

COMMUNITY RELATIONS OFFICER PROGRAM

1. **PURPOSE:** To provide guidelines for a Community Relations Officer Program, to improve and enhance relationships between the community and the Department.
2. **POLICY:** The Huntsville Police Department will form interactive partnerships between police and the community. Such relationships are essential for effective community policing.
3. **SCOPE:** This directive is applicable to all personnel.
4. **RESPONSIBILITY:** All employees will comply with this directive.
5. **GOAL:** The final outcome of the community relations function will be a redesigned system for the delivery of police services. The foundation of this system are the relationships developed between the citizens and police, in which the citizens acquire vested interests and perform vital roles in the prevention and control of crime.
6. **ORGANIZATION:** The Community Relations Officers are assigned directly to their respective Precinct Commanders. The Community Relations Officers implement a wide general knowledge of crime prevention and police community relations practices, working closely with Community Watch, neighborhood associations, and business/civic groups. The **Community Relations Supervisor is assigned the overall responsibility of planning, coordinating, and documenting all crime prevention activities city-wide.**
7. **UNIFORM/APPERANCE:** Community Relations Officers will wear the following approved uniforms:
 - A. **Duty Uniform:** The Apex storm grey pants and dark navy 5.11 performance polo shall be worn while on duty. The approved black hoodie and dark navy event shirt can be worn while attending and working special events.
 - B. **Court:** The duty uniform may be worn for court purposes, including Grand Jury. However, if an officer is to testify in a high-profile trial, they must wear a Class A Dress Uniform.
8. **COORDINATION:** Community Relations Officers will
 - A. Submit status reports to the Community Relations Supervisor, who will incorporate activity reports in the quarterly reports to the Chief of Police.
 - B. Meet as needed with the Community Relations Supervisor to discuss and evaluate police community activities and crime prevention programs.
 - C. Work with the Public Information Officer (PIO) and the City Communication Specialist (CCS) to promote programs and services involving police community relations and crime prevention.

9. PROCEDURES

A. **STAFFING:** Two Community Relations Officers will be assigned to each police district, under the supervision of the Precinct Commander. The officers will coordinate the community relations functions within their assigned districts. This will provide a system of geographic accountability for these functions and furnish a central point of contact for each district. The Community Relations Officers will meet on a routine basis with the Precinct Commanders and the Uniform Supervisors. These meetings will facilitate effective communications and ensure a broad scale approach to the community relations function.

B. **COMMUNITY RELATIONS OFFICERS:** The Community Relations Officers will:

1. Organize partnership teams within our communities that will endeavor to revitalize our policing system. These teams will include concerned community members, representatives from the Department, public service and social service agencies.
2. Serve as a direct resource for the partnership teams and other citizen community organizations to coordinate the public services needed to support their efforts.
3. Serve as the communications liaisons between the partnership teams, community organizations and the Department. This may include the development, distribution, and collection of citizen surveys; and
4. Work with landlords and rental property managers in developing methods of preventing the use, sale and manufacture of illegal drugs on rental property.
5. The Community Relations Officers will perform Crime Prevention duties and public speaking for various Community groups.
6. The CRO will act as and meet the following qualifications required by the Madison County Probate Judge to become a Mental Health Officer:
 - a. Must have a minimum of five years as a sworn police officer in the United States within their first year as a Community Relations Officer; and
 - b. Will complete the annual Mental Health Officer recertification requirements.

C. **PROGRAM GOALS:** The Community Relations Officers will strive to obtain the following goals.

1. Establish a bond of mutual trust between the citizens and police.
2. Increase citizen participation and involvement in developing policing priorities and common goals for their communities.
3. Identify the underlying causes of crime and related problems, as well as non-crime problems, within their communities.

4. Collectively formulate solutions to problems and devise methods of prevention that use all available public and private resources.
5. Provide educational, social and recreational opportunities for community residents.
6. Create a system of accountability for the police, citizens and other public service agencies; and
7. Improve quality of life within the community.

10. SELECTION

A. **BASIC REQUIREMENTS:** Any candidate who does not meet the basic requirements will be precluded from participation in the process.

1. **EXPERIENCE:** Candidates must be full time police officers with a minimum of four (4) years law enforcement experience. At least at least one (1) of the four (4) years must be service with the Huntsville Police Department.
2. **PERFORMANCE EVALUATIONS:** Candidates must have an overall effective rating on their most recent evaluation, with no category marked marginal.
3. **POSITIVE SUPERVISORY RECOMMENDATION:** Candidates must receive a positive recommendation from their immediate supervisor. The recommendation should describe in detail the candidate's work performance and suitability for the position. This recommendation will be sent to the Bureau Commander through the candidate's chain of command.

B. **SELECTION PHASE:**

1. **201 FILE REVIEW:** A comprehensive review of the candidate's 201 file will be conducted by the unit supervisor.
2. **SUPERVISORY RECOMMENDATION:** The recommendation as to the candidate's performance and suitability for the position will be a consideration in the review of each candidate.
3. **REVIEW BOARD:** Candidates will be scheduled for an interview before a review board. The board will consist of the unit supervisor and no more than three additional qualified members selected by the Operations Bureau Commander. The candidate evaluation will include, but not be limited to the following categories: specific skills, background, oral communication skills, confidence, judgment, resourcefulness, honesty, interest, motivation and compatibility.
4. **SELECTION FILE:** A file will be compiled to determine the candidate's performance during the selection phase. All aspects of a candidate's performance in the selection phase will be considered. The file will include: 201 File Review, Supervisory Recommendation and performance in the Review Board.

5. **RECOMMENDATION:** The unit supervisor will submit a written recommendation to the Chief of Police outlining each candidate's suitability for the position and listing eligible candidates in order of preference. The selection file will be attached to the recommendation. All assignments will be made by the Chief of Police. The list of eligible candidates will remain active for six months from the date of selection.