

		Policy & Procedures			No. 1.17	
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		Community Relations				
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CALEA STANDARDS

45.2.1

GENERAL CONSIDERATIONS AND GUIDELINES

In order to operate effectively, the Canton Police Department must have the support of the people who live and work within the community. The information citizens receive through the media is helpful in making them aware of Department activities, but it does not necessarily generate the support that is required. This can only be achieved through an on-going and meaningful Community Relations Program.

Community Relations involves joint problem solving with the Department and the community as a whole. It requires public input into the planning process for new as well as old programs, and it encourages the constructive participation of residents and business people in seeking alternatives to ineffective or unproductive policing practices. The position of Community Relations Officer has been created to help serve as a liaison with existing community organizations and to identify current community concerns and to establish community groups where needed. **45.2.1 (3A)**

The programs and practices of the Community Relations Officer go far in serving the interests of both the Department and the community. Also, the important daily responsibilities of officers assigned to Patrol prescribe a positive approach to individual situations and matters that transcend into a favorable Community Relations posture for the Department.

However, in order to ensure that this public input encompasses all segments of the community, it is necessary to develop methods of obtaining, retaining, evaluating, and utilizing information received from these segments. The responsibility for the coordination and control of any formal plan lies directly with the Chief of Police through the Administrative Division. However, personnel at all levels share Community Relations responsibilities on an informal basis.

PROCEDURES

- I. REPORTING:** As a regular part of Supervisor Staff Meetings, the Chief of Police will request information on:
- A.** Current known concerns expressed by members of the community; **45.2.1 (3A)**
 - B.** Potential problems that could have a bearing on law enforcement activities within the community; and,
 - C.** Recommended actions that address previously identified concerns and problems; develop problem oriented or community policing strategies. **45.2.1 (3B,C)**

The Chief will duly note all information and, if necessary, assign a superior officer to work with the Community Liaison Officer to assist in alleviating any problem(s) in a timely and positive manner. **45.2.1 (3B)**

- II. URGENT CONCERNS:** All officers shall be required to report any public concerns of an urgent nature to their immediate superior upon gaining knowledge of the situation. These types of concerns include, but are not limited to, potential racial unrest, teenage conflicts of an intra or inter community nature, potential labor/management conflicts within the community that could result in violence, and neighborhood tensions which have the potential to result in violence.

The information shall be passed on to the Chief of Police through normal channels of the chain of command and it will be the Chief's responsibility to develop a plan which will attempt to diffuse or alleviate the situation before it becomes critical.

- III. ANNUAL EVALUATIONS:** On an annual basis the Chief of Police, using feedback from the Community Relations Officer, will seek to receive feedback from the public on such issues as: **45.2.1 (3C)**

- A.** Overall Department performance;
- B.** Overall competence of Department employees;
- C.** Officer's attitude and behavior towards citizens;
- D.** Concern over safety and security within the community as a whole and,
- E.** Any recommendations and suggestions for improvements.

The Community Relations Officer may compile this information from written surveys, casual conversation with citizens, neighborhood meetings and/or from feedback from fellow officers. Information will then be forwarded to the Lieutenant in Charge of the Community Relations. Upon receipt and compilation of the data, the Chief will identify

the problem areas and seek to eradicate them through training, policy change, or other satisfactory means. **45.2.4**

- IV. COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS:** All officers shall be encouraged to hold membership in community-based organizations or to be involved in these organizations at some level.

Membership/participation in these groups will often subject an officer to both positive and negative feedback regarding Department activity. Rather than ignore or excuse any complaints, officers are encouraged to report any incidents that appear to be valid through the Department chain of command. The Chief of Police will note all information and, if necessary, take positive steps to eradicate the problem through training, policy change, or other satisfactory means.

- V. PROGRAM EVALUATION:** The Chief of Police shall evaluate all Community Policing programs and activities on a regular basis. **45.2.1 (3C)**