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POLICY

It is the policy of the Douglas County Sheriff's Office (DCSO) to continually strive to strengthen ties with the community by fostering and maintaining open lines of communication with the citizens it serves.

PROCEDURE

I. Community Outreach Objectives

- A. The DCSO will strive to develop problem oriented and community policing crime prevention strategies to include, at minimum: (45.1.1)
 - 1. Focusing programs and resources by crime type and geographic area based on crime data. (45.1.1a)
 - 2. Focusing programs and resources to address community concerns. (45.1.1b)
 - 3. Assisting in organizing community groups with an interest in crime prevention, to include: (45.1.2)
 - a. Establishing liaison with existing community organizations or establishing community groups where they are needed. (45.1.2a)
 - b. Assisting with the development of community involvement policies for the agency. (45.1.2b)
 - c. Publicizing agency objectives, community problems, and successes. (45.1.2c)
 - d. Communicating crime trends and problems between citizens, businesses, and the agency. (45.1.2d)
 - e. Supporting agency practices bearing on police/community interaction. (45.1.2e)
- B. Crime prevention/community outreach programs may include, but are not limited to:
 - 1. The Neighborhood Watch program.
 - 2. Community Outreach Team.
 - 3. Community Liaisons.
 - 4. School Resource Officers.
 - 5. School Security Audits.
 - 6. School Evacuation and Lockdown Drills.

7. Church/Place of Worship Security.
8. Facility Tours.
9. Omaha Coalition of Citizen Patrols.
10. National Night Out.
11. Project Extra Mile.
12. Child Passenger Safety.
13. Law Enforcement Explorer Post #592.
14. Citizen Ride-Alongs (see Section III below).
15. Drivers Safety (e.g., school presentations, seat belt roll over cart etc.).
16. College Internship Program.
17. Recruitment events.

II. Community Outreach/Crime Prevention Responsibilities

- A. All DCSO members are responsible for building and strengthening ties to the community within their various roles in the agency.
- B. While all DCSO members are responsible for developing strong community relations within their roles, the Community Outreach Team is responsible for coordinating community outreach/crime prevention activities and programs throughout the agency and for overseeing specific programs (see the DCSO “Organizational Structure” policy).
 1. The COT will be comprised of approved volunteer DCSO members who represent the DCSO at community events.
 2. The team will provide a consistent approach while increasing flexibility in fulfilling public requests and reduce conflicts encountered by multiple events/venues at similar times/dates.
 3. COT Deputies are authorized to post information regarding COT activities and other approved community outreach/crime prevention events/programs on DCSO social media accounts in accordance with the DCSO “Social Media” policy.
- C. Animals used for community outreach events will be approved by the Sheriff or Sheriff’s designee.

EXCEPTION: Requests for DCSO Canines will be made in accordance with the DCSO “Canine Operations” policy.
- D. Documentation of Community Programs/Events
 1. In order to ensure the most efficient and effective use of agency resources, all community outreach/crime prevention events, activities, and programs will be reported to

the COT. The COT will work with agency command to coordinate such activities and programs to most effectively meet agency goals.

2. All external requests for community outreach/crime prevention activities/events (e.g., tour requests, etc.), including the approval or denial of such requests, will be documented on a Community Program Request (SF-233) form and submitted to the COT via chain of command.
3. DCSO members or units/divisions that participate in or initiate approved community events/programs will notify the COT by submitting a completed Community Program Request (SF-233) via chain of command.
4. Outcome(s) of community outreach/crime prevention activities/events will be documented on the SF-233 upon completion of the event.
5. Completed SF-233s will be retained on file for four calendar years in COT's files.

III. Ride-Along Procedures

- A. All persons must submit a Ride-Along Request Form (SF-210) to be approved for a ride along.
 1. Interns/Volunteers will submit the form to the Administrative Services Lieutenant for review and approval.
 - a. Ride-alongs for interns and volunteers will be arranged by the Administrative Services Lieutenant or designee.
 2. Ride-Along Request Forms submitted by citizens will be submitted to the Recruitment Coordinator for review and approval.
 - a. Ride-alongs for citizens will be arranged by the Recruitment Coordinator.
 3. Persons under the age of sixteen (16) are not permitted to participate in a ride-along.
 4. Persons ages sixteen (16) – eighteen (18) may participate if approved by the respective commander coordinating the ride along upon signed agreement from the juvenile's parent or legal guardian.
 5. Persons who submit a request may request to ride with a Deputy of the same sex. Such requests will be accommodated if possible.
 6. Persons may request multiple ride-alongs. Such requests will be submitted to the USB Captain or designee for approval.
- B. Ride alongs will be four hours in duration unless otherwise approved by the respective USB Supervisor.
- C. All persons approved for a ride-along will adhere to the following grooming and apparel standards:
 1. Properly groomed hair and fingernails.
 2. Body and breath will be clean and free of offensive odors.

3. Shirts

- a. Participants may wear sports shirts, dress shirts, pullover sports shirts, polo shirts, or jackets.
- b. Participants will not wear t-shirts, body shirts, tank tops, muscle shirts, or any other shirt deemed inappropriate by the respective USB Supervisor.

4. Pants

- a. Participants may wear dress slacks, dress jeans, or tactical pants that are in good condition. Belts will be worn when needed.
- b. Participants will not wear denim that is torn or spotted, cutoff jeans and shorts, dresses, skirts, skorts, sagging pants, or any other pant that is deemed inappropriate by the respective USB Supervisor.

5. Shoes

- a. Most types of footwear are acceptable and should be clean and in good condition.
- b. Athletic shoes, sneakers, and boots are acceptable.
- c. Dress shoes must have a closed toe and a heel securing the foot inside the shoe.
- d. Sandals, slides, mules, or similar styles are prohibited.

6. Participants will not wear clothing or accessories that advertises any product.

7. Accessories

- a. Jewelry will be worn conservatively so as not to present a danger to the participant.
- b. Participants may wear stud-type earrings.
- c. Wire, hoop, or dangling-type of earrings are prohibited.

D. Participants will:

- 1. Be present at the time agreed upon with the respective Coordinator. If the participant arrives after the scheduled time, the participant will be required to resubmit a ride-along request.
- 2. Conduct themselves professionally at all times.
- 3. Remain in the patrol vehicle during routine traffic stops unless otherwise directed by a Deputy.
- 4. Remain in or near the patrol vehicle during disturbance calls and calls of a serious nature in order to summon assistance by radio if needed, unless otherwise directed by a Deputy.

5. Adhere to all directives issued by Deputies.
- E. Participants will not:
1. Use alcohol or illegal drugs prior to or during the ride-along.
 2. Use profanity, abusive, or derogatory language.
 3. Talk excessively, which may distract the Deputy or interfere with his/her hearing of the radio.
 4. Make remarks or voice opinions to complainants, witnesses, victims, violators, or suspects in any manner.
 5. Participate or interfere in any law enforcement activity.
 6. Make known to any unauthorized person, information that may compromise any ongoing or future police operation, procedure, or investigation.
 7. Make known to unauthorized persons the identity of persons arrested, persons being confined to jail, or suspects in a criminal act.
 8. Use information learned for personal gain
 9. Record or photograph, by audio or video, without the permission of the Deputy with whom they are riding.
- F. Non-sworn participants are prohibited from carrying weapons, do not have powers of a law enforcement officer, and have no authority except when acting at the direction of a Deputy.
- G. If participants do not adhere to the grooming, apparel, or behavioral standards, the ride-along will be terminated and the participant will be sent home.
- H. Deputies will adhere to the following procedures:
1. Verify the ID of the participant and confirm that the participant has appropriate apparel prior to starting the ride-along.
 2. Briefly explain the operations of the radio should an emergency arise.
 3. Notify DC Communications of the presence of the participant and the anticipated duration of the ride-along.
 4. Deputies will NOT:
 - a. Engage in a vehicular pursuit with a participant in their vehicle.
 - b. Allow the participant to engage in any official law enforcement activity.
 - c. Allow the participant to accompany the Deputy into a private dwelling or private business that is not open to the public without prior and specific permission of the owner/legal occupant of that property.

- (1) If permission is denied, the Deputy will instruct the participant to wait in the Deputy's vehicle or another safe location.
5. Deputies will not knowingly bring participants into hazardous situations that could endanger that life and safety of the participant.
 - a. If a dangerous situation arises that requires the response of the Deputy, the Deputy will leave the participant in a safe location (e.g., law enforcement facility, public and open establishment, etc.) and notify DC Communications and their on-duty Supervisor of the location of the participant.
 - b. The on-duty Supervisor or their designee will arrange to have the participant picked up by a Deputy as soon as possible.
6. If the participant is injured during the ride-along, Deputies will:
 - a. Render medical aid and/or request a rescue squad as needed (see the DCSO "Medical Aid and Hospital Procedures" policy).
 - b. Notify their on-duty Supervisor as soon as possible.
 - c. Document the injury via a Blue Team Entry.
7. Deputies will notify their on-duty Supervisor and the coordinating commander in writing of any unusual, inappropriate, unsafe, or concerning behavior of the participant.

IV. Reporting

A. Citizen Survey

1. The Administration Chief Deputy or designee will conduct a survey of citizen attitudes and opinions at least once every two years, with respect to: (45.2.2)
 - a. Overall agency performance. (45.2.2a)
 - b. Overall competence of agency employees. (45.2.2b)
 - c. Citizens' perceptions of Deputies' attitudes and behaviors. (45.2.2c)
 - d. Community concern over safety and security in the agency's service area. (45.2.2d)
 - e. Citizens' recommendations and suggestions for improvements. (45.2.2e)
2. Survey results will be compiled and a written summary will be provided to the Sheriff and other command staff in accordance with the "Administrative Reporting System" policy. (45.2.2f)

B. Crime Prevention Programs Evaluation (45.1.1c)

1. The USB Captain or designee will be responsible for completing a Crime Prevention Programs evaluation at least once every two years.

2. This evaluation will determine whether the agency should continue, modify, or discontinue crime prevention programs.
3. The evaluation will be provided to the Sheriff, Operations Chief Deputy, and Policy Coordinator in accordance with the "Administrative Reporting System" policy.

REFERENCES

I. Previous Orders

- A. Previous General Orders include: #47-2023, #32-2022, #78-2020, #69-2020, #48-2019, #9-2017, #8-2013, and #31-2008.

II. Accreditation Standards

- A. Applicable CALEA Accreditation standards include: 45.1.1, 45.1.2, and 45.2.2.

III. Review Schedule

- A. Quadrennial.