



# COLUMBIA POLICE DEPARTMENT

*“Policing Excellence through Community Partnerships”*

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<b>Subject:</b> <i>Crime Prevention and Community Relations</i>		
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## 1.0 DIRECTIVE

Each individual member of the Department is responsible for the crime prevention and community relations goals and functions of the Department. Through the use of pro-active crime prevention programs, the Crime Prevention Unit, the Regions and each individual member of the Department will reduce the opportunity for or lessen the loss arising from crime. Each employee will also attempt to make his/her contact with the community one which inspires respect for himself/herself as an individual and professional and one which generates cooperation and approval of the public.

## 2.0 ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

The Crime Prevention Unit is a component of the Special Services Division of the Police Department. The Unit is supervised by a Lieutenant and supported by full time Officers. All members of the Columbia Police Department are responsible for being familiar with and supporting all crime prevention and community relations programs and objectives.

## 3.0 RESPONSIBILITIES

The Crime Prevention function of the unit is responsible for the reduction of crime through pro-active crime prevention programs. The Crime Prevention function is also responsible for the coordination, development and perpetuation of community crime prevention programs such as Neighborhood Watch Groups.

Each Region will address any crime patterns identified by the Crime Analysis Unit by contacting residents in the affected area and providing them with pro-active crime prevention information to address the problem identified.

The Regions and the Crime Prevention Unit will maintain close ties with the community to improve community relations, community cooperation and to remain responsive to community needs.

### 3.1 Neighborhood Crime Prevention Watch Groups

The Police Department cannot function effectively without the support of the citizens in the community. The Regions will utilize the weekly crime analysis data to determine which areas of the city are experiencing the highest crime rates. Once a problem has been identified, the Crime Prevention Unit will assist in organizing

Neighborhood Crime Prevention Watch Groups in those targeted areas or in any other area requested by a citizen or group of citizens.

An Officer from the Crime Prevention Unit will contact citizens in the targeted area. Once contact has been made, a Crime Watch Meeting is scheduled and the program is explained. At least 80% of the homes in the targeted area must have a Home Security Survey completed in order for the area to qualify as a Crime Watch Zone. The Home Security Survey consists of an on-site inspection of the home or business, providing practical security recommendations to better secure the property. The Regional officer or the Crime Prevention Unit may complete home security surveys.

Once a Neighborhood Crime Prevention Watch Group has been established, the Region Commander or his designee will maintain close liaison with such groups by attending their meetings periodically. The Region Commander may also request that a member of Crime Prevention Unit attend a particular meeting to address a problem in the area of crime prevention that was brought out at a previous meeting.

### 3.2 Police Community Relations

The Crime Prevention Unit will be responsible for the coordination of community relations programs and policies in the department. The unit will maintain a list of all neighborhood organizations, special crime watch groups, business crime watch groups and neighborhood coalitions. This list will include the date and time of scheduled meetings. The Region Captain will appoint a staff member that will attend these meetings at least quarterly and will publicize the Police Department's objectives, problems and successes.

The feedback generated from these meetings will be documented in a written report submitted by the Region Commander and forwarded through the chain of command to the Chief of Police after each meeting. A copy of this report shall also be forwarded to the Crime Prevention Unit for file maintenance. The report will contain a description of current concerns voiced by the community, potential problems that have a bearing on law enforcement and a statement of recommendations and/or actions taken or that will be taken in order to address the concerns and problems.

The Region Commander will meet with Crime Prevention personnel periodically. These meetings will enable the Commander to inform the Crime Prevention personnel of the community concerns and problems discussed at the community meetings and identify those areas that can be addressed by the Crime Prevention function and which will be addressed by the Region.

The information gathered by the Region personnel at the community and business meetings, along with information from community surveys will also be used to evaluate police-community relations and to correct any actions, practices and attitudes that may contribute to community tensions and grievances. This information, in conjunction with information provided by the Crime Analysis Unit and supervisory staff of the Department, will be used to initiate training programs geared towards correcting the problem areas within the Police Department.

### 3.3 Crime Prevention Programs

The Crime Prevention Unit will utilize a number of programs to address those areas in the city that are experiencing the highest rates of Part One crimes. The Crime Prevention Units first priority would be to go into one of these communities and address the problem using one or more of the following programs:

- Burglary assessment
- Crime Prevention for Commercial Business
- Combat Auto Theft (C.A.T.)
- Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (C.P.T.E.D)
- Fraud Awareness
- Personal Safety

The Crime Prevention function will also provide a number of other programs for citizens and proprietors in a targeted area or upon request:

- Mc Gruff
- Fingerprints Insures Safe Tots and Teens (F.I.S.T.)
- Pedestrian Safety/Bicycle Safety
- Basic Firearms Safety Course

The Crime Prevention Unit will provide crime prevention input into the development and/or revision of zoning policies, building codes, fire codes and residential and commercial building permits, upon request from the City Zoning Section or a private citizen.

All Crime Prevention Programs will be reviewed continually by the Lieutenant to determine whether the existing programs continue to meet the needs of the community, need to be upgraded or changed or no longer meet the needs of the community and should be discontinued and new programs implemented.

#### **4.0 COMMUNITY INPUT**

The community will have input in the development of Police Department policies. Community input will be obtained through public opinion surveys, conducted at least every three years. The public opinion surveys will include questions as to the citizen's attitudes and opinions regarding, at a minimum:

- The overall performance of the Police Department.
- The overall competence of the Police Department's employees.
- The officer's attitudes and behavior towards citizens.
- The citizen's concerns over safety and security within the Police Department's service area as a whole.
- Recommendations and suggestions for improving the Police Department.