



Atlanta Police Department – Standard Operating Procedure			
	APD.SOP.7037 – Homeless Outreach Proactive Enforcement (HOPE) Unit Effective Date: December 31st, 2024		
Chief Darin Schierbaum	Signature by: DS	Date Signed: 12/31/2024	Expires: 2028

SIGNIFICANT CHANGES

APD Staff,

The Policy and Standards Section is dedicated to providing the department, and its employees, with accurate, understandable and transparent policies. In order to publish policies that reflect the most up-to-date standards, the Policy and Standard Section regularly reviews all policies to ensure that they are reflective of the current mission and objectives of the Atlanta Police Department.

No significant changes were found during the review and renewal of APD.SOP.7037 H.O.P.E. however, we encourage you to read the policy below in its entirety to better understand that the Homeless Outreach Proactive Enforcement Team:

- Will respond to all requests completed on APD Form 674 and sent to AtlantaCops@Atlantaga.gov and handle any complaints associated with homeless encampments throughout the City of Atlanta. (Section 4.2.3)
- Will proactively patrol and monitor homeless encampments to ensure that no laws are violated and to continue outreach services to establish a harmonious rapport with the homeless community. (Section 4.2.5)
- Will visit known homeless camps during issues of inclement weather warnings and issue weather advisory warnings. (Section 4.3.1)

Thank you and stay informed!

Policy and Standards Section

Planning, Research, and Accreditation Unit

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1. PURPOSE	3
2. POLICY	3
3. RESPONSIBILITIES	3
4. PROCEDURE	3
4.1 Police Encounters with Homeless Citizens	3
4.2 Homeless Outreach Proactive Enforcement	4
4.3 Inclement Weather Contingency Plan	4
4.4 External Outreach Services	4
5. DEFINITIONS	5
6. CANCELLATIONS	5
7. REFERENCES	5
8. HOPE Assistance Request Form	6

1. PURPOSE

The Atlanta Police Department will ensure the fair and equal treatment of all persons experiencing homelessness. The purpose of this policy is to establish policies and procedures for employees of the Atlanta Police Department during citizen encounters involving homeless persons and/or encampments.

2. POLICY

The primary purpose of the HOPE Team is to identify and eliminate all homeless encampments in the City of Atlanta by trying to place homeless individuals in temporary housing. All sworn employees will exercise reasonable discretion whenever the circumstance dictates and will provide proper notice to those who are unlawfully trespassing on public property in accordance with the law.

3. RESPONSIBILITIES

- 3.1 The Community Oriented Policing Section (COPS) Commander will be responsible for coordinating the operations of the Homeless Outreach Proactive Enforcement (HOPE) Team.
- 3.2 The HOPE Team will serve as a liaison between the Zones and community groups, social organizations, business groups, civic organizations, schools, and other organized groups (CALEA 6th ed. Standard 45.2.1a).
- 3.3 All employees are responsible for complying with this directive.

4. PROCEDURE

4.1 POLICE ENCOUNTERS WITH HOMELESS CITIZENS

- 4.1.1 Absent reasonable articulable suspicion that a homeless person is violating the law, officers will approach homeless individuals as they would any other citizen. Homelessness, on its own, does not constitute reasonable suspicion.
- 4.1.2 If reasonable suspicion is present, officers may detain and identify the homeless citizen.
- 4.1.3 No personal property will be searched or seized unless reasonable articulable suspicion or probable cause exists.
- 4.1.4 Many homeless individuals keep medication and/or medical documents in their personal belongings that may appear to be trash. Therefore, no personal property will be destroyed or discarded unless it is contaminated or considered a health hazard. (APD.SOP.6030 Property and Evidence Control)
- 4.1.5 Unless due to a safety or security concern, homeless citizens cannot be forced to move to another location if they have a legal right to be present at a location.
- 4.1.6 Officers will notify the HOPE team using APD Form 674, whenever homeless encampments are located and/or when homeless individuals would benefit from different outreach services (i.e. health, mental health, social and housing services).
- 4.1.7 Officers that identify a homeless person who suffers episodes of mental illness will notify a trained Crisis Intervention (CIT) officer for assistance whenever feasible. Otherwise, they will follow policy and procedures outlined in APD.SOP.3082 Mentally Ill and complete an incident report. (CALEA 6th ed. Standard 41.2.7) (OCGA 37-3-42).

4.2 HOMELESS OUTREACH PROACTIVE ENFORCEMENT

- 4.2.1 The HOPE Team will act as a liaison between homeless citizens and external outreach services.
- 4.2.2 HOPE Team officers will make every effort to verify that homeless citizens are without options for them to receive services or assistance from the homeless shelters. The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) requires verification be completed before a person can receive housing services.
- 4.2.3 The HOPE Team officers will respond to all requests on APD Form 674 and handle any complaints associated with homeless encampments throughout the City of Atlanta.
- 4.2.4 HOPE Team officers will visit the encampments to determine the follow:
1. Who owns the property in question?
 2. How many persons are living within the encampment?
 3. If there are environmental hazards that need to be handled by trained personnel.
 4. What proper services are needed in order to clean up camp sites.
- 4.2.5 HOPE Team officers will notify all individuals found in these homeless encampments with the following information:
1. That they are violating the law by camping in the park, under overpasses, etc.
 2. Warning that they will be subject to further law enforcement if they remain in the area.
 3. The location of alternate shelters.
 4. The date by which they must vacate the area.
- 4.2.6 The HOPE Team officer will proactively patrol and monitor homeless encampments to ensure that no laws are violated and to continue outreach services to establish a harmonious rapport with the homeless community.

4.3 INCLEMENT WEATHER CONTINGENCY PLAN

- 4.3.1 During an inclement weather warning the HOPE Team will visit known homeless camps and issue weather advisory warnings whenever there is an 80% chance of it occurring. Individuals in need of desperate help will be transported to a safe shelter.

4.4 OUTREACH COLLABORATING PARTNERS

- 4.4.1 The following are the HOPE Team outreach collaborating partners:
- ❖ United Way: 404-524-2540
 - ❖ Gateway Center: 404-215-6615 or 404-215-6600
 - ❖ Travelers Aid: 404-817-7070
 - ❖ Recovery Consultants: 404-292-7590

- ❖ Community Friendship: 404-875-0381 or 404-577-0270
- ❖ Grady Health Systems (Psychiatric Unit): 404-616-1000
- ❖ Behavioral Health Link: 404-420-3202 or 800-715-4225 Open 24/7
- ❖ St. Joseph Mercy Care: 678-843-8900
- ❖ Department of Veterans Affairs: 404-656-5933
- ❖ Salvation Army: 404-486-2750
- ❖ City of Refuge: 404-564-7764
- ❖ Community Court: 404-588-5902

5. DEFINITIONS

Homeless: A person who lacks a fixed, regular and adequate residence, or has a primary residence that is described below:

- A habitation that is not meant for human habitation, such as cars, parks, sidewalks or an abandoned building (on the street).
- A place or institution that is transitional and that provides emergency shelter or temporary accommodation.
- Is being discharged from an institution, such as a mental health or substance abuse treatment facility or a jail/ prison, in which the person has been a resident for 90 days or less and no subsequent residence has been identified and the person lacks the resources and support networks needed to obtain housing.
- A person who may be fleeing domestic violence or other life-threatening condition that relates to violence against the individual or family member.

Homeless encampments: A place where homeless individuals gather to store their property and/or sleep.

6. CANCELLATIONS

APD.SOP.7037 Homeless Outreach Proactive Enforcement (HOPE) Team, September 11th, 2020

7. REFERENCES

Commission on Accreditation of Law Enforcement Agencies (CALEA) 6th ed. Standards; 41.2.1 and 45.2.7.



Atlanta Police Department
Homeless Outreach Proactive Enforcement Request

Date: _____ Zone: _____ Beat: _____
Address: _____
Incident Number(s): _____

Description of the Problem(s):

Citizen with Complaint:

Name: _____ Phone Number: _____

Problems Indicated by the Community (check all that apply):

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Abandoned Buildings | <input type="checkbox"/> Littering |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Abandoned Vehicles | <input type="checkbox"/> Loitering |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Break & Entering/Burglaries | <input type="checkbox"/> Noise Violations |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Building Code Violations | <input type="checkbox"/> Open Container |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Criminal Damaging | <input type="checkbox"/> Panhandling |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Curfew Violations | <input type="checkbox"/> Animal Violations |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Disorderly Conduct | <input type="checkbox"/> Prostitution |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Drugs | <input type="checkbox"/> Public Indecency |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Gambling | <input type="checkbox"/> Theft from Vehicles |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Graffiti | <input type="checkbox"/> Trespassing |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Illegal Dumping | <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Juveniles | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Liquor Establishments | _____ |

City Departments to Involve (check all that apply):

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> City Manager | <input type="checkbox"/> Corrections |
| <input type="checkbox"/> City Council | <input type="checkbox"/> Law Department |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Planning & Community Development | <input type="checkbox"/> Fire Department |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Parks & Recreation | <input type="checkbox"/> Sanitation Department |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Public Works | <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

Requesting Officer: _____ ID #: _____



Atlanta Police Department Homeless Outreach Proactive Enforcement Request

Description of Problem(s):

	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>		
Multiple Incidents:	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Incident Numbers:	_____
Incidents Related:	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	How?	_____
Incident Cause Harm:	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	How?	_____
Description of the Problem:				

Problems Indicated by the Community (check all that apply):

<input type="checkbox"/> Abandoned Buildings	<input type="checkbox"/> Littering
<input type="checkbox"/> Abandoned Vehicles	<input type="checkbox"/> Loitering
<input type="checkbox"/> Break & Entering/Burglaries	<input type="checkbox"/> Noise Violations
<input type="checkbox"/> Building Code Violations	<input type="checkbox"/> Open Container
<input type="checkbox"/> Criminal Damaging	<input type="checkbox"/> Panhandling
<input type="checkbox"/> Curfew Violations	<input type="checkbox"/> Animal Violations
<input type="checkbox"/> Disorderly Conduct	<input type="checkbox"/> Prostitution
<input type="checkbox"/> Drugs	<input type="checkbox"/> Public Indecency
<input type="checkbox"/> Gambling	<input type="checkbox"/> Theft from Vehicles
<input type="checkbox"/> Graffiti	<input type="checkbox"/> Trespassing
<input type="checkbox"/> Illegal Dumping	<input type="checkbox"/> Other:
<input type="checkbox"/> Juveniles	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Liquor Establishments	_____

City Departments to Involve (check all that apply):

<input type="checkbox"/> City Manager	<input type="checkbox"/> Aviation
<input type="checkbox"/> City Council	<input type="checkbox"/> Corrections
<input type="checkbox"/> Planning & Community Development	<input type="checkbox"/> Human Resources
<input type="checkbox"/> Parks & Recreation	<input type="checkbox"/> Information Technology
<input type="checkbox"/> Watershed Management	<input type="checkbox"/> Law Department
<input type="checkbox"/> Public Works	<input type="checkbox"/> Fire Department
<input type="checkbox"/> Solid Waste	<input type="checkbox"/> Transportation
<input type="checkbox"/> Other:	