



COMMUNITY RELATIONS

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I. POLICY

A. Commitment to Community Relations

The Anne Arundel County Police Department is committed to establishing close ties with and responding to the needs of the community. A well-organized community relations operation is required to elicit public support and to identify problems in the making.

B. Commitment to Corrective Action

The department is committed to correcting actions, practices, and attitudes that may contribute to community tensions and grievances. It is the joint responsibility of department personnel and members of the community to identify and rectify actions, procedures, and attitudes that may lead to racial and other unrest. By recognizing such problems at an early stage, the department can initiate preventive action to ward off greater problems in the future.

C. Responsibility of Department Employees

All personnel share the responsibility of achieving the department's community relation's objectives. Because the conduct of each employee reflects on the department as a whole, the burden of achieving our objectives must be everyone's. A unified, coordinated effort requires the participation, enthusiasm, and skills of all personnel.

II. COMMUNITY RELATIONS *DIVISION*

A. Role of Section Commander

The commander of the Community Relations *Division* is responsible for managing the department's community relation's function.

B. Organization

The Community Relations *Division* falls under the command of the *Patrol Services Bureau Commander*. Its major functions and components are:

1. Community Relations Function

The *division* serves as a direct liaison with community groups to foster a better working relationship between the department and the communities.

2. Crime Prevention Function

Through its Crime Prevention Unit, the *division* provides support and subject matter expertise in the area of crime prevention and avoidance. It conducts crime avoidance surveys for businesses and residences, and oversees neighborhood watch programs (refer to Index Code 901).

3. Volunteer Programs

The *division* manages the department's volunteer Reserve Officer program and the Volunteers In Police Service (VIPS) program – both of which provide valuable staff and technical support to line operations.

III. COMMUNITY RELATIONS PLAN

The Community Relations *Division* is responsible for developing and administering a community relations plan for the section to include, at a minimum, the following:

- A. Establishing liaison with existing community organizations or establishing community groups where they are needed;
- B. Assisting in the development of community involvement policies for the agency;
- C. Publicizing agency objectives, community problems, and successes;
- D. Conveying information transmitted from citizens' organizations to appropriate officers in the department;
- E. Improving departmental practices bearing on police-community interaction; and
- F. Developing problem oriented or community policing strategies, if any.

IV. PROGRAM EVALUATION

The *division* commander will evaluate all community relations programs on an ongoing basis. Communities are not static entities; consequently, the demands placed on the department vary. Programs designed to meet community needs should be evaluated frequently to ensure that they still address community concerns.

V. DISTRICT COMMANDERS' RESPONSIBILITIES

A. At least quarterly, patrol district commanders will prepare and submit to the Chief of Police a report that includes the following elements:

- 1. A description of current concerns voiced by the community;
- 2. A description of potential problems that have a bearing on law enforcement activities within the community and;
- 3. A statement of recommended actions that address previously identified concerns and problems and;
- 4. A statement of progress made toward addressing previously identified concerns and problems.

B. Any employee who has information that is relevant to the report listed above should forward an inter-office memorandum to the appropriate district commander for inclusion in the report.

C. The department provides facilities for police-community councils to conduct regular meetings in each patrol district. In order to obtain community input in the development of department policies; patrol district commanders and platoon commanders should attend regularly scheduled police-community relations council meetings, and will attend neighborhood, civic, and social meetings upon invitation.

VI. PROPONENT UNIT: Community Relations *Division*.

VII. CANCELLATION: This directive cancels Index Code 900, dated 08-18-08.