



COTTAGE CITY POLICE DEPARTMENT

GENERAL ORDER

SUBJECT: COMMUNITY RELATIONS

NEW REVISED RESCINDS

APPROVED: *GM*
GEORGIA MILTENBERGER
ACTING CHIEF OF POLICE

Effective Date 8/22/2018

I. POLICY

The Cottage City Police Department is committed to the principle that cooperation and positive interaction between the community and every member of the Department is a critical element in achieving the Department's goal of establishing close ties with and responding to the needs of the community. Positive community relations represent a unity of purpose between the members of the Department and the community towards a common goal of preserving the peace through equitable law enforcement. The goal of the community relations effort is to establish a strong, lasting trust and mutual respect between the community and the members of the Department based upon the fair, unprejudiced, honest, professional and sensitive conduct of each member of the Department. Achieving this goal will create an environment in which every member of the Department is able to perform his/her duties with the support and understanding of the community.

The Cottage City Police Department will not condone or tolerate behavior, practices, or attitudes by any member of the department that may contribute, or exacerbate community problems, tensions, or grievances. Any such behavior, practices, or attitudes will be subject to reasonable and appropriate administrative and/or criminal sanctions.

The City Police Department views its mission of providing law enforcement/police services to the community in the same manner as any successful private organization would be dedicated to providing effective, fair, and professional customer service. All of the individuals within the community are the customers for whom the Department is committed to a strengthened and increased level of satisfaction.

II. PURPOSE

This General Order defines the philosophy of the Department and every employee regarding community relations and establishes the mechanics of the Department's community relations effort.

III. GENERAL PROCEDURES

- A. Community relations efforts of the department will identify and address any problems arising between the Department as an agency, or any of its employees, and any and all segments or individuals within the communities served by the Cottage City Police Department. The Department's community relations programs will establish formal relationships with community groups to learn of the issues and concerns impacting those groups so that pro-active responses can be developed before those issues and concerns become the problem realities of criminal activity. Community relations efforts must focus on increasing the community's understanding and trust in the Department as a law enforcement agency, the current and proposed Departmental activities and programs, and the individual officers. In a similar manner, the community relations efforts of the Department will strive to increase every employee's understanding of the community's needs and concerns and every employee's fair, unprejudiced, professional and sensitive conduct towards all individuals within the community.
- B. Every member of the Department will be considered an integral part of the Department's mission to achieve its community involvement objectives. As such, every employee of the Department is responsible for promoting and assisting in the attainment of those objectives through fair and impartial conduct.
- C. In each and every contact between a member of the Department and a member of the community, the guiding principle shall be to treat the individual contacted with respect for his/her dignity. Prejudices and personal feelings and attitudes will not be allowed to negatively impact a contact between a member of the community and an employee of the Department.
- D. The Chief of Police will retain overall responsibility for the Department's community involvement programs.
- E. A member of the Department will be designated by the Chief of Police as responsible for the coordination and development of all the Department's day-to-day community involvement operations as defined by the Chief of Police. The community relations duties of this designated officer will be in addition to the regular duties of a patrol officer. The delegation of community relations duties to this officer will not result in additional financial

compensation and will not be construed as either a promotional or tenured assignment. The community relations assignment and its duties and obligations will remain at the discretion of the Chief of Police.

IV. COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT PROGRAMS/ACTIVITIES

All contacts, both official and unofficial, between a member of the Department and an individual or group in the community are within the scope of the Department's community involvement program. Under the direction of the community relations officer, or at his/her direction, the Department's structured community involvement efforts will include, but are not limited to, the following activities:

- A. Formal participation in, and liaison with, civic, social, business, or other public and community groups by encouraging members of the Department to become involved with these groups, by encouraging these groups to invite members of the Department to group functions to make presentations, and by actively soliciting involvement by these groups with the Department. Such community groups might include Neighborhood Watch units.
- B. Presentation of programs to community groups and organizations addressing crime prevention or other Departmental programs, objectives, activities, development, successes, or problems.
- C. Publicizing the Department's programs, objectives, activities, development, or successes through planned media press releases, interviews, and or video productions, including the local newsletter.
- D. Soliciting and gathering citizen/community input regarding the Department's policies, practices, and procedures at any opportunity and conveying that information to the Department's administrative staff, including the Chief of Police, so that the information, recommendations, and suggestions can be reviewed to develop and improve the Department's policies, procedures, and responsiveness to the community's needs.
- E. Determining community satisfaction with the police services provided by the Department by analyzing "feedback" received in community group meetings and activities, by reviewing both inquiries and complaints received from the community, and by conducting follow-up surveys and interviews of both individuals and community groups.

- F. An administrative or supervisory member of the Department, at the discretion of the Chief of Police, shall conduct a random audit of at least one citizen contact and/or radio call response by each member of the Department on a quarterly basis.

The audit may be conducted in person, by mail, by telephone, or in conjunction with other law enforcement related matters. The focus of the audit should be the level of the employee's competence, including any written work product, his/her behavior and attitude, and the general level of satisfaction and confidence created by the employee. The results of the random audit may be considered by supervisory officer(s) when the employee's performance is evaluated.

V. RESOLUTION OF PROBLEMS IN THE COMMUNITY

- A. The Department recognizes the critical and sensitive nature of relations between the community and the police. The Department is committed to proactively responding to any actions, practices, and attitudes by its employees that may contribute to, or exacerbate, problems, tensions, or grievances within the community. A proactive and sensitive response to the early signs of such actions, practices, and attitudes that negatively impact the community may mitigate, or prevent, the development of greater problems within the community.
- B. Any Department employee, who becomes aware of concerns within the community or from an individual regarding police activities or services in general, or the specific actions, practices, or attitude of an individual employee, shall advise a supervisor of those concerns within a reasonable period of time. Depending upon the urgency or severity of the information received by a supervisor, he/she will advise the Chief of Police of the information within a reasonable period of time.
- C. All levels of training are critical factors in positive community relations. As such, any and all sources of community or individual input, recommendations, and suggestions, a review of internal administrative investigations of employee conduct, consultations with those involved in the internal administrative investigations, and if deemed reasonably necessary by the Chief of Police, input from community groups formed in an advisory capacity, will be considered in evaluating the need(s) for new or remedial training for employees and any development or modification of Departmental policies, practices, procedures or programs.

VI. EVALUATION OF COMMUNITY RELATIONS EFFORTS

- A. Flexibility is a key element in a successful community relations program; therefore, a structured and regularly scheduled evaluation of the Department's community relations

activities and programs and their effectiveness is essential. On a quarterly basis, the member of the Department designated by the Chief of Police as responsible for the Department's community relations efforts will complete a written report to the Chief of Police evaluating the Department's community relations efforts and the community's satisfaction with the Department's performance. The survey may be conducted in person or by mail or telephone. It may be conducted with other law enforcement related matters. The evaluation will consider information obtained through community groups and individual citizen contacts and surveys, complaints, requests, inquiries, recommendations, and suggestions. The evaluation may include, but is not limited to: {CALEA 45.2.2}

1. A description of the current overall safety and security concerns of the community;
 2. A description of specific citizen safety and security concerns;
 3. An analysis of citizen perception of the level of employee competence;
 4. An analysis of employee behavior and attitude and their impact upon community relations efforts;
 5. An analysis of the community's satisfaction with existing Department community relations programs and activities;
 6. A description of potential problems that may impact the safety and security of the community or the ability of the Department to effectively, sensitively, and impartially provide police services to the community; and
 7. A statement of recommendation(s) for changes or improvements in the Department and its community relations programs and activities based upon an analysis of the previously identified concerns and problems within the community.
- B. After reviewing the evaluation of the Department's community relations efforts, the Department will take reasonably appropriate action to modify, expand, or reduce its community involvement activities to reflect the needs of the community.