

Bowie Police Department - General Orders



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AUTHORITY Chief John K. Nesky	ACCREDITATIONS STANDARDS CALEA STANDARDS: 45.1.1-a-b-c, 45.1.2, 45.1.3	TOTAL PAGES 4
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I. POLICY

The Bowie Police Department is committed to the principle that cooperation and positive interaction between the community and the Department is a critical element in achieving the common goal of preserving peace through equitable law enforcement. The goal of the community relations effort is to establish a lasting trust and mutual respect between the community and the Department based upon the professional and sensitive conduct of each member of the Department. The Department views its mission of providing law enforcement services to the community in the same manner that any successful private organization views its responsibility to provide quality customer service. Achieving this goal will create an environment in which every member of the Department is able to perform his/her duties with the support and understanding of the community.

The Department will not condone or tolerate behavior, practices, or attitudes by any member of the Department that may exacerbate community problems, tensions, or grievances. Any such behavior, practices, or attitudes will be subject to reasonable and appropriate administrative sanctions.

The Bowie Police Department views its mission of providing law enforcement/police services to the community in the same manner as any successful private organization would be dedicated to providing effective, fair, and professional customer service. All of the individuals within the community are the customers for whom the Department is committed to a strengthened and increased level of satisfaction.

II. PURPOSE

This General Order defines the philosophy of the Department and its employees regarding community relations and the Department's efforts in this regard.

III. GENERAL PROCEDURES

- A. The Department shall address any problems arising between the Department, its individual members, and communities served by the Department. The Department's community relations programs are

intended to establish formal relationships with community groups to explore issues impacting those groups so that pro-active responses can be developed before those issues and concerns develop into criminal activity or impair the Department's law enforcement activities. The Department must focus on increasing community understanding of, and trust in, the Department as a law enforcement agency, Departmental activities, and individual Officers. In a similar manner, the Department will strive to increase every employee's understanding of the community's needs and concerns and every employee's fair, unprejudiced, professional and sensitive conduct towards all individuals within the community.

- B. Every member of the Department is an integral part of the Department's mission to achieve its community relations objectives, and every Department member shall promote and assist in the attainment of those objectives through fair and impartial conduct.
- C. The guiding principle behind every interaction between Department members and the community is to treat every individual with respect. Prejudice and personal feelings shall not be allowed to impact the interaction between Department members and the community.
- D. The Chief of Police will retain overall responsibility for the Department's community relations programs and shall designate a Community Services Officer ("CSO") responsible for coordinating and developing the Department's day-to-day community relations and operations. The delegation of community relations duties to the CSO shall not entitle the CSO to additional financial compensation and shall not be construed as a promotional or tenured assignment.
- E. All contact between Department members and the community falls within the scope of the Department's community relations procedures.

IV. COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT PROGRAMS/ACTIVITIES

The Department's structured community involvement efforts will include, but are not limited to, the following activities:

- A. Formal participation in, and liaison with, civic, social, business, or other public and community groups by (1) encouraging Department member involvement with these groups; (2) encouraging these groups to invite Department members to group functions to make presentations addressing crime prevention or other Departmental issues; and (3) soliciting involvement by these groups with the Department. Such community groups might include various Neighborhood Watch programs.
- B. Publicizing the Department's programs, objectives, activities, development, or successes through media press releases, interviews, and/or video productions.
- C. Soliciting community input regarding the Department's policies and procedures at any opportunity and conveying such information to the Department's administrative staff, including the Chief of Police, for review and response.
- D. Determining community satisfaction with police services provided by the Department by (1) analyzing feedback received in community meetings and activities; (2) reviewing both inquiries and complaints

received from the community; and (3) conducting follow-up surveys and interviews of both individuals and community groups.

V. RESOLUTION OF PROBLEMS IN THE COMMUNITY

- A. The Department recognizes the critical and sensitive nature of its relationship with the community and is committed to proactively responding to any actions, practices, and attitudes by its employees that may contribute to problems or tensions within the community. Such proactive response may mitigate, or prevent, the development of greater problems within the community.
- B. Any Department employee who becomes aware of concerns within the community or from an individual regarding police activities or services in general, or the specific actions, practices, or attitude of an individual employee, shall advise a supervisor of those concerns within a reasonable period of time. The supervisor shall advise the Chief of Police of the information within a reasonable period of time.
- C. In evaluating the need for new or remedial training for employees, and the need for development or modification of Departmental policy or procedure, the following shall be considered: (1) any complaints, input, recommendations, or suggestions received from community members; (2) internal administrative investigations of employee conduct, including consultations with those involved in internal administrative investigations and if necessary the Chief of Police; and (3) input from community groups formed in an advisory capacity.

VI. EVALUATION OF COMMUNITY RELATIONS EFFORTS

- A. The CSO shall submit an annual written evaluation to the Chief of Police evaluating the Department's community relations efforts, including the level of community satisfaction with the Department. As part of the evaluation, the CSO shall conduct or oversee a community survey (either in person, by mail or by telephone) to evaluate Departmental performance, and shall consider information obtained from community members and groups, including complaints, input, recommendations, and suggestions. The evaluation may include, but is not limited to, the following elements:
 - 1. A description of the current overall safety and security concerns of the community;
 - 2. A description of specific citizen safety and security concerns;
 - 3. An analysis of citizen perception of the level of Officer competence;
 - 4. An analysis of Officer behavior and attitudes and their impact upon community relations efforts;
 - 5. An analysis of the community's satisfaction with existing Departmental community service programs and activities;

6. A description of potential problems that may impact the safety and security of the community or the ability of the Department to effectively, sensitively, and impartially provide police services to the community; and
 7. A statement of recommendation(s) for changes or improvements to the Department and its community relations programs and activities based upon an analysis of the previously identified concerns and problems within the community.
- B. After reviewing the evaluation of the Department's community relations efforts, the Department will take reasonably appropriate action to modify, expand, or reduce its community involvement activities to reflect the needs of the community.