

Watch Commander for Community Corrections

Effective Date:	1/7/2026
Revised Date:	1/7/2026
Issuing Authority: Chief Probation Officer	

811.1 PURPOSE:

Establish guidelines to enhance field operations, ensure deployments are organized and consistent with Department goals, promote effective communication with allied agencies, and ensure compliance with policies and procedures during high profile, critical, and/or major events.

811.2 DEFINITIONS:

Area of Responsibility (AOR): The pre-defined geographical area assigned to the Watch Commander.

Assist Other Agency (AOA)/Assist Other Department (AOD): Term(s) used when requesting or responding to the assistance of another agency or department.

Critical Incidents:

- An unexpected event involving death or serious injury or an event that could have resulted in death or serious injury.
- An event that significantly deviates from the Department's usual process for providing services as determined by the Incident Commander.
- An event that undermines or could potentially undermine public confidence in the Department as determined by the Incident Commander.
- An event that results in any individual being taken to a hospital for examination for other than routine or planned hospital visits.

Watch Commander (WC): An armed Supervising Probation Officer (SPO)/ or Acting Supervising Probation Officer responsible for providing leadership and supervision over department personnel during field operations in their AOR and has the authority to manage resources and responses to field incidents.

Incident Command System (ICS): A management system designed to enable effective and efficient domestic incident management by integrating a combination of facilities, equipment, personnel, procedures, and communications operating within a common organizational structure.

Incident Commander (IC): The individual responsible for establishing incident objectives, strategies, and priorities. Assumes overall responsibility for the incident.

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Public Information Officer (PIO): External Affairs staff and/or other staff as designated by the Chief Probation Officer or designee responsible for the dissemination of information to the public, media, or other agencies.

SEMS/NIMS: Standardized Emergency Management System / National Incident Management System.

811.3 GUIDELINES:

- A. In instances where unit supervisors are in the field actively supervising, they should retain authority over their personnel. However, in matters where a departmental response is required, the WC assumes authority over the personnel to manage the situation.
- B. The WC has the authority to direct all officers during field matters. This includes any follow up necessary as it relates to documentation, interviews, etc.
- C. Department personnel will use the industry-standard of SEMS/NIMS and Incident Command System (ICS) and follow all lawful directives.
- D. Participation as a WC will be determined by the Division Directors.
- E. It is not the intent to absolve unit supervisors of their duties and responsibilities as defined in other policies and procedures but rather to provide additional support.

811.4 RESPONSIBILITIES:

- I. Probation Officers (PO I, II, III, and SPO):
 - A. Follow all reasonable directives given by the WC during field operations.
 - B. Notify the WC of any situation that has or might lead to a use of force or critical incident particularly if the unit supervisor will not be on the scene.
 - C. Refer all media requests to the PIO.
 - D. Request permission from the WC and/or their supervisor before responding to an AOD/AOA. Supervisors will route requests to the WC for approval before deploying staff.
- II. Watch Commander (WC):
 - A. Operate a command vehicle during the tour of duty when available.
 - B. At the start of the shift, will log on with the SBSD Dispatch.
 - C. Inquire on the status of calls or events.
 - D. Maintain contact with dispatch.
 - E. Respond to all of the following, to include, but not limited to:
 - 1. Significant situations:
 - (a) Foot pursuits
 - (b) Use of force

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- (c) Citizen complaints resulting from a critical incident or as requested when the unit supervisor or designee is not readily available or in the vicinity.
- 2. Officer-involved shootings
- 3. Any critical incident
- F. Monitor events that are likely to impact field operations.
- G. Ensure probation personnel deployments are organized and consistent with the Department's operational goals.
- H. Ensure the efficient and continuous delivery of field services. This includes making sure officers are efficiently managing their calls and time.
- I. Ensure communications with probation personnel and dispatch are efficient and professional. As such, the WC will ensure personnel follows appropriate protocols and reduces the amount of airtime being used. This should include the use of Mobile Data Computers (MDC) when possible.
- J. Engage and disengage department personnel in field actions as deemed appropriate.
- K. Respond to and coordinate requests made by other agencies and probation personnel.
- L. Provide field representation and direct probation personnel at AOA/AOD or multi-agency events.
- M. In determining the response to a situation, the WC will take into consideration, but not limited to, the following:
 - 1. The nature of the offense or situation.
 - 2. The legal mandates and responsibilities of the Department.
 - 3. Safety concerns to both the community and department personnel.
 - 4. The department's ability to resolve the situation.
- N. Upon arriving at incidents in which the Department is the lead agency, assess the situation and the capabilities of Department personnel. This includes the capabilities of the IC. The WC will relieve personnel and assume the IC role if the need arises.
- O. May approve overtime and designate replacement staff if the situation requires.
- P. Perform other duties as directed by management (Division Directors) or administration (Deputy Chiefs, Asst. Chief, Chief) staff.
- Q. Follow reporting requirements to management and executive staff pursuant to Department procedures when the situation permits.
- R. Immediately notify the Office of the Chief Probation Officer of incidents that are of unusual concern to the Department or require large scale mobilization (multiple units) of probation personnel. Such incidents include but are not limited to:

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1. Death, or injury or illness requiring hospitalization, of department employees or citizens during a probation field action.
2. Incidents involving direct contact with diplomats, celebrities, legislators, or other notable persons.
3. Hazardous material emergencies.
4. Disasters both natural and manmade.
5. Tactical situations.

S. Notify and ensure the respective unit supervisor or designee responds to the scene and if appropriate transfer control of the incident upon arrival.

T. Debrief incidents unless deemed unnecessary and address issues/concerns with the appropriate personnel in a timely manner.

U. Notify the Peer Support Coordinator when applicable.

V. Perform the duty of a WC as directed.

W. Advise any substitutions or schedule changes to the Division Director or designee responsible for the WC schedule as soon as possible.

III. Division Directors (DDI/II):

- A. Assigned director(s) or their designee will be responsible for completing the monthly WC schedule for their AOR five business days prior to the beginning of the next month.
- B. The completed schedule will be forwarded to supervisors and directors.
- C. Review and approve or deny all substitutions or schedule changes.