

St. Michaels Police Department (SMPD)
General Order No. 14-004

September 24, 2018

GENERAL ORDER NO. 18-004

TO: All SMPD Personnel

SUBJECT: Community Policing Program

PURPOSE AND SCOPE

The purpose of this policy is to provide guidelines for community relationship-building through the implementation and practice of Community Policing.

POLICY

It is the policy of the SMPD to promote positive relationships between officers and the community. This is accomplished by treating community members with dignity and respect and engaging them in public safety strategy development and relationship-building activities that includes making relevant policy and operations information available to the community in a transparent manner. Community policing is the responsibility of all members of the police department to include the administrative staff, also identified as the school liaison officer.

BACKGROUND

The Ten Guiding Principles of Community Policing as identified by the U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Community Oriented Policing, include:

- (a) Crime Prevention is the responsibility of the total community.
- (b) The police and community share ownership, responsibility and accountability for the prevention of crime.
- (c) Police effectiveness is a function of crime control, crime prevention, problem solving, community satisfaction, quality of life and community engagement.
- (d) Mutual trust between the police and the community is essential for effective policing.
- (e) Crime prevention must be a flexible, long-term strategy in which the police and community collectively commit to resolving the complex and chronic causes of crime.
- (f) Community policing requires the knowledge, access, and mobilization of community resources.
- (g) Community policing can only succeed when top management, police and government officials enthusiastically support its principles and tenets.

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- (h) Community policing depends on decentralized, community-based participation in decision making.
- (i) Community policing allocates resources and services based on analysis, identification and projection of patterns and trends, rather than incidents.
- (j) Community policing requires an investment in training with special attention to problem analysis and problem solving, facilitation, community organization, communication, mediation, conflict resolution, resource identification and use, networking and linkages, and cross-cultural competency.

MEMBER RESPONSIBILITIES

SMPD officers should, as time and circumstances reasonably permit:

- (a) Make casual and consensual contacts with community members to promote positive community relationships.
- (b) Become familiar with the schools, businesses and community groups in and around the Town of St. Michaels.
- (c) Work with community members and the community relations coordinator to identify issues and solve problems related to community relations and public safety.
- (d) While conducting periodic patrol checks, attempt to facilitate positive interaction with community members with the goal of establishing an overall community and police partnership.

COMMUNITY RELATIONS COORDINATOR

The Chief or Deputy Chief (Captain) shall designate a member of the SMPD to serve as the community relations coordinator. The coordinator should report directly to the Chief or the Deputy Chief and is responsible for:

- (a) Obtaining department-approved training related to his/her responsibilities.
- (b) Responding to requests from department members and the community for assistance in identifying issues and solving problems related to community relations and public safety.
- (c) Organizing surveys to measure the condition of the department's relationship with the community.
- (d) Working with community groups, department members and other community resources to:
 - 1.) Identify and solve public safety problems within the community.
 - 2.) Organize programs and activities that help build positive relationships between department members and the community and provide community members with an improved understanding of SMPD operations.
- (e) Working with command staff to develop patrol deployment plans that allow officers the time to participate in community engagement and problem-solving activities.

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- (f) Recognizing officers and community members for exceptional work and/or performance in community relations efforts.
- (g) Attending community meetings to obtain information on community and police relationship needs.
- (h) Assisting with the department's response to events that may affect community relations, such as an incident where the conduct of a department member is called into public question.
- (i) Informing the Chief and others of developments and needs related to the furtherance of the community policing initiative.

SURVEYS

The community relations coordinator should arrange for a survey of community members and department members to be conducted at least annually to assess the condition of the relationship between the SMPD and the community. Survey questions should be designed to evaluate perceptions of the following:

- (a) Overall performance of the SMPD.
- (b) Overall competence of department members.
- (c) Attitude and behavior of department members.
- (d) Level of community trust in the police department.
- (e) Safety, security or other concerns.

A written summary of the compiled results of the survey should be provided to the Chief.

COMMUNITY AND YOUTH ACTIVITIES AND PROGRAMS

The community relations coordinator should organize or assist with programs and activities that create opportunities for department members and community members, especially youth, to interact in a positive setting. Examples of such programs and events include:

- (a) Department-sponsored family trips designed to foster bonding of the family unit (e.g., trip to Six Flags Amusement Park, fishing trips and trips to see the Shorebirds, bowling trips.)
- (b) Police-community get-togethers (e.g., cookouts, block parties, holiday parties)
- (c) Youth leadership and life skills mentoring. (e.g., Junior Police Academy).
- (d) Conduct routine school patrols and visits to facilitate interaction with youth.
- (e) Neighborhood Watch and crime prevention programs.
- (f) Holding periodic community meetings to educate and inform the public.
- (h) Performing of foot patrols through the business districts and neighborhoods.

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INFORMATION SHARING

The community relations coordinator should work with the Chief to develop methods and procedures for the convenient sharing of information (e.g., major incident notifications, significant changes in department operations, comments, feedback, positive events) between the department and community members. Examples of information-sharing methods include:

- (a) Community meetings (e.g. Coffee with a Cop)
- (b) Social media (see the Use of Social Media Policy.)
- (c) The SMPD website/Facebook postings. Information should be regularly refreshed to inform and engage community members continuously.

LAW ENFORCEMENT OPERATIONS EDUCATION

The community relations coordinator should develop methods to educate community members on general law enforcement operations so they may understand the work that officers do to keep the community safe. Instructional information should include direction on how community members should interact with the police during enforcement or investigative contacts and how community members can make a complaint to the department regarding alleged misconduct or inappropriate job performance by department members.

SAFETY AND OTHER CONSIDERATIONS BEST PRACTICE

Department members responsible for community relations activities should consider the safety of the community participants and, as much as reasonably practicable, not allow them to be present in any location or situation that would jeopardize their safety.

TRANSPARENCY

The SMPD should periodically publish statistical data and analysis regarding the department's operations. The reports should not contain the names of the officer, suspects or case numbers. The community relations coordinator should work with the community advisory committee to identify information that may increase transparency regarding office operations.

POSTING

The SMPD will post department policies on the office website and the MPTSC website, as appropriate (Md. Code PS § 3-515.)

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TRAINING

Subject to available resources, department members should receive training related to this policy, including training on topics such as:

- (a) Effective social interaction and communication skills.
- (b) Cultural, racial and ethnic diversity and relations.
- (c) Building community partnerships.
- (d) Community policing and problem-solving principles.
- (e) Enforcement actions and their effects on community relations.

Where practicable and appropriate, community members, especially those with relevant expertise, should be involved in the training to provide input from a community perspective.

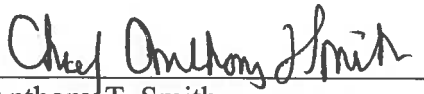
OTHER STATE REQUIREMENTS

The community relations coordinator should ensure that the SMPD community policing program is filed annually with the MPTSC by October 1st of each year (Md. Code PS § 3-517.) The office shall file the report utilizing the reporting format provided by the MPTSC. Section I of the report will be completed with the agency's information and demographics on the population that the agency services.

In Section II, the agency will provide a detailed description of its community policing program. The description shall incorporate within its program the Ten Guiding Principles of Community Policing identified by the U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Community Oriented Policing. Community Policing Programs must be emailed to: PCTC.CommunityPolicing@maryland.gov.

Effective Date:

This General Order is effective September 24, 2018; and supersedes or cancels any previous order or memoranda in conflict therewith.



Anthony T. Smith
Chief of Police