The PATROL Program - *Psychologist And Training/Recruit Officer Liaison*

Orientation - During group orientation many issues are discussed. Some of the more common subjects that arise have to do with career choice, departmental policy, moving to a new city, family adjustments, stress and anxiety, adult learning, and the FTO program. Information discussed between the psychologist and recruit officer during the various phase meetings is deemed confidential.

Meeting during FTO Phase I - Reconciling the reality of field police experience with expectation is the primary focus of the Phase I session. Within this framework, officer observations are processed, officer safety is discussed, stressor management strategies are developed, application of skills is encouraged, and features of work ethic are explored.

Meeting during FTO Phase II - Issues surrounding the Phase II session frequently involve persistence and motivation. Many new officers report that the FTO program is more rigorous or stressful than anticipated. Officers with prior experience sometimes struggle with being in training once again. The psychologist works to enhance motivation by pointing out successes, commenting on the growing sense of competence, discussing alternative learning and stressor management strategies, identifying problem areas and designing specific interventions, and having the officer focus efforts on performance. Emphasis is placed upon the assumption of responsibility, officer discretion, and the appropriate application of authority.

Meeting during FTO Phase III - The Phase III session centers on rehearsal for Phase IV. In addition to stressor management and job skill enhancement, officers are encouraged to "scan" their knowledge and skill level for areas in which they feel they need improvement. They remediate these areas or bring them to the attention of the FTO for assistance in remediation. The FTO then works to provide the recruit officer with the appropriate review, practice, exposure, or experience (Review, Rehearse, Repeat).

Phase IV - This phase of the FTO program is sometimes referred to as "checkout." Upon successful completion, the recruit officer is advanced to Phase V and assigned to regular duty. As the focus of this phase is independent behavior, Phase IV appointments are optional. Phase IV recruit officer appointments may be requested by the recruit officer or by the recruit officer's primary FTO.

Phase V - Like Phase IV, Phase V (the period that the officer is on probation) appointments are optional. The recruit officer may schedule any number of appointments during this phase. During Phase V appointments the psychologist addresses pertinent issues identified by the officer.

Recruit officers are informed that they may invite their spouses to their PATROL meetings. Mentors, peer support team members, FTOs not involved in recruit training, and the Employee Assistance Program may be utilized as PATROL support resources for agencies without a psychologist.

PATROL Program Features

The PATROL program is flexible and may be adjusted to meet individual needs. For instance:
1. More than one session per phase may be initiated by either the recruit officer or FTO.
2. The FTO may attend any or all (or portions) of the sessions if requested by the recruit officer.
3. The FTO or recruit officer may arrange joint sessions to work on a specific performance issue.
4. The recruit officer may initiate a comprehensive counseling program. Such programs can involve other significant persons and extend beyond FTO training.
5. If the recruit officer is failing to progress as expected, counseling can be integrated into a remedial plan. Such plans may involve recruit-officer family members.
6. If the recruit officer fails to succeed in the FTO program, counseling may assist the officer and/or FTOs in processing the officer's resignation or termination.

Secondary benefit of PATROL: A secondary positive result of PATROL has been the reduction of any perceived stigma for visiting and interacting with the police psychologist.