
Community Relations

300.1 PURPOSE AND SCOPE

The purpose of this policy is to provide guidelines for community relationship-building.

Additional guidance on community relations and outreach is provided in other policies, including the:

- HATE CRIMES
- Limited English Proficiency Services Policy - Contact with Limited English Proficient individuals
- Communications with Persons with Disabilities Policy.
- Chaplains Policy.
- Patrol Function Policy.
- Suspicious Activity Reporting Policy.

300.2 POLICY

It is the policy of the Alsip Police Department to promote positive relationships between department members and the community by treating community members with dignity and respect and engaging them in public safety strategy development and relationship-building activities, and by making relevant policy and operations information available to the community in a transparent manner.

300.3 MEMBER RESPONSIBILITIES

Officers should, as time and circumstances reasonably permit:

- (a) Make casual and consensual contacts with community members to promote positive community relationships (see the Contacts and Temporary Detentions Policy).
- (b) Become reasonably familiar with the schools, businesses and community groups in their assigned jurisdictional areas.
- (c) Work with community members and the department community relations coordinator to identify issues and solve problems related to community relations and public safety.
- (d) Conduct periodic foot patrols of their assigned areas to facilitate interaction with community members. Officers carrying out foot patrols should notify an appropriate supervisor and the Dispatch Center of their status (i.e., on foot patrol) and location before beginning and upon completion of the foot patrol. They should also periodically inform the Dispatch Center of their location and status during the foot patrol.

Community Relations

300.4 COMMUNITY RELATIONS COORDINATOR

The Chief of Police or the authorized designee should designate a member of the [Department/Office] to serve as the community relations coordinator. The member should report directly to the Chief of Police or the authorized designee and is responsible for:

- (a) Obtaining [department/office]-approved training related to the coordinator's responsibilities.
- (b) Responding to requests from [department/office] members and the community for assistance in identifying issues and solving problems related to community relations and public safety.
- (c) Organizing surveys to measure the condition of the [department/office]'s relationship with the community.
- (d) Working with community groups, [department/office] members and other community resources to:
 - 1. Identify and solve public safety problems within the community.
 - 2. Organize programs and activities that help build positive relationships between [department/office] members and the community and provide community members with an improved understanding of [department/office] operations.
- (e) Working with the Patrol Lieutenant to develop patrol deployment plans that allow officers the time to participate in community engagement and problem-solving activities.
- (f) Recognizing [department/office] and community members for exceptional work or performance in community relations efforts.
- (g) Attending Village council and other community meetings to obtain information on community relations needs.
- (h) Assisting with the [department/office]'s response to events that may affect community relations, such as an incident where the conduct of a [department/office] member is called into public question.
- (i) Informing the Chief of Police and others of developments and needs related to the furtherance of the [department/office]'s community relations goals, as appropriate.
- (j) Evaluating the effectiveness of Community Policing programs.

300.5 SURVEYS

The community relations coordinator should arrange for a survey of community members and [department/office] members to be conducted at least annually to assess the condition of the relationship between the [Department/Office] and the community. Survey questions should be designed to evaluate perceptions of the following:

- (a) Overall performance of the [Department/Office]
- (b) Overall competence of [department/office] members
- (c) Attitude and behavior of [department/office] members

Community Relations

- (d) Level of community trust in the [Department/Office]
- (e) Safety, security, or other concerns
- (f) Recommendations and suggestions for improvement

A written summary of the compiled results of the survey should be provided to the Chief of Police.

300.6 INFORMATION SHARING

The community relations coordinator should work with the Public Information Officer to develop methods and procedures for the convenient sharing of information (e.g., major incident notifications, significant changes in department operations, comments, feedback, positive events) between the Department and community members. Examples of information-sharing methods include:

- (a) Community meetings.
- (b) Social media (see the Department Use of Social Media Policy).
- (c) Department website postings.

Information should be regularly refreshed, to inform and engage community members continuously.

300.7 SAFETY AND OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

Department members responsible for community relations activities should consider the safety of the community participants and, as much as reasonably practicable, not allow them to be present in any location or situation that would jeopardize their safety.

Department members in charge of community relations events should ensure that participating community members have completed waiver forms before participation, if appropriate. A parent or guardian must complete the waiver form if the participating community member has not reached 18 years of age.

Community members are subject to a criminal history check before approval for participation in certain activities, such as citizen academies.

300.8 TRANSPARENCY

The Department should periodically publish statistical data and analysis regarding the department's operations. The reports should not contain the names of officers, suspects or case numbers. The community relations coordinator should work with the community advisory committee to identify information that may increase transparency regarding department operations.

300.9 TRAINING

Subject to available resources, members should receive training related to this policy, including training on topics such as:

Alsip Police Department

Policy Manual

Community Relations

- (a) Effective social interaction and communication skills.
- (b) Cultural, racial and ethnic diversity and relations.
- (c) Building community partnerships.
- (d) Community policing and problem-solving principles.
- (e) Enforcement actions and their effects on community relations.

Where practicable and appropriate, community members, especially those with relevant expertise, should be involved in the training to provide input from a community perspective.