

Michigan Association of Chiefs of Police  
MICHIGAN LAW ENFORCEMENT ACCREDITATION PROGRAM



# Onsite Final Report

**Ferndale Police Department**  
**July 21-22, 2020**

**Team Leader: Detective James Myers**

**Team Member: Gail Kicinski**

**A. Agency name, CEO and AM:**

Ferndale Police Department  
310 E. Nine Mile Road  
Ferndale, MI 48220

Chief Vincent Palazzolo

Sgt Baron Brown  
Accreditation Manager

**B. Dates of the On-Site Assessment:**

July 21-22, 2020

**C. Assessment Team:**

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**D. Community and Agency Profile:**

**1. Community Profile**

In the 1800s, farmers began cultivating the land now known as Ferndale, Michigan. After the invention of the automobile and the development of the automotive assembly line, the population of Ferndale increased rapidly. Ferndale was incorporated into a village in 1918 and then incorporated into a city on March 7, 1927, by vote of the citizens of the village.

Ferndale became a community for Detroit workers with most of its growth in housing from 1920 to 1951. Through the early 1950s, there were trolley (interurban railroad) lines in the median strip of Woodward Avenue from downtown Detroit to Pontiac. These helped the northern suburbs of Detroit grow as bedroom communities as people could take the trolley to shop or work in Detroit.

In the 1970s, the Ferndale suburban community emerged as a place for families to raise children during the "Baby Boom" era, with its elementary schools, a downtown, city parks, active churches and civic groups. Ferndale High was completed in 1958.

Ferndale's downtown shopping area, 9 Mile Road, featured many busy, popular stores in the 1940s to 1960s, but later went into decline, and many businesses closed.

In recent decades, the downtown area has revitalized. Ferndale's downtown is formed by two major thoroughfares, Nine Mile Road and Woodward Avenue. Circa 1997, the city made the downtown more pedestrian-friendly by narrowing West Nine Mile Road, the heart of the downtown, to one lane in each direction and adding on-street parking.

The result has been a return of pedestrian traffic and an influx of new stores and restaurants. The city has continued to make itself more accessible to people by reducing traffic lanes on Hilton Road and Pinecrest Road, two major local north/south streets, and adding bicycle lanes

As of the census of 2010, there were 19,900 people, 9,559 households, and 4,349 families living in the city. The population density was 5,128.9 inhabitants per square mile.

There were 10,477 housing units at an average density of 2,700.3 per square mile.

There were 9,559 households, of which 20.4% had children under the age of 18 living with them, 30.3% were married couples living together, 10.9% had a female householder with no husband present, 4.3% had a male householder with no wife present, and 54.5% were nonfamilies. 39.0% of all households were made up of individuals, and 6.8% had someone living alone who was 65 years of age or older. The average household size was 2.08 and the average family size was 2.85.

The median age in the city was 35.6 years. 16.5% of residents were under the age of 18; 8.3% were between the ages of 18 and 24; 41.2% were from 25 to 44; 25.2% were from 45 to 64; and 8.9% were 65 years of age or older. The gender makeup of the city was 49.9% male and 50.1% female.

The 1980s and 1990s saw the growth of the LGBT population in Ferndale, coinciding with a migration from neighborhoods in Detroit to the communities north along Woodward Avenue, including Royal Oak, Pleasant Ridge and others. In 1999, a proposed non-discrimination ordinance was introduced in Ferndale, but was defeated. The Motor City Pride Festival moved to Ferndale from Royal Oak in 2001. In 2006, the city passed an anti-discrimination ordinance protecting LGBT people from discrimination in public accommodations, housing, and business, with 70% in favor and 30% in opposition. Affirmations, a 17,000-square-foot LGBTQ community center in Downtown Ferndale, opened its new expanded building on Sunday, June 3, 2007, the same year the city elected the first openly gay mayor in

Michigan. In 2011, Motor City Pride moved to Detroit's Hart Plaza. Ferndale Pride was started that year.

## **2. Agency Profile**

The Ferndale Police Department was established on April 29, 1918. The original force consisted of one Marshall who patrolled the small rural village. In 1919, the department grew by three deputies as the Marshall needed additional manpower for the period of the Michigan State Fair that is located just south of Ferndale. Over the last 102 years, the department has grown to a force of 41 men and women, many of whom have strong ties to the community. The Police Department has been divided in two different locations over the years: a location at East Nine Mile and Woodward, as well as the current location at 310 East Nine Mile.

The Ferndale Police Department serves an area of 3.8 square miles with a population of approximately 20,000. It is at the cross roads of two of the busiest surface streets in the Detroit Metropolitan area: Eight Mile and Woodward Ave.

Driven by their organizational core values of Integrity, Service, Commitment, Courage, and Compassion, they strive to continually improve the ways we serve the community. The core value creation was a collaboration by every member of the department and these values serve as guiding principles for which all employees commit themselves in professional interactions with fellow employees, and with the citizens and visitors of Ferndale.

The Ferndale Police Department works to provide the best possible services to all members of the community in a consistent, fair manner. They are constantly building partnerships to reduce crime and the fear of crime, as well as improve the quality of life for all of their residents. They continue to engage with community partners in an intentional manner and cultivate meaningful relationships to accomplish their vital mission. At the core of their success is their staff, who proudly serve. It is the goal of the department to recruit and retain the best possible employees who respect the diversity of the community. They strive to provide staff with opportunities for meaningful work, challenging goals, and growth throughout their careers. Chief Palazzolo is honored and privileged to serve the men and women of the Ferndale Police Department and the community.

## **3. Future Issues**

The agency cited 2 issues or challenges facing the department now and in the near future:

- Chief Palazzolo stated one of his top concerns for the Ferndale Police Department is recruiting and retention of qualified candidates. With current and upcoming retirements, the agency will be faced with the challenge of maintaining current staffing levels and promoting command staff.

- Chief Palazzolo also explained that the perception of policing, in general, has cast police in a negative light and low morale of those in this profession is an issue.

#### **4. CEO Biography**

Vincent Palazzolo was named Ferndale's Chief of Police in April 2018, following a two-year tenure as the department's captain. He is a 24.5 year veteran of the force. Palazzolo is a 2017 graduate of the FBI National Academy Class #268, which selects law enforcement professionals with exemplary leadership qualities to improve and raise law enforcement standards in police departments and agencies worldwide. He also obtained a Bachelor's degree in Public Safety from Siena Heights University. Before joining the Ferndale Police Department in 1995, Palazzolo briefly served as an Officer for Huron Township after graduating from the police academy.

Chief Palazzolo served 11 years total in the U.S. military and deployed to Iraq with the Michigan Army National Guard as an Airborne Infantry soldier. Palazzolo served on the Oakland County Crime Suppression Task Force, as Team Commander of Southeast Oakland SWAT, and as Team Commander of the Oakland County Mobile Field Force. He has risen through the ranks of the Ferndale Police Department as Patrol Officer, Sergeant, Lieutenant, and Captain.

Chief Palazzolo is a member of the Michigan Association Chiefs of Police, the International Association Chiefs of Police, and Veteran of Foreign Wars. He is a strong advocate for veterans and is currently involved with reintegration programs through physical fitness and veteran suicide prevention.

Chief Palazzolo spearheaded the department's community engagement focus, including the addition of a community engagement officer position two years ago. He adheres to the six pillars of community policing set forth by the President's task force on 21st Century Policing. His vision for a modern police department is performance with the highest integrity, ensuring that officers and staff operate efficiently and make smart decisions, safely, ethically, and morally.

#### **E. Public Information Activities:**

Public notice and input are cornerstones of democracy and MLEAC accreditation. This section reports on the community's opportunity to comment on their law enforcement agency and to bring matters to the attention of the commission that otherwise may be overlooked.

##### **1. Telephone Contacts**

The public telephone line was active on Wednesday from 10 AM – 12 PM. The telephone line was tested and found to be functional. Seven calls were received.

Jackie Smith, business owner and chair of Ferndale DDA

Ms. Smith mentioned that she has had good interactions with the Ferndale Police Department with nothing negative to say. Not only has she had personal contacts with the PD, but has also witnessed their interactions with the community and is very impressed with them. Having the Ferndale Police Department receive accredited status makes her very proud. The department becomes more relevant every year and embraces accreditation with that attitude that it always strives for improvement. She is very impressed with the programs that the department has started within the community and she states one of the most touching things about the department is how personal and humane they are with the homeless population of the city.

Dale Vigliarolo, business owner

Mr. Vigliarolo has been a business owner in the City of Ferndale since the 1990s. He has had positive interactions with the Ferndale Police Department. He has a great amount of respect for the department and has watched the department grow over the years. Mr. Vigliarolo has been involved in the Citizens Police Academy and other programs that the department sponsors. He is amazed at the CPA and what he gained from it. He states that the department has a great motivation to become accredited and be the best that they can be. He feels there is a small fraction who do not support the police, however, a great majority do support the Ferndale Police Department and trust that they would do the right thing when it comes down to it. Mr. Vigliarolo believes the department's community involvement is excellent and they are very visible. He is proud the Ferndale Police Department is becoming accredited and proud they took the steps to always improve.

Heather Vanpoucker, Executive Director of Housing

Ms. VanPoucker stated she is the Executive Director of Public Housing in the City of Ferndale. She stated that she has always had a great relationship with the department and depends on them a lot. She feels the department is excellent in many areas already and accreditation will only improve on that. She said that tenants in her rental facilities are about 90% disabled or elderly, which causes a lot of calls. Ms. VanPoucker said that the department handles the calls with compassion and empathy and never makes the residents feel that they are a burden. They are dignified in their interactions with the citizens and are never too busy for any call.

Dania Bazzi, Superintendent of Ferndale Public Schools

Ms. Bazzi states that she has an excellent relationship with the Ferndale Police Department and they have many interactions between the schools and the police. She said they have a School Resource Officer and the school's relationship with her is very strong. The Police Department is very attentive to the community. The

department provides free training to the schools and has an open line of communication. Recently with the COVID-19 pandemic, Ms. Bazzi mentioned that the department has been extremely helpful and supportive of the school and families of the students. The Police Department offers an open line of communication to the city. She is very happy that the department is getting accredited and will be improving procedures and striving to do better.

Justin Lyons, City Planning Manager

Mr. Lyons works with the Ferndale Police Department in many areas but especially in planning projects and new development. Mr. Lyons depends on the department's feedback when it comes to plans. His interactions with the department have been positive and they have a good working relationship. He feels they are face to face with the community and very open minded. The department is visible in the community, has the community's trust, and they are approachable and accessible with great programs. He feels that accreditation is a positive and in line with what the community demands of its department.

Rachel Bair, Ferndale resident

Ms. Bair was a member of the Citizens Police Academy. She feels the department is involved in the schools, is very visible and is approachable. She complimented the programs called the "Chief's Roundtable." She feels accreditation is a very positive thing.

Chris Best, business owner

Mr. Best mentioned that he is a business owner in Ferndale and has been for about 10 years. He has a good relationship with the Ferndale Police Department and has had positive interactions. The department is very visible in the community and has great accessibility. Mr. Best knew the Chief before he was Chief. Mr. Best feels the Chief has always been compassionate and kind. The culture of the Police Department has improved over the years. He feels accreditation only adds value and validity to the department.

## **2. Correspondence**

The assessors received one correspondence regarding the reaccreditation process.

*From: Matt Wixson <mattywixson@gmail.com>*

*Date: Wednesday, July 15, 2020 at 6:36 PM*

*To: "FPDfeedback@ferndalepolice.org" <FPDfeedback@ferndalepolice.org>*

*Cc: Neal Rossow <nrossow@michiganpolicechiefs.org>*

*Subject: Ferndale PD Feedback*

*Hello,*

*It was only a couple years ago that an off-duty Roseville officer was pulled over in Ferndale while driving drunk on the wrong side of Woodward. The officer was given a complimentary ride home and was not charged. For this reason, I have no faith that the Ferndale Police Department has the community's best interests in mind.*

*We're living in a moment in the country where dirty cops are getting away with dirty deeds because the rest of the department has their back. In my opinion, FPD has shown to embody this exact same problem with policing.*

*Matt Wixson  
Ferndale, MI*

### **3. Media Interest**

There were no inquiries from the media to assessors regarding the on-site.

### **4. Community Outreach Contacts**

Joe Gacioch, City Manager

Mr. Gacioch met with assessors to discuss the Ferndale Police Department. Mr. Gacioch has a good relationship with the department and works well with them. He feels that the police are evolving from antiquated technology and a culture built on history. Chief Palazzolo has brought the department to 21st Century Policing and COP values. He feels that there is a communication problem between police and the community only because there is a language barrier. He feels both sides are speaking the same language, but in different terms. Mr. Gacioch also feels the department is very young which can be an issue. He wants to somehow bridge the gap between the rest of the city and the Police Department, along with the community. He hopes to introduce training that will help that issue. He feels City Council is moving in the right direction of their demands and that the Police Department is doing well answering their needs.

### **5. Community Involvement**

Jillian Mahlmeister, Community Engagement Officer

Officer Mahlmeister heads several programs for the department, as well as, interacts with the community on almost a constant basis. Some of the programs she talked about include:

- Citizens Police Academy: The Citizens Police Academy is a four-week program, three hours per session. This is usually held in October with a class size of approximately 20 people.

- Chief's Roundtable: The Chief started a program called Chief's Roundtable, which has been very successful, in which people from the community meet with members of the department to discuss current events. Dialogue is good and usually centers around hot topics which helps with communication between the community and the department.
- Curbside Roundtable: This is another program started by the department that consists of meetings out in the neighborhoods where citizens can meet with the Police Department, however, these meetings are hosted out in the community instead of at the Police Department. This has also been very successful. Due to COVID, they have not been able to have these meetings in several months but they are still receiving questions and having conversations through Zoom.
- Ferndale Inclusion Network: This group is headed by Citizens for Fair Ferndale. This is a system to make everyone feel included and feel heard. Citizens meet with members of the department, have discussions and take information back to the community. This consists of different topics such as police practices and other trainings that are mainly informational sessions.
- Narcan Program: All police are trained with Narcan and all carry it. They respond to every overdose call. The Narcan supply is provided by the Oakland Health Network.
- Hope Not Handcuffs: The Hope Not Handcuffs program was started this year and has been very successful. The department has had a lot of participation in this program since it began.
- Business Outreach Program: This program consists of the DDA and businesses in the city, along with the Police Department. The department provides training to the local businesses and teaches topics ranging from crime prevention to active shooter plans.
- ALPACT: ALPACT stands for Advocates and Leaders for Police and Community Trust. The program is part of the Michigan Roundtable group and has been operating for 22 years. The program brings together leadership from the community, along with local, state and federal government. In essence, the group brings people together that normally would not be in the same circles, therefore, building communication. Their most recent topics were building relationships between all of them.
- Religious Leaders: Chief Palazzolo meets with religious leaders from the community on a regular basis. They hold faith based meetings which leads to great resources and support from the local clergy during negative incidents.

## **6. Tour of the City/Ride Along**

Assessor Myers conducted a ride along on July 21, 2020, with Officer Alison Shank. Officer Shank is the School Resource Officer at Ferndale High School.

Officer Shank drove the city boundaries at my request and discussed crime patterns and traffic issues that were prevalent to the city. Readily apparent was that the city is very bicycle friendly. Officer Shank said there is a good amount of bicycle traffic and the city has done many things to accommodate it. For instance, the bicycle lane is nearest the curb and vehicles that must park on the street do so between the bike lane and traffic lane in designated spaces. There were also newly installed rental bicycles positioned around the city in secure racks. The city also installed barriers on each side of a city street near a park to narrow the roadway so vehicles must slow down as only one can pass through the narrowing at a time.

Officer Shank was very pleasant and a great ambassador for Ferndale Police Department. In addition to her being a SRO for the past three years, Officer Shank also trains all the area school employees in ALICE. Officer Shank is passionate about protecting the students and wants to make sure all the schools receive the training, as well as, area law enforcement. Officer Shank was previously awarded Support Person of the Year by the Ferndale Middle School. She was very positive about and dedicated to her agency. She discussed the great relationship Ferndale has with mutual aid, including Royal Oak and Royal Oak Township. In fact, we were tasked with delivering water to Fire Department personnel who were working a fire in Royal Oak Township.

Another interesting fact about Ferndale is it is a “silent town.” Officer Shank explained this is because the trains are prohibited from sounding their horn at intersections while traveling through the city. The city installed concrete barriers at the railroad crossings to prevent vehicles from going around the railroad crossing arms.

**F. Essential Services:**

**Chapter 1 – The Administrative Function**

Direction of Personnel

All policies, procedures, rules and regulations are issued by the Chief of Police. Any revisions or new drafts to the policies, procedures, rules and regulations must also be approved by the Chief of Police prior to being disseminated. Any command officer may issue an administrative memorandum to those persons under their command. The department uses PowerDMS in order to ensure receipt of new and amended policies.

Fiscal Control

The agency has a cash register that is controlled by Records personnel. Each instance cash funds are received by Records personnel, the transaction is entered into the cash register and onto a ledger at the Records service window. The account is balanced daily by the Records staff and verified by a Sergeant. A

weekly deposit is made by the Finance Director. Each workday begins with an empty register. The petty cash is also the responsibility of Records personnel and is kept in a locked safe. When expenditures are made and reimbursed, they must be done so with an accompanying receipt verifying this reimbursement or purchase. Per City policy, there is a limit of \$100 petty cash disbursement per request. The department chooses to do a weekly audit, which is verified by Records personnel, a Sergeant and the Finance Director.

### Internal Affairs

All criminal complaints are evaluated by the Captain and the Chief of Police. Non-criminal complaints are investigated by the employee's immediate supervisor. The agency accepts and investigates all complaints received to include anonymous complaints. A specific process is followed for the complaint process. The Chief of Police reviews all personnel complaints and responds to both the employee and his/her supervisor, as well as, to the person making the complaint. Access to complaint investigations is limited to command officers only to a degree limited to the information immediately necessary to the immediate investigation.

During the accreditation period, there were six internal affairs complaints. All of the investigations resulted in "sustained" allegations of administrative rules. Discipline ranged from remedial training to an 84-hour suspension. There were also four citizen complaints, three of which were unfounded at the shift level through video review and the other being referred of to internal investigation, which is captured in the total number of internal affairs complaints.

### Disciplinary Procedures

The agency has a well-defined written directive in regards to methods of discipline. The agency employs Guardian Tracking as an early warning and tracking mechanism for the collection of activities related to citizen complaints, use of force, emergency vehicle operations etc.

The agency is well-disciplined and has procedures to apply training, counseling (verbal and/or written), as well as, coaching. To that, employees are entitled, through the terms and conditions of the collective bargaining agreement, to appeal/file a grievance through an established system. During the assessment period there were no grievances filed.

### Organization

All sworn personnel take an oath of office during a swearing in procedure. Additionally, all employees are provided with a code of ethics that they must abide by and are subsequently required to be trained in ethical behavior.

The police personnel have a structured unity of command being Chief, Captain. In the Chief's absence, the Captain or Lieutenant, at the discretion of the Chief, will

assume command. In situations involving personnel of different functions engaged in a single operation, direct command is followed. Personnel with the rank of Lieutenant or higher are on-call 24 hours a day. The agency has access to supervisory personnel on a 24-hour basis.

Bias based policing is prohibited by the agency. There is a clear definition of bias based profiling, including but not limited to, a selection of individuals based solely on a common trait such as, race, national origin, ethnic background, immigration status, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, marital status, economic status, individuals with disability, age, height and weight, or religion. Training is done every year minimally and was last completed in April 2020.

The agency also prohibits unlawful workplace harassment, including sexual harassment. The written directive outlines a proper reporting mechanism to the chain of command. The directives also include complaints in regards to the Chief, providing direction to take the complaint to the Director of Human Resources. There were no issues of workplace harassment during this accreditation period.

#### Agency Equipment and Property

Officers are responsible to maintain care of all equipment in their custody. The department issues body armor to all personnel. Officers assigned to both uniform and non-uniform positions are required to wear body armor while engaged in field activities. Any personnel involved in pre-planned, high-risk situations are required to wear protective body armor.

#### Public Information

The point of contact for media relations for all routine cases and investigations is designated by the Chief of Police. The department's PIO serves as a central source of information for release by the department and responds to requests for information by the news media and the community. At times, the PIO or Chief of Police may direct the media to other members of the department who will serve as media contacts. In the absence of the Public Information Officer, this duty will fall to the Detective Lieutenant, Captain and Chief. At the time of the on-site assessment, the Community Engagement Officer had this assignment.

#### Agency Records and Computers

The agency abides by the state retention and disposal requirement in accordance with the Michigan Statute and Records Management. The agency has a detailed Field Reporting System with the approval of all reports by supervision. The agency has procedures in place both electronically and by individual user passwords to protect its central records system. There is a system in place to identify when physical files are removed from their secured location. The agency utilizes CLEMIS records management system which also handles backup

responsibilities. All juvenile records are kept within the CLEMIS RMS and are all electronic.

Non-public personnel records are also kept secure within the CLEMIS system, which the agency utilizes for report taking and records management. Juvenile records are password protected and identified with red highlight. During the assessment period, there were no reported breaches of security.

### Agency Training

The agency training records are current and maintained in accordance with the applicable state retention schedules. Records of training files are maintained by the Training Coordinator. Training course content is outlined and lesson plans are utilized. In-house training is conducted by qualified personnel and the materials used are retained by the agency. Names of the attendees are recorded and also maintained. Field Training Officers serve at the discretion of the Chief of Police. The Chief of Police appoints the Field Training Commander to oversee the program.

Newly selected personnel are required to complete a training program that is requisite training needed to accomplish new assignments, responsibilities and tasks. All newly promoted personnel and specially assigned personnel are provided with training consistent with new responsibilities and tasks. This training is to be conducted within one year of assignment, to include accreditation manager training.

Annual training included: dispatcher training, firearms and firearms instructor, SRO, EMD, DT, Taser, rifle/pistol/less lethal, force on force/scenario U of F, ethics, bias influenced policing prohibited, hazmat, EMD, tactical team training, etc.

### Authorization and Use of Agency Weapons

The Chief of Police is the authorizing authority for all weapons and ammunition, including off-duty weapons. Weapons are inspected annually by the Range Master and there is a system in place to take weapons out-of-service and/or replace defective weapons. The Firearms Training Unit maintains records on each weapon approved by the agency for official use. All department weapons, when not in use, are stored in the department armory in unloaded condition. Along with annual sidearm recertification, the agency mandates annual training for department issued shotguns, patrol rifles and kinetic energy impact projectiles. The training includes review of the agency deadly force policies.

## **Chapter 2 – The Personnel Function**

### Personnel Benefits and responsibilities

The agency has a written directive outlining the employee assistance program. The employee may seek assistance or can be recommended to seek assistance by supervisory personnel. Any referrals to the E.A.P. will be kept confidential. The agency has a detailed written directive outlining the steps to be taken in the event of a line of duty death including incorporating a voluntary personal information packet to be referred to in the event of a line of duty death or serious injury. The packet is kept confidential in the captain's office.

Secondary employment, otherwise described as off duty employment is allowed at the approval of the Chief of Police. The approval is conditional and may be revoked by the Chief if it is determined the secondary employment may be detrimental to the agency or the member involved. Extra duty is prohibited by the agency.

The agency has a detailed written directive indicating the procedures for employees involved in crashes and subsequent responsibilities for the supervisor on duty. Following the administrative investigation and review, the Professional Standards Sergeant will make recommendations to the Captain to implement findings of the administrative review. Several forms and documents will be completed by the Professional Standards Sergeant.

The agency has a comprehensive exposure control and reporting policy to include appropriate follow up mechanisms for the exposed employee. Additionally, the written directive establishes a supervisory meaningful review of all employee injuries or exposures which culminates into recommendation for policy change, additional training and/or discipline to be completed by the Professional Standards Sergeant.

The department has a policy in place for evaluation for the need for relief from duty during critical incidents. Professional services are provided for employees dealing with stress.

### Performance Evaluations

The agency has established a system for a defined performance development and review system. They have also established a rating/scoring system. As of this time, the performance evaluations have not been completed. The department will have these completed by the end of 2020. Past practice was a monthly evaluation that was done in Guardian Tracking. The new procedures will compile the monthly evaluations into a yearly evaluation. The agency has established a standard rating scale of "does not meet expectations", "needs improvement", "meets expectations" and "surpasses expectations. There is a protocol in place to deal with early warning identifiers – to include referral to the employee assistance program. These early warning identifiers are tracked in Guardian Tracking which will notify them if too many instances of flagged behaviors occur.

It was discussed with the agency that there were no current performance evaluations in place except for the Captain and the Chief. The agency stated that all employees will have a completed performance evaluation by the end of 2020.

#### Promotion of Sworn Personnel

The agencies promotional system is regulated by current contractual language. To meet eligibility requirements for Lieutenant position, an employee must have served as a sergeant for at least six months and have been confirmed in that position. For the Sergeant position, an employee must be off probation on the date of testing. The testing process consists of a written test, oral interview and consideration for seniority and education. The agency uses a Civil Service Board to examine the conduct of the promotional process. The agency uses an assessment center for the promotional process

#### Recruitment of Sworn Personnel

The recruitment plan contains a clear statement that the agency is committed to equal opportunity. The written directive indicates all members of the agency are considered recruiters in their day to day contacts with the community and the role model that they present. The written directive reflects recruiting activities will continue throughout the year and that personnel specifically assigned to recruiting duties will receive training in regard to procedures, cultural diversity and applicable state and federal laws. The recruitment plan is reviewed on a triennial basis by the Chief of Police and the Captain.

#### Selection of Personnel

The agency has a complete written process for the selection of full time personnel, which includes written testing administered by the township Human Resources Department or by an approved third party (EMPCO). Candidates must score a passing percentage to move on in the hiring process. Remaining candidates will be subjected to an oral interview.

The remaining candidates may receive a conditional offer of employment from the Chief of Police upon completion of all phases of the selection process.

The final offer for employment is contingent on successfully completing a psychological examination, medical examination, drug testing, and a comprehensive background investigation, and MCOLES requirements. The background investigation consists of fingerprinting, a driver's license check and personal reference contacts at a minimum.

#### Reserve Officers and Civilian Volunteers

The agency appoints auxiliary officers. The agency provides for a defined selection criteria and conducts background checks on all candidates. If selected,

candidates must successfully complete a training program after successful completion of a reserve officer training academy. Reserve officers are unpaid and at will volunteers who serve in a civilian capacity. They are required to take an oath of office set forth by the City Clerk.

Auxiliary officers must qualify annually using the MCOLES police officer pistol qualification course of fire. They are only allowed to use deadly force when confronted with a situation that clearly presents an imminent threat to their life or the life of another. They are not responsible for the prevention and detection of crime or the enforcement of any criminal laws and they have no police powers. The auxiliary officer is assigned duties such as traffic and crowd control at parades, festivals and school events, traffic and crowd control at critical incidents or natural disasters, vacation house checks, and ride-alongs with regular officers.

### **Chapter 3 – The Operations Function**

#### **Arrest, Search and Seizure**

The Ferndale Police Department is a full-service agency with arrest powers. The agency and its policies follow the U.S. Constitution in relation to arrest, search and seizure. The agency outlines warrantless search exemptions. The agency written directive clearly defines exigent circumstances, as well as, plain feel, view and smell warrantless searches.

In regard to search warrants, the agency's written directive details how employees prepare a search warrant affidavit, however, a portion was missing to include providing a copy to the court and after-hours protocol for obtaining a search warrant. The change was made in the policy during the on-site to correct the deficiency.

The agency addresses providing alternate care for dependents of arrestee's and directs employees to remove the dependents from the scene where warranted or if care cannot be located. Strip searches must be conducted at the approval of the officer in charge and may be done so when there is reasonable cause to believe a prisoner is concealing a weapon or contraband. The policy outlines the procedures of conducting a strip search which include in-private, of a person of the same sex, and a detailed incident report regarding the incident to include the name of the person being searched, name and sex of officer searching, name of assisting officer, date, time and location of the search, as well as, the justification for the search. The agency written directive is clear that body cavity searches will not be conducted without a valid search warrant.

The agency written directive gives specific instruction on booking procedures including mandatory fingerprinting and photographing requirements for all persons being booked into the jail on a new arrest or on an original warrant with exceptions noted. The agency written directive details proper protocol for face to face 30-minute minimum checks in regards to in-custody prisoners.

### Interview and Interrogation

The agency has established procedures for compliance with contemporary criminal procedural requirements related to interviews. The agency has an "interrogation" room in the secure lock-up area which contains a bathroom and location for comfort breaks. The "interview" room is located in the secure administrative area of the agency. Both rooms are equipped with video and audio capabilities which are activated by movement or sound and can be monitored by additional personnel when in use.

Officers are directed to verbally and physically summon assistance if so needed (with the assistance of their prep radio). The written directive clearly defines that weapons are not permissible in the interrogation room. There is also an interview room in a less secured area of the department, capable of conducting victim/witness interviews. It is the sole discretion of the officer to maintain his/her weapon in the interview room. The agency provides for gun lock boxes outside of both rooms.

The agency was lacking criteria for electronic recording of interviews or interrogations related to specific felonies. The agency now requires that all custodial interrogations of suspects accused of 3<sup>rd</sup> degree CSC or a felony punishable with a maximum penalty of 20 or more years, be videotaped.

### Use of Force

The agency provides a clear definition of force, including deadly force, last resort and reasonableness. Agency employees are equipped and trained with multiple weapons platforms that are at their disposal including firearms, Tasers, pepper spray and less lethal munitions. The written directive clearly outlines considerations for employing use of force. The agency has a system in place for all use of force incidents to be reviewed by a supervisor. An annual review and analysis occurs by the use of force officer which is a Sergeant or Lieutenant appointed by the Chief of Police. All reported use of force incidents were reviewed to identify needed changes to training, policy or equipment.

The agency's written directive clearly mandates in any instance where use of force results in a death or serious physical injury, the involved employee shall be removed from the line of duty and placed on administrative leave during the review process.

### Communications

The agency currently has its own dispatch center with six employees that report to the shift Patrol Lieutenant. Dispatch monitors video throughout the building. If backup is needed, calls are transferred to Hazel Park PSAP.

The agency's dispatch center handles dispatching and call taking responsibilities for fire and emergency medical service requests from persons in the City of Pleasant Ridge.

The agency's dispatch center handles dispatching and call taking responsibilities for fire service requests from persons in the Charter Township of Royal Oak.

All recordings are kept in storage for a minimum of 31 days, unless requested by the department for longer retention.

The Communications Center has a backup generator onsite which is auto-checked weekly and is load checked annually.

The written directive identified procedures for FOIA requests and securing recordings in criminal matters.

### Field Activities

Ferndale Police Department has 2 response modes:

- Priority Calls for Service – When responding to priority calls for service, officers will activate emergency equipment when exceeding the speed limit, disregarding traffic control devices, or otherwise driving in an emergency manner.
- Non-Priority Calls for Service – Officers responding to non-priority calls for service will drive safely and serve as an example of lawful driving to the public. Officers will not drive recklessly, exceed the speed limit, disregard traffic control devices, or otherwise violate the motor vehicle code.

Pursuits are allowed when the justification outweighs the level of danger to the public. The agency had nine pursuits in 2019. Official pursuit reporting and meaningful review became required by policy in August 2019. The tactics of intentional collisions, forcing vehicles off the roadway, or blocking of the roadway with any vehicle, barrier, or object could be considered potentially fatal force and shall not be used, except in limited circumstances, and must be authorized by the shift supervisor. PIT and tire deflation devices are not authorized.

Mental health training was conducted for the agency on June 1, 2020.

The agency has in-car and body-worn camera recording capability. The written directive indicated when the employee was to activate the camera.

The agency has MDC's in each patrol car and applicable policies in place.

The agency has an applicable foot pursuit policy in place. The policy indicated that the officer could reinstate a previously terminated foot pursuits when the officer

becomes aware of new information, that makes relevant the circumstances that initiated the pursuit originally. The policy further indicated that an officer should terminate a pursuit if the danger outweighs the necessity for immediate apprehension. Policy requires a review of each pursuit and an annual review of all pursuits. Ferndale Police Department had four foot pursuits since the policy was incorporated August 2019.

The agency's policy on seatbelt and child safety restraint usage complies with state law. The policy also states if no child safety restraining device is available, the department vehicle operator should notify Dispatch and request Ferndale Fire Rescue to send an ambulance equipped with an appropriate child safety restraining device.

Ferndale Police Department does not maintain a police canine program, nor is there any plan to engage in such a program in the future.

#### Traffic Safety and Enforcement

The agency has applicable policies in place regarding traffic violation enforcement, offenders, and traffic direction and control. The directives addressed high-risk stops, however, lacked procedures to conduct unknown risk and high-risk motor vehicle stops. Enforcement options, include warnings, citations and arrest when appropriate, lacked criteria and procedures to ensure uniform action is taken. Each option was dictated by officer discretion. The agency now has policy in place that provides guidance to each officer based on the totality of the circumstances and outlines when enforcement should be taken.

#### Homeland Security/Critical Incidents

The agency has a critical incident system in place, which includes command, operations, planning, logistics, and fiscal responsibility. The agency lacked a way to ensure all components of ICS would be covered. The written directive is dated January 2020, and due to Covid-19, there have not been as many opportunities to utilize ICS. Normally, the Dream Cruise, Ferndale Pride, and DIY/Funky Ferndale would be special events that ICS could be implemented. The agency developed a form which will show compliance with these standards in the future.

### **CHAPTER 4 – The Investigative Function**

#### Criminal Investigation

The Ferndale Police Department operates a Detective Bureau, staffed by three detectives. Cases are reviewed and assigned by the Detective Bureau Commander. The detective position is a promotion within the agency. The primary responsibility of the detective bureau is conducting follow-up on unsolved incidents initiated by the agencies patrol officers.

The Detective Bureau Commander (Lieutenant) will be responsible for assigning reports to the Detective Bureau. All cases that are referred to the Detective Bureau for evaluation and assignment will be assessed by the Detective Lieutenant to maintain consistency in the solvability factors and assignment of cases for follow-up investigation. The agency has guidelines that are used for determining the solvability of cases and include the screening weights that will be used to determine which cases will be assigned for follow-up investigation by officers and detectives.

The agency specifies a double blind procedure for eyewitness identification, as well as, defining showup and live lineup procedures through policy. Corporal lineups take place at the Oakland County Jail.

### Crime Scene Processing

The agency operates and maintains their own Crime Scene Processing Unit, staffed by officers who are certified as evidence technicians. An evidence technician is generally on-duty, or accessible, based on a 24-hour on-call list. These technicians can operate independently or as a team based on the size of the incident. The department has nine evidence technicians and two supervisors.

### Storage of Evidence and Property

The agency controls property through a records management system called CLEAR. A Lieutenant is in charge of the property room.

A visual inspection found the property room and processing area was generally neat and organized. There are two way lockers for passage of property from the officer to the property custodian. The processing area is stocked with an assortment of packaging materials. Personnel may submit properly packaged property/evidence to the Property Clerk(s) or deposit property/evidence into the evidence submission lockers located in the sally port. If it is a large item and unable to be submitted to the evidence submission lockers, the property or evidence may be stored at the city garage. Once property is placed in the locker, the officer pushes the button on the locker and the spring accentuated door shuts and locks, preventing someone else from using the same locker. The property custodian takes the property from the property room side of the lockers and processes. The property custodian resets the lock for the next use.

The property room is secured through electronic access, a dead bolt lock and a camera system. High value items are secured within a locked safe within the property room. Money is stored in the safe. Firearms are stored in lockers. The entry door is monitored by a camera. Garage 6A at the city yard is accessible only by the Ferndale Police Department and is used for large pieces of evidence. A supervisor needs to be called out with a key and evidence tape is placed on the doors to maintain the integrity of the evidence and chain of custody.

The property room is maintained by two Property Clerks. The Detective Lieutenant oversees the property room. All time sensitive inspections, audits and inventories were conducted. During an inventory of the property room in February 2020, as a result of a change in command, numerous items were discovered to be untagged. Corrective action was taken at that time and documented in a memo to the Detective Lieutenant.

The agency has appropriate policy in place for converting property to department use. No property was converted during the accreditation period.

Appropriate policy is in place for the possession, transfer and destruction of property.

### Juvenile Matters

The Ferndale Police Department has the physical capabilities and procedures outlined to identify juvenile offenders and hold a juvenile offender for non-status offenses if necessary. The outlined policies ensure the protection of the juveniles Constitutional rights. Appropriate proofs were shown indicating standard compliance in regard to processing, parental notification, release, and reporting.

Per policy, juveniles can be held at Ferndale Police Department for up to six hours.

### Special Investigations and Operations

The agency has policy in place which dictates procedures for special investigations and operations. The agency has the ability to manage records of confidential informants and has appropriate policy and procedures to protect the informant's identity, mitigate risks, manage CI funds and complete de-confliction. The agency utilizes HIDTA for de-confliction. The agency had a non-occurrence in the file as they had no confidential informants this accreditation cycle.

The agency has established policy and procedures to address missing persons and unidentified persons investigations. There were no incidents requiring an amber alert activation during this assessment period. Policy exists to ensure compliance with the Michigan Safe Delivery of Newborns Law.

## **CHAPTER 5 – The Arrestee/Detainee/Prisoner Handling Function**

### Transporting of Arrestees/Detainees/Prisoners

The Ferndale Police Department has established policy and procedures in place to include searching vehicles and subjects prior to transport. Arrestees are also searched prior to transport. Subjects are handcuffed behind the back unless there is reasonable justification to handcuff in the front related to age, physical condition, injury or offense. Subjects are secured in caged vehicles and seat belts are

utilized in compliance with State law. Belly chains will be used as needed. If the situation arose where a child was needed to be transported, the Ferndale Police Department would contact the Ferndale Fire Department for transport of the child.

#### Processing of Arrestees/Detainees/Prisoners

The Ferndale Police Department maintains a processing area. Appropriate weapon control policies and procedures are in place. The processing area is monitored by dispatch. Arrestees are never left unattended in the booking area. Policy states that if a subject meets certain criteria, he or she may be temporarily handcuffed to the bench in the booking cell. An individual handcuffed to the bench in the booking cell must remain under constant one-to-one observation by a staff member.

This area is monitored by closed circuit cameras. During the on-site, three emergency alarms were identified and in working order. Policy and signage is in place regarding electronic equipment prohibited during breathalyzer. An appropriate escape policy is in place and the processing area is secured by two double locked doors.

#### Holding of Arrestees/Detainees/Prisoners

The agency maintains a secure holding facility with a processing area and holds prisoners on a short term basis. Cells 1 – 4 are general holding cells, cell 5 is a designated female cell, cell 6 is a designated secure holding area for juveniles arrested for felonies or who are a danger to themselves or others. The bullpen is a general holding cell for no more than four arrestees at a time. The booking cell is a temporary holding area reserved for arrestee processing. Policy is in place to assure all incoming arrestees are searched prior to lodging and upon movement in and out of the secure lockup area. Arrestees are directed to stand on a yellow rectangle in the booking area so the handling of the prisoner is carried out in view of the booking room camera to mitigate claims of loss or mishandling on the part of the booking personnel. A metal detector is also used as a final step to ensure that all metallic objects have been removed from the arrestee.

Appropriate training and evacuation policy and procedures are in place.

### **G. Applied Discretion Compliance Discussion**

This section provides specific information on those standards found to be in compliance after on-site adjustments were made. Adjustments may include modifying agency policies and directives, creating documentation, and alteration of the physical plant.

Standard 2.2.2 Annual Evaluations

ISSUE: Annual evaluations have not been conducted. Policy went into effect March 2020.

ACTION: The first annual evaluations will be conducted December 2020. The agency has been using Guardian Tracking since 2016, and providing monthly feedback to employees.

Standard 3.2.1f Interview and Interrogation

ISSUE: There was no requirement to record interrogations for specific felonies as required by law.

ACTION: The agency added policy language to conform to the standard.

Standard 3.6.1 Conducting Motor Vehicle Stops

ISSUE: The agency's written directive did not address unknown risk traffic stops.

ACTION: The agency added policy language to conform to the standard.

Standard 3.6.3 Enforcement Options

ISSUE: The written directive did not have criteria or procedures to ensure uniform action would be taken regarding warnings, citations, or arrests for traffic violations.

ACTION: The agency added policy language to conform to the standard.

Standard 3.7.2 – 3.7.6 Homeland Security/Critical Incidents

ISSUE: The agency had a written directive which addressed all sections of the Critical Incident Response Plan, but lacked a plan to account for all the functional areas or responsibilities. Also, since the inception of the policy in January 2020, there have been no opportunities to institute ICS as all of the special events which normally take place in the spring and summer were cancelled due to COVID-19.

ACTION: A "Special Operations Plan" was added to the policy to address this need.

**H. Standards Noncompliance Discussion:**

The agency had 0 standards in noncompliance.

The agency had 1 standard (3.5.9 Police Canines) which was N/A.

**I. Future Performance / Review Issues:**

The agency will need to conduct performance evaluations on all employees for 2020.

**J. Summary and Recommendation:**

A thorough review of the files for compliance was conducted, supported by observations and interviews. It was determined that the agency was in compliance with all of the established accreditation standards, with exceptions noted. Accreditation is recommended.

James Myers, Team Leader  
Date submitted: August 5, 2020

Reviewed and approved to be scheduled for a hearing before the MLEAC.



Neal Rossow, Program Director  
Date August 7, 2020