



Colorado Springs Police Department Standard Operating Procedure

DL-210-01 Crime Prevention Neighborhood Watch Program Patrol Operations Bureau – Patrol Division

Effective Date: 1/10/2022

Supersedes Date: 7/8/2013

.01 Purpose

The purpose of this directive is to establish uniform procedures for the administration of the *Neighborhood Watch* program in each patrol division.

.02 Cross Reference

[DL-134-02 Patrol Bureau](#)

[DL-1020-04 Crime Prevention](#)

.03 Definitions

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.04 Procedure

Neighborhood Watch is a national program designed to encourage citizen participation in assisting law enforcement in making neighborhoods safe.

The Crime Prevention Officers (CPOs) perform a wide variety of crime prevention and public education duties and report to the commander at their assigned division. This includes providing oversight and direction to the *Neighborhood Watch* programs in their assigned area command.

.10 Duties of the Crime Prevention Officer

Each division's CPO will be responsible for the following tasks associated with the *Neighborhood Watch* program:

- Monitor the progress of the neighborhood watch program on a division level as well as other crime prevention programs and initiatives.
- Speak at engagements that are requested by members of the community or *Neighborhood Watch*.

- Train *Neighborhood Watch* groups in crime prevention, workplace violence, home security, personal safety, and other topics related to crime prevention upon request. Contact the CPO to schedule training.
- Coordinate *Neighborhood Watch* block captains' meetings.
- Assist other crime prevention officers when more than one CPO is necessary to make a presentation.
- Perform Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) assessments in the community.
- Review site plans sent to CSPD by City Planning.
- Provide written fact sheets, pamphlets, and community alerts on crime prevention topics. CPOs will identify and obtain copies of existing publications on crime prevention from other law enforcement agencies and other sources to use as references.
- Order and maintain necessary crime prevention supplies, materials, and equipment.
- Attend community meetings upon request.
- Conduct community education classes and speaking engagements upon request.

.20 Requirements for Starting and Maintaining a Neighborhood Watch

The following steps must be taken when starting a *Neighborhood Watch* group:

- The group decides on the number of households their watch program can effectively cover, with the input and consent of the CPO. Consideration should be given to geographical layout of the neighborhood and the ease with which neighbors can observe each other's property. Some groups will involve all the houses on one street facing each other while other groups may be organized around alleys, greenbelts, or cul-de-sacs.
- The group will first contact the division CPO or their designee to see when they will be able to attend the start-up meeting.
- Once a date and time has been coordinated with the CPO or their designee, the neighborhood meeting organizer will communicate with prospective members about the meeting.
- Select *Neighborhood Watch* block captain.

- The *Neighborhood Watch* group must meet at least twice a year and report meeting dates to the CPO. This is a requirement and failure to do so will result in removal from the program.
- Once a group has been started, the *Neighborhood Watch* group needs to continue to meet at least twice a year. These meetings can be formal or informal and may include block parties, cookouts, ice cream socials, or National Night Out - on the first Tuesday of each August. An officer does not need to attend every meeting. The CPO should be notified of when the meetings are taking place for the group to receive credit for meeting.

The block captain has the following responsibilities:

- A block captain applicant must not have any prior felony convictions, must not be a registered sex offender, and must not be actively involved in criminal activities. The final approval rests with the division CPO and/or the division commander.
- Ensure the group meets at least twice a year by coordinating the meetings, cookouts, block parties, etc. and report the meeting dates to the CPO or their designee.
- Attend the **city-wide Chief's Town Hall** event each year or send a designee from the group.
- Develop a block map and roster for the group that includes names, addresses, and phone numbers, and e-mails for each group member.
- Develop an alert plan reflecting the name and phone number of each household - e-mail distribution list or phone tree for notification of suspicious activity.
- Inform and distribute to group members any crime related information received from the CPO or their designee.
- Be the liaison between your *Neighborhood Watch* group and the CPO or their designee.
- Sign application and memorandum of understanding and return to the division CPO or their designee.
- Attend two of the block captain training presentations offered throughout the year.
- Keep your contact information up to date with the CPO, e-mail address and phone numbers.
- The block captain will not decide who participates in the *Neighborhood Watch* group; it is open to all residents in the designated area unless the CPO deems otherwise. **HOA's do not control or manage any aspect of the *Neighborhood Watch* program, but participation in the program by board members is acceptable.**