

Community Policing and Relations

346.1 PURPOSE AND SCOPE

The purpose of this policy is to provide guidelines for efforts by the Sahuarita Police Department (SPD) to engage in community policing and develop community relationships.

346.2 POLICY

It is the policy of the SPD to regularly practice community policing and promote positive relationships between department members and the community. We will strive to do this by treating community members with dignity and respect and engaging with them via different forums to help develop relevant policy and operations that the public will have free access to.

346.3 DEFINITIONS

- A. **Community Policing:** The philosophy and practice of working with community members and organizations to identify and solve different policing and some quality of life issues (problem solving). SPD members may serve as a conduit and/or resource for community or regional resources that can help address different issues.
- B. **Neighborhood Oriented Policing Project (NOP):** An NOP is an issue brought to the attention of the SPD specific to a particular neighborhood or area of Town such as but not limited to, occurrences of vandalism, traffic violations, thefts, etc.

346.4 MEMBER RESPONSIBILITIES

- A. Members should, as time and circumstances reasonably permit:
 - 1. Make casual and consensual contacts with community members to promote positive community relationships.
 - 2. Become reasonably familiar with the schools, businesses and community groups in their assigned jurisdictional (sector, beat, etc.) areas.
 - 3. Work with community members and supervisors/superior officers to identify issues and solve problems related to community relations and public safety.
 - 4. Conduct regular patrols along with periodic foot, bicycle and ATV patrols of their assigned areas to facilitate interaction with community members.

346.5 COMMUNITY POLICING RESPONSIBILITIES

- A. Every member of this department is responsible for the on-going practice and development of positive relationships with the community to better enhance our community policing philosophy and practice.
- B. Members may be tasked with different aspects of community policing and engaging the community and may be responsible for:

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1. Responding to requests from SPD and/or Town members and the community for assistance in identifying issues and solving problems related to community policing, relations and public safety.
 - (a) These efforts will likely include tracking all NOP projects in the SPD Records Management System (RMS).
2. Organizing surveys, as assigned, to measure the condition of the SPD's relationship with the community.
3. Working with community groups, SPD members and other community resources to:
 - (a) Identify and solve public safety problems within the community.
 - (b) Organize programs and activities that help build positive relationships between the SPD and the community and provide community members with an improved understanding of the SPD's community policing philosophy and practice and general operations.
4. Working with the Field Services Division (FSD) Commander to develop patrol deployment plans that allow members the time to participate in community engagement and problem-solving activities.
5. Recognizing SPD members and community members for exceptional work or performance in community policing and community relations efforts.
6. Attending community meetings and events, as assigned, to obtain information on community needs.
7. Assisting with the SPD's response to events that may affect community relations, such as an incident where the conduct of a member is called into public question.
8. Informing the Chief of Police and others of developments and needs related to the furtherance of the SPD's community policing goals, as appropriate.

346.6 COMMUNITY POLICING AND PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT SURVEYS

- A. The Special Services Division (SSD) Commander and FSD Commander, in coordination with the Town, should arrange for a survey of community members and SPD members to be conducted annually to assess the condition of the relationship between the SPD and the community. Survey questions should be designed to evaluate perceptions of the following:
 1. Overall performance of the SPD
 2. Overall competence of SPD members (sworn and civilian)
 3. Attitude and behavior of SPD members (sworn and civilian)
 4. Level of community trust in the SPD
 5. Safety, security or other concerns
- B. A written summary of the compiled results of the survey should be provided to the Chief of Police and published in the SPD Annual Report.

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346.7 COMMUNITY ACTIVITIES AND PROGRAMS

- A. Members may, at times, be assigned to organize and/or assist with programs and activities that create opportunities for SPD members and community members, especially youth, to interact in a positive setting. Examples of such programs and events include:
1. Participation by SPD members in athletic programs (e.g., baseball, basketball, soccer, bowling).
 2. SPD and/or Town Events (e.g., charity events, National Night Out, Fiesta Sahuarita, WinterFest, etc.).
 3. Youth leadership and life skills mentoring (Police Explorers Program).
 4. School Resource Officer program.
 5. Neighborhood Watch and crime prevention programs.
 6. Volunteers in Police Services (VIPS)
 7. Arizona Rangers
 8. Citizens Police Academy

346.8 INFORMATION SHARING

- A. The Public Information Officer (PIO) team will work to develop methods and procedures for the convenient sharing of information (e.g., major incident notifications, significant changes in SPD operations, etc.) between the SPD and community members. Examples of information-sharing methods include:
1. Community meetings.
 2. Town sponsored special events.
 3. Social media (see the Department Use of Social Media Policy - 347).
 4. Department and Town website postings.
 5. Any other means of communication as approved by the Chief of Police.
- B. Information should be regularly refreshed, to inform and engage community members continuously.

346.9 LAW ENFORCEMENT OPERATIONS AND EDUCATION

- A. The SSD and FSD commanders should develop methods to educate community members on general law enforcement operations so they may understand the work that officers do to keep the community safe. Examples of educational methods include:
1. Development and distribution of informational cards/flyers.
 2. SPD/Town website postings.
 3. Presentations to driver education classes, community groups, etc.

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4. Instruction in schools.
 5. Department ride-alongs.
 6. Scenario/Simulation exercises with community member participation.
 7. Internships at the SPD.
 8. Citizen Police Academy.
- B. Instructional information should include direction on how community members should interact with the police during enforcement or investigative contacts and how community members can make a complaint to the SPD regarding alleged misconduct or inappropriate job performance by members of the SPD.

346.10 COMMUNITY POLICING AND PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT SAFETY

- A. SPD members responsible for community policing and community engagement activities must consider the safety of the community participants in different programs and, as much as reasonably practicable, not allow them to be present in any location or situation that would jeopardize their safety.
- B. SPD members in charge of community policing and engagement activities need to ensure that participating community members have completed applicable waiver forms before participation. A parent or guardian must complete the waiver form if the participating community member has not reached 18 years of age.
- C. Community members may be subject to a criminal history check before approval for participation in certain program and activities such as but not limited to:
1. Citizen Police Academy
 2. VIPS
 3. Ride-alongs
 4. Police Explorers Program

346.11 TRANSPARENCY

- A. The SPD publishes an annual report which shows statistical data and analysis regarding the department's operations.
- B. The SPD will strive to conduct an annual Citizen Police Academy during which it accepts significant feedback from participants associated with SPD policy and procedure.
- C. The SPD posts numerous SPD operational policies on the SPD webpage such as, but not limited to:
1. Use of Force
 2. Vehicle Pursuit and Code-3 Driving,
 3. Investigation and Report Writing

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4. Code of Conduct
5. Participation in Pima Regional Tactical Teams
6. Hazardous Material Response
7. Contacts and Temporary Detentions
8. Body-worn Cameras (BWC) (Portable Audio/Video Recorders)
9. Traffic Enforcement
10. Vehicle Impounds
11. UAS and Robotics
12. DUI Enforcement
13. Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)
14. Property and Evidence
15. Records Bureau Operations
16. Animal Control Program
17. Temporary Detention Facility
18. Custodial Searches
19. Personnel Complaints
20. Early Warning System

346.12 TRAINING

- A. Subject to available resources, members should receive training related to this policy, including training on topics such as:
 1. Effective social interaction and communication skills.
 2. Cultural and ethnic diversity and relations.
 3. Building community partnerships.
 4. Community policing and problem-solving principles.
 5. Enforcement actions and their effects on community relations.

346.13 POLICY ISSUANCE OR REVIEW

12/04/2024 - Reviewed by Chief John D. Noland - SP#002