



CHATHAM COUNTY POLICE DEPARTMENT

STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURES

SOP # OPS-024:
COMMUNITY-ORIENTED POLICING

EFFECTIVE: 02/01/2018
REVISION: 03/24/24

PURPOSE

The Chatham County Police Department strives to maintain an atmosphere of trust and cooperation within the community it serves. As a law enforcement agency, our primary concern is public safety. Since we depend on the community to help us prevent crime, as well as solve crimes, we must work in partnership through structured programs to maintain an atmosphere of trust.

POLICY

The CCPD will maintain various programs designed to involve the public in keeping our community safe. These programs will strive to teach the public about the functions of the police and what role they can play to help the police, all while keeping the spirit of community trust at the forefront.

PROCEDURES

I. NEIGHBORHOOD LIAISON OFFICERS

- A. The Neighborhood Liaison Officers' (NLO) primary duties include promoting the Departments' philosophical approach to Community Policing as well as:
1. Organize crime prevention groups in residential and business areas and maintain a liaison with these and other interested community groups.
 2. Enhancing community relations by addressing community perceptions or misperceptions of crime.
 3. Remaining acquainted with the needs of the community and defining areas where both traditional and non-traditional law enforcement services would be most effective to satisfy the community needs.
 4. Organizes and attends meetings of community organizations; also represents the CCPD at these organizations.
 5. Speaking at various civic and religious groups.
 6. Develops programs based on crime data i.e. crime type and geographical information.
 7. Provides feedback via Chain of Command regarding community meetings for the purpose of improving policies and practices of the department.
 8. Provides the department's on-going crime prevention efforts and activities to community groups to enhance transparency and trust.
 9. Engaging in foot patrol as directed.

10. And, other tasks necessary to accomplish the Community Oriented Policing philosophy.
- B. All sworn employees should be aware of, and when possible, appropriately offer their assistance to community policing activities taking place within their assigned patrol area.
- C. All employees shall make referrals to the appropriate resource either within or outside the Department in response to requests which exceed their knowledge or capability to accommodate.
- D. All sworn employees, upon request and when appropriate, shall provide knowledgeable and instructive advice to the public concerning steps that can be taken to reduce the opportunity for or lessen the loss from crime.
- E. All sworn employees, upon request and when appropriate, shall conduct brief surveys of homes or small businesses and orally advise the owner or occupant of security strengths and weaknesses.

II. CITIZENS POLICE ACADEMY

- A. The Citizens Police Academy (CPA) is a 2-day program designed to promote citizen interaction with department members. Academy students discover how the CCPD is organized, how it interacts with other components of the County government and the criminal justice system, and how the department and the community work together to improve the quality of life.
- B. Eligibility - Participation in the Citizens Police Academy can affect both citizen and officer safety. Participation in the program is at the sole and absolute discretion of the Chatham County Police Department. The following minimum standards are not a guarantee of approval for the academy.
 1. Applicants to the academy must:
 - a. Be at least 18 years of age;
 - b. Consent in writing to a criminal history and background check;
 - c. CCPD reserves the right to deny entry based on the background review.
 - d. Agree in writing to hold harmless and release Chatham County from any and all liability resulting from participation in the CPA.
- C. Procedure
 1. The CPA applications (form # [261 Citizen Police Academy Application](#)) will be available to the public on the official CCPD internet site and such other locations as the Chief of Police may direct. The application will incorporate the consent to a criminal history check.
 2. The applicants will complete and submit the application form to the Office of Professional Standards (OPS), which will be routed to the appropriate CCPD personnel to perform the criminal history check.
 3. Once the criminal history check is completed, the results of that check will be forwarded back to OPS. The Office of Professional Standards unit will consider the application and make the final decision to approve or disapprove the request.

4. Once the application is approved, they must complete the waiver and release of liability form.
 5. All application requests (approved or disapproved) will be maintained within the Office of Professional Standards unit.
- C. During the program, officers from individual units of CCPD will make presentations to the classes that describe their role in the successful operation of the department. The presentations provide class members with an opportunity, in an informal setting, to ask questions and share information with the Officers.

III. RIDE-ALONG PROGRAM

- A. Purpose - The purpose of the ride-along program is to afford eligible citizens the opportunity to experience the reality of police work by accompanying and observing officers during the actual performance of their duties.
- B. Eligibility - Participation in the ride-along program can potentially affect both citizen and officer safety. Participation in the program is at the sole and absolute discretion of the Chatham County Police Department meeting the following minimum standards is not a guarantee of approval for the program.
1. Applicants to the ride-along program must:
 - a. Be at least 18 years of age at the time of the ride-along;
 - b. Consent in writing to a criminal history record check which must reveal:
 - (1) No outstanding warrants;
 - (2) No unresolved felony or misdemeanor charges;
 - (3) No prior felony convictions, “guilty,” or “no contest” or similar pleas;
 - (4) No prior felony arrests within 10 years of the date of the application;
 - (5) No prior misdemeanor convictions, “guilty,” or “no contest” or similar pleas for acts occurring within 3 years of the date of the application.
 - c. Have received or will receive an honorable discharge if they served in the US Armed Forces.
 - d. Agree in writing to hold harmless and release Chatham County from any and all liability resulting from participation in the ride-along program.
 - e. Have a valid reason for participating (such as; interest in a law enforcement career, Citizen Police Academy graduates, understanding family members' job experiences, etc...).
 2. The Chief of Police may waive any or all of the foregoing conditions at his discretion. Any such waiver must be in writing and must be provided to the commander of the subject unit prior to the ride-along.
 3. Immediate family members (defined as spouses, domestic partners, parents, children and siblings) who meet the conditions in items “a” through “d”, above, will be given special consideration for the ride-along program with the intent of enabling them to gain insight into what their loved ones experience on a daily basis. They will not, however, be allowed to ride-along with their family member.

4. Former CCPD officers who left the department in good standing and current police officers from other recognized law enforcement agencies will be given special consideration for the ride-along program with the intent of enabling them to share the experience of current CCPD officers and allow them to maintain proficiency in current law enforcement methods and techniques. Such individuals are encouraged to apply for the program as often as they desire.
5. For additional information as a CCPD-police applicant ride-a-long, refer to CCPD Policy PNL-011 Recruitment and Selection (section: IV).

D. Procedure

1. Ride-along program applications will be available to the public on the official CCPD internet site and such other locations as the Chief of Police may direct. The ride-along program application will incorporate the consent to a criminal history check and the waiver of liability referenced above. It will also allow, but not require, the applicant to specify the unit with which he or she wishes to ride.
2. Ride-along applicants will complete and submit the application form which will be routed to the appropriate CCPD personnel to perform the criminal history check.
3. Once the criminal history check is completed, the results of that check and the application will be forwarded either to the Unit Commander of the unit with which the applicant wishes to ride, or if no particular unit is designated, to a randomly assigned Unit Commander. The Unit Commander considering the application will make the final decision to approve or disapprove the request.
4. All application request (approved or disapproved) will be maintained within the Unit that the request was made.
5. The Unit Commander will contact the applicant and inform him or her of the decision.
6. The Unit Commander will pair approved applicants for the ride-along with an officer with at least one year of continuous service with CCPD.
7. The Unit Commander will notify the subject officer's supervisors of the ride-along.
8. Immediately prior to the ride-along the Unit Commander or his designee will conduct an informational and safety briefing with the program participant. The safety briefing will include, but will not necessarily be limited to:
 - a. The participant's obligation to wear any safety vest or similar equipment provided by the department at all times during the ride-along;
 - b. Instruction on proper procedure in the event that the participant is separated from the officer during the ride-along.
9. Only one program participant will be allowed to accompany an officer at any given time.

- E. Media Applications - Ride-along program requests by accredited members of the media for purposes of reporting will be subject to the same terms and conditions set forth above. In addition, accepted media applicants will agree in writing to not follow an

officer onto private property, even at the invitation of a property owner. They will further agree in writing to indemnify and hold harmless Chatham County from any and all liability resulting from any breach of that agreement.

IV. INTERNSHIP PROGRAM

- A. The CCPD will maintain an internship program for students pursuing a career in law enforcement designed to allow them to gain an insight into the law enforcement profession and the Department
- B. Interns will generally be from the following schools:
 - 1. Georgia Southern University.
 - 2. Saint Leo University.
 - 3. Savannah State University.
 - 4. High Schools in Chatham County.
 - 5. Other schools as approved by the Office of Professional Standards & Training Division Commander.
- C. Those students who are interested in participating in a student internship program should apply through their school. The Office of Professional Standards will serve as the Internship Program's coordinator for student interns.
- D. Program
 - 1. Patrol Division (Weeks 1-3).
 - a. Security and Integrities and Neighborhood Liaison Officer for physical tour/orientation of CCPD (Day 1).
 - b. Marine Patrol (4 days).
 - c. West Chatham Precincts– Ride-Along (Weeks 1).
 - d. East Chatham Precinct– Ride-Along (Weeks 2).
 - 2. Criminal Investigations Division (Week 4).
 - a. CID Orientation with Sergeant
 - b. Assign to investigator to observe investigative techniques (1 day).
 - c. Assign to investigator to observe courtroom demeanor (1 day).
 - d. Assign to Forensics Unit (2 days).
 - e. Ride-Along (1 day).
 - 3. Support Services Division/Chief's Office (Week 5).
 - a. Assign to Records Unit. (½ day)
 - b. Assign to Court Liaison/Policy Manager (½ day)
 - c. Assign to Quartermaster (½ day)
 - d. Assign to Public Information Office (½ day)
 - e. Assign to Training Unit (3 days).

4. Summary (Week 6)
 - a. Assign to area(s) of interest (5 days).
- E. Interns must agree to complete the following for consideration for an internship.
 1. Fingerprints completed by Forensics for a Criminal History Background.
 2. [Ride-Along Authorization Form \(CCPD Form 1042\)](#) submitted to the Office of Professional Standards.

V. COURTESY OFFICER PROGRAM

- A. The Courtesy Officer Program improves neighborhood security within Chatham County. Officers serve as neighborhood ambassadors for the purpose of crime deterrence, community engagement, and relationship building. The Courtesy Officer Program will allow CCPD officers to build trust with the residents they serve.
- B. The Courtesy Officer will maintain a visual and courteous presence promoting goodwill while providing visible protective services related to safety and security.
- C. Requirements:
 1. All Courtesy Officer positions shall be coordinated through the Internal Affairs Office or designee.
 2. Officer(s) shall not accept or be approved for any Courtesy Officer position outside the jurisdictional limits of the CCPD.
 3. Officer(s) must have an approved "Request for Courtesy Officer" form #97 on file with the Internal Affairs Unit or designee.
 - a. Form #97 will be forwarded through the chain of command, via Blue Team.
 4. Courtesy officers are prohibited from delivering/serving any form of paperwork, on management's behalf, to any resident.
 5. When off-duty and working in a Courtesy officer capacity, the officer will be required to:
 - a. Enforce State Laws and County ordinances.
 - b. Patrol the perimeter of the property, in accordance with the CCPD approved uniform attire. This will provide visual presence, high visibility and deter criminal activity.
 - (1) Patrolling will include the perimeter for vandalism, suspicious behavior, damaged or inoperable lighting, curfew violations, unlocked gates and doors, loitering, public drinking, illegal parking, etc.

- f. Represent management in a qualified manner.
- g. Consistently maintain a professional and courteous attitude when interacting with residents, co-workers, management, security personnel and the public.
- h. Report to property management/company if unemployed or decertified by the Chatham County Police Department.

VI. EVALUATION OF COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT PROGRAMS

- A. Community involvement is vital to the success of the CCPD's mission and, therefore, will be constantly evaluated and refined as needed to maintain community support.
- B. To maintain community support CCPD is committed to:
 - 1. Developing policies that keep the concerns of the community at interest.
 - 2. Publicizing CCPD objectives, problems, and successes.
 - 3. Improving agency practices that impact community involvement.
 - 4. Identifying training needs through interviews with citizen groups, consultations with those involved in Internal Affairs investigations, and conferences with CCPD Supervisors.
 - 5. Establishing community groups where needed.
- C. In addition to regular monthly reports, precinct commanders shall submit, through their chain of command to the chief of police, a quarterly report on community involvement efforts that includes at minimum:
 - 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.
 - 3. A statement of recommended actions that address previously identified concerns and problems.
 - 4. A statement of progress made toward addressing previously identified concerns and problems.
 - 5. The report will be based on information gathered from all officers under the Commander's authority, as well as comment cards returned by the public.

BY ORDER OF:

Electronically Signed in PowerDMS on 03/24/2024

Jeffrey M. Hadley
Chief of Police