sworn to prior to any investigation. According to Article 27, Section 728(b)(4), “A complaint against a law enforcement officer, alleging brutality in the execution of his duties, may not be investigated unless the complaint be duly sworn to by the aggrieved person, a member of the aggrieved person’s immediate family, or by any person with firsthand knowledge obtained as a result of the presence at and observation of the alleged incident, or by the parent or guardian in the case of a minor child before an official authorized to administer oaths. An investigation which could lead to disciplinary action under this subtitle for brutality may not be initiated and an action may not be taken unless the complaint is filed within 90 days of the alleged brutality.”

2. Maryland Court decisions have carved out some exceptions to the 90-day time limit requirement. The 90-day rule is a statutory guide that should be followed in most circumstances. However, if the 90-day period has expired but it appears that good cause has been shown for not meeting the statutory 90-day limit, the excessive force complaint will be accepted and forwarded to the Director, IAD. The Director will review the facts
and reasons for the lack of a timely filing. The decision to investigate or not shall be made by the Chief of Police, or designee, on a case-by-case basis.

G. Retaliatory Action Prohibited
Any department employee who takes retaliatory action against a complainant or witness shall incur appropriate disciplinary action. This in no way, however, prohibits the right of an officer to bring suit arising out of his duties as a police officer. Article 27, Section 728(b)(11)

V. Investigation of Complaints (CALEA 52.1.1)
A. IAD has primary responsibility for conducting administrative investigations in the following instances: (CALEA 52.1.1.b, c)
1. All use of force complaints.
2. All firearms discharges to include intentional and accidental discharges, regardless of the employee’s duty status (except for range practice or the destruction of animals).
3. All racial, ethnic, and sexual harassment/discrimination complaints.
4. All administrative investigations required whenever an employee is charged with:
   a. A criminal offense. Allegations of criminal misconduct will first be investigated by the appropriate criminal investigative unit. Upon completion of the criminal investigation, the case is forwarded to IAD for the administrative investigation.
   b. Operating a motor vehicle while under the influence of alcohol or drugs.
   c. Operating a county vehicle involved in a fatal accident.
5. Any complaint or situation designated by the Chief of Police, or designee.

B. The Director, IAD, will use the following guidelines in determining whether the investigation will be conducted by IAD or by the employee’s commanding officers, excluding those complaint categories as delineated in section V.A: (CALEA 52.1.1.a)
1. Nature of the complaint.
2. Source of the complaint.
3. Number of individuals involved (employees and/or witnesses).
4. Whether the involved employees are assigned to the same unit.
5. Jurisdictional limitations.
6. Underlying indications of graft, corruption, or other serious misconduct.
7. Any other related matter that would dictate assignment.
8. Complaints will not be assigned to an investigator/supervisor at any level where there exists a conflict or potential conflict by virtue of involvement in the event under investigation.

C. In addition, the following principles will serve as guidelines for the Director, IAD, when determining investigative responsibility:
1. Discipline is a command responsibility.
2. Complaints should be investigated at the lowest possible level.
3. Performance-related issues will generally be handled at the district/unit level.

D. IAD Log (CALEA 52.1.10)
An IAD log will be maintained to record all complaints against departmental personnel. This log will include the following information:
1. The name(s) of the accused employee(s)
2. Name of the complainant
3. District of the complaint
4. Nature of the complaint
5. IAD control number
6. Date the complaint is received
7. Date of the incident
8. Unit assigned to investigate
9. Disposition

E. Cases Assigned to Units
1. Unit commanders assigned cases by IAD may assign an executive officer or supervisor under their command to conduct the investigation. Upon completion of the investigation, the commander will review the file for deficiencies, errors, or omissions. Upon final receipt of the case file, the commander will review the facts and determine a finding, which will be indicated in a separate memo included in the case file. All internal investigations conducted at the unit level will be reviewed by the Director, IAD, prior to submission to the Internal Investigative Review Panel (IIRP).
2. All formal investigations will be completed within a 90-day period unless authorized by the Director, IAD. (CALEA 52.1.4)
3. All inquiry investigations will be completed within 30 days of the date of assignment. (CALEA 52.1.1.a, 52.1.4, 52.1.9)

F. Cases Assigned to IAD
1. When a complaint is to be handled by IAD, the Director, IAD, will assign an IAD investigator to conduct an investigation and obtain all available documentary evidence. After completing the investigation, an internal report will be written which the Deputy Director, IAD, or designee, will review.
2. If that review does not reveal any errors or need for additional work, the file will be forwarded to the Director, IAD, for final review and approval.
Upon final review by the Director, IAD, the file will be forwarded to the commander of the involved employee for review.

3. Upon completion of the file review, the commander will prepare a memorandum to the Director, IAD, which shall include a finding assessed to each rule allegation, the rationale for the finding, and, where appropriate, the commander’s recommendation as to discipline or other resolution(s). This memorandum will become part of the permanent case file. (CALEA 52.1.9)

4. If the Director, IAD, concurs with the findings and the case is sustained, the file will be forwarded to the IIRP for review and recommendations for resolution.

5. In all cases where there is disagreement between the Director, IAD, and the commander, the file will be forwarded to the IIRP for review and recommendations.

6. In all cases where there is agreement between the Director, IAD, and the commander, and the findings are other than sustained, the case will be closed.

G. Internal Investigative Reports (Formal)
All internal reports will include:
1. The allegations as made by the complainant or discovered through investigation.
2. A written report of the investigative process and information uncovered or obtained.
3. A listing of all those contacted and/or interviewed during the course of the investigation.

H. Interrogation of Officers under Investigation
The information in quotes below is from the LEOBR.
1. Notification (CALEA 52.1.6)
   a. “The law enforcement officer under investigation shall be informed in writing of the nature of the investigation prior to any interrogation. Upon completion of the investigation, the law enforcement officer shall be notified of the name of any witness not less than ten days prior to any hearing.” Article 27, Section 728(b)(5)
   b. In order to ensure the protection of rights guaranteed by LEOBR, the MCP 242, “Internal Investigation Notification,” is used in the administrative investigation of any incident which could lead to disciplinary action against an officer. Once an apparent violation is discovered and the supervisor’s investigation focuses on a particular officer, the MCP 242 shall be executed prior to interrogation of that officer. For example, since many at-fault traffic accidents result in disciplinary action, this form should be executed prior to the supervisor’s questioning of the responsible officer. It is suggested that the supervisor allow the accident investigator to complete the accident report prior to the start of the supervisor’s investigation.

2. Representative at Interrogation - “At the request of any law enforcement officer under interrogation, he shall have the right to be represented by counsel or any other responsible representative of his choice who shall be present at all times during the interrogation, unless waived by the law enforcement officer. The interrogation shall be suspended for a period of time not to exceed ten days until representation is obtained. However, the chief may, for good cause shown, within that ten day period, extend that period of time.” Article 27, Section 728(b)(10)

3. LEOBR Rights Waiver - A police officer under investigation may waive, in writing, any or all rights provided under the LEOBR. It is a requirement of the law that the waiver of those rights be done in writing. To that end, the MCP 459, “LEOBR Rights Waiver Form,” should be utilized for that purpose.

4. Record of Interrogation - “A complete record, either written, taped or transcribed, shall be kept of the complete interrogation of a law enforcement officer, including all recess periods. Upon completion of the investigation, and upon request of the law enforcement officer under investigation or his counsel, a copy of the record of his interrogation shall be made available not less than ten days prior to any hearing.” Article 27, Section 728(b)(8)

5. When to Use the MCP 50, “Advice of Rights” - “If the law enforcement officer under interrogation is under arrest or is likely to be placed under arrest as a result of the interrogation, he shall be completely informed of all his rights prior to the commencement of the interrogation.” Article 27, Section 728(b)(9)

6. Time, Place, and Manner of Interrogations (CALEA 52.1.6)
   a. “The interrogation shall take place either at the office of the command of the investigating officer or at the office of the local precinct or police unit in which the incident allegedly occurred, as designated by the investigating officer, unless otherwise waived in writing by the law enforcement officer, or at any other reasonable and appropriate place.” Article 27, Section 728(b)(2)
   b. “The interrogation shall be conducted at a reasonable hour, preferably at a time when the law enforcement officer is on duty, unless the seriousness of the investigation is of such
a degree that an immediate interrogation is required.” Article 27, Section 728(b)(1)

c. “Interrogating sessions shall be for reasonable periods and shall be timed to allow for any personal necessities and rest periods as are reasonably necessary.” Article 27, Section 728(b)(6)

d. “The law enforcement officer under interrogation may not be threatened with transfer, dismissal or disciplinary action.” Article 27, Section 728(b)(7)(i)

e. “The law enforcement officer under investigation shall be informed of the name, rank and command of the officer in charge of the investigation, the interrogating officer and all persons present during the interrogation. All questions directed to the officer under interrogation shall be asked by and through one interrogator during any one interrogating session...” Article 27, Section 728(b)(3)

7. Required Interrogations and Tests - “This subtitle does not prevent any law enforcement agency from requiring a law enforcement officer under investigation to submit to blood alcohol tests, blood, breath or urine tests for controlled dangerous substances, polygraph examinations or interrogations which specifically relate to the subject matter of the investigation. This subtitle does not prevent a law enforcement agency from commencing any action which may lead to a punitive measure as a result of a law enforcement officer’s refusal to submit to a blood alcohol test, blood, breath or urine tests for controlled dangerous substances, polygraph examination or interrogation, after having been ordered to do so by the law enforcement agency. The results of any blood alcohol tests, blood, breath or urine test for controlled dangerous substances, polygraph examination or interrogation, as may be required by the law enforcement agency under this subparagraph are not admissible or discoverable in any criminal proceedings against the law enforcement officer when the law enforcement officer has been ordered to submit the same. The results of a polygraph examination may not be used as evidence in any administrative hearing when the law enforcement officer has been ordered to submit a polygraph examination by the law enforcement agency unless the agency and the law enforcement officer agree to the admission of the results at the Administrative Hearing.” Article 27, Section 728(b)(7)(ii). (CALEA 52.1.6, 52.1.7)

8. During the internal investigation, any officer may be ordered by the investigator to submit a statement and/or answer all questions which specifically relate to the subject matter of the investigation regardless of the relative rank of the officers involved.

I. Notification of Employee after Investigation (CALEA 52.1.9)

1. In those cases where a finding other than sustained has been determined, the employee will be notified in writing within seven business days by the Director, IAD, that the case has been concluded.

2. In those cases where a finding of sustained has been determined by the IIRP, the employee will be notified in writing by the Chief of Police of the investigative outcome and the recommended action to be taken.

J. Notification of Complainant (CALEA 52.1.5.c)

1. In all formal investigations, the complainant will be notified in writing by the Chief of Police or the Director, IAD, about the outcome of the investigation.

2. For cases investigated at the inquiry level, the complainant will be notified via telephone of the outcome by the investigator within seven business days of the completion of the investigation. The date and time of the closure contact will be documented on the MCP 302.

K. Circumstances for No Punitive Action

An investigation shall result in no punitive action where the complaint is unfounded, the employee is exonerated, the case is administratively closed, or a policy failure is discovered. (CALEA 26.1.8)

L. Investigations Confidential

Reports of internal investigations, including witness statements, are confidential. Authorization for access to these reports can only be granted by the Chief of Police, or designee. (CALEA 26.1.8, 52.1.10)

M. When Officers will be Furnished Copy of File

In those cases where a charge of misconduct has been sustained and the officer has requested a hearing board, the officer will be furnished with a copy of the investigative file under the following conditions [Article 27, Section 728(5)(iii)]: (CALEA 26.1.8)

1. Excluding the identity of confidential sources.

2. Excluding any non-exculpatory information.

3. Not less than 20 days before any hearing if the officer and the officer’s attorney agree:

a. To execute a confidentiality agreement with the law enforcement agency to not disclose any of the material contained in the record for any purpose other than to defend the officer; and

b. To pay any reasonable charge for the cost of reproducing the material involved.
VI. Summary Punishment  
(CALEA 52.1.1)

A. Statutory Provisions  
Summary punishment may be imposed for minor violations of departmental rules and regulations when:  
“(i) The facts which constitute the minor violation are not in dispute; (ii) the officer waives the hearing provided by this subtitle; and (iii) the officer accepts the punishment imposed by the highest ranking officer of the unit to which the officer is attached.” Article 27, Section 734A(1)

B. Other Considerations (CALEA 26.1.5)  
The above procedure does not preclude a commander from counseling a subordinate. Use of the counseling process can correct undesirable behavior while maintaining maximum harmony between a supervisor and subordinate.

C. Review  
To ensure fairness and consistency in disciplinary matters involving the offer of summary punishment, all summary punishment cases will be reviewed jointly by the employee’s assistant chief and the Director, IAD, prior to an offer being made to an employee.

VII. IAD Notification Procedures (CALEA 52.1.1.c)

A. Immediate Notification Circumstances  
An IAD investigator will be notified of and will immediately respond whenever an employee is involved in any of the following circumstances:

1. When an employee is involved in a firearm discharge whether intentional or accidental and regardless of duty status, except for authorized target practice or the killing of a dangerous or injured animal as authorized in FC 131, “Use of Force.” (CALEA 1.3.6.a)

2. When an employee is charged with a criminal offense, or anytime there is an allegation of criminal activity on the part of an employee where police investigation is necessary regardless of jurisdiction of occurrence. (Refer to FC 310, “Administrative Leave.”)

3. When an employee is charged with operating a motor vehicle while under the influence of alcohol or drugs.

4. When an employee is the operator of a county vehicle involved in a fatal accident.

5. When, after a supervisor confers with an executive officer and justification is determined, an employee is believed to be in violation of the department’s substance abuse policy. (Refer to FC 371, “Employee Substance Abuse Program.”)

6. Any incident where an executive officer or officer in charge of the district of occurrence feels an immediate administrative investigation is necessary or where so directed by the Chief of Police, or designee.

B. Notifying IAD  
1. When the circumstances are such that a notification of IAD is necessary (events listed in section VII.A), the notification will be made by an executive officer by direct contact with IAD during business hours or through ECC during off-duty hours. Any doubt should be resolved in favor of making the notification. Once notification is made, the responsibility for the administrative investigation lies with the IAD investigator. If an executive officer is unavailable, the responsibility for notification will revert to the senior ranking officer on the scene of the event.

2. IAD may be notified between 0800 hours and 1600 hours, Monday through Friday, at (301) 840-2730. At all other times, an IAD investigator will be available through ECC. (CALEA 52.1.1, 81.2.6)

C. On-Call Investigator’s Responsibility  

I. Upon notification, the IAD investigator will consult with the Director, IAD, to determine the number of investigators who will respond to those incidents listed in section VII.A.

2. Interviews of involved employees by IAD investigators will be conducted, if necessary, independently of any other interview or interrogation. IAD investigators will not involve themselves in the interview of involved employees conducted by other units unless so requested.

VIII. Proponent Unit: Internal Affairs Division

IX. Cancellation  

This directive cancels Function Code 301, effective date 11-15-94.

Charles A. Moose, Ph.D.  
Chief of Police