



# GENERAL ORDER

DATE OF ISSUE

4-9-76

EFFECTIVE DATE

5-1-76

NUMBER

76-50

SUBJECT

Proper Identification by Members

FILE CODE

Identification

REFERENCE

T.B. 73-16

RESCINDS G.O. 73-36(R),  
last paragraph;  
Not. 72-183 & 72-117

AMENDS

EXPIRATION DATE

DISTRIBUTION

A #12

## 1. GENERAL

In view of the potential problems that may result when a plainclothes or undercover officer fails to properly identify himself, it shall be the responsibility of each member to follow proper procedures. If these procedures are put into practice, the operation of the department as a whole becomes more efficient, and the interest and well being of the individual officer is generally assured. Members in plainclothes, whether on or off duty, must first properly identify themselves before taking police action.

Further, members are reminded that under Michigan state law, ... citizens resisting arrest, even to the point of inflicting injury, cannot be blamed unless the officer has proclaimed himself by showing his badge of authority. No member has any right to expect obedience to his orders or respect for his authority until he has identified himself by displaying his badge and identification card. Members should be well aware that citizens are wary of becoming victims of crime even to the point of illegally carrying weapons. Therefore, an officer attempting to take police action without properly identifying himself may be subjected to unnecessary trouble, embarrassment, injury, etc., or even death.

## 2. INCIDENTS REQUIRING IMMEDIATE POLICE ACTION

In those instances that require immediate and decisive police action, where it is obvious to the member that he doesn't have time to present his badge and identification card, he shall announce in a firm, clear voice, that he is an officer before taking police action.

## 3. IDENTIFICATION UPON REQUEST OF A CITIZEN

A member or employee shall, when requested, give his name, badge number and/or display his police identification card in a courteous manner, except when actually engaged in an undercover assignment.

4. VEHICLE INVESTIGATIONS INVOLVING MEMBERS

- 4.1 Proper Identification. Under Michigan state law, the operator of a motor vehicle must present his operator's or chauffeur's license to a uniformed officer upon demand. This law applies equally to all officers without exception. Further, any member who is operating a motor vehicle and is stopped by patrolling members or other members in the course of an investigation or other police function, shall present his driver's license and vehicle registration upon demand. Members shall also present their police identification in accordance with Section 5. of this order.
- 4.2 Entry on Activity Log. Any member who has the occasion to stop another member shall make proper notation on his activity log sheet. If the patrolling member encounters difficulty under such circumstances, he shall call for a supervisory officer and appropriate action shall be taken.

5. IDENTIFICATION OF PLAINCLOTHES AND UNDERCOVER MEMBERS

Officers today must assume many different roles to effectively combat crime. Many times officers must grow excessively long hair, mustaches, or generally maintain an appearance that would not be commensurate with the high standards expected of uniformed members. Patrolling members in the course of investigations occurring on the street may have contact with such officers. Therefore, it is incumbent upon members working plainclothes and undercover assignments, who are stopped by other members for investigative or identification purposes, to properly identify themselves as set forth below.

- 5.1 Identification of Plainclothes Members. Members who are working in plainclothes assignments, or who are off duty in plainclothes, shall present their identification cards and badges when stopped by patrolling members or other members in the course of an investigation or other police function.
- 5.2 Identification of Undercover Members. Members working in undercover assignments, who verbally identify themselves as members of the department when stopped by other members in the course of an investigation or other police activity, shall then present their identification cards and badges, as well as their place of assignment upon request of the investigating member.

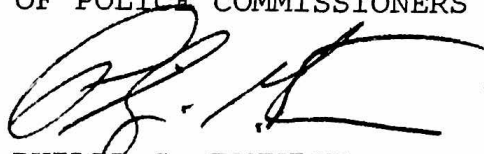
If the undercover member feels that his assignment is of such a nature that it warrants total anonymity, then the member shall not be required to identify himself in the above prescribed manner. However, he shall use the identification issued to him for identification purposes and be prepared to accept the consequences of the actions of the investigating member.

Members shall not verbally identify themselves as members of the department and refuse to present the proper department identification. Investigating members should remember that officers working in undercover assignments may be engaged in surveillance activities and any investigations should be kept to a minimum whenever possible. As soon as the undercover member has properly identified himself, the investigating member shall make every attempt not to interfere further with the undercover activities.

#### 6. UNUSUAL CIRCUMSTANCES

When unusual circumstances exist and if a strong doubt remains as to the proper identity of the member, investigating members shall contact the Communications Operations Section to ascertain by name check that the person is a member of the Detroit Police Department. If a doubt still remains as to the proper identity of the officer, the investigating member shall contact the patrol supervisor or the ranking officer in the precinct of occurrence, who shall respond to the scene immediately. Officers questioning a member's identity shall use good judgment in their decision to request the presence of a supervisor and their judgment shall be subject to review. Officers being investigated shall, upon request, remain at the scene pending the arrival of a supervisory officer.

BY AUTHORITY OF THE BOARD  
OF POLICE COMMISSIONERS



PHILIP G. TANNIAN  
Chief of Police

PGT:hs/an