

COUNTY OF OAKLAND
OFFICE OF THE SHERIFF

MICHAEL J. BOUCHARD



Memorandum

To: Mayor Bryan Barnett
CC: Director Joe Snyder
From: Captain Paul Workman
Date: 10/7/25
Re: Citywide DFR Program Details

Mayor Barnett,

The Oakland County Sheriff's Office (OCSO) Drone Unit, operating under the Drone as First Responder (DFR) program, provides a safe and effective aerial observation platform to support law enforcement during public safety incidents. All missions will be conducted with the highest regard for safety, constitutional rights, privacy protections, and applicable laws.

The DFR may be deployed for, but is not limited to, the following purposes: responding to active 911 and emergency calls; locating missing people or suspects; assisting specialized units during high-risk incidents; documenting crash or crime scenes; supporting hazardous materials or public health operations; providing tactical and situational awareness at large events; and conducting post-incident or disaster damage assessments.

All DFR personnel must be thoroughly familiar with relevant FAA regulations, federal and state laws, and official guidance governing governmental drone operations. Compliance with these requirements is mandatory for every flight under OCSO policy.

The DFR shall be deployed only for legitimate law enforcement purposes and shall not be used for "random patrols."

Operators shall act in full accordance with applicable Sheriff's General Orders concerning Search and Seizure, and Warrantless and Search Warrants. When operating a DFR over private property where no lawful exception to a warrant applies, a search warrant must be obtained prior to flight. If a warrant exception exists, it must be clearly justified and documented.

The DFR shall not be used solely to monitor activities protected under the First Amendment or other constitutionally secured rights, except when necessary to ensure public and officer safety—such as for lawful crowd or traffic control operations.

DFR operations will never be conducted based on an individual's real or perceived personal characteristics, including but not limited to race, ethnicity, national origin, immigration status, gender, gender identity or expression, sexual orientation, religion, socioeconomic status, age, disability, or political affiliation.

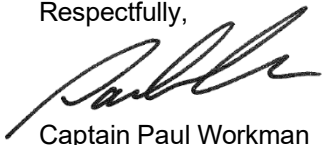
The DFR shall not intentionally record or transmit imagery of locations where a person has a reasonable expectation of privacy. Operators and observers must take all reasonable measures to prevent the inadvertent recording or transmission of such imagery.

The DFR program and Drone Unit are considered a "Special Unit" under the umbrella of Patrol Services – Technical Support Group. My understanding is that the use of this unit, and assets, is covered under the current contract for law enforcement services.

If additional information is required, please let me know and I will seek out the answers.

Thank you for your consideration.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Paul Workman', written in a cursive style.

Captain Paul Workman
Substation Commander – City of Rochester Hills
Oakland County Sheriff's Office