



# Apex Police Department

## General Order



<i>Title</i>		<i>Order Number</i>	
Council (and Other) Meeting Duties		714-19	
<i>Effective Date:</i>		<i>Amends:</i>	
July 12, 2019			
<i>CALEA Standard:</i>		<i>Rescinds:</i>	
<i>Reference:</i>		<i>Pages:</i>	
		5	
<i>Forms:</i>			

### Council (and Other) Meeting Duties

#### Purpose

The purpose of this directive is to outline the duties and expectations of officers while providing public safety services during a Town of Apex Council meeting or any other official meeting of a Town of Apex Board, committee, etc.

#### Policy

It will be the policy of the Apex Police Department to provide a uniformed officer for public safety purposes during all regular meetings of the Town Council and, when requested, at any other official meeting of the Council, one of their boards, committees, or any other official meeting.

#### Definitions

*Council/Other Meeting* – Any official meeting of the Town of Apex Council, one of their boards, committees, or any other official Town of Apex Meeting.

*Council/Other Meeting Duty* – The assignment of and responsibilities assigned to an officer selected to attend any Council/Other Meeting.

#### Requests

1. Requests to have an officer present will generally come through the Chief of Police from the Town Manager or a Town Department Head.

2. Requests will be forwarded to the Administrative Division Commander to coordinate staffing.

### **Staffing**

1. The Administrative Division Commander will work with other Division Commanders to fulfill requests to have an officer attend any Council/Other Meeting.
2. Division Commanders are responsible for working with the Administrative Division Commander to ensure scheduled requests are fulfilled.
3. Whenever possible, requests will be filled using on-duty staff. Use of staff who will accrue overtime as a result of attending any Council/Other Meeting must be pre-approved by the Chief of Police.
4. Officers assigned to Council/Other Meeting Duty are responsible to carry out their duties in compliance with this and any other applicable written directives..

### **Town Council Meetings**

1. The Apex Town Council generally holds regular meetings twice per month. The schedule is posted on the Town of Apex website.
2. The department will provide at least one uniformed police officer at every scheduled Town Council Meeting.
3. Employees are advised that scheduled Town Council Meetings are “Live Streamed” by video through the Town website.

### **Other Meetings**

1. The Town of Apex has a number of committees and boards that meet on a regular frequency and as-needed basis. A list and schedule for these committees and boards can be found on the Town of Apex website.
2. The department will provide uniformed police officers to attend Other Meetings when requested by the Town Manager, a Town of Apex Department Head, or applicable committee/board members.
3. The Administrative Division Commander will determine the number of uniformed police officers required for any Other Meetings.

## Council/Other Meeting Duties

1. The primary duties for any officer assigned to a meeting is to:
  - Enhance public safety by providing a visible deterrent to disruptive behavior
  - Appropriately and professionally address any matter that reasonably could disrupt a meeting
  - Provide typical public safety/police services as needed
  
2. In most cases, unless intervention is clearly needed and the officer determines he/she must act immediately, the officer will refrain from intervening until requested by the Mayor, Town Manager or person in charge of the meeting.
  - Officers must be cognizant that people have a First Amendment right to speak, which does not apply only under certain circumstances. That right must be balanced with the applicable General Statutes and Town Ordinances that prohibit disruptive behavior and/or disrupting a public meeting.
  - Officers must also provide good guidance on the application of the law under these circumstances, and may have to explain that a town facility is not a “public location,” and that persons can be removed and/or trespassed from entering.
  
3. Officers are to be aware of persons approaching the Council seating area to ensure they have been invited to do so, or are doing so as part of a presentation, appropriate interaction, etc.
  
4. Officers will remain focused and observant of the audience, entrances/exits to the meeting room, and the dynamics of the meeting.
  
5. Officers assigned to Council/Other Meeting Duty will:
  - Be dressed in Class “B” Uniform and will meet all uniform regulations (i.e. shaved, etc.)
  - Arrive at least 15 minutes prior to the start of the meeting
  - Notify the Communications Center via radio of their assignment, location, anticipated duration, etc.
  - Have their issued police radio with the volume on “low” or use an earbud
  - Remain until the meeting has ended and a majority of the attendees have left, or are released by the Town Manager, or person in charge of the meeting
    - For Council Meetings, this may be an Assistant Town Manager
    - For Other Meetings, it may be a Town of Apex Department Head, or applicable committee/board chair
  - Not bring computers, laptops, books, or anything that will distract them from being observant
  - Refrain from using a cell phone, other than in an emergency or as needed to call the Communications Center, a supervisor, etc.

- NOTE: All cell phones and other electronic devices will be placed on “Silent” before the start of the meeting
  - Not bring food, drink, etc.
    - **EXCEPTION:** Unless otherwise advised not to by a competent authority, coffee, tea, water, etc. may be brought into the meeting in a cup/container free from a commercial logo, with the exception of a department or town logo
6. If requested by a Council Member, town employee or other person, the officer may escort a person to his/her vehicle once the meeting has ended and the officer is released. If the person is not able to wait until the end of the meeting, the officer should contact the on-duty supervisor to request an officer to respond and escort the person.
  7. For all Council/Other Meetings which end after Town of Apex business hours (generally after 5 pm Monday through Friday) in a Town of Apex facility, unless advised otherwise by the Town Manager, Assistant Town Manager, or person in charge of the meeting who states he/she will ensure facility security, the officer will ensure all doors are locked or otherwise secured prior to leaving the facility.

## **Direction**

### *Council Meetings*

1. In the absence of a supervisor or command officer from the Apex Police Department, the officer will take direction from the Town Manager or, in his/her absence, the Assistant Town Manager assigned to the meeting.
  - If an officer is uncertain about a request from the Mayor, a Council Member, a Department Head or a citizen, the officer will seek guidance from the Town Manager, Assistant Town Manager or on-duty supervisor.
  - **NOTE:** This direction is primarily regarding intervening in a situation, when the officer is to be released from the meeting, etc. The officer will seek clarification from the on-duty supervisor as necessary.
2. Unless otherwise directed, the officer will be stationed to the far left of the Council seating area where a full view of the Council Chambers is available.

### *Other Meetings*

1. In the absence of a supervisor or command officer from the Apex Police Department, the officer will inquire from the meeting organizer (Department Head, board chair, etc.) as to the nature of the concern and his/her reason for requesting an officer to be present.

- Generally, this information will have been obtained by the department when the request was made and, if so, will be provided to the assigned officer.
  - The officer will determine his/her post in the meeting room, etc., but will attempt to comply with reasonable requests. For example, the meeting organizer may request that the officer remain outside, but in close proximity, instead of being in the meeting room.
2. The officer will discuss any public safety concerns with the meeting organizer. If an agreement cannot be reached, the officer will contact the on-duty supervisor for direction.

**BY ORDER OF:**



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John W. Letteney

Chief of Police