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|  | <b>GAITHERSBURG POLICE DEPARTMENT</b>           |               |  |
|   | <b>Crime Prevention and Community Relations</b> |               |   |
|   | <b>GENERAL ORDER</b>                            | <b>1200.1</b> |   |
| <b>Effective Date</b>   | <b>11/02/2021</b>                               |               |   |
| <b>Authorized by:</b>   | <b>Mark P. Sroka</b><br>CHIEF OF POLICE         | SIGNATURE     | DATE<br><b>11/02/2021</b>   |

## **1. DEPARTMENT POLICY**

The Department is committed to the development and implementation of crime prevention programs, positive community relations, and effective community policing in an effort to build strong community relationships and enhance the quality of life for the citizens of Gaithersburg. It is the policy of the Department that all members shall be responsible for promoting community relations, establishing partnerships, and proactively working to identify and address community concerns.

## **2. CRIME PREVENTION**

### **2.1. Program Components**

- 2.1.1. Based on an analysis of local crime data, certain programs are targeted by crime type and geographic area.
- 2.1.2. Certain programs are targeted to address citizens' perceptions and/or misperceptions about crime.
- 2.1.3. Upon request from the Planning and Code Department, members of the Department, especially those trained in the concepts and principles of Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED), provide crime prevention input into the development and/or revision of zoning policies, building codes, fire codes, and residential and commercial building permits.
- 2.1.4. To ensure the Department's crime prevention efforts are results-oriented, a documented review of the program is conducted by the Community Services Office and reviewed by Command Staff personnel, at least every three years.

### **2.2. Establishing Partnerships**

- 2.2.1. The Community Services Office is responsible for contacting various residential and business groups throughout the City in an effort to establish crime prevention networking groups, such as Neighborhood Watch.
- 2.2.2. Community Services Officers (CSOs) maintain liaison with these groups and other interested community groups. A CSO will make periodic contact with Neighborhood Watch leaders, share relevant information, and assist with training and coordination of the Neighborhood Watch Program.

2.2.3. All members of the Department are responsible for promoting community relations and establishing partnerships through their day to day interactions with the public. Department members forward information to the Community Services Office in a timely manner to allow the Department to have a coordinated and integrated response to community concerns.

### **2.3. Crime Prevention Programs**

2.3.1. Programs are developed to address specific concerns within the community based on information obtained through various methods, to include:

2.3.1.1. Analysis of crime data and review of Computer Aided Dispatch (C.A.D.) calls for service

2.3.1.2. Event Reports

2.3.1.3. Information from other jurisdictions

2.3.1.4. Citizen requests for additional patrol

2.3.1.5. Homeowner Association meetings attended by members of the Department.

2.3.1.6. Neighborhood Watch organizations

2.3.1.7. Information obtained from other City departments

2.3.1.8. The Police Advisory Committee

2.3.1.9. Council in the Communities meetings

2.3.1.10. Schools

2.3.1.11. Feedback from the Gaithersburg Web Site

2.3.1.12. Officers feedback, and

2.3.1.13. A documented survey of citizen attitudes conducted once every three years.

2.3.2. The Department offers many programs to assist in its crime prevention goals, and to address the concerns of the citizens.

#### **2.3.2.1. Neighborhood Watch**

The Department actively encourages and assists geographic areas and neighborhoods organizing and developing Neighborhood Watch groups. The Department maintains communication with active Neighborhood Watch groups in an effort to share information and to assist in training and support needs.

2.3.2.2. Security Surveys

Officers who are trained to conduct Security Surveys will conduct surveys of businesses and residences free of charge and by appointment.

Specially trained officers conduct CPTED (Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design) surveys. These are thorough security surveys that take into consideration environmental factors as they relate to security.

2.3.2.3. Police Advisory Committee

The Police Advisory Committee is comprised of citizens from throughout the City. The Committee meets quarterly to provide guidance and input to the Chief and to facilitate the flow of information between the Department and the community.

2.3.2.4. National Night Out

National Night Out, which is held annually in August, is designed to heighten crime and drug prevention awareness and strengthen neighborhood spirit and police-community relations.

2.3.2.5. Council in the Communities

The City of Gaithersburg elected officials and staff members meet with various communities within the City periodically throughout the year. In an open forum, they advise the communities of current issues, and receive information from the communities about their current concerns and opinions. These meetings are routinely attended by the Chief of Police or designee.

2.3.2.6. Coffee with a Cop

Police and community members come together in an informal, neutral space to discuss community issues, build relationships, and drink coffee.

2.3.2.7. DARE Program

Drug Abuse Resistance Education (DARE) is an international education program that seeks to prevent use of controlled dangerous substances, membership in gangs, violent behavior and teaches positive decision making.

2.3.2.8. Other Programs

The “Ride Along” program, and the “Bicycle Safety

Program”, along with officer presentations, personal appearances, and tours of Department facilities and vehicles are conducted to attempt to address community perceptions/misperceptions of crime, and to promote communication between the Department and the community.

### **3. COMMUNITY RELATIONS**

#### **3.1. Community Policing**

The Gaithersburg Police Department is committed to the Community Oriented Policing (COP) philosophy. This philosophy encompasses the many strengths of traditional law enforcement, with an emphasis on community involvement in identifying, analyzing, and solving problems.

#### **3.2. Community Relations Efforts**

3.2.1. The Department's community relations effort encompasses establishing and maintaining liaison with formal and informal community organizations and other community groups, such as tenant groups, homeowners associations, the Chamber of Commerce, and local area service clubs and organizations.

3.2.2. Community relations policies are developed for the Department utilizing input from several sources, including community meetings, elected officials, Department members, feedback from various civic groups, the Citizen Police Academy, and the Police Advisory Committee.

3.2.3. The Chief of Police, commanders, and officers are provided with timely information transmitted from the various sources listed in 2.3.1. Information is primarily coordinated through the Community Services Office.

#### **3.3. Community Services Office**

3.3.1. The Community Services Office has the primary responsibility for coordinating the Department's community relations activities by maintaining open lines of communication with the community, other City Departments, and outside agencies.

3.3.2. The Community Services Office consists of Community Services Officers and the Community Engagement Officer (CEO). The CSOs and the CEO are sworn positions within the Special Operations Bureau, and report directly to the Special Operations Bureau Sergeant.

##### **3.3.3. Community Services Officers**

3.3.3.1. CSOs coordinate the Department's Crime Prevention Programs. CSOs monitor the implementation of these programs, receive feedback from members of the

Department and the community, and advise the Chief of Police on the effectiveness of these programs.

- 3.3.3.2. CSOs maintain open lines of communication with the community by attending community meetings, maintaining the Department's Crime Summary Web Page, establishing and maintaining contact with community leaders, working with Neighborhood Watch organizations, and contact with the media.
- 3.3.3.3. CSOs are responsible for preparing and submitting a monthly report to the Chief of Police, which includes:
  - 3.3.3.3.1. A description of current concerns voiced by the community;
  - 3.3.3.3.2. A description of potential problems that have a bearing on law enforcement activities within the community;
  - 3.3.3.3.3. A statement of recommended actions that address previously identified concerns and problems; and
  - 3.3.3.3.4. A statement of progress made toward addressing previously identified concerns and problems.

3.3.4. Community Engagement Officer (CEO)

- 3.3.4.1. The Community Engagement Officer (CEO) is a certified police officer who is assigned to provide safety and security assistance to a cluster of public schools.
- 3.3.4.2. This partnership between the school board and law enforcement allows the CEO to work closely with the school administration to establish a working protocol for exchanging information and addressing matters of concern cooperatively, with the goal of maintaining and enhancing a safe and secure learning environment for students, staff, and the MCPS school community within the City of Gaithersburg.

**3.4. Information Sharing**

- 3.4.1. Current crime information is provided to the public via the Crime Summary Web Page which has postings of significant crime events/trends that have occurred within the City recently.
- 3.4.2. The City of Gaithersburg maintains a website which provides information to the public about the Police Department, its goals and objectives, programs, history and structure of the department. Citizens

have the opportunity to give feedback to the Department utilizing the Citizen Police Survey within the website.

- 3.4.3. Citizen Attitude and Opinion Surveys are conducted on an on-going basis throughout the accreditation cycle, to solicit information regarding *overall Department performance; overall competence of Department employees; officers' attitudes and behavior toward citizens; how citizens would rate their concern over safety and security in their neighborhood and in the City as a whole; and recommendations and suggestions citizens would make for improvements*. The results are compiled by the Accreditation Manager into a written summary and then forwarded to the Chief of Police.
- 3.4.4. A report is published annually by the Department and is available to the public. This report advises the community about the successes of the Department and concerns/problems that have been identified.
- 3.4.5. The Chief of Police, or designee, answers inquiries from the media and insures that accurate and timely information is shared with the public.

#### **4. TRANSMITTING FEEDBACK**

##### **4.1. Procedures**

- 4.1.1. Any member of the Department who receives information concerning community issues, concerns, or requests will forward that information to the Community Services Office. Information may be transmitted utilizing various methods. These methods include, but are not limited to, memos, emails, Community/Traffic complaint forms, daily activity reports, speaking engagement forms, command staff notifications, event reports, or any other expedient method.
- 4.1.2. The Community Services Office will collect information received from all sources, to include information received from members of the Department. This information shall be disseminated by the Community Services Office to the Chief of Police, Command Staff, Investigative Section, Street Crimes Unit, and any other members of the Department as necessary.
- 4.1.3. The Community Services Office shall disseminate information to members of the Department as necessary, via the most appropriate method based on the urgency and significance of the information received. These methods include:
  - 4.1.3.1. The monthly Community Services Office Report
  - 4.1.3.2. E-mails
  - 4.1.3.3. Crime Alerts
  - 4.1.3.4. Electronic roll call

- 4.1.3.5. Community Complaints
- 4.1.3.6. Traffic Complaints
- 4.1.3.7. Criminal Intelligence Information Lead Sheets