



Police Commissioner's Special Order

Number:	SO 26-13
Date:	3/30/26
Post/Mention:	Indefinite

SUBJECT: RULE 103 POLICE OFFICER -- REVISED

Effective immediately, Rule 103, Police Officer, is hereby revised and reissued superseding all previous rules, special orders, memos and directives on this subject.

Rule 103 is being revised to codify current practices and to address relevant standards of the Commission on Accreditation for Law Enforcement Agencies (CALEA).

Specifically, the following sections have been revised:

- Introduction
- Sec. 1 General Considerations – first paragraph is new
- Sec. 9
- Sec. 10
- Sec. 12
- Sec. 15
- Sec. 16
- Sec. 17
- Sec. 18
- Sec. 20
- Sec. 21
- Previous Sections 22 and 23 deleted
- Sec. 22, and started renumbering for the rest of the rule
- Sec. 23
- Sec. 24
- Sec. 25
- Sec. 26
- Sec. 27
- Sec. 28
- Sec. 31 – New
- Sec. 32 – New
- Pronouns updated

Michael A. Cox
Police Commissioner

Rule 103, Police Officer

This rule is issued to establish the responsibilities and duties of the rank of Patrol Officer.

Sec. 1 GENERAL CONSIDERATIONS: All sworn officers of the Boston Police Department derive their legally mandated authority and responsibilities from M.G.L c. 41, § 98. Prior to assuming sworn status, all sworn personnel shall take and subsequently abide by an oath of office to support and defend the Constitution of the United States of America and the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, to obey all department rules and regulations, and to faithfully and impartially discharge and perform all duties incumbent upon them as a police officer with the Boston Police Department.

A patrol officer, in carrying out the functions of the department, including but not limited to, the preservation of the public peace, the protection of life and property, the prevention of crime, the arrest and prosecution of violators of the law, the proper enforcement of all laws and ordinances and the effective delivery of police services shall constantly direct their best efforts to accomplish that end intelligently and efficiently and shall hold themselves in readiness at all times to answer calls and obey the orders of their superiors. Patrol officers shall be held to a strict accountability for the good order of the sector, beat or post to which they have been assigned to duty.

PATROL OFFICERS:

Sec. 2 Shall not carry any unauthorized equipment on their person, while on duty, nor place any unauthorized equipment into a department vehicle or place it on a department animal.

Sec. 3 Shall report for duty at the time and place specified by their Superior Officer or Supervisor and shall be physically and mentally fit to perform their duty. Patrol officers shall be properly uniformed and equipped and cognizant of the information required for proper performance of their duty so that they may immediately assume their assignment.

Sec. 4 Shall acquaint themselves with all matters occurring since their last tour of duty which affect their responsibilities and shall be held accountable for compliance with all orders, rules, bulletins and circulars.

Sec. 5 Are encouraged to keep a private record of their work, noting all matters of importance in which they are engaged in their official capacity.

Sec. 6 Shall proceed to their assignment after roll call and notify the Operations Division accordingly.

Sec. 7 Equipped with radio communications, patrol officers shall keep the receiver in operation at all times. When their unit is called by the Operations Division they shall immediately respond and acknowledge receipt of any communications dispatched to them even if on a previous assignment. If sent on an assignment, patrol officers will notify the Operations Division of their arrival at the scene and make a further notification when they have completed that assignment, furnishing the appropriate disposition which will indicate their availability for further duty. If required, patrol officers will obtain an incident number from the Operations Division and prepare and submit the properly completed Incident Report. Before being relieved of duty, a patrol officer will notify the Operations Division of that fact and all communications between a patrol officer and the Operations Division shall be in accordance with current communications procedures.

Sec. 8 Shall confine their patrol within the limits of their assigned sector or area except in case of emergency when they shall immediately notify the Operations Division by radio. A patrol officer will not otherwise leave their assigned area until properly relieved unless they are dispatched elsewhere by the Operations Division or a Superior Officer.

Sec. 9 Patrol officers who leave their assigned area for a police purpose by going elsewhere shall immediately report to the Operations Division the location and circumstances of the incident. A patrol officer who considers it necessary to leave their assigned area for any purpose other than police work shall first seek the permission of the Operations Division giving their reason and location. When permission is given, they shall report at once on their return and should they fail to report within a reasonable time the Operations Division shall notify the patrol supervisor so that they may ascertain the whereabouts of the absent officer. A patrol officer absent from their assigned area for a proper purpose, in accordance with the provisions of this rule, shall not be subject to disciplinary action.

Sec. 10 Shall maintain an active patrol presence within their assigned area, leaving the patrol sector only when necessary for the proper performance of their duty. Patrol officers are expected to remain alert, attentive, and professional at all times, and shall avoid conduct that diminishes readiness or public confidence.

Sec. 11 Shall furnish information and render aid to all persons as may be consistent with their duties and responsibilities.

Sec. 12 Shall, when requested, direct members of the public to the nearest and safest route to their destination. If the destination is within the officer's assigned area, they may accompany the individual as appropriate. If the destination is outside the assigned area and circumstances warrant, the officer shall contact the Operations Division and follow the instructions provided.

Sec. 13 Hearing a call for assistance, patrol officers shall immediately notify the Operations Division and then proceed to render aid. When a disturbance or other type of problem occurs, they shall instantly proceed to the location and use their best efforts to restore order, taking the

police action that is deemed necessary and proper. Patrol officers will be responsible for notifying the Operations Division of the action taken.

Sec. 14 Shall aid and assist fellow officers performing traffic duty in any emergency or when directed by the Operations Division or a Superior Officer. When any public way becomes blocked by vehicles patrol officers shall use their best efforts to restore the normal flow of traffic, paying particular attention to pedestrians.

Sec. 15 Patrol officers may briefly detain and inquire of an individual only when they have reasonable suspicion that the person is engaged in criminal activity. Any such detention and questioning must be conducted in a reasonable manner, limited in scope and duration to confirming or dispelling the officer's suspicions, and in full compliance with constitutional requirements and departmental policy.

Sec. 16 Shall observe and, when necessary, investigate any vehicle whose driver or occupants appear suspicious. Patrol officers shall document relevant registration information and vehicle descriptions and report pertinent findings. Patrol officers shall also maintain awareness of all motor vehicles in their vicinity, monitoring for those reported stolen, involved in criminal activity, improperly registered, or not legally equipped.

Sec. 17 Shall maintain awareness of all parts of their assigned area and with the streets, thoroughfares, courts, buildings, and other relevant locations.

Sec. 18 Shall submit a Field Interaction/Observation/Encounter Report (FIOE) subsequent to a field interaction/stop, a frisk, an observation, or an encounter in accordance with Rule 323.

Sec. 19 Should take notice of all places and persons on their assigned area engaging in any business or activity which requires a license and shall report in writing to their Commanding Officer all unlicensed places or persons requiring a license and all cases where the provisions of a license are not complied with. Patrol officers will be prepared to give information to their superior officers concerning the nature of all businesses being conducted in their assigned area.

Sec. 20 Shall actively monitor and stay informed about locations within their assigned area where vice, drugs, or organized crime related activity is suspected and submit an FIOE as appropriate.

Sec. 21 Shall remain alert to conditions that pose a hazard to public safety such as malfunctioning traffic signals, road obstructions, unsafe work sites, or dangerous conditions caused by inclement weather. Patrol officers shall notify the Operations Division of any hazardous condition that could result in death or serious injury and take all actions reasonably within their power to mitigate the hazard.

Sec. 22 Patrol officers may direct individuals who are loitering to relocate to another area to keep public travel routes unobstructed.

Sec. 23 Shall monitor their patrol areas and may transport individuals without shelter to an appropriate facility, particularly during inclement weather. Patrol officers should also verify with shelter staff whether the individual is barred from that facility.

Sec. 24 Shall notify the Operations Division in the event of a fleeing suspect.

Sec. 25 Patrol officers on duty may suspend their patrol for meal breaks only for the time authorized and only after receiving permission from the Operations Division. Patrol officers granted such permission shall remain on the air and available to respond to emergency calls.

Sec. 26 Shall search all persons taken into custody before placing them in a department vehicle for transport.

Sec. 27 Patrol officers assigned equipment (i.e. portable radio, body worn camera, mobile phone) are responsible for its proper care and security while it is in their possession. They shall also maintain sufficient knowledge of the equipment's functions to operate it effectively.

Sec. 28 Patrol officers are to be attentive to the movement of vehicles and traffic conditions in their area and shall take appropriate enforcement action when a motor vehicle violation is observed.

Sec. 29 When it is necessary to arrest the operator of a vehicle for a violation, patrol officers shall, if possible, order the offender out of the traffic flow to the street curb and make such arrest without unnecessary loss of time or the obstruction of traffic. When an arrest is made under such circumstances, proper measures for safeguarding the vehicle of the arrested person must be taken. It shall be the responsibility of the arresting officers to dispose of the car in the following manner:

1. leave it with a person having apparent authority to assume control of it; or
2. park it legally, close the windows, lock it, if possible, and attempt to notify the registered owner; or
3. leave it at the side of the road with windows closed and locked, if possible, if traffic is not obstructed and arrangements can be made for its removal without undue delay; or
4. have it towed for safekeeping.

Sec. 30 When securing a vehicle on the street (such as, a vehicle involved in an accident or one which was operated by a person now under arrest), which contains valuable property, officers shall whenever possible, ask the owner of the property how they want it disposed of. When the owner is unavailable or is unable to express their wishes officers, before securing the vehicle, shall remove the property and deliver it to their Duty Supervisor, together with the report of the incident and an inventory of the property removed. When circumstances indicate the necessity, a written notification of what property was removed and where it may be claimed should be left in the vehicle.

Sec. 31 Shall request the police dispatcher to contact emergency medical services (EMS) in situations when an individual is exhibiting signs of severe injury or trauma, is unconscious or unresponsive, or requires assistance for a medical condition that may escalate without intervention.

Sec. 32 Shall request the police dispatcher to contact the Boston Fire Department (BFD) in situations such as structural fires or visible smoke from a building, hazardous materials incidents or spills, rescue operations requiring specialized equipment, an explosion or potential explosion, or situations involving trapped individuals in vehicles or structures.

Michael A. Cox
Police Commissioner

Note: Rule 103 Police Officer was originally issued on August 20, 1984 which replaced Rule No. 24 of the 1950 Manual, Patrolmen.