

# Kent County Sheriff's Office Community Policing Plan

## 20-100 **COMMUNITY POLICING**

Community policing is a philosophy that promotes organizational strategies that support the systematic use of partnerships and problem-solving techniques to proactively address the immediate conditions that give rise to public safety issues such as crime, social disorder, and fear of crime and other quality of life issues.

To provide a more comprehensive focus on community policing the KCSO has adopted, where appropriate and practical, the Guiding Principles of Community Policing identified by the U.S. DOJ, Office of Community Oriented Policing as they relate to the KCSO as follows:

1. Crime Prevention is the responsibility of the total community.
2. The KCSO and community share ownership, responsibility and accountability for the prevention of crime.
3. The KCSO's effectiveness is a function of crime control, crime prevention, problem solving, community satisfaction, quality of life and community engagement.
4. Mutual trust between the KCSO and the community is essential for effective policing.
5. Crime prevention must be a flexible, long-term strategy in which the KCSO and the community collectively commit to resolving the complex and chronic causes of crime.
6. Community policing requires the knowledge, access and mobilization of community resources.
7. Community policing can only succeed when KCSO administrative, supervisory, line-personnel and government officials enthusiastically support its principles and tenets.
8. Community policing depends on decentralized, community-based participation in decision making.
9. Community policing allocates resources and services based on analysis, identification and projection of patterns and trends, rather than incidents.
10. Community policing requires an investment in training with special attention to problem analysis and problem solving, facilitation, community organization, communication, mediation and conflict resolution, resource identification and use, networking and linkages and cross-cultural competency.

The Kent County Sheriff's Office is committed to establishing close ties with and responding to the needs of the community, as well as the development and perpetuation of community relations and crime prevention programs. All KCSO employees will perform community relations and crime prevention activities daily with the intent to reach a reasonable balance between reactive and proactive law enforcement.

## 20-101 **EMPLOYEE ROLE**

The daily conduct of every employee, both sworn and civilian, reflects on the KCSO. The responsibility for meeting the KCSO's community relations objectives is therefore shared by all personnel. Successful community relations depend upon a unified, coordinated effort that requires participation, enthusiasm, and the skills of all employees.

When any employee comes into possession of information which reflects on community attitudes, concerns, or problems, he or she will provide a written report to the KCSO Community Policing Coordinator, through his or her commander/supervisor. The KCSO Field Interview Report Form may be used for this purpose

where appropriate.

**(CALEA 45.2.3)**

## 20-102 **COMMAND COMMITMENT**

The KCSO is committed to correcting actions, practices, and attitudes that may contribute to community-police tensions and grievances from citizens. As an elected official and the top law enforcement officer in Kent County, the Sheriff regularly attends community functions and makes himself available to citizens who have concerns about the operations of the KCSO. The Sheriff regularly seeks the input of community leaders, both elected and unelected, concerning citizen satisfaction with law enforcement in the County. The Chief Deputy assists the Sheriff in this effort.

Under the direction of the Sheriff, the Chief Deputy also:

- a. Establishes liaison with existing community organizations or establishes community groups where they are needed;
- b. Develops community involvement policies for the KCSO;
- c. Publicizes agency objectives, community problems, and successes via various information outlets;
- d. Conveys information transmitted from citizens' organizations to the Sheriff and elsewhere internally to the KCSO;
- e. Improves agency practices bearing on police/community interaction;
- f. Identifies additional training needs for KCSO employees focusing on community involvement; and
- g. Develops problem-oriented or community policing strategies.

**(CALEA 45.2.1)**

## 20-103 **PROGRAM COORDINATOR**

The Chief Deputy will have principal responsibility for the KCSO's Community Policing Program. The Coordinator's role will include:

- a. Establishing liaison with formal community organizations and other community groups;
- b. Assisting with establishing community groups where such groups do not exist.
- c. Submitting an annual report to the Sheriff, which includes:
  - 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 actions that address previously identified concerns and problems; and
  - 4) a statement of progress made toward addressing previously identified concerns and problems.
- d. Submitting an annual report to the Maryland Police Training and Standards Commission (MPTSC) by July 1 of each year as required by law.

**(CALEA 45.1.2, 45.2.2)**

20-104            **PROGRAMS**

The KCSO has established active community involvement programs, including:

- Neighborhood Patrols
- Traffic Safety Initiatives
- Adolescent Substance Abuse Council
- Local Drug and Alcohol Advisory Council
- Prescription Drug Collection Program
- School Security Partnership and Crisis Management
- Community Crime Prevention Presentations
- Child Fingerprinting

20-105            **CITIZEN SURVEY**

Citizen surveys can help ensure that the KCSO's policies and procedures accurately reflect the needs of the community. The KCSO conducts a survey of citizens' attitudes, opinions, and needs on an on-going basis, via its website, with respect to:

- a. Overall KCSO performance
- b. Overall competence of KCSO employees;
- c. Deputies' attitudes and behavior toward citizens;
- d. Public trust of agency
- e. Concern over safety and security within the primary service area;
- f. Recommendations and suggestions for improvements.
- g. Annually, the Chief Deputy reports to the Sheriff on the results of the year's survey responses.  
**(CALEA 45, 1.2, 45.2.4, 45.2.5)**

20-106            **COMMUNITY PLANNING**

The KCSO participates as a regular member of the Kent County Technical Advisory Committee, which provides support to the County Planning and Zoning Commission. As necessary, the KCSO provides crime prevention input into the development and/or revision of zoning policies, building codes, fire codes, and residential and commercial building permits. The release of any crime prevention analysis data requires the approval of the Sheriff and Chief Deputy.

**(CALEA 45.1.2, 45.1.3)**

20-107            **IDENTITY THEFT**

Where reasonable and appropriate, officers engaged in public education/information forums, community crime prevention and awareness presentations or similar speaking or information dissemination efforts will provide the public with information on the nature and prevention of identity theft.

**(CALEA 42.2.8)**

The KCSO is committed to the development, implementation, and continuation of effective victim/witness assistance programs.

The KCSO recognizes that providing assistance to victims of and witnesses to crimes is as important to its role in law enforcement as identifying and apprehending criminal perpetrators. The Kent County State's Attorney's Office has a position of Victim/Witness Services Provider (VWSP) who is responsible for coordinating support services to all crime victims in Kent County, regardless whether the underlying criminal case is handled by the KCSO, the Maryland State Police, or a local Kent County law enforcement agency.

In most cases, the law enforcement officer is the first to arrive on the scene of a crime and is the initial source of protection for the victim. The manner in which the Deputy treats the victim at the time of the crime and afterwards affects not only the victim's immediate and long-term ability to cope with the crime, it can determine the victim's willingness to assist in the prosecution.

In support of assistance provided to victims and witnesses by the Kent County State's Attorney's Office VWSP, the KCSO's role when appropriate during initial investigations, follow-up investigations and the arrest of suspects is, to include:

- a. The implementation and delivery of victim/witness assistance services by KCSO personnel;
- b. The confidentiality of victims/witnesses and their role in case development to the extent consistent with applicable law;
- c. Efforts to inform the public and media about available victim/witness assistance services;
- d. The relationship between the KCSO and victim/witness efforts of other agencies and organizations; and
- e. A summary of victim and witness rights as established in Article 47 of the Declaration of Rights of the Maryland Constitution, to include:
  - *A victim of crime shall be treated by agents of the State with dignity, respect, and sensitivity during all phases of the criminal justice process.*
  - *In a case originating by indictment or information filed in a circuit court, a victim of crime shall have the right to be informed of the rights established in this Article and, upon request and if practicable, to be notified of, to attend, and to be heard at a criminal justice proceeding, as these rights are implemented and the terms "crime", "criminal justice proceeding", and "victim" are specified by law.*
  - *Nothing in this article permits any civil cause of action for monetary damages for violation of any of its provisions or authorizes a victim of crime to take any action to stay a criminal justice proceeding.*  
**(CALEA 55.1.1)**