When the Joplin Police Department hires a new police officer, the proper training of that new officer is paramount to their success. Before beginning the In-House Academy and Field Training Officer (FTO) Program phases of training, each new officer must have previously obtained a license from the State of Missouri. This license must show they have completed 600 hours of Police Officer Basic Training and passed the training curriculum to become a Missouri Law Enforcement Officer. Once the licensing requirement has been satisfied, the newly hired police officer is ready to begin their in-house and FTO training phases with the department.

In 2011, the training department continued the 240 hours of instruction for the in-house phase of training. During this phase, the police officer is trained with a curriculum that includes topics such as customer service, ethics, law, police operations, and defensive tactics. After the completion of the in-house training, the new police officer begins the FTO program phase.

The FTO program is a 14-week (560-hour) program that is modeled after the nationally recognized San Jose Model FTO Program. It is designed so that at the conclusion of the 14-week training, the new police officer is able to demonstrate the ability to perform daily tasks that will be required of them without assistance. Only after successfully completing the FTO program phase of training is the new officer allowed to begin working independently under the supervision of division leadership at the Joplin Police Department.

The Field Training Officer (FTO) Program is administered by the Patrol Bureau Lieutenant, FTO/Training Coordinator, and FTO Supervisor. The application of the FTO Program is provided by experienced police officers who have been specifically trained to be FTOs. Our training division trains new FTOs internally so there is no longer a need to send them to outside training to become recognized as an FTO. This reduces the police department's cost for training and ensures a more consistent teaching platform for future training.

The training division continuously strives to provide the City of Joplin and the Joplin Police Department the very best training for newly hired police officers in a fiscally responsible and efficient manner. In doing so, it is a significant accomplishment for a new Joplin police officer to begin working independently under the supervision of division leadership. Police officers must complete 600 hours of basic training through a state certified academy, 240 hours of department-specific training during the in-house academy, and 560 hours of field training during the FTO phase of training. This equates to at least 1400 hours (35 weeks) of training for the newly hired officer before they are allowed to begin working independently under supervision.

In 2011, seven new police officers successfully completed the in-house and FTO training programs.

Training and Development

Under the supervision of the training sergeant/coordinator, the Training Department is tasked with two missions. The first mission is to maintain and enhance Joplin police officers' knowledge, skills, and abilities to perform their jobs effectively. This is accomplished through the introduction of new technologies, methods, and/or equipment, and ensuring that all personnel remain current with new laws, policies, and procedures. The second mission is the validation and documentation of training that is provided through a variety of training sources, including the training provided by the police department's own certified instructors and training staff.

The Missouri Peace Officer Standards and Training (POST) Commission establishes the rules and regulations for the training of Missouri police officers. Each year, the Training Department makes sure

the required POST-approved training is satisfied by all our officers. In 2011, the Training Department validated and documented over 10,000 hours of police officer continuing education training that was divided among legal studies, interpersonal perspectives, technical studies, and skill development. This is an average of over 90 hours of continuing education per officer per year.

Police officers also attend daily briefings known as squad meetings. The shift supervisor conducts training regarding legal updates and reviews existing policies or policy changes to the Joplin Police Department Standard Operating Guidelines as well as the City of Joplin Employee Manual.

To stay fiscally responsible, there is a continued effort to utilize the allotted budget in a more effective and efficient manner for 2011 and years to come. The training sergeant/coordinator continues to work toward a fully enacted Train-the-Trainer Program. Through an instructor development process, the Training Department can assist our department's own subject matter experts in developing valuable courses of instruction that will provide quality, effective, and timely training to our police officers in a monetarily efficient teaching platform.

The Joplin Police Department continues to provide a Training Outreach Program. The program is designed to reach out to other law enforcement agencies in the area, across the State of Missouri, and into surrounding states. The program continues to provide training events such as active shooter/threat and less lethal technologies taught by our certified instructors either for free or at a minimal cost to the host agency. This program helps cultivate a positive relationship between the Joplin Police Department and outside agencies, which is always of great importance. The program also helps provide assurance that surrounding agencies are following similar protocols during critical incidents that require a multi-agency response.