General Order

Houston Police Department

ISSUE DATE:	NO.
May 7, 2025	200-13

REFERENCE: Supersedes all prior conflicting Circulars and Directives, and General Order 200-13, dated June 19, 2015

SUBJECT: POLYGRAPH EXAMINATIONS

POLICY

Employees shall follow the guidelines outlined in this General Order to ensure compliance with rules and regulations published by the American Polygraph Association or the American Association of Police Polygraphists.

When conducting polygraph examinations of classified employees, the department shall do so pursuant to the Meet and Confer Agreement and related case law.

Employees shall treat any information, reports, or statements given for a polygraph examination as strictly confidential and only the authorized requestor may release such information.

Unless otherwise approved by a Polygraph Unit supervisor, an employee shall only use the Polygraph Unit to conduct a polygraph examination.

Only the Chief of Police may approve an exception to this General Order or, in the Chief's absence, the highest-ranking supervisor available in the Polygraph Unit's chain of command (e.g., executive chief, executive assistant chief, assistant chief, captain, Polygraph Unit supervisor).

This General Order applies to all employees.

1 POLYGRAPH EXAMINATION GUIDELINES

Unless noted otherwise, Polygraph Unit employees shall ensure:

a. An authorized requestor makes a polygraph examination request to the department's Polygraph Unit.

b. The authorized requestor knows to inform the examinee to bring a valid photo identification.

c. An authorized requestor either (1) accompanies the examinee to the Polygraph Unit and remains available, if the Polygraph Unit determines the requestor's presence would be beneficial to the examination process, or (2) is readily available for the polygraph examiner to contact during the examination, if needed.

d. The authorized requestor furnishes the examiner with a copy of all pertinent information, incident reports, all statements, and any other information necessary to conduct a valid examination at least 48 hours prior to the scheduled polygraph examination date. Any employee wanting to deviate from the 48-hour window shall receive prior approval from a Polygraph Unit supervisor.

e. Polygraph examinations are not performed for law enforcement agencies that have access to a polygraph examiner within their own jurisdiction, except during unusual circumstances.

f. The Polygraph Unit takes examination requests in the following order of precedence:

1. A request from an HPD employee who is investigating a criminal case.

2. A request from the City of Houston Office of Inspector General (OIG).

3. A request from the City of Houston Legal Department for City personnel or for persons making allegations or complaints against City personnel.

4. All other requests.

2 REQUESTS FOR EXAMINATIONS

When receiving any of the following specific examination requests, the Polygraph Unit shall do the following, as applicable:

a. **City of Houston Legal Department:** The Polygraph Unit shall only accept examination requests from the City Legal Department when made by the City attorney or one of the assistants, or through the Inspector General.

b. **Other City of Houston Departments:** The Polygraph Unit shall only accept examination requests from other City departments when they make the request through the City Legal Department.

c. **Pre-employment Examinations:** The Polygraph Unit shall only accept pre-employment examination requests from Employee Services Division for civilian applicants and Recruiting Division for cadet applicants.

d. **District Attorney's Offices:** The Polygraph Unit shall only accept examination requests from a district attorney's office when a division chief or higher from that office makes the request. When the request concerns a charge filed by an HPD officer, regardless of county, or another officer in Harris County, the employee shall direct the district attorney's office to submit a request through the investigative division of that officer's agency.

J. Noe Diaz, Jr.
Chief of Police