

NEW CANAAN POLICE DEPARTMENT

SUBJECT: COMMUNITY RELATIONS

GENERAL ORDER NUMBER: 88-9-53

FILE: PR 4

OPERATIONS SUPPORT

I PURPOSE/POLICY

The members of the New Canaan Police Department share a common bond with the community they serve. That bond is the recognition of the principal that the police function is to preserve order in a democratic society. To best accomplish this task, all department personnel must show a willingness to establish close ties with and demonstrate a genuine concern for the citizens of New Canaan.

The purpose of this General Order is to establish procedures that will enhance the department's ability to elicit public support for its mission. This is best accomplished through the police department's participation in, and communication with, all segments of the community.

II RESPONSIBILITY

It is the responsibility of all department personnel to adhere to this General Order. It shall be the additional responsibility of all supervisory and command staff to insure its compliance.

III PROCEDURES (ORGANIZATION & ADMINISTRATION)

A The main responsibility for developing and coordinating the department's community relations procedures shall rest with the officer assigned to the Community Relations/Crime Prevention Unit. This officer will be under the direct supervision of the Commander of the Investigative Section. Additionally, this officer will communicate directly with the Chief of Police when formulating community relations programs and make himself or herself available to advise the supervisory staff on community matters.

B All department personnel will share the responsibility for advancing stated community relations goals. Good community relations cannot be achieved without the active participation and enthusiasm of all officers.

C The Community Relations/Crime Prevention Officer shall be responsible for the development of a coordinated community relations plan. Among other elements, this plan will include:

1. Establishing liaison with formal and informal community groups and organizations.
2. Advising all Department personnel that they are each responsible for achieving the Department's community involvement objectives.
3. Developing community relations policies for the Department that are consistent with, and supportive of stated departmental objectives.
4. Publication of an annual report which includes information relative to the department's current objectives, statistics, trends, problems and successes. In addition, pertinent information will be contained in the town's annual report.

5. Establishment of a system of communication that will insure a departmental response to information obtained from any community organization.
6. Recommendations for improving departmental practices that have an impact on police/community relations.
7. When appropriate, consultation with citizen representatives, supervisory officers and internal affairs investigators and provide written suggestions for training in the area of community relations. These suggestions shall be forwarded to the Department's Training Officer.
8. Provisions for aiding in the establishment of community groups when a need for such groups has been identified.

IV PROCEDURES (DOCUMENTATION)

- A At least quarterly, the Community Relations/Crime Prevention Officer shall, forward a community relations report to the Chief of Police. The information in the report shall contain the following:
 1. A description of current concerns voiced by the community.
 2. A description of potential problems that have a bearing on law enforcement activities within the community.
 3. A statement of recommended action(s) that address previously identified community concerns.
 4. A statement of progress towards correcting previously identified concerns.
 5. A summary of monthly activities initiated by the Community Relations Officer.
- B Officers within the Police Department recognize the value in listening to and whenever possible, addressing the concerns and/or problems voiced by citizens within the community. Whenever a citizen voices a concern, problem or potential problem, the officer shall:
 1. When within the scope of his/her authority, attempt to resolve the concern/problem.
 2. If it cannot be reasonably corrected or is beyond the scope of their authority, the officer shall inform the appropriate command or supervisory officer of the concern/problem. It shall then be the responsibility of said command or supervisor to review and take the appropriate action.
 - a. When command or supervisory officers receive information regarding such a concern or problem, they shall forward the information to the Community Relations/Crime Prevention Officer. Said information shall be documented on a monthly basis using the Community Relations and Crime Prevention Report.
- C The New Canaan Police Department is committed to address and correct any action, practice or attitude which has a deleterious effect on community relations. Early examination and elimination of potential biased or prejudicial conduct is essential in order to maintain public confidence in the Department.

- D** The needs of the community cannot be adequately addressed by the police department without providing for community input. Input in the form of suggestions, opinions or criticisms of current departmental policies may be obtained by:
1. Providing a period for discussion about the Department during Neighborhood Watch Programs.
 2. Providing the opportunity for a citizen to make comments during Police Commission meetings.
 3. Providing opportunities for outside agency heads who have worked closely with police department personnel to comment on the performance of departmental personnel. The outside agencies may include;
 - a. Fire Department
 - b. Highway Department
 - c. Emergency Medical Services
 - d. Board of Education and Educational Institutions
 - e. Town Administration
 - f. Connecticut State Police
 - g. Social/Human Service Organizations
 - h. Other agencies and organizations
 4. Use of surveys, opinion polls or other resource.

V DISTRIBUTION

This general order will be reproduced in electronic and traditional media. All sworn personnel shall have access to Department general orders through a read-only file on their individual domain of the Department's computer network. Printed copies and/or CD's will also be placed in locations throughout headquarters so that they are easily accessible to all personnel.

VI EFFECTIVE DATE

This general order approved by the Police Commission on October 19, 1988 and is effective January 30, 1989.
Reviewed May 2000
Reviewed November 2000

Per Order

Edward J. Nadriczny
Chief of Police