

TAKOMA PARK POLICE DEPARTMENT - GENERAL ORDERS



TITLE: COMMUNITY ORIENTED POLICING		NUMBER: 651
EFFECTIVE DATE: August 25, 2016		REVIEW DATE: August 25, 2021
New X Amends Rescinds		G.O. 651 Dated March 18, 2002
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01 Purpose: To outline the philosophies associated with community oriented policing, and to provide guidance for department personnel regarding community policing methods, problem identification, and problem solving.

02 Policy: To incorporate community policing philosophies and methods into the Department's general policing ideology, and to impart ideals that empower police personnel and citizens to mutually achieve the goal of improving the quality of life. Community Policing is the responsibility of every member of the department. Patrol and CID will work in conjunction with one another in analyzing and responding to problems.

03 Problem Identification: A problem generally involves a sequence or continuation of incidents that are of concern to the community and/or the Department. Potential problems can also be identified by analyzing the changing social, economic, structural and/or demographic aspects of an area.

A. Members of the community often provide officers with valuable information regarding existing or potential problems. Other possible sources of information for identifying problems are:

- 1.** Crime analysis: Trends and patterns can be tracked based on time/day, similar incidents, similar suspect descriptions and/or similar target victims/locations.
- 2.** Crime prevention: Physical conditions of an area (e.g., lighting, overgrown foliage, abandoned buildings and vehicles) may contribute to criminal activity and victimization. Officers should be cognizant of these potential problem areas and coordinate with property owners and City departments in an effort to eliminate potential and existing hazards.
- 3.** Computer aided dispatch records are helpful in determining data associated with particular calls and their relation to factors of time, day, location, etc...
- 4.** Other law enforcement agencies often are victimized in the same fashion and by the same individuals as this Agency. Exchange of information at this level is vital.
- 5.** Local government agencies have plans which influence or impact areas within the City. Complaints received by City departments often lead to the discovery of criminal activity.

6. Schools often convey concerns regarding juveniles, as related to vandalism, CDS activity, weapon possession and truancy.
7. Neighborhood watch and citizen patrols are a good source of observation relating to neighborhood activities that may be suspicious.
8. Social service organizations can provide information regarding specific family problems that may identify community concerns.

04 Analyzing a Problem:

- A. Officers should gather all available information regarding a problem. The goal should be to implement a long-term solution, rather than a short-term response.
- B. Shift Supervisors, Patrol Officers, and CID will work in conjunction with one another in analyzing and responding to problems.

05 Responding to a Problem: Officers will arrive at a solution, utilizing all of the aforementioned resources, and implement their program or action for solving the problem. Solutions may be designed to:

- * Totally eliminate a problem,
- * Substantially reduce a problem,
- * Reduce the harm created by the problem,
- * Deal with the problem better, or
- * Remove the problem from police consideration.

06 Assessing the Response: Officers and their supervisor will assess the effectiveness of the implemented response to a problem. This will enable officers to modify or change their response, improve their analysis of the problem, or redefine the nature of the problem. Officers and their supervisors will evaluate whether the goals associated with the problem were met. If the goals were not realized, the officer will:

- A. Attempt to determine why the goals were not met,
- B. Determine what, if anything, can be done to meet the goals in the future, and
- C. Ascertain if the goals need to be re-evaluated or changed.

07 Beat Officer Responsibilities: Patrol officers are assigned a beat in order to facilitate community oriented policing. Officers will coordinate their efforts with fellow beat officers, CID members, other law enforcement agencies, and non-police agencies as necessary and appropriate. Officers are encouraged to use alternative methods (other than patrolling in a car), such as foot and bicycle patrols, to interact with the community.

A. Each time a COP Project is initiated, officers will complete a Form 600-105 Beat Project/Crime Trend Initiative and give the project an event number starting with the year and then a sequential number from Form 600-102 Beat Project/Crime Trend Log. Once the project is completed, final documentation will be on the original Form 600-105, making sure to indicate the number of hours spent during the reported period. The Beat Project/Crime Trend Initiative logbook and originals of the Form 600-105 will be kept in the Patrol Operations Supervisors' Office.

B. Officers are encouraged to develop and record information on beat resources, which may include elected officials who live in and / or represent their beat, community groups and organizations, contact persons, beat newsletters, COP projects, and crime analysis. Officers are also responsible for attending citizen and civic organization meetings, answering questions and presenting crime stats, COP projects, etc.

C. Officers must receive approval from the Custodian of Records to disseminate any written reports, but Officers may give crime stats orally or direct to the Takoma Park Police web page. Officers may not give victims' names or exact addresses. Officers are reminded that criminal history cannot be disseminated outside criminal justice agencies.

08 Patrol Supervisor Responsibilities: Patrol Supervisors will review projects developed by his/her officers and will ensure that projects are not duplicated by other officers, that efforts are conducted according to procedures, and that adequate resources exist or are available. Supervisors will assign the event number to the project using the Beat Project/Crime Trend Initiative logbook and place the original in the logbook. A copy will be given to the officer for his/her project records.

A. Patrol supervisors will allow a reasonable amount of time, when applicable, for their officers to conduct community related projects.

B. They will review all COP project paperwork and provide guidance where needed.

C. They will measure the effectiveness of officers' responses to problems, and will evaluate officers' ability to identify, analyze, respond to and evaluate problems.

D. Supervisors will ensure that their officers work effectively with other officers assigned to their beat in addressing problems.