

City of Johns Creek Police Department

<i>Subject:</i> Crime Prevention Unit and Community Relations		<i>Number:</i> 02-31	
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PURPOSE:

Establish a community relations program that provides a response to the needs of the people and provides for an active involvement in community affairs as they relate to this Department, the City of Johns Creek, the Criminal Justice System and the public we serve.

Scope:

This policy is applicable to all officers, members and employees of the Johns Creek Police Department.

POLICY: (02-31)

Beyond stating a commitment to crime prevention and community relations, we, the officers, various divisions and units of the Department shall be responsible for cultivating positive, formal relationships and actively participating in the community and its many organizations. By establishing these relationships, we may learn of issues and respond to them before they become problems. We may also enhance the community's understanding of the activities and roles we play and thereby increase the public's understanding and confidence in us.

Additionally, we must ensure victims of criminal activities and any other witnesses impacted by crime and become involved with the criminal justice system receive professional attention and care consistent with their important role in the investigation and prosecution. How each member of this department treats a victim or witness, at the time of the crime and thereafter, will affect on an ongoing investigation and determine the victim or witness's willingness to assist in the prosecution.

Further, one of our most important functions as police officers may be that of role models to the youth of the community. Every contact we have with a juvenile, whether in a positive or negative situation, and how we conduct ourselves, has an enduring effect. When dealing with juvenile offenders, we must follow procedures that utilize the least coercive alternatives, whenever possible, while preserving public safety, order, and individual liberty.

While committed to juvenile enforcement, we must also be committed and take an active, instrumental position in the development and implementation of programs intended to prevent delinquent and criminal behavior by the youths of our community.

PROCEDURES:

Youth and Juvenile Operations (02-31-01)

- A. The Johns Creek Police Department, by virtue of function and responsibility, does not have a full-time Youth and Juvenile Officer or a designated athletic youth program. The department has several programs which assist in developing a positive relationship with our juvenile community. The enforcement of laws is the main function of the

- Johns Creek Police Department, but we strive to develop and perpetuate youth oriented programs in an effort to prevent and control delinquent behavior.
- B. The responsibility for participation in and support of all juvenile operations shall be maintained through a cooperative effort between all components of the Department. Every employee of the Department shall be responsible for cooperation with the youth in our community.
 - C. An annual written review and evaluation of all enforcement and prevention programs relating to juveniles will be conducted by the employee responsible for the program.

Crime Prevention and Community Relations (02-31-02)

Crime prevention is a primary function of every member of this Department. This effort enlists the support and participation of individual residents, neighborhoods, educators, community groups and organizations, businesses, and the media. As a result, we will establish trust that will increase communication and assure the community that the Department is concerned with meeting their needs. An effective line of communication minimizes the misconceptions the public may have regarding criminal events in their neighborhoods and the role they and we have in crime prevention and/or subsequent investigations.

Establishment of the Crime Prevention Function, Crime Prevention and Community Relations Officer(s), and Departmental Responsibility:

- A. The Chief of Police establishes departmental goals and objectives concerning crime prevention and community relations.
- B. He/she, through departmental policy, directs and establishes various programs that achieve these objectives. These objectives are disseminated to each member of the Department and generally will be communicated to the public through media announcements and public meetings.
- C. Community Relations Officer and shall serve as the Crime Prevention Officer. He/she shall report to the Crime Prevention Unit Supervisor.
- D. He/she shall be the primary contact and shall develop and coordinate the Department's crime prevention and community relations functions.
- E. The Crime Prevention Unit Supervisor shall be responsible for the planning and all coordination of the community relations and crime prevention programs within the Department and with the community itself.
- F. The Crime Prevention Unit Supervisor shall be responsible for the coordination of departmental efforts in crime prevention and shall ensure positive exchanges of information with the various components of the Department. He/she shall also enlist and utilize any available civilian personnel from within and outside the Department as well as community to assist.
- G. The Community Relations Officer(s) shall encourage fellow officers and members of the department having specific skills, talents, training, knowledge or the desire to promote our proactive services to participate with the "unit's" activities when possible.
- H. The overall responsibility for achieving the objective of our crime prevention and community relations programs is shared by all members of the Department.
- I. Upon request or when appropriate, the Chief of Police or other designated personnel shall offer crime prevention recommendations and input to other City departments, boards and commissions, and interested groups. The input may involve the development and/or revision of zoning policies, building codes and permits, and fire codes.

Crime Prevention Operations (02-31-03)

- A. The Department shall establish crime prevention program priorities and the agency's bicycle unit. There shall be targeting of programs by crime type and geographic area on the basis of analysis of crime data, when specific geographic data is available.
- B. Among the crime prevention programs are:
 - 1. P.A.C.T. – Police and Citizens Together (Neighborhood Watch)
 - a. includes 50% of neighborhood participation, or a demonstrated high level of commitment from the neighborhood;

- b. must complete two PACT events each year, such as block parties, pool parties, ice cream socials, etc.
 - c. PACT officers must attend initial PACT meeting and other events held by neighborhood; and
 - d. act as a liaison for the department and pass along relative crime data and information to neighborhoods as applicable.
- 2. SHIELD Program (Business Watch)
- 3. Residential security surveys
- 4. Residential property security checks
- 5. Business property security checks
- 6. Conducting drug related and safety programs for schools and groups, if applicable
- 7. Disseminating safety and security information to the community
- C. The Crime Prevention Unit and all other personnel involved in the crime prevention program shall develop and maintain liaisons with community groups, including but not limited to residential, civic and educational groups to encourage their active involvement.
- D. There shall be a documented evaluation of the effectiveness of the various programs, every three years, which will be submitted through the chain of command to the Chief of Police.

Community Relations Operations (02-31-04)

- A. The Department will establish positive direct contacts with the community. We are committed to correcting actions, practices, and attitudes that may contribute to community tensions and grievances.
- B. Our community relations function shall involve:
 - 1. Formal liaison with organizations and groups;
 - 2. Developing community relations policies as a whole and to improve those practices that have a bearing on police-community relations;
 - 3. Publicizing agency objectives, problems and successes via COPS Connect, website or other media outlets;
 - 4. Conveying information from citizens' organizations to the Department;
 - 5. Identifying training needs through interviews with members of the community;
 - 6. Facilitating Citizens Policy Academy; and
 - 7. Establishing community groups where none exists.
- C. Community involvement is the responsibility of all agency personnel; therefore, with the assistance of the each major component and the Community Relations Supervisor, a monthly report shall be prepared and submitted to the Chief of Police at staff meetings that includes.
 - 1. A description of current concerns voiced by the community;
 - 2. A description of potential problems identified and having a bearing on the law enforcement function within the community;
 - 3. A statement of recommended actions that address previously identified concerns and problems; and
 - 4. A statement of progress made toward addressing previously identified concerns and problems.

It shall be the responsibility of all department members to transmit relevant information to the Community Relations Officer, Division Commanders and Shift Commanders for inclusion in this report. This will ensure that there is an evaluative loop in the community involvement and community-policing actions of the department and that information being gathered by all agency personnel is incorporated into the decision-making processes.

- D. Although considerations should be continual, there shall be an annual review of our community relations programs.

- E. There shall be a survey of citizen's attitudes and opinions at least every three years with regards to:
 - 1. Overall Department and individual employee competence and performance;
 - 2. Officer's attitude and behavior toward citizens;
 - 3. Concern about matters of safety and security within the City as a whole;
 - 4. Concern over safety and security within the specific areas the respondent lives; and
 - 5. Recommendations and suggestions for improvements.
- F. Information derived from surveys and unsolicited responses shall have direct impact on development or amendment of policies and programs as needed.
- G. The Community Relations Officer shall maintain a file for the documentation of community relations projects, for periodic reports, and for a collection of media releases.

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