

	VOLUSIA SHERIFF'S OFFICE GENERAL ORDER 45.1	Distribution All Personnel	Reissue/Effective Date 02/14/2020
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Title COMMUNITY RELATIONS AND EDUCATION			
Section		AUTHORITY OF  MICHAEL J. CHITWOOD, SHERIFF 	

To protect and serve with courage, honor and integrity by fighting crime, maintaining trust, and building community partnerships.

I. PURPOSE

The purpose of this general order is to establish the mission of the Volusia Sheriff's Office Community Relations Unit (CRU) and its role in community engagement, education and crime prevention activities.

II. DISCUSSION

Effective law enforcement agencies strive to create an integrated, responsive and proactive approach. Maintaining a community relations component is an effective means of integrating responsive enforcement functions and anticipatory preventative programs to propagate a coordinated approach toward achieving the Volusia Sheriff's Office strategic and tactical goals.

It is also important for every member of Volusia Sheriff's Office to be committed to a policy of serving the communities' needs in a professional and courteous manner while providing opportunities to educate, collaborate and build community partnerships with the community.

III. POLICY

It shall be the policy of Volusia Sheriff's Office to develop and perpetuate a firm commitment to proactive community engagement and crime prevention programs.

Volusia Sheriff's Office shall maintain close ties with and respond to the needs of the community in a courteous and professional manner.

It shall further be the policy of Volusia Sheriff's Office to take steps to correct practices, actions or attitudes that may contribute to community tensions and grievances. This approach involves skills and participation of all agency personnel at all levels and assignments.

IV. PROCEDURE

A. Mission

1. The Community Relations Unit's mission is to strive to build positive relationships and lasting trust between the Volusia Sheriff's Office and the diverse communities of Volusia County through community outreach, crime prevention and engagement opportunities. Through collaborative measures with Volusia Sheriff's Office and community members, the goal is to educate, prevent crime, build safer communities and advance the quality of life in Volusia County.
2. The mission is achieved through the following objectives:
 - Developing relationships with community based organizations, leaders, groups and stakeholders;
 - Attending community events and functions;

- Educating the public regarding the Volusia Sheriff's Office overall mission of providing protection and service to the community;
- Utilizing social media outlets to keep the public, stakeholders and community informed of Volusia Sheriff's Office outreach efforts;
- Partnering with community groups to address public safety issues;
- Offering crime prevention lectures, security assessment survey concepts and distributing educational materials addressing various law enforcement related topics;
- Coordinating Citizen's Academies which provide community members an opportunity to be exposed to the many facets of services provided by the Volusia Sheriff's Office;
- Working closely with other law enforcement agencies regarding community policing efforts;
- Coordinating within the Volusia Sheriff's Office to ensure consistent correspondence on key community concerns and issues and assisting in developing community education policies for the Volusia Sheriff's Office as needed.
- Assist internal recruitment teams (sworn and communications) through partnering at different community events, recruiting opportunities, educational events, etc.

B. Staffing

1. The Training Section Assistant Commander serves as the Community Relations Unit Supervisor.
 - The CRU Supervisor will continually assess the CRU's efficiency in providing community oriented programs and concepts bridging the gap between the Volusia Sheriff's Office and the public will be identified and documented through an annual analysis.
 - The CRU annual report will be submitted at the end of the calendar year by the CRU Supervisor.
2. The Community Relations Unit is comprised of at least two assigned members whose primary responsibilities are to achieve goals established by the unit's mission.
 - a. Community Relations Unit Crime Prevention Liaison – a civilian position responsible for scheduling and organizing CRU outreach programs.
 - The Crime Prevention Liaison will maintain an automated calendar of events documenting all services rendered by the CRU and its members. The calendar will be accessible to all CRU members and the CRU Supervisor.
 - Information relating to community outreach efforts, instructions, demonstrations and literature will be submitted by the CRU Crime Prevention Liaison for approval by the CRU Supervisor.
 - Statistics and debriefing notations will be maintained monthly by the Crime Prevention Liaison.
 - b. Community Relations Unit Crime Prevention Specialist – A sworn position responsible for creating new and updating existing crime prevention programs.
 - The Crime Prevention Specialist prepares lesson plans, bulletins, pamphlets, folders and other printed material related to the Volusia Sheriff's Office crime prevention programs. All materials associated with the programs will be submitted to the CRU Supervisor for approval.
 - The Crime Prevention Specialist will review watch commander logs in an effort to identify trends and areas being effected by crime. The data can assist in identifying areas which may be prime locations for crime prevention programs.

C. Community Relations Unit

1. The Community Relations Unit has the fundamental responsibilities related to community relations, education and crime prevention activities. However, every Volusia Sheriff's Office employee is responsible for conscientious efforts in community relations and crime prevention activities, when engaged with the public.

2. The Community Relations Unit shall coordinate with the Communications Center on attending various events involving recruitment and community education activities with the goal of improving agency practices and policy bearing on the public safety communications-community interaction.
3. The Volusia Sheriff's Office will assist in organizing, establishing, maintaining and promoting crime prevention/community relations programs in targeted areas.
4. The Community Relations Unit is responsible for:
 - a. Development and coordination of the Volusia Sheriff's Office's community relations/crime prevention functions;
 - b. Raising citizen awareness of crime prevention through education and public/private participation;
 - c. Maintaining and creating new programs to enhance citizen knowledge on crime prevention awareness;
 - d. Author and distribute pamphlets, fliers and articles concerning public and private safety regarding crime prevention matters;
 - e. Holding public and/or private meetings related to safety and crime prevention upon request from Volusia Sheriff's Office personnel or individuals in the general public;
 - f. Monitoring and submitting reports of current concerns voiced by the community and any potential problems that have a bearing on law enforcement activities within the community to the CRU Supervisor. Community concerns will be included in the quarterly report to the Sheriff;
 - g. Establishing and maintaining liaison with existing community organizations and other community groups;
 - h. Establishing community groups where such groups do not exist;
 - i. Target crime prevention programs by type and geographic areas based on empirical analysis of crime data identified through the Volusia Sheriff's Office CompStat program;
 - j. Maintaining a close working relationship with the Public Information Officer to ensure that Volusia Sheriff's Offices objectives, problems and successes are published at least annually to inform all personnel via internal electronic report, as well as informing the public via social media applications, postings, etc.
 - k. Shall maintain liaison with various entities and actively seek the opportunity to provide crime prevention through environmental design (CPTED) input into development and/or revisions into the zoning policies, building codes and residential and commercial building permits, security surveys, etc.;
 - l. Coordinating and managing all duties, tasks and assignments related to the Volusia Sheriff's Office Citizens Academy and its events;
 - m. Reporting to and advising the Community Relations Unit Supervisor on a monthly basis regarding community relations matters and conveying information transmitted from citizens/organizations;
 - n. Completing and submitting the CRU quarterly report through chain of command to the Sheriff;
 - o. Prepare the documented annual evaluation of all crime prevention programs that determines the effectiveness, need for modification, or possible discontinuance for of each program in use;
 - p. Conducting the biennial Community Survey;
 - q. Due to the nature and fluidity of community engagement, interaction and problem solving, direct collaboration with the Sheriff may be required in responding to community engagement activities, requests for the Sheriff's attendance at various events, meetings, etc. In these cases, CRU members shall keep the CRU Supervisor apprised of these activities and will include a summary in the monthly report to the CRU Supervisor.

D. Quarterly Report Submitted to Sheriff

1. The CRU Supervisor, or designee, shall prepare and submit quarterly to the Sheriff via chain of command a report that includes, at a minimum, the following:
 - a. An overview of community meetings attended
 - b. A description of concerns voiced by the community;
 - c. A description of potential problems which have a bearing on law enforcement activities;
 - d. A statement of recommended actions to address concerns and problems noted in 3. And 4., above; and
 - e. A statement of progress toward addressing previously identified concerns and problems.
2. The above report on community concerns and problems should provide information on conditions in the community to allow the Sheriff to react in a timely manner to alleviate identified concerns, avert potential problems and build community trust.

E. Biennial Community Survey

1. A documented Community Survey of citizens' attitudes and opinions shall be conducted at least once every two years and shall include at a minimum:
 - a. The overall Volusia Sheriff's Office performance;
 - b. The overall competence of Volusia Sheriff's Office employees;
 - c. Citizens' perception of personnel's attitudes and behavior;
 - d. Concerns with safety and security;
 - e. Citizens' recommendations and suggestions for improvement.
2. The results of the survey shall be compiled and a documented summary provided to the Sheriff.
3. The CRU Supervisor shall review the survey results with the Law Enforcement Operations Division Chief, the Support Operations Division Chief, and the Communications Director in order to identify any concerns that require deployment of resources, change in protocols, procedures, training based on input from citizens, etc.
4. Reports and verbal updates shall be made available to the Chief Deputy. The Public Information Officer will compile a summary of the survey results and forward to the Sheriff for review.

F. Results from Community Input/Information

1. Results from surveys, quarterly reports and general CRU interactions with the community may be used in conjunction with other internal reviews and supervisory input in the development of new or revised training, goals and objectives, policies and practices to ensure the needs of the community are being met as concerns, potential problems and new trends emerge.