



Riverside Police Department Field Training Program

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Program Overview

From academy graduate to competent solo patrol officer

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What the FTO Program Is Designed to Do

- Bridge the gap between academy training and field performance
- Provide systematic, consistent, department-specific training
- Develop safe, productive, professional patrol officers
- Teach through observation, modeling, coaching, and repetition
- Evaluate performance against standardized expectations
- Completion: competent performance as a solo uniformed patrol officer



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Program Structure: 25 Weeks of Progressive Responsibility

- California POST's minimum requirement for an FTO program is 10 weeks



Lateral officers may be accelerated based on demonstrated performance; the guide establishes a 10-week minimum with at least two FTOs.



Source: RPD Field Training Program Guide — Length, Program Development, and
RPDOnline.org

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How Responsibility Changes Across the Phases

- Phase I — Introductory
 - Academy-to-patrol transition; safety, routines, radio/MDC, geography, basic reports
- Phase II — Developing
 - Trainee becomes contact officer, begins driving and self-initiated activity
- Phase III — Increasing Independence
 - Handles most patrol details with minimal input; workload and time management matter
- Phase IV — Traffic
 - Three weeks focused on traffic collision investigation and related objectives
- Phase V — Test Phase
 - Trainee leads; FTO shifts to advisor/cover role
 - Final week is the "Ghost" phase: primarily observation and evaluation



Source: RPD Field Training Program Guide — Length, Program Development, and
RPDOnline.org

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The Program Is a Team Effort

- Trainee
 - Give full effort; learn, apply feedback, and demonstrate increasing independence
 - Goal is competent solo-officer performance by program completion
- Field Training Officer
 - Teach, model, coach, evaluate, document, and adapt training to the trainee
- FTO Sergeant / Coordinator
 - Monitor progress, review evaluations, provide consistency and accountability
 - Address training problems and coordinate phase progression
- Program Leadership
 - Maintain standards, resources, documentation, and program integrity



Source: RPD Field Training Program Guide — RPDOnline.org

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Evaluation: Continuous, Documented, and Standardized

- Daily Observation Report (DOR)
 - Completed for each evaluated shift
 - Permanent record of progress, performance, training, and needed improvement
- Supervisor's Weekly Report
 - Provides higher-level review and a check-and-balance on progress
- End of Phase Report
 - Documents strengths, weaknesses, and recommendation to advance
- Common rating anchors
 - 1 / N-I — Unacceptable
 - 4 / C — Acceptable / competent standard
 - 7 / S — Superior
 - N.O. — Not observed
- Ratings must be supported by specific, behavior-based narrative documentation



Source: Phase Protocols for FTOs — RPDOnline.org

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When Performance Falls Below Standard

- Correct deficiencies as soon as practical
- Identify the specific performance problem
- Determine what training has already been attempted
- Develop a clear plan: expected outcome, conditions, timeframe, and resources
- Implement, evaluate, adjust, and document
- Remedial strategies should be creative, safe, professional, and purposeful
- NRT — “Not Responding to Training” is used only after reasonable remedial efforts fail
- Extensions may be considered when progress and a reasonable probability of success remain



Source: RPD Field Training Program Guide — Remedial Training RPDonline.org

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The Finish Line: Competent Solo Patrol Performance

- 1 Complete Phase V**
Trainee demonstrates the ability to lead normal patrol activity.
- 2 Ghost / Final Evaluation**
FTO observes with minimal intervention except for safety, legality, ethics, or serious risk.
- 3 Check-Out / Final Review**
Coordinator verifies the trainee benefited from training and possesses requisite knowledge and skills.
- 4 Competency Attestation**
Completion record documents readiness to perform the duties of a solo patrol officer.



Source: RPD Field Training Program Guide — Phase V: Check-Out Date, and Completion RPDonline.org

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What Success Looks Like

- The FTO Program is training first — but evaluation is continuous.
- Responsibility should increase as competence and confidence increase.
- FTOs teach the individual trainee, while holding everyone to the same performance standard.
- Documentation protects the trainee, the FTO, the program, and the Department.
- The ultimate question is simple: Can this officer safely, lawfully, professionally, and independently perform as a competent solo patrol officer?



Train with purpose. Evaluate with consistency. Document with clarity.

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FTO Program — 2026 at a Glance

37

Officers Trained YTD
33 Trainees + 4 Laterals

4

Trainee Resignations

12

Currently in Field Training

4

Trainees in the Academy

21

Active Patrol FTOs

11

Active Traffic FTOs



LOOKING AHEAD: Additional trainees and lateral officers are expected to enter the program.

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