



<b>Series</b> 300 Support Services	<b>Effective Date</b> 10/07/2014	<b>Review Date</b> Two Years	<b>Directive Number</b>  <b>301.4</b>
<b>Chapter</b> 301 - Communications			<input type="checkbox"/> <b>New Directive</b> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <b>Revised</b> <small>Revisions in <i>italics</i></small>
<b>Reviewing Office</b> Office of the Chief of Police			
<b>References</b>			

## WRITTEN COMMUNICATIONS

### **301.4 - 1      PURPOSE**

An accurate flow of information is essential to police operations. The purpose of this directive is to establish guidelines concerning the handling of correspondence by members both internally and externally.

### **301.4 - 2      POLICY**

It is the policy of the Detroit Police Department (DPD) to respond to all correspondence in a timely, concise and meaningful manner and in accordance with established guidelines. In addition, it is this Department’s policy that all matters, including written communication, be handled at the lowest level that is appropriate.

### **301.4 - 3      PROCEDURES**

#### **301.4 - 3.1      Inter-Office Memorandum (DPD568)**

Department members shall complete all required reports in an accurate, legible manner and will submit them through proper channels and in accordance with department procedures immediately upon completion.

#### **301.4 - 3.2      Grammar**

Members should bear in mind that all reports and/or Inter-Office Memorandums (DPD568) must be clear, concise, and grammatically correct. It is the duty of all supervisors to review all reports submitted by subordinates to ensure content (completeness) and quality (spelling and grammar). All Inter-Office Memorandums (DPD568) should be prepared in the first person singular (i.e., “I observed”), rather than the third person (i.e., “writer observed”).

### **301.4 - 4      Time Limits**

#### **301.4 - 4.1      Return of Reports**

Letters of complaint or other matters forwarded for investigation from executives shall bear, on the Route Slip (DPD232), the date by which a return must be made.

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**301.4 - 4.2 Routing**

All written communications forwarded for investigation from ranking officers shall bear a date on the Route Slip (DPD232), by which a return must be made. A special attention slip shall be affixed to urgent correspondence, which requires priority consideration or handling.

**301.4 - 4.3 Progress Report**

Department members shall submit reports on time. Reports submitted late due to inattention constitute grounds for disciplinary action. In the event a final report cannot be made by the date specified, a progress report shall be submitted to the office of origin. Progress reports and all other reports to the office of origin shall be sent through official channels unless otherwise directed.

Progress reports shall contain the dates the investigation will be completed and the final report will be submitted. However, all progress reports must explain the reasons that the extension is needed, and the progress report must be submitted prior to the original due date for the assignment. Members will be directed to elaborate or revise reports or correspondence when found to be inadequate.

**301.4 - 4.4 Copies**

All reports through official channels to the Chief of Police on an Inter-Office Memorandum (DPD568) should consist of one (1) original and one (1) copy. One (1) additional copy shall be retained and submitted to each additional command that is in the reviewing chain of command. Whenever a communication is to be forwarded to more than one (1) individual or command, a distribution list indicating the recipients of information copies shall be typewritten at the conclusion of the report and placed in line with the left hand margin.

**301.4 - 4.5 Endorsements**

Long reports shall be made by letter or memorandum and not by endorsement. When communications are directed through official channels, each supervisory officer reviewing the communication shall approve, disapprove or make further recommendations and forward the communication without unnecessary delay. Forwarding papers "for consideration", "inviting attention", or the like is prohibited. An exception is statistical reports, which are forwarded through official channels for the information of the Chief of Police.

**301.4 - 4.6 Formatting**

The following are guidelines for written communications:

1. On an Inter-Office Memorandum (DPD568), a margin of one (1) inch shall be allowed at the left, right, and bottom of each page;
2. Only one side of the sheet shall be used;



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general subject and all unnecessary introductory or explanatory paragraphs shall be avoided. All ceremonial forms such as “Sir,” “I have the honor,” “Respectfully recommended” shall be omitted.

When a member is mentioned by name in the body on an Inter-Office Memorandum (DPD568) for the first time, his/her rank, full name, and badge number shall be stated. If referred to thereafter, his/her rank and last name shall be used. The written signature above the typewritten name, title, badge number and command shall be placed about one-half inch below and at the left margin.

An Inter-Office Memorandum (DPD568) shall be folded in three (3) equal parts parallel with the writing, the top toward the back, and the lower fold to the front or over the face of the letter in order that the entire subscription may show without unfolding the communication.

**301.4 - 5 Correspondence with other Departments**

All telegrams, letters, circulars, and administrative Law Enforcement Information Network (LEIN) messages pertaining to traffic warrants and detainee identification that are directed to other law enforcement agencies regarding fugitives, criminal investigations and related matters shall be coordinated through *Criminal Investigations Bureau*.

All correspondence from other departments requesting arrest and/or criminal investigations shall be recorded and given a file number by *Criminal Investigations Bureau* and assigned to the proper command for appropriate action by *Criminal Investigations Bureau*. Shall this type of correspondence be received directly by another office without first having been recorded; the *officer in charge* shall be immediately notified for proper recording.

Upon completion of the investigation by the assignee, such correspondence shall be returned promptly to *Criminal Investigations Bureau* with a written report of the action taken, or a verbal report when expediency is essential. Replies to assignments on LEIN messages should be telephoned, in lieu of a written report, to the *officer in charge* generally within twenty four (24) hours.

In emergency cases, when the *officer in charge is unavailable*, letters directed to other agencies shall be transmitted over the signature block of the commander, *Criminal Investigations Bureau*, i.e., By Authority of the Commander, *Criminal Investigations Bureau*.

The investigating officer shall then affix his/her signature directly below the signature block. A copy of the letter shall be delivered to and filed with *Criminal Investigations Bureau*. LEIN messages shall be sent by contacting the Message Center, and transmitting to them

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a typed copy of the message via tele-copier. In the event a tele-copier is not available, the LEIN message shall be typed and hand delivered to the Message Center. A copy of the message shall be retained at the command where it was originated. The LEIN operator shall be instructed to *forward a copy of the message to the officer in charge*.

All long distance phone calls incoming from other departments, as well as outgoing, relative to requests for an arrest or criminal investigations, shall be reported to *Criminal Investigations Bureau*. Monday through Friday, 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m., phone calls from requesting departments shall be transferred to *Criminal Investigations Bureau*. All other times such calls shall be transferred to the Control Desk which shall prepare a memorandum for the *officer in charge*. Callers requesting an arrest shall be advised to confirm the call by LEIN message. If the call is from out of state, the caller should be further advised to indicate whether he/she would extradite. The procedure set forth in this section shall apply to all correspondence with out of state agencies as well as those agencies within the state of Michigan, with the exception of phone calls made to adjacent communities wherein the matter can be consummated immediately.

**301.4 - 6 Communications to and from the Public**

All correspondence from the public, whether received by a command through official channels or directly from a citizen, shall be processed as promptly as possible. The commanding officer shall be responsible for initiating appropriate action and for reviewing and approving the findings.

**301.4 - 7 Signatures**

**301.4 - 7.1 When Signed by the Chief of Police**

Any official communication addressed to the mayor or to the head of a department of the municipal, county, state or federal government, the Chief of Police shall sign.

**301.4 - 7.2 Signature of Members**

When signing any communications, members shall sign his/her first and last names in full, over his/her rank or position and assignment. Sworn members shall also indicate his/her badge numbers.

**301.4 - 7.3 Substituting in a Different Rank**

Members of the department acting or substituting for a superior officer or temporarily assigned to fill a position or a different rank shall, when signing communications, designate his/her present rank or position instead of his/her acting rank.

**301.4 - 8 Administrative LEIN Message**

An Administrative *LEIN* Message is used only for sending and receiving information on traffic warrants and for establishing positive identification of prisoners with other

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departments on line with LEIN in the state of Michigan. When sending an Administrative *LEIN* Message, the format contained in the LEIN Manual shall be used. An Administrative LEIN Message is an official department message and no unnecessary communications shall be sent by this means. When officers send an Administrative LEIN Message, he/she shall sign his/her name to the left of the entry on the LEIN terminal printout sheet. This printout sheet shall serve as a record of all such messages sent and shall be retained for a period of thirty (30) days.