

# TAKOMA PARK POLICE DEPARTMENT - GENERAL ORDERS



TITLE: <b>CRIME PREVENTION</b>		NUMBER: <b>504</b>
EFFECTIVE DATE: <b>March 12, 2012</b>		REVIEW DATE: March 12, 2023
New <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Amends    Rescinds	General Order 504, dated September 26, 2005	
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**01 Purpose:** To define policy and procedures pertinent to the department’s proactive crime prevention initiatives.

**02 Policy:** The department is committed to the development, implementation and continuance of comprehensive, proactive programs and procedures, which anticipate, recognize and appraise crime risks and thereafter cause actions to remove or reduce such crime risks. All department members and components are responsible for achieving departmental and community crime prevention goals.

**03 Background:** While all personnel are participants in the department’s proactive crime prevention initiatives, the leading role is taken by a trio responding to the direction of the Chief of Police. The trio consists of the Public Information Officer (PIO), Community Outreach Program (COP) officer, and Crime Analyst. These functionaries collectively bring crime awareness and crime prevention initiatives to the government and citizens of Takoma Park. Their initiatives generally derive from a process known as “Compstat” (short for “computer comparison statistics”), a crime-control process manifested in periodic meetings called and chaired by the Chief and during which the department’s performance indicators are critically reviewed for improvement. In a Compstat meeting, some of which include city government officials and residents, the number and location of crimes and arrests as well as an analysis of suspects, victims, days and times of criminal activity, etc., are reviewed in order to identify crime patterns, clusters, suspects and hot spots. Once identified, strategies are developed to counter the increasing incidence of crime. The Compstat process encourages creativity in strategy development, allocation of resources and deployment of police personnel, while at the same time holding managers and employees accountable for proactively confronting the problems of crime.

**04 Procedures:**

A. The department’s crime prevention function provides for the following:

1. Targeting programs by crime type and geographical area on the basis of crime data.
2. Targeting programs to address community perceptions and/or misperceptions of crime.
3. Conducting a documented evaluation of crime prevention programs, at least once every three years.

**B.** The department's COP officer assists in organizing crime prevention groups in residential and business areas targeted for such activity and maintains liaison with these and other interested community groups as follows:

- 1.** Maintaining current programs and services, as well as developing new ones that are designed to promote safety and crime prevention, to educate citizens in safety and crime prevention procedures so they can better safeguard themselves, and to diminish delinquent and criminal behavior.
- 2.** Assisting in organizing and maintaining Neighborhood Watch groups, as well as encouraging participation in Operation Identification and Watch Your Car programs.
- 3.** Encouraging residents to contact the police to report crime and any situations that are suspicious or out of the ordinary.
- 4.** Reaching out to all community groups, regardless of race, sex, ethnicity, religion, or age while giving extra attention to children and the elderly.
- 5.** Maintaining current and developing new liaison with community groups and organizations and keeping regular open lines of communication with each group.
- 6.** Establishing and maintaining liaison, to include prevention training and security surveys, with local merchants and businesses throughout the City.
- 7.** Devising plans of action for addressing and rectifying quality of life issues (e.g., loiterers, trespassers, graffiti, poor fencing/lighting, etc.) that cause concern to residents and community members.
- 8.** Establishing priorities for crime prevention action based on data provided by the Crime Analyst and showing the hot spots, where crime prevention initiatives could be most productive.
- 9.** Fostering continued cooperation between community members and departmental personnel.
- 10.** Stressing the importance of community policing and crime prevention efforts to other officers and encouraging their active involvement in such efforts. This can include performing security surveys, attending community meetings, and developing enforcement projects focused on community concerns.
- 11.** Providing safety information on current topics of concern, at least monthly and as frequently as necessary, by disseminating it through media outlets such as LISERVS, the department's social media network page and blog, and local periodicals.

**12.** Evaluating crime prevention programs and services, at least triennially, and submitting recommendations for program/service retention, modification, or discontinuance to the Chief via the chain of command.

**13.** Providing reports on current projects addressing specific crime prevention concerns, as requested by the Chief of Police.

**14.** Attending meetings and conferences at which there is an opportunity for exchange of crime prevention and safety information among area jurisdictions.

**15.** Researching new crime prevention initiatives being used successfully by other jurisdictions to determine if such initiatives might be used successfully by this department.

**16.** Enhancing knowledge and continuing education on crime prevention topics and techniques by taking advantage of relevant training opportunities, as well as recommending training classes to the training coordinator that would benefit other officers by increasing their knowledge of crime prevention theory and practice.

**C.** The COP officer will provide, upon request, input into development and/or revision of zoning policies, building codes, fire codes and residential/commercial building permits. Programs such as Crime Free Multi-Housing (CFMH) and Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) are valuable resources that can aid in the development of partnerships to reduce the opportunity for criminal activity to occur.

**D.** The Chief's Advisory Board, established in 2009, is made up of 12 citizens and/or business owners in the City, who advise the Chief on issues, concerns, and matters which affect the quality of life in the City. The Chief updates and briefs the board members on at least a monthly basis as to what is occurring in the City and the department, including crime prevention initiatives.