




Clayton County Police Department

PROCEDURES

Subject COMMUNITY AFFAIRS & CRIME PREVENTION			Procedure # G1
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I. PURPOSE

To provide guidelines and procedures for the Clayton County Police Department (CCPD) to implement and oversee community-based educational and crime prevention while also utilizing civilian volunteers for departmental functions and tasks that do not require sworn officers, thereby fostering positive community relations and allowing law enforcement to focus on duties requiring their expertise.

II. POLICY

It is the policy of the Clayton County Police Department (CCPD) to use educational and crime prevention programs, and civilian volunteers to foster positive public relations and increase community safety. This strategy allows sworn officers to concentrate on core law enforcement duties. The Community Affairs Unit (CAU) is responsible for implementing these initiatives and familiarizing sworn officers, especially those assigned to the Uniform Patrol Division, with the Department's offerings.

III. DEFINITIONS

Citizen Volunteer: A civilian affiliated with the Clayton County Police Department (CCPD), who has applied, qualified and been accepted to serve in a part-time, unsalaried, non-sworn capacity.

Community-Oriented Policing (COP): A philosophy that combines traditional aspects of law enforcement with prevention measures, problem solving, community engagement and partnerships.

Intelligence-Led Policing (ILP): A policing model which is built around risk assessment and risk management and is a strategic, future-oriented and targeted approach to crime control, focusing upon the identification, analysis and management of persisting and developing problems or risks.

Problem-Oriented Policing (POP): A philosophy that involves the identification and analysis of specific crime, disorder problems and trends in order to develop effective response strategies in conjunction with ongoing assessment(s).

Volunteers in Police Services (VIPS) Program: A program designed to allow citizen volunteers to serve their community by performing certain functions and tasks that benefit the Clayton County Police Department (CCPD) and community, as well as serving to increase community relations.

IV. ORGANIZATION & OPERATION

A. Community Affairs Unit (CAU) Command Authority

1. The Support Services Division Commander (Major), or authorized designee, is in charge of operations for the CAU.
2. Besides their normal shift assignment, officers assigned to the CAU might be required to work other hours, weekends, and holidays based on the needs of the Department.
3. Officers assigned to the CAU shall report to the CAU Commander, or authorized designee (hereinafter referred to as the CAU Commander), for their assignment.
4. It will be the responsibility of the CAU Commander to inform the E911/Communications Center anytime officers of the CAU are participating and/or assisting with community functions, special events and/or details, e.g., parades, funeral processions and other special operations.

B. Community Affairs Unit (CAU) Selection

Announcements regarding the selection of members for the CAU will be made to all employees within the Department as positions become available. Personnel must meet the minimum personal qualifications for selection to specialized units as outlined in CCPD SOP: *B1: Organization, Direction & Management*, and any additional requirements listed in the Department's Gateway Program for the position they are seeking.

C. Community Affairs Unit (CAU) Planning and Scheduling

1. The CAU Commander shall be responsible for the creation and distribution of a *Weekly Event Agenda*, which will be distributed weekly, via the County email system, to the Command Staff, all Uniform Patrol Division (UPD) Precinct Captains, or authorized designees, concerned and affected personnel, and the Clayton County Board of Commissioners' Constituent Aides.
2. Each Friday, the CAU Commander shall notify the On-Call/Weekend Duty Captain scheduled for the following week, in person or by telephone, of any events scheduled during their upcoming week of duty.

D. Community Affairs Unit (CAU) and/or Other Department Personnel Responsibilities

1. The CAU develops and oversees the entire community relations program, while the Community Liaison serves as a specific, direct contact person between the CCPD and the community. For the purpose of this policy the CAU shall encompass the Community Liaison.
2. The CAU's primary purpose is to perform crime prevention functions and enhance community security. Its core functions are:

a. Crime Prevention: The CAU serves as a centralized source of information for families, homes, and businesses to make them more secure.

1) The CAU shall develop proactive strategies like community-oriented policing (COP) and problem-oriented policing (POP); and

2) Collaborate with the Intelligence Unit on intelligence-led policing (ILP) strategies using data analysis to guide crime prevention and community engagement efforts.

See also CCPD SOP: *E7: Crime Analysis & Criminal Intelligence*.

b. Community Relationships: The CAU shall build close relationships through a community policing philosophy and various outreach programs.

c. Educational Programs: The CAU will develop and implement programs to inform the public about law enforcement roles, responsibilities and how to work together to combat crime.

3. In addition to its core functions, the CAU offers a number of activities and programs to include but are not limited to:
 - a. Responding to Inquiries: Helping citizens regarding crime prevention and other related matters.
 - b. Crime Awareness Education: Conducting programs to raise crime awareness for the community, neighborhoods, and businesses.
 - c. Fostering Positive Interactions: Designing strategies to increase positive interactions between law enforcement and the community.
 - d. Developing Community Programs: Overseeing initiatives such as Neighborhood Watch, Citizens Police Academy (CPA), and the Volunteers in Police Services (VIPS) Program.
 - e. Assignment of Liaisons: Assigning specific liaisons to different sectors and communities within the County to facilitate communication.
 - f. Mentoring Programs: Overseeing initiatives such as the Clayton County Police Public Safety Cadet Program.
4. The CAU will utilize proactive and reactive methods in the performance of their duties.
 - a. Proactive Methods: Proactive policing involves acting on the CAU's own initiative to prevent crime before it occurs. Key proactive methods include:
 - 1) Building Public Relationships: Interacting with residents and businesses at neighborhood watches, community gatherings, and other local events to build trust.
 - 2) Providing Education: Attending community meetings and visiting schools to give educational programs on crime awareness and prevention techniques.
 - 3) Creating Partnerships: Collaborating with schools, businesses, and other agencies to develop long-term solutions for community-specific problems.
 - 4) Hosting Outreach Programs: Managing programs like the Citizens Police Academy (CPA) to educate the public on department operations, and the Volunteers in Police Services (VIPS) program to engage citizens in non-enforcement tasks.
 - b. Reactive Methods: Reactive policing involves the CAU responding to crimes after they have occurred. Key reactive methods include:
 - 1) Performing Area Canvasses: Going door-to-door in a neighborhood or business district to gather additional information from residents and witnesses.
 - 2) Assisting with Follow-up Investigations: Providing support to officers by following up on community-related leads or interviewing witnesses and victims.
 - 3) Responding to Calls for Service: Working alongside patrol officers to respond to non-emergency calls or addressing community concerns that arise from a specific incident.
 - 4) Victim and Witness Support: Providing resources and assistance to individuals affected by a crime, which can help in building trust and gathering information.
 - 5) Media and Public Information Management: Releasing information to the public to inform the community, manage public perception, and potentially solicit tips.
5. Department personnel designated to attend a community meeting, such as those held by Neighborhood Watch groups or Homeowners Associations (HOAs), shall document and note the details and topics discussed or covered. Following the meeting, Department personnel shall complete a meeting debriefing *Memorandum (Memo)* and forward it to the concerned Sector Captain and/or any other concerned or affected personnel.
6. Department personnel designated to attend a community meeting **shall not** depart from the meeting until it is completed and all persons in attendance have also departed.

7. As directed and/or approved by the Chief of Police, or authorized designee (hereinafter referred to as the Chief of Police), the CAU Commander will schedule periodic meetings with community business groups, Neighborhood Watch groups, Homeowners Associations (HOAs), and community leaders.

V. RESPONSIBILITIES & THE BASIS FOR PROGRAMS

- A. All sworn personnel, not just the CAU, share the duties and responsibilities of crime prevention as well as achieving and maintaining positive community relationships.
- B. Educational and crime prevention programs shall be based on statistics obtained through crime analysis of crime types and trends within defined geographic areas. These programs aim to educate the community and correct misconceptions about crime and how it is handled. Effective strategies include focusing on the most problematic crimes, targeting high-risk locations, and fostering community partnerships to prevent crime and promote public safety.

VI. EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS

The Department shall develop, implement and maintain community education programs aimed at combating crime. The purpose of these programs is to foster cooperation and a shared understanding between the public and law enforcement. These programs may include, but are not limited to, internships, courses and/or curriculum on related topics, first-hand observation of on-duty law enforcement in various capacities, and organizations and/or clubs intended to develop the interest of potential or future law enforcement professionals, and engage youth in positive activities.

A. Citizens Police Academy

The CCPD offers both a Citizen's Police Academy and a Junior Citizen's Police Academy.

1. Citizen's Police Academy (CPA)

The CPA was established by the Department to educate adults regarding the function and operations of the CCPD in order to improve their understanding of the role of law enforcement in society; to serve as a resource for the neighborhoods in the community on how law enforcement operates; and to provide general guidance and advice on specific issues that affect citizens in Clayton County.

2. Junior Citizen's Police Academy (JR CPA)

The JR CPA is an engaging program designed to educate children between the ages of eight (8) to eighteen (18) years of age (must be enrolled in school) about law enforcement and community safety. Overall, the JR CPA serves as a bridge between young citizens and the Department, empowering the next generation to be informed, engaged, and proactive members of their community.

B. Cadet Program

1. The Clayton County Police Public Safety Cadet Program is a program designed to provide young people (typically ages 14-20) with knowledge, skills, and practical experience related to public safety and law enforcement careers through mentorship and hands-on training.
2. Clayton County Police Cadet Post #5 serves members within Clayton County, with the goal of teaching leadership skills and an appreciation for their community.
3. **Cadets are not sworn officers and will not replace law enforcement; however, they can be used to support and assist law enforcement personnel.**

The Cadets may help with community events and crime prevention programs, under the direction and supervision of sworn officers. They shall be utilized in the planning, organization, and presentation of programs within their expertise, abilities, and training.

4. The *Clayton County Police Cadet Manual* (see *Appendix D* of this policy) is an official publication of the Department. It contains the policies, procedures, and regulations relating to the Department's Public Safety Cadet Program Post #5. These directives are established to direct all Cadets while carrying out their duties and responsibilities.

Note: Units with the responsibility of operating, managing and maintaining any juvenile-related law enforcement and/or prevention programs shall conduct an annual review and complete a written evaluation for each program.

C. Ride-Along

1. Through the Ride-Along Program the Department encourages and permits adult citizens to participate in the direct observation of sworn personnel performing law enforcement duties. A ride-along is primarily designed to educate the public about law enforcement operations and address public perceptions of crime and police responses.
2. Candidates shall meet the following criteria to be eligible for participation in the program:
 - a. Must be eighteen (18) years of age or older;
 - b. No felony or recent misdemeanor convictions on the candidate's criminal history;
 - c. Reside and/or work within the boundaries of Clayton County;
 - d. Must consent to and sign a *Release and Hold Harmless* form; and
 - e. Provide a copy of the candidate's current driver's license.

Upon successful completion of the application process, notification shall be made to the Chief of Police, that the candidate has met the criteria for eligibility to participate as a ride-along. The number of ride-a-longs permitted, and the final approval of each candidate to ride with an officer, is at the discretion of the Chief of Police.

3. Adult family members of sworn officers can apply for a ride-along to better familiarize them with routine police work. This family familiarization ride-along will be with an officer/supervisor who is not related by blood or marriage to the applicant, and it is limited to no more than once every twelve (12) months. The applicant must complete and sign the *CCPD Release and Hold Harmless/Police Vehicle* form (see *Appendix C* of this policy) prior to the ride-along.

D. Student Internships

The internship program is designed to provide an overview of the various components of the CCPD, including, but not limited to, patrol operations, criminal investigations, administration and training. Through student internships the Department provides opportunities for college undergraduates and graduates to participate in, learn, and directly observe law enforcement activities in an effort to encourage their interest in the law enforcement profession and recruit more interested and qualified candidates for employment with the CCPD. The program format is relatively flexible to accommodate the educational needs of the intern, the requirements of the intern's college or university, and the commitments of the Department.

The number of intern positions available, and the final approval of each candidate to become an intern, is at the discretion of the Chief of Police.

Student internship candidates shall meet the following criteria to be eligible to participate in the program:

1. Be eighteen (18) years of age or older;
2. Currently enrolled in an accredited college or university program which awards credit for participation in an internship program;
3. Must have the approval of the concerned college or university faculty advisor or sponsor;

4. Must pass a routine background check;
5. Agree to a waiver of liability as required by the Department; and
6. Have a flexible schedule to work irregular hours when needed.

VII. CRIME PREVENTION PROGRAMS & MEASURES

The Department shall develop, implement and maintain programs that focus on the prevention and reduction of crime in both residential and commercial areas. These programs may include, but are not limited to, assessing current security measures of residential and commercial properties, recommending crime prevention measures, fostering community involvement, and supporting the establishment of community crime prevention groups.

Evaluations of all crime prevention programs implemented by the CCPD shall be conducted quarterly. Quarterly reports of those evaluations will be completed, stored and maintained for future reference. Quarterly reports shall be forwarded through the chain of command, up to the Chief of Police.

A. Neighborhood Watch and Business Watch Programs

The Department places a priority on the organization and maintenance of Neighborhood Watch and Business Watch Programs in residential and commercial areas which are consistently targets of crimes. These programs are designed to teach crime prevention strategies and encourage community cooperation especially in areas frequently targeted by crime. As it relates to such programs, officers shall perform residential and commercial property walk-throughs and/or security assessments at the requests of concerned citizens.

B. Homeowners Association (HOA)

The Department offers several programs and initiatives that involve or benefit HOAs and promote community engagement and safety.

C. Juvenile Programs

The Department is committed to the development and perpetuation of youth and juvenile programs designed to prevent and control juvenile delinquency. All personnel shall be familiar with juvenile problems and established procedures for handling both criminal and non-criminal juvenile incidents as defined in CCPD SOP: *A10: Juvenile Procedures*.

D. Targeted Patrols

Officers conduct targeted patrols in response to notable crime trends and patterns determined through crime analysis (e.g., geographic areas, day of the week and time of day). Officers may increase their presence in such areas through foot and/or vehicle patrols to deter potential offenders.

E. General Patrols

General patrols cover a larger, assigned area with routine, often random patrols to deter crime and provide a visible police presence.

1. Officers may conduct general patrols by both vehicle and on foot, with each method offering distinct advantages.
2. Officers conduct general patrols specifically requested by citizens. Citizens may request general patrols for their residential or commercial property for temporary periods, such as when they are on vacation or when the property has been compromised by a recent burglary.
3. Other patrols may be conducted at the request of citizens. Officers and citizens may contact a Watch Office to identify the correct Sector/Beat for the location where the patrol is requested.
4. Officers assigned to a Sector or Beat, where an area or residential or commercial property to be checked is located, shall be responsible for the corresponding general patrol(s).

F. Community Time Management (CTM)

CTM is most accurately described as a measure or strategic element within a broader community-based approach, not a complete program in itself. Examples of CTM for crime prevention include after school programs, neighborhood watch, community clean-up, coordinated social and recreational events and group violence interventions.

G. Connect Clayton County Program

This program is used by the Department to improve public safety and strengthen partnerships with residents and businesses. Citizens can register their cameras online (<https://connectclayton.org/>) to help reduce crime and assist in investigations.

H. CCPD Website and Online Platforms

The Department utilizes its website and online platforms to engage the public and promote safety by sharing crime prevention tips, community program information, and safety strategies.

The CAU manages these community-focused initiatives, using digital tools to educate residents, foster collaboration and address public safety issues proactively.

VIII. CITIZEN FEEDBACK

Citizen feedback is crucial for the success of community-oriented policing (COP). It fosters trust, improves police effectiveness, and ensures that law enforcement practices align with the needs and expectations of the community.

A. Citizen Feedback Survey

The Department provides a way for citizens to provide feedback through the CCPD website.

1. A documented survey of citizen attitudes and opinions shall be conducted at least once every two (2) years with respect to the following: overall departmental performance; overall competency of departmental personnel; citizens' perception of officers' attitudes and behavior; community concern over safety and security within the Department's service area; and citizens' recommendations and suggestions for improvements.
2. The Support Services Division Commander shall carry out the survey.
3. The results of the survey of citizens' attitudes shall be compiled, with a written summary, and provided to the Chief of Police.
4. The results of the survey may be provided to the community when deemed appropriate.
5. The surveys shall be stored and maintained for future reference.

B. Commission on Accreditation for Law Enforcement Agencies (CALEA) Public Comment Portal

The CALEA Public Comment Portal allows community members to provide feedback, both positive and negative, on the Department's compliance with CALEA standards, its service to the community, and its public safety services during the accreditation process.

The ultimate goal of this feedback is to support continuous improvement and the pursuit of professional excellence within the Department, with comments accessible through the CCPD's website homepage.

IX. PUBLIC FACING DOCUMENTS

- A. The Department has created the Public Facing Document section, so members of the community can access the most current departmental policies and procedures. The majority of the Department's policies and procedures are available for citizens to view and download on the CCPD website (<http://www.claytonpolice.com/>), on the navigation menu, users will click on "How Do I..." and select "Departmental Policies".

- B. The sharing of departmental policies can significantly enhance community-oriented policing (COP) by fostering transparency, building trust, and improving communication between law enforcement and the public.

X. VOLUNTEERS IN POLICE SERVICES (VIPS) PROGRAM

A. Command

- 1. Citizen Volunteers will be assigned to and administered by the Community Affairs Unit (CAU).
- 2. The CAU Commander is responsible for overseeing the VIPS Program, supervising Citizen Volunteers, ensuring they are properly assigned, scheduled, and organized, and maintaining updated and accurate records for all Citizen Volunteers.

B. Volunteers in Police Services (VIPS) Prerequisites

- 1. In order to provide for the best service to the community and the Department, requirements must be established to ensure that the most qualified volunteers are accepted into the VIPS Program.
- 2. In order to be considered for a Citizen Volunteer position with this Department, the following requirements must be met successfully:
 - a. Must be at least eighteen (18) years of age.
 - b. Attended and successfully completed the Department's Citizens Police Academy (CPA). Exceptions will only be made at the discretion of the Chief of Police.
 - c. Must be a Clayton County resident; and
 - d. Undergo an application and acceptance process as to include:
 - 1) Submitting an "employment" application for the VIPS Program;
 - 2) Passing a background investigation process;
 - 3) Any other processes as may be required by the Department; and
 - 4) Approval and acceptance into the VIPS Program by the Chief of Police.

See also *Appendix A* of this policy for the *Clayton County Police Department Volunteers in Police Services (VIPS) Application*.

C. Volunteers in Police Services (VIPS) Orientation

Once accepted into the VIPS Program, Citizen Volunteers will undergo an orientation that will include:

- 1. Reviewing and signing the *Clayton County Police Department Awareness Statement*. (see *Appendix B* of this policy).
- 2. Assigning an employee number;
- 3. Issuing an employee ID badge (this badge **should not** grant any electronic access);
- 4. Completing necessary paperwork to establish an employee file;
- 5. Chain of command orientation;
- 6. General orientation on various roles they may be tasked with;
- 7. Policy orientation, especially pertaining to this policy, and other policies relevant to duties, functions, tasks that Citizen Volunteers perform and various components of the Department they will interact with;
- 8. Signing and understanding confidentiality requirements; and
- 9. Understanding their role and that they are not certified officers, and **do not** have arrest powers.

D. Volunteers in Police Services (VIPS) Training

1. Citizen Volunteers, in order to perform assigned tasks and functions, must be properly trained. It is a benefit to the community and the Department to ensure that Citizen Volunteers are properly trained in order to perform assignments at a professional level.
2. Citizen Volunteers will receive supervised on-the-job training, and any other training deemed beneficial or necessary.
3. Citizen Volunteers should be supervised at all times, to ensure proper guidance and direction.
4. Citizen Volunteers who wish to ride with on-duty uniformed officers may do so after completing the ride-along application process and being approved for the ride-along. The ride-along is not considered part of the VIPS Program. See also *Section VI.C. Ride-Along* of this policy.

E. Volunteers in Police Services (VIPS) Restrictions

Unless otherwise properly authorized, Citizen Volunteers:

1. Must openly wear their employee identification (ID) card at all times when performing in a VIPS capacity;
2. Shall not be issued any keys or granted unsupervised access to restricted areas;
3. Shall not be allowed to possess weapons of any kind, while on departmental property or in performing VIPS functions;
4. Must wear clothing that is readily distinguishable from those worn by sworn officers and in compliance with CCPD SOP: *D2: Dress Code & Grooming Standards*;
5. Shall not be issued any departmental equipment;
6. Are prohibited from operating County or departmental vehicles;
7. May only perform tasks that do not require the status of a sworn law enforcement officer;
8. Must never represent themselves, directly or indirectly, as law enforcement officers or as any other full-time employee;
9. Will always represent themselves as volunteers; and
10. May not volunteer more than twenty-four (24) hours per week, unless otherwise specifically authorized by the Chief of Police.

F. Volunteers in Police Services (VIPS) Duties

1. Assignment of Citizen Volunteers requires careful consideration of numerous factors, including their abilities, training, experience, limitations and other relevant aspects. Utilizing Citizen Volunteers in a consistent manner will ensure a more professional and competent VIPS Program.
2. Components and areas of the Department that Citizen Volunteers may best be utilized, in a supporting or indirect role, to include: Records, Reception/Front Desk, Community Affairs, and any other areas where administrative non-sworn functions exist.
3. Citizen Volunteers may sometimes be asked to provide services on week-ends, holidays or during off-peak hours (other than 0800-1700 hours).
4. Citizen Volunteers may be utilized in the following capacities, with the proper qualifications and/or training:
 - a. Telephone communications;
 - b. Filing of records and documents;
 - c. Assisting with public presentations, functions and events (this may involve week-ends or evenings);

- d. Data entry/scanning documents;
- e. Staffing public information locations;
- f. Manual labor;
- g. Assistance with other departmental administrative non-sworn functions; and
- h. Any other activity that is properly authorized.

G. Volunteers in Police Services (VIPS) Performance

1. Responsibilities and Expectations

Citizen Volunteers shall provide satisfactory and regular volunteer services, adhere to departmental rules and regulations, and complete a minimum of eight (8) hours of volunteer service per month.

2. Evaluations and Monitoring

Citizen Volunteers are subject to quarterly and annual evaluations to assess their performance. Citizen Volunteers must have a Driver's Record Query and a Criminal History Check conducted every six (6) months.

3. Fitness and Duty

Citizen Volunteers must be fully fit for duty and able to perform, when reporting for volunteer work.

4. If a Citizen Volunteer does not meet expectations or needs, consideration and action may be taken to rectify the situation, up to and including release from the VIPS Program.

5. Citizen Volunteers serve at the discretion of the Chief of Police, they are not subject to due process considerations and shall have no property interests in their continued service. Citizen Volunteers can be removed at any time, without recourse or just cause.

H. Opportunities, Status and Reinstatement Process

1. Status as a Citizen Volunteer does not preclude them from applying for and seeking actual employment with this Department, when positions become available.

2. Citizen Volunteers are considered to hold a provisional/temporary status. They are not compensated in any way and do not receive benefits of any kind, other than workers compensation.

3. A former Citizen Volunteer, who was removed or resigned from the VIPS Program, may be considered for reinstatement. If a former Citizen Volunteer wants to be reinstated they must submit a typed letter outlining their desire to be reinstated into the program. Reinstatement will be at the discretion of the Chief of Police.

4. Acceptance into the VIPS Program is not guaranteed, particularly when it comes to available positions.

I. Waivers and Modifications

Conditions and requirements of these procedures may be waived or modified at the discretion of the Chief of Police. Any such changes that involve a Citizen Volunteer must be documented in the volunteer's file to avoid future conflicts.

XI. CANCELLATION

This procedure amends and supersedes the following standard operating procedure *G1: Community Affairs & Crime Prevention*, dated November 29, 2023.