



# The Police Commission

## CITY AND COUNTY OF SAN FRANCISCO

November 6, 2025

Interim Chief Paul Yep  
Chief of Police

Dear Chief Yep:

At the meeting of the Police Commission on Wednesday, November 5, 2025, the following resolution was adopted:

**RESOLUTION 25-86**

**APPROVAL OF REVISED DEPARTMENT GENERAL ORDER 5.08, "PLAINCLOTHES, NON-UNIFORMED, AND UNDERCOVER OFFICERS," TO USE IN MEETING AND CONFERRING WITH THE EFFECTED BARGAINING UNITS AS REQUIRED BY LAW, WITH LABOR INSTRUCTIONS PROVIDED IN RESOLUTION NO. 23-30;**

RESOLVED, that the Police Commission hereby approves revised Department General Order 5.08, "Plainclothes, Non-Uniformed, and Undercover Officers," for the Department to use in meeting and conferring with the effected bargaining units as required by law; and be it

FURTHER RESOLVED, that labor instructions are provided in Resolution No. 23-30, Police Commission Directions Regarding Police Department and Department of Human Resources Labor Negotiations with Effected Bargaining Units regarding Department General Orders.

AYES: Commissioners Yee, Scott, Elias, Leung, Tekkey, Vice President Benedicto and President Clay

Very truly yours,

A blue ink signature of Sergeant Stacy Youngblood, written in a cursive style.

Sergeant Stacy Youngblood  
Secretary  
San Francisco Police Commission

1211/ks

cc: Manager A. Steeves/PDD, Gloria Rosalejos/WDU, Director L. Preston/Labor Relations, Senior Analyst L. Davis/Labor Relations

C. DON CLAY  
President

KEVIN BENEDICTO  
Vice President

CINDY ELIAS  
Commissioner

LARRY YEE  
Commissioner

W.S. WILSON LEUNG  
Commissioner

MATTIE SCOTT  
Commissioner

PRATIBHA TEKKEY  
Commissioner

Sergeant Stacy Youngblood  
Secretary

## **Plainclothes, Non-Uniformed, and Undercover Officers**

### **5.08.01 PURPOSE**

The purpose of this policy is to provide operational guidelines and tactical considerations for members who are not wearing a Department uniform (DGO 10.01, *Uniform and Equipment*). Members are reminded that there are unique advantages and risks associated with taking enforcement action while not in uniform.

### **5.08.02 DEFINITIONS**

- **Non-Uniformed Member** – A sworn member who is not wearing a SFPD uniform while on-duty. Non-uniformed members are typically investigators or perform administrative functions for the Department and do not actively participate in enforcement actions.
- **Plainclothes Member** – A sworn member who is assigned to participate in planned operations and enforcement in a non-uniformed capacity. These assignments have a reasonable expectation of conducting enforcement action.
- **Undercover Member** – A sworn member that needs to conceal themselves or change their identity to carry out their assignment. Sworn members working undercover are not planned participants in enforcement action.

### **5.08.03 POLICY**

Plainclothes, non-uniformed, and undercover members shall identify themselves as Police Officers when enforcement action is taken, be properly equipped, and ensure their actions align with all Department policies.

### **5.08.04 ENFORCEMENT PROCEDURES**

#### **A. Plainclothes and Non-Uniform Enforcement Operations**

1. When taking enforcement action, plainclothes members shall:
  - a. Verbally identify themselves as police officers.
  - b. Display their Department-issued star on their outermost garment.
  - c. Activate Body Worn Camera (BWC), unless granted an exemption based on the task/operation, **such as if** ~~or~~ activation could compromise the identity of confidential informants and undercover operatives. If BWCs are not activated, rationale must be documented.
    - i. For surveillance operations, plainclothes members must have their BWC accessible unless a supervisor reasonably determines otherwise.

2. Enforcement plans should pre-designate an arrest team with sworn members wearing uniforms or clearly identifiable law enforcement gear (e.g. jacket or vest carrier with POLICE lettering, etc.) with their department-issued star.
  - a. Plainclothes members may act as the arrest team for tactical/safety reasons or in exigent circumstances. Rationale must be documented.
    - i. Pre-planned actions shall be approved by the Lieutenant.
    - ii. Sergeants may approve the use of plainclothes members in the field for spontaneous events or exigent circumstances.
    - iii. If non-uniformed members make initial contact with a subject to be arrested, members wearing uniforms or clearly identifiable law enforcement gear shall immediately converge and support the non-uniformed members in arresting the subject(s).

#### **B. Undercover Enforcement Operations**

1. Undercover members are generally exempt from wearing BWC, however they should have their Department-approved firearm and appropriate police identification near their person, unless prior authorization has been granted by the member's Deputy Chief.

#### **C. Vehicle Stops**

1. Plainclothes, non-uniformed, and undercover members shall not initiate vehicle stops solely for infractions.
2. Plainclothes, non-uniformed, and undercover members may initiate vehicle stops in the following circumstances (if operating a vehicle equipped with a forward-facing red light and siren) when:
  - a. There is reasonable suspicion that an occupant has committed, is committing, or is about to commit a misdemeanor or felony.
  - b. There is probable cause to arrest an occupant for a misdemeanor or felony.
  - c. There is probable cause to believe that evidence of a misdemeanor or felony is in the vehicle or the vehicle itself is evidence.
  - d. An occupant or owner is on probation, parole, or supervised release with a warrantless search condition.
  - e. Immediate action is needed to protect life or property (e.g. driving under the influence).
3. When initiating vehicle stops, **plainclothes, non-uniform, and undercover** members shall **notify Dispatch and** request a marked backup unit as soon as practical.

### **5.08.05 CROWD CONTROL**

- A. Plainclothes, non-uniformed, and undercover members ~~should~~ **shall** not be used to make arrests in crowd control situations unless there is reasonable cause to believe there is a danger to life or the possibility of great bodily injury (DGO 8.03, *Crowd Control* and *SFPD Crowd Control Manual*).

### **5.08.06 EXPOSING FIREARMS**

- A. Plainclothes, non-uniformed, and undercover members shall not knowingly expose weapons in public unless they conspicuously display their Department-issued stars or other clearly identifiable law enforcement gear.
- B. Plainclothes, non-uniformed, and undercover members should advise Dispatch when deploying with a rifle/shotgun and wear clearly identifiable law enforcement gear, except if there is an imminent threat of death or serious bodily injury as defined in DGO 5.01.

### **5.08.07 COMPLYING WITH LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICERS**

- A. If confronted by a uniformed law enforcement officer, plainclothes, non-uniformed, and undercover members shall immediately identify themselves as a police officer, provide appropriate identification, and comply with all commands of the uniformed officer.

### **5.08.08 OUT-OF-COUNTY OPERATIONS**

- A. Outside jurisdictions shall be notified (local Watch Commander or Dispatch) when members arrive in an outside jurisdiction to conduct stationary/static surveillance or enforcement action.
- B. Members shall notify their direct supervisor any out-of-county surveillance or enforcement action.
- C. Members are encouraged to include local law enforcement in planned operations and to have communications with local law enforcement units operating in the area.

### **5.08.09 DUTIES OF SUPERVISORS**

- A. When practical, supervisors should notify the on-duty Platoon Commander(s) of affected district(s) in which plainclothes enforcement action is occurring.
- B. Supervisors should ensure that DEM is notified of enforcement actions.
- C. Supervisors shall ensure a written operation plan is prepared for any planned enforcement action and that all team members are briefed on the plan.
  - 1. If a verbal plan is developed which modifies the written operations plan, the name of the briefing supervisor shall be documented.

### **5.08.10 EXCEPTIONS**

- A. Deputy Chiefs may approve deviations from this policy for specific units, operations, or events. Approved deviations shall be documented.
- B. Members assigned to the Mayor's Detail/Dignitary Protection are exempt from this policy but shall be guided by their specific Unit Orders.

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**Plainclothes, Non-Uniformed, and Undercover Officers**

**5.08.01 PURPOSE**

~~This order establishes policies regarding the use of non-uniformed officers in traffic and crowd control situations, and the requirements for identification. The purpose of this policy is to provide operational guidelines and tactical considerations for members who are not wearing a Department Uniform (DGO 10.01, *Uniform and Equipment*). Members are reminded that there are unique advantages and risks associated with taking enforcement action while not in uniform.~~

**5.08.02 DEFINITIONS**

- **Non-Uniformed Member** – A sworn member who is not wearing a SFPD uniform while on-duty. Non-uniformed members are typically investigators or perform administrative functions for the Department and do not actively participate in enforcement actions.
- **Plainclothes Member** – A sworn member who is assigned to participate in planned operations and enforcement in a non-uniformed capacity. These assignments have a reasonable expectation of conducting enforcement action.
- **Undercover Member** – A sworn member that needs to conceal themselves or change their identity to carry out their assignment. Sworn members working undercover are not planned participants in enforcement action.

**I. 5.08.03 POLICY**

~~A. DEFINITION. A non-uniformed officer is any officer who is not wearing the prescribed S.F.P.D. uniform.~~

Plainclothes, non-uniformed, and undercover members shall identify themselves as Police Officers when enforcement action is taken, be properly equipped, and ensure their actions align with all Department policies.

~~B. ARRESTS/IDENTIFICATION. Before making an arrest, detaining a suspect, conducting a search, serving or executing a warrant, or issuing a citation, non-uniformed officers shall display their police star or other official identification. When requested, non-uniformed officers shall promptly and politely provide their name, star number and assignment.~~

## **5.08.04 ENFORCEMENT PROCEDURES**

### **A. Plainclothes and Non-Uniform Operations**

1. When taking enforcement action, plainclothes members shall:
  - a. Verbally identify themselves as police officers.
  - b. Display their Department-issued star on their outermost garment.
  - c. Activate their Body Worn Camera (BWC), unless granted an exemption based on the task/operation, such as if activation could compromise the identity of confidential informants and undercover operatives. If BWCs are not activated, rationale must be documented.
    - i. For surveillance operations, plainclothes members must have their BWC accessible unless a supervisor reasonably determines otherwise.
2. Enforcement plans should pre-designate an arrest team with sworn members wearing uniforms or clearly identifiable law enforcement gear (e.g. jacket or vest carrier with POLICE lettering, etc.) with their department-issued star.
  - a. Plainclothes members may act as the arrest team for tactical/safety reasons or in exigent circumstances. Rationale must be documented.
    - i. Pre-planned actions shall be approved by the Lieutenant.
    - ii. Sergeants may approve the use of plainclothes members in the field for spontaneous events or exigent circumstances.
    - iii. If non-uniformed members make initial contact with a subject to be arrested, members wearing uniforms or clearly identifiable law enforcement gear shall immediately converge and support the non-uniformed members in arresting the subject(s).

### **B. Undercover Enforcement Operations**

1. Undercover members are generally exempt from wearing BWC, however they should have their Department-approved firearm and appropriate police identification near their person, unless prior authorization has been granted by the member's Deputy Chief.

### **C. ~~TRAFFIC ENFORCEMENT (also see DGO 9.01, Traffic Enforcement).~~**

#### **~~1. TRAFFIC Vehicle Stops/CITATIONS.~~**

1. Plainclothes, non-uniformed, and undercover ~~officers~~ **members** shall not initiate ~~traffic vehicle~~ stops, ~~issue traffic citations or make minor traffic arrests except:~~ **solely for** infractions.

2. Plainclothes, non-uniformed, and undercover members may initiate vehicle stops in the following circumstances (if operating a vehicle equipped with a forward-facing red light and siren) when:

- a. ~~When the activity~~ There is reasonable suspicion that an occupant has committed, is committing, or is about to commit a misdemeanor or felony ~~related to an ongoing criminal investigation or regulated vehicle enforcement, e.g. taxi cabs, shuttle buses, limousines.~~
- b. There is probable cause to arrest an occupant of the vehicle for a misdemeanor or felony.
- c. There is probable cause to believe that evidence of a misdemeanor or felony is in the vehicle or the vehicle itself is evidence.
- d. An occupant or owner is on probation, parole, or other supervised released with a warrantless search condition.
- ~~be. When witnessing an aggravated situation requiring immediate action is needed to protect life or property; (e.g., drunk driving~~ **under the influence).**

~~23. BACKUP UNIT. When initiating making a traffic vehicle stops, under the circumstances described above (except for regulated vehicle enforcement) non-uniformed officers plainclothes, non-uniformed, and undercover members shall immediately notify Dispatch and request a marked backup unit as soon as practical.~~

#### ~~D.~~ **5.08.05 CROWD CONTROL.**

- A.** Plainclothes, non-uniformed, and undercover officers members shall not be used to make arrests in crowd control situations unless there is reasonable cause to believe there is a danger to life or the possibility of great bodily injury (~~See DGO 8.038.10, Crowd Control Guidelines for First Amendment Activities and SFPD Crown Control Manual~~).

#### **5.08.06 EXPOSING FIREARMS**

**A.** Plainclothes, non-uniformed, and undercover members shall not knowingly expose weapons in public unless they conspicuously display their Department-issued stars or other clearly identifiable law enforcement gear.

**B.** Plainclothes, non-uniformed, and undercover members should advise Dispatch when deploying with a rifle/shotgun and wear clearly identifiable law enforcement gear, except if there is an imminent threat of death or serious bodily injury as defined in DGO 5.01.

#### **5.08.07 COMPLYING WITH LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICERS**

A. If confronted by a uniformed law enforcement officer, plainclothes, non-uniformed, and undercover members shall immediately identify themselves as a police officer, provide appropriate identification, and comply with all commands of the uniformed officer.

### **5.08.08 OUT-OF-COUNTY OPERATIONS**

- A. Outside jurisdictions shall be notified (local Watch Commander or Dispatch) when members arrive in an outside jurisdiction to conduct stationary/static surveillance or enforcement action.
- B. Members shall notify their direct supervisor of any out-of-county surveillance or enforcement action.
- C. Members are encouraged to include local law enforcement in planned operations and to have communications with local law enforcement units operating in the area.

### **5.08.09 DUTIES OF SUPERVISORS**

- A. When practical, supervisors should notify the on-duty Platoon Commander(s) of affected district(s) in which plainclothes enforcement action is occurring.
- B. Supervisors should ensure that DEM is notified of enforcement actions.
- C. Supervisors shall ensure a written operation plan is prepared for any planned enforcement action and that all team members are briefed on the plan.
  - 1. If a verbal plan is developed which modified the operations plan, the name of the briefing supervisor shall be documented in the incident report.

### **5.08.10 EXCEPTIONS**

- A. Deputy Chiefs may approve deviations from this policy for specific units, operations, or events. Approved deviations shall be documented.
- B. Members assigned to the Mayor's Detail/Dignitary Protection are exempt from this policy but shall be guided by their specific Unit Orders.





# The Police Commission

## CITY AND COUNTY OF SAN FRANCISCO

April 10, 2023

Chief William Scott  
Chief of Police

Dear Chief Scott:

At the meeting of the Police Commission on Wednesday, April 5, 2023, the following resolution was adopted:

**RESOLUTION 23-30:**

**APPROVAL OF POLICE COMMISSION DIRECTIONS REGARDING POLICE DEPARTMENT AND DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN RESOURCES LABOR NEGOTIATIONS WITH AFFECTED BARGAINING UNITS;**

CINDY ELIAS  
President

MAX CARTER-OBERSTONE  
Vice President

LARRY YEE  
Commissioner

JAMES BYRNE  
Commissioner

JESUS YANEZ  
Commissioner

KEVIN BENEDICTO  
Commissioner

DEBRA WALKER  
Commissioner

Sergeant Stacy Youngblood  
Secretary

WHEREAS, The Police Commission remains committed to its duty of effective oversight and policymaking for the San Francisco Police Department; and

WHEREAS, The Police Commission respects the importance of labor relations and the rights of public sector employees, including peace officers, under the Meyers Milius Brown Act; and

WHEREAS, In 2016, the U.S. Department of Justice's "Assessment of the San Francisco Police Department" identified delays in policy enactment "because of collective bargaining practices," and recommended that the Police Department and the Police Commission "expedite the process in the future for other policy development;" now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, When bargaining with affected bargaining units regarding Department General Orders or other policies passed by the Police Commission that require effects bargaining under law, the Police Commission hereby direct the Police Department and urge the San Francisco Department of Human Resources to meet and confer only to those negotiable effects required by law; and

RESOLVED, When bargaining with affected bargaining units regarding Department General Orders or other policies passed by the Police Commission that involve mandatory subjects of bargaining under law, the Police Commission hereby direct the Police Department and urge the San Francisco Department of Human Resources to meet and confer only to the extent required by law; and

FURTHER RESOLVED, When bargaining with affected bargaining units regarding Department General Orders or other policies passed by the Police Commission, the Police Commission hereby direct the Police Department and urge the San Francisco Department of Human Resources to not meet and confer on managerial decisions that are not within the scope of representation, and where there is no legal duty to meet and confer; and

FURTHER RESOLVED, When bargaining with affected bargaining units regarding Department General Orders or other policies passed by the Police Commission, the Police Commission hereby directs the Police Department and urges the San Francisco Department of Human Resources to ensure there are no unreasonable delays on any items within the scope of representation and consistent with the City's legal obligations.



# The Police Commission

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## CITY AND COUNTY OF SAN FRANCISCO

AYES: Commissioner Walker, Byrne, Yanez, Benedicto, Yee, Vice President  
Carter-Oberstone and President Elias.

Very truly yours,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, likely belonging to Sergeant Stacy Youngblood, is positioned above the typed name.

Sergeant Stacy Youngblood  
Secretary  
San Francisco Police Commission

CINDY ELIAS  
President

MAX CARTER-OBERSTONE  
Vice President

LARRY YEE  
Commissioner

JAMES BYRNE  
Commissioner

JESUS YANEZ  
Commissioner

KEVIN BENEDICTO  
Commissioner

DEBRA WALKER  
Commissioner

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Sergeant Stacy Youngblood  
Secretary

1211/ks

cc: Deputy City Attorney Cabrera  
Director L. Preston/SFPD Labor Relations  
Captain D. Toomer/PSPP  
Lieutenant E. Altorfer/PSPP  
Isabelle Choy/SFPD Labor Relations