



DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SAFETY OPERATING PROCEDURES MANUAL			
CHAPTER 4	OFFICE OF THE COMMISSIONER		
	Effective: 7/24/2023	Commissioner Approval: 	
	Authorities: AS 44.17.030 ; 39.25.010 - 190 ; 18.65.030 ; 18.60.146 ; 18.65.130-290 ; 18.65.010 ; 04.06.010		
	Applicability: All Department Employees		
	Special Instructions: Click here to enter text.		

4.100 RESPONSIBILITY

The Commissioner of Public Safety is the appointed principal executive head of the Department of Public Safety, vested with full power and authority over the organization, administration, and discipline of the divisions of the department, as outlined in AS 44.17.030.

4.300 COMMISSIONER

The Commissioner has the authority to appoint, promote, demote, suspend and/or dismiss employees in accordance with the State Personnel Act under AS 39.25 and in accordance with current collective bargaining agreements. The position has the authority to assign and transfer personnel. The Commissioner determines policies of the divisions in keeping with statutory and regulatory responsibilities. The Commissioner may prescribe the uniform and equipment and establish the location of the various division segments and units, the nature and character of recruitment, and special training and the general policy with respect to the use of equipment and employment of all employees of the Department of Public Safety.

4.310 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER

The Deputy Commissioner of Public Safety is deputy executive head of the department and shall, in the absence or at the discretion of the Commissioner, administer functions relative to the protection of life and property in the State of Alaska. The Deputy Commissioner shall receive supervision from and be directly responsible to the Commissioner of Public Safety, and in the Commissioner's legal absence, the Deputy shall assume the responsibilities of the Commissioner. As deputy executive head of the department, the Deputy Commissioner shall provide supervision as required through appropriate lines of authority, to ensure a high degree of efficiency and morale in subordinate personnel, utilizing modern methods of planning, organizing, staffing, directing, reporting, budgeting, recruiting, training, and leadership.

The Deputy Commissioner has, upon approval of the Commissioner, the authority to appoint, promote, demote, suspend and/or dismiss employees in accordance with provisions of AS 39.25. and rules promulgated therein and in accordance with current collective bargaining agreements. The position has the authority to assign and transfer personnel.

4.320 DEPARTMENT ORGANIZATION

The Department of Public Safety is organized into the Divisions of Administrative Services, Alaska State Troopers, Alaska Wildlife Troopers, Fire & Life Safety, Village Public Safety Officer Program, Commissioner's Office, and Statewide Services. The divisions are further broken down into offices, unit, posts, and detachments under authority held by the Commissioner in AS 18.65.030.

4.330 DEPARTMENTAL PROGRAMS

The Commissioner's Office supervises the programs and functions listed in this section. The Commissioner may assign or locate these functions anywhere in the state and may delegate the supervision as needed for efficient functioning. Investigation will be coordinated with local detachment.

A. *DPS Training Academy.* The Public Safety Academy, supervised by the Commissioner's Office, provides:

1. recruit training for state and municipal law enforcement agencies;
2. in-service training covering refresher, update, and advanced topics;
3. public safety training to other government agencies;
4. coordination of federal funding requests providing courses and other training projects for public safety agencies.

B. *Office of Professional Standards.* The DPS Office of Professional Standards:

1. conducts all administrative investigations on department employees;
2. manages internal affairs and an early intervention program for monitoring employee performance;
3. provides statistical reports on employee behavior in pre-determined indicators such as use of force, vehicular pursuits, complaints, and any other identified areas;
4. provides oversight for deadly force review boards and maintains historical documentation of those incidents;
5. coordinates the revision and publication of the departmental Operating Procedures Manual (OPM).

C. *Human Resources (HR) Business Partner.* The Human Resources Business Partner:

1. manages the human resources functions for the Department of Public Safety including management of technical human resources staff;
2. acts as a liaison with the Division of Personnel;
3. provides employee and labor relations guidance for commissioned staff and serves as the representative on collective bargaining matters and interactions between the union and the Department;
4. provides input for department-wide policies;

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5. provides subject matter expertise to the Office of Professional Standards;
6. serves as the Department's Americans with Disabilities (ADA) Coordinator;
7. serves as a strategic partner with department leadership.

D. *Legislative Liaison Section.* The special assistant to the commissioner reviews, researches, and tracks all legislation impacting the department. Within this capacity, the special assistant also coordinates departmental testimony, regulation drafting, and meets with concerned or involved parties to the proposed legislation. The special assistant serves as the department liaison with the State Legislative Branch. The special assistant also researches regulation updates and other special projects and assignments for the commissioner.

E. *Public Information Office & Public Information Research and Request Unit.* The public information office (PIO) and public information request and research unit (PIRRU) are supervised by the department's communications director who reports to the commissioner. The PIO informs the media and the public of department activities and matters of public safety. They also coordinate the department's social media channels, website content, photography, videography, event planning, and graphic design. The PIRRU manages the department's Alaska Public Records Act processes and compliance. They also provide enterprise level research and data analysis at the request of department leadership to support the DPS mission. See OPM Chapter 206 for additional information.

F. *Recruitment Unit.* The Recruitment unit is responsible for:

1. recruiting individuals to join the commissioned ranks of the Alaska State Troopers, Deputy Fire Marshals, and Court Service Officers; ensuring efforts include a strategy for building a culturally diverse workforce;
2. proctoring applicants' written and physical endurance tests, scheduling medical examinations, drug screening, psychological testing and oral interviews;
3. conducting comprehensive background investigations to assist in the determination of suitability for hire by DPS.

G. *Aircraft Section.* The Aircraft Section is overseen by an Aviation Program Manager who oversees the daily operations of the aircraft section and all civilian staff employees. The Aircraft Section is responsible for:

1. maintenance, repair, operational safety, fiscal accounting, and budget for all aircraft under the section's jurisdiction; and,
2. ensuring that all aircraft are assigned and maintained as outlined in OPM Chapter 229.

H. *Advanced Training Unit (ATU).* ATU is responsible for:

1. planning and teaching in service training to members of the department;

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2. development and instruction of police topics to members of DPS and other law enforcement agencies.

I. *Wellness Unit.* The Wellness Unit is responsible for:

1. establishing and developing methods and means of support of department personnel in dealing with critical and other stressful incidents;
2. managing the DPS Peer Support program.

J. *Village Public Safety Officer Program (VPSO).* The VPSO Program, established under AS 18.65.670,

1. with funding appropriated to the Department, disperses grants to nonprofit regional corporations and Alaska Native organizations for training and employment of VPSOs to implement the Department's mission in rural villages;
2. establishes and enforces minimum qualifications and training standards for all VPSOs;
3. certifies officers who satisfactorily complete requirements;
4. establishes powers and duties as peace officers;
5. creates policy and procedural recommendations based upon statistical analyses, trends, changing economic conditions, and consultations with rural region and village leaders and citizens.

4.330 BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS

The Boards and Commissions established within the Alaska Statute and administered by the Department of Public Safety are:

A. *Alaska Police Standards Council (APSC).* The APSC, established under AS 18.65.130 290,:

1. establishes and enforces minimum selection and training standards for all full time state and municipal police, correctional, probation, and parole officers;
2. determines minimum requirements for instructors and certifies police training schools and courses.

B. *Alaska Fire Standards Council (AFSC).* The AFSC, established under AS 18.70.330,:

1. reviews certification standards, and conduct certifications for fire service training throughout the state;
2. is also responsible to maintain the state's International Fire Service Accreditation (IFSAC).

C. *Council on Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault (CDVSA).* The Council, established under AS 18.65.010,:

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1. funds, monitors, plans, organizes, implements, coordinates, and provides fiscal and technical assistance for programs and services for families and victims of domestic violence and sexual assault provided by State agencies and community groups;
2. develops and implements a standardized data collection system;
3. provides technical assistance as requested to state and community groups.

D. *Violent Crimes Compensation Board (VCCB)*. VCCB, established under AS 18.67 facilitates the payment of compensation to eligible victims and dependents of violent crime across Alaska.