



Newport News Police Department - Administrative Manual

ADM-130 - POLICE AND COMMUNITY INTERACTION

Amends/Supersedes: ADM-130 (05/07/2018)

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I. GENERAL

The Police Department's foremost responsibility is to the community. Individual concerns and problems are not routine to those experiencing them. Whether contacting someone personally, via telephone, or in writing, Department employees shall strive to treat others as they would like to be treated. Personnel have a responsibility to: [26.1.1]

A. Treat each individual with:

1. Dignity;
2. Courtesy, tact;
3. Patience and discretion; and
4. A genuine concern for the individual's well-being.

B. Maintain a "customer comes first" philosophy.

1. Engage in respectful, insightful, rather than argumentative, discussion;
2. Do not use abusive language, or gestures.

C. Avoid portraying the appearance of:

1. Preoccupation, or being too busy;
2. Possessing an uncaring attitude;
3. Annoyance or anger.

D. Treat each individual fairly and equally. No prejudice regarding race, sex, religious preference, political affiliation, national origin, lifestyle or any other personal characteristic will be displayed. Action of this type shall not be tolerated and will result in disciplinary action (see [ADM-210 Standards of Conduct/Disciplinary Action](#)). [1.2.9(a)]

II. PROCEDURE

A. Department personnel shall maintain a professional and courteous demeanor at all times when dealing with citizens and other employees.

B. Telephone Demeanor

Unless actively working in an undercover assignment, or some other similar sensitive or covert operation, when addressing people on the telephone (either cellular or desk phones) for either incoming or outgoing calls, the following salutation should be provided:

1. Identify yourself by department, name, and rank/title (examples: "Newport News Police Department, Officer J.S. Smith", "Newport News Police Department, Records Division, Ms. Cynthia Smith"). [22.1.8(c)]

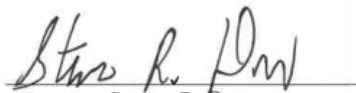
2. Except as already set out, employees will not refuse to give their correct name and rank/title.

NOTE: This will not be construed to intend employees only identify themselves when asked.

3. When accepting calls, employees should:
 - a. Be as helpful as possible in their responses.
 - b. Refrain from transferring calls.
 - c. In cases where a call transfer is necessary, ensure the call is transferred to the proper office.
 - d. If the area to which the call needs to be transferred is not known, obtain the name and telephone number of the caller.
 - e. Find out the necessary information then make the appropriate referral, or call the person back once the appropriate information has been received.
4. If a citizen request necessitates the dispatch of a patrol unit, Department personnel will make every effort to obtain the information and transfer the call to the Communications Division, or to the appropriate precinct or station.
- C. Convey compassion for the individual to help lessen their anxiety associated with the situation.
- D. Consider the matter from the citizen's point of view:
 1. Remain objective;
 2. Address any problem from a positive viewpoint;
 3. Accept the fact that some contacts are going to be viewed negatively by the citizen no matter what is done, especially when a law has been violated;
 4. Each situation must be addressed individually and judged on its own merit by those reviewing the complaints; and
 5. Avoid statements that may be viewed as victim blaming.
- E. Responses should always be honest, but tactful:
 1. Do not make-up excuses when an expected service cannot be delivered, or a demand filled.

NOTE: This should not be construed to prohibit explanations of the situation.

 2. Make every effort to be positive and reassuring regarding the Department's commitment to its' mission.
- F. Department personnel shall take time to fully understand the concern or complaint raised by the citizen before deciding a course of action.
- G. Police Department employees should follow through with promises.


Steven R. Drew
Chief of Police