

Policy: 1639.2, Guardians of the Shield

Effective Date: 10/02/2024

Distribution Group: All Employees

Review Responsibility: Training Division Commander

Accreditation Chapter(s): None

Chief of Police: Eric D. Smith

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I. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to establish procedures for the Guardians of the Shield fund.

II. POLICY

This fund was created to assist officers and professional staff who have incurred expenses related to a serious illness, injury, disease, death, or some catastrophic circumstance within their immediate family.

III. DEFINITIONS

None

IV. PROCEDURES

1. GUARDIANS OF THE SHIELD PROCEDURES

1.1 ELIGIBILITY FOR FUNDS

All current, full time Orlando Police Department employees are eligible to receive funds from Guardians of the Shield. In order to receive funds from the Guardians of the Shield, an application must be submitted by or on behalf of an eligible employee. Funds may be distributed to a full-time Orlando Police Department employee who has incurred expenses related to a serious illness, injury, disease, death or some catastrophic circumstance within their immediate

family. Two members who are related may not both receive funds from Guardians of the Shield based upon the same circumstance.

Once an employee separates from OPD, they are no longer eligible to receive funds from Guardians of the Shield.

1.2 CONTRIBUTIONS

1.2.1 EMPLOYEE CONTRIBUTION

Employees may contribute to the Guardians of the Shield fund in one of three ways:

- a. Employees may contribute during the City's Work Place Giving Campaign. If an employee chooses this option, the funds will be automatically withdrawn from the employee's payroll at the selected intervals.
- b. Employees may contribute with credit cards by visiting <http://strengthenorlando.org>
- c. Employees may contribute cash donations in person by visiting city hall.

For each option, the employee should make their contribution to "Strengthen Orlando, Inc." and designate the funds specifically for the "Guardians of the Shield". Contributions are voluntary and non-refundable

1.2.2 OTHER DONOR CONTRIBUTIONS

Other donors may contribute by making their donations to "Strengthen Orlando" and designating the funds specifically for the "Guardians of the Shield". The donations will vest in the fund upon receipt and an acknowledgement of the donation will be issued by Strengthen Orlando or a member of the committee.

1.3 GUARDIANS OF THE SHIELD COMMITTEE

The Guardians of the Shield Committee will follow the procedures outlined below.

1.3.1 MEMBERSHIP COMPOSITION

The Guardians of the Shield Committee will be comprised of eight (8) City of Orlando employees who work primarily for the Orlando Police Department. The Captain of Professional Standards will serve as the Chairperson. Members will be appointed by the Chief of Police. The Chief of Police will appoint one of the members to act as co-Chairperson. The co-Chairperson shall act as the Chairperson in his or her absence or if the Chairperson is otherwise unable to fulfill the duties of the Chairperson.

1.3.2 REQUIREMENTS FOR COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP

All members of the committee must be Orlando Police Department employees or employees of the Police Legal Advisor's Office and must have previously contributed to the Guardians of the Shield fund.

1.3.3 GUIDELINES FOR THE COMMITTEE MEETINGS

The committee will meet and conduct business as follows:

- a. Review requests for funds.
- b. Meet at a minimum of four times each fiscal year or when the Chairperson or a majority of the committee expresses a desire to meet. The Chairperson will schedule the meetings.

1.4 APPLICATIONS

Employees requesting funds must apply by submitting a Guardians of the Shield Application for Distribution of Funds form (Attachment A), which shall contain the following information:

- a. Name and employee number of the applicant.
- b. Describe the circumstances as they relate to the serious illness, injury, death, or some catastrophic circumstance within their immediate family and the date that the related expenses were incurred.
- c. Receipts or other supportive documents.

1.5 DISTRIBUTION OF FUNDS

The maximum amount of funds that may be distributed to an eligible employee during one calendar year is \$6,000. However, no more than \$3,000 may be distributed for expenses incurred during any six-month period except in extraordinary circumstances. Committee discretion will be used to distribute funds on a case-by-case basis upon a review of the application. Decisions shall be issued in writing.

1.6 RECORDS

The Chairperson shall maintain all records of the committee's actions for a minimum of four years.

1.7 APPEALS

An eligible employee who has been denied a distribution from the Guardians of the Shield fund may appeal the decision in writing to the Chief of Police within ten (10) business days of the final decision of the committee. Within five business days (5) of receipt of the appeal, the Chief of Police or designee will schedule a special meeting with the Guardians of the Shield Committee members to review the appeal. The Chief of Police shall have the authority to confirm, reverse and/or modify the decision of the Guardians of the Shield Committee and shall issue a written decision within five (5) business days of review. The Chief's decision shall be final.

V.FORMS AND APPENDICES

[ATTACHMENT A-Application for Distribution of Funds](#)

VI.REFERENCES

This policy rescinds Policy and Procedure 1639.1

Related Policies: Not Applicable

Related Laws: Not Applicable