

## **Purpose**

The purpose of the Community Policing Program is to maintain a valuable partnership between the Sheriff's Office and the community. Sheriff's Office administered programs will address community concerns, perceptions and misperceptions, while maintaining open lines of communication with community members for the purpose of preventing and deterring crime and reducing fear.

## **Policy**

It is the policy of the Cecil County Sheriff's Office to maintain an effective Community Policing Program, charged with maintaining community relations, administering community related programs, and performing crime prevention tasks. The Community Resource Unit serves as the primary but not sole means of establishing and maintaining the Sheriff's Office's efforts in this area.

## **Definitions**

**Community Resource Unit (CRU):** The Cecil County Sheriff's Office has established the Community Resource Unit that is responsible for maintaining and executing Community Policing Programs to include administering an Explorer Post, hosting Annual Citizen's Police Academies, participation in community events, and maintaining effective communication with the public via Social Media platforms.

## **Procedure**

### **A. Community Involvement**

1. It will be the responsibility of the Community Resource Unit to establish and maintain open communications and positive partnerships between the Sheriff's Office and the community. It is essential for the Sheriff's Office to have the respect and support of its residents, and it is primarily through positive interactions with the community that it secures and maintains this support.
  - a. The Community Resource Unit will encourage the formation of, and assist in organizing crime prevention groups in residential and business areas. This would include but not be limited to Neighborhood and Business Crime Watches. Once these groups are formed, the Community Resource Unit will maintain liaison with these groups, providing appropriate support as necessary. In the interests of maintaining regular community interest in a group, it is recommended that the liaison maintain regular communications with the groups. The involvement of community groups in areas of recent activity should be strongly encouraged.

- b. Unless other personnel are specifically assigned, the Community Resources Unit will maintain liaison with any other legitimate community groups' needs if deemed reasonable.
- c. The Community Resource Unit will share all pertinent information gained from communications with the community groups, associations, and organizations, and will coordinate Sheriff's Office resources to meet the group's needs, if deemed reasonable.
- d. The Community Resource Unit shall share appropriate any relevant information with members of the community, as well as community groups, associations, and organizations. This should be accomplished through the use of verbal, written, and electronic means, including Social Media postings, postings to the Sheriff's Office webpage, press releases, and in person to the Citizens' Police Academy, Explorer Post Meetings, National Night Out, Neighborhood Watch meetings, and other means deemed reliable. Information shared should include recent criminal trends, prevention strategies, requests for information, current or upcoming programs and initiatives, significant arrests, Sheriff's Office successes, and any other appropriate information.
- e. The Community Resource Unit shall develop, maintain, and facilitate community programs deemed valuable to the Sheriff's Office. These programs may include the Citizens' Police Academy, Explorer Post, and National Night Out. The Community Resource Unit will coordinate with local public and private schools in cooperation with the agency School Resource Unit, to provide education to students and staff and facilitate presentations to other departments, divisions of Cecil County Government, and local community events as appropriate.
- f. The Community Resource Unit shall assist in the development of the Sheriff's Office's community involved policies and procedures.

#### B. Crime Prevention:

1. It shall be the responsibility of the Community Resource Unit to perform crime prevention functions.
  - a. Through the use of crime data analysis, the Community Resource Unit shall study crime and incident trends within Cecil County and surrounding areas, and shall remain up to date on current threats to individuals, businesses, and agencies within the County. This information shall be used to design crime prevention efforts, programs, or initiatives specific to Cecil County's needs through the use of Problem Oriented Policing or community policing strategies. This information shall also be used to address the community's perceptions or misperceptions of incidents within the County. Each community issue will be examined independently and solutions developed individually for each unique problem, either addressing legitimate crime issues or educating and reassuring

- the community in the event of misperceptions.
- b. The Community Resource Unit shall conduct residential security surveys if requested by any Cecil County resident. A record of the survey recommendations will not be maintained by the Sheriff's Office.
  - c. The Community Resource Unit shall conduct a commercial security survey if requested by any Cecil County commercial property manager or designated representative. The record of the survey recommendations will not be maintained by the Sheriff's Office.
  - d. The Community Resource Unit shall provide crime prevention input into the development and revision of zoning policies, building codes, and building permits when requested by other Cecil County Departments as approved by the Sheriff.

#### C. Reporting and Evaluation of the Community Resource Unit

1. The Community Resources Unit's efforts will be reported in detail on an annual basis for effectiveness and efficiency to the Administrative Lieutenant.
2. Annual Community Policing reports will be provided to the Maryland Police Standards and Training Commission (MPSTC) for review and shall be posted to the agency's website for public dissemination.