



DES PLAINES POLICE DEPARTMENT

GENERAL ORDER

Jim Prandini, Chief of Police

SUBJECT: CITIZENS ON PATROL

NUMBER: 1.26

SECTION: 1 – ORGANIZATION & MISSION

EFFECTIVE: March 24, 2006

AMENDED:

RESCINDS:

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PURPOSE: To establish guidelines for the Des Plaines Police Department Citizens On Patrol program and outline the responsibilities of members of the program.

POLICY: Law enforcement agencies are not the only entities with a duty to police communities. Engaging citizen volunteers to work within their communities helps improve the safety and quality of life desired by everyone. The Des Plaines Police Department has established a Citizens on Patrol (C.O.P.) program to provide a means for qualified participants to volunteer their time to assist the Department in accomplishing its mission. Selection, training, and assignment of members of C.O.P will be performed as outlined in this order and order 7.04, "Volunteers".

Members of the C.O.P. provide a great benefit to the Department as well as its individual members. Members of C.O.P. have successfully fulfilled many requirements and are willing to donate their personal time without monetary compensation for the benefit of the Department and the citizens of Des Plaines. Participation in any successful volunteer program must be enjoyable for those participating. Members of C.O.P. will be treated with courtesy and respect by all members of the Department.

1.26.1 HISTORY

The C.O.P. was established in 2001 as a response to the desire of graduates of the Citizens' Police Academy to support and assist the Department and its Officers in serving the Des Plaines community. In order for a citizen to qualify for the C.O.P. program, they must meet the following qualifications:

- Must be a United States citizen
- Must have a valid Illinois driver's license
- Must not have received excessive traffic citations in the last three years
- Must be at least 21 years of age and live in the City of Des Plaines
- Must have successfully completed studies through the Des Plaines Police Citizen's Police Academy
- Must successfully undergo a background check by the Department, including fingerprint submission to the Illinois State Police
- Must successfully complete an interview with selected members of the C.O.P. Program and sworn members of the Department

1.26.2 ADMINISTRATION

The Citizens on Patrol program is administered by the Coordinator of Volunteers, under the authority of the Chief of Police. The Coordinator is responsible for overseeing recruiting, training, scheduling, communication, and meeting agendas, and will serve as liaison between the program and the Department.

1.26.3 RECRUITING

Volunteers should be recruited on a continuous and ongoing basis to ensure that a good base of volunteers is maintained. Participation in the Des Plaines Police Citizens' Police Academy is a prerequisite for participation in the program. This ensures that C.O.P. members all have the same basic understanding of the Department and how it functions.

1.26.4 C.O.P. MANUAL

Upon their selection for participation in the program, C.O.P. members will be issued a copy of the C.O.P. Manual. This manual should contain a copy of this General Order, a copy of General Order 7.04 "Volunteers", and copies of General Orders, procedures and rules specifically applicable to members of C.O.P. and the duties they perform.

1.26.5 REQUIRED EQUIPMENT

C.O.P. members are required to have the following equipment prior to going on patrol or working a function:

- A working portable radio
- A charged and working cell-phone
- A full C.O.P. uniform including identification card
- A parking ticket book

- A slim-jim
- A working flashlight
- A traffic vest

1.26.6 GENERAL GUIDELINES FOR ASSIGNMENT

C.O.P. will generally volunteer their time in four-hour blocks. This time will usually be spent in a C.O.P. vehicle on patrol in Des Plaines. C.O.P. members will sometimes have other assignments from the Coordinator of Volunteers. If that is the case, they should advise the on-duty Watch Commander of that fact when they check in at the beginning of their "tour of duty". C.O.P. members have been advised that they will work in pairs. C.O.P. members will not be assigned to go on patrol or work at a function or assignment alone.

C.O.P. members have access to the police station and PNR. Upon arrival at the station prior to starting their tour of duty, they will sign for portable radios and any other equipment that requires a signature and check their other equipment out. They will sign out their C.O.P. vehicle in the Watch Commander's Office. C.O.P. members will call the Communication Center and provide their names, radio call sign, and the hours they will be on duty. Communications will enter them into the CAD system status board. Once they are ready for duty, they will check in with the Watch Commander to advise that they are going to be "on-duty". They should also ask the Watch Commander if there are any areas they should stay away from, any areas that they should give extra attention to, or any tasks that they can help out with.

The C.O.P. will go 10-8 over the radio when they are available for calls. At the conclusion of their shift with will inform Communications that they are going off duty (10-42) and will return their radios to the desk or designated storage area. They will return any other equipment that they have checked out, and inform the Watch Commander, (if practical), that they are ending their tour of duty. The volunteers have access to the station, desk, Watch Commander, designated radio storage area, and report writing room while on duty.

1.26.7 GENERAL PATROL DUTIES

C.O.P. members perform a variety of functions while on non-committed patrol time. C.O.P. is authorized to patrol all areas of Des Plaines including parks, schools, library plaza, shopping areas and business areas. They are not authorized to go onto residential property including condo garages, unless dispatched to that area for an assignment. The general rule is not to patrol in an isolated area and do more perimeter patrolling vs. going into an isolated or closed area. While on non-committed patrol time, their duties include:

- Enforcement of select parking ordinances
- Looking for and calling in suspicious activity or crimes in progress
- Assisting with citizens who need help, (e.g.: giving directions, motorist assists, lockouts)
- Making premise checks at businesses, schools, homes, and parks
- Making security checks on government buildings and critical areas during heightened security alerts

1.26.8 TYPES OF CALLS C.O.P. HANDLES

C.O.P. will receive, respond to, and close assignments that they are authorized to perform, and have been trained to handle when so assigned by the Communications Center, the Watch

Commander, or the officer in charge of special events. Additional assignments can be given based on the nature of the call, its appropriateness to be handled by a volunteer, and safety of the volunteer during the assignment. C.O.P. members are trained that they cannot arbitrarily accept or reject assignments, and that assignments as given are to be completed unless safety issues arise or the C.O.P. assigned does not have the physical ability needed to complete an assignment.

In general, authorized assignments include, but are not limited to the following:

- Prisoner Meal Pickup.
- Pickup of recovered property: Note this includes items left at restaurants, abandoned or lost bikes, etc. The Desk Officer or other CSO will assist in the logging and recording of recovered property.
- Delivery of Alderman mail or official City documents.
- Assignments to observe and report: Examples are the checking of railroad gates or crossings, hazards in the road, the presence of a vehicle, and stationary patrol to observe or watch. C.O.P. does not detain or question individuals. Their purpose is to observe as requested and to report.
- Finger Print Delivery or Pickup.
- Disabled Vehicles: Most 10-46 calls. If there is no driver/owner and paper work is required for a tow, the 10-46 will be assigned to an Officer.
- Traffic Direction: The location of any traffic direction assignment is to be considered when assigning it to C.O.P. Members of C.O.P. are instructed to advise the Communication Center if they are uncomfortable with a location or circumstances of a traffic direction assignment.
- Railroad Gate Malfunctions
- Road Hazards: C.O.P. is authorized to check road hazards out and remove them if appropriate.
- Vehicle Lockouts
- Premise Checks: Premise checks are a big part of C.O.P.'s duties. Most are not called in or coded but are listed on the C.O.P. Report for tracking purposes. C.O.P. is authorized to call in via radio and code one to two premise checks per hour. Special assignments for premise checks from the Watch Commander, the Communication Center, library checks, and those done during heightened security will be called in and coded.
- Parking Citations: C.O.P. members have been sworn (clerked) and empowered to issue citations for city ordinance violations as assigned by radio or those they have been authorized to enforce while on duty. C.O.P. is authorized to issue citations for handicap parking violations, vehicles for sale on private property (approved locations-mainly large lots with city agreements-Jewel, Dominick's, K-Mart), fire lane, and vehicle sticker violations. C.O.P. members are trained to avoid private parking garages at condo's and do not go on residential property to view city stickers.
- Animals: C.O.P. is authorized to pickup and drop off cats and kittens in cages. C.O.P. does not have a seat divider in their vehicles and should not transport other animals such as dogs. They can assist in locating an animal but should not be attempting to catch them or transport animals other than caged cats.
- Parking Complaints: C.O.P. may investigate a parking complaint but should not be assigned to a problem or ongoing parking issue that could be confrontational. They are instructed to request an officer in questionable situations or to ask radio to assign an officer if they are uncomfortable with the situation for safety reasons.

- Traffic Accidents: C.O.P. may be dispatched to traffic accidents to direct traffic, protect property, and transport as needed when deemed appropriate for the volunteers. The C.O.P. can also advise on conditions and the first responder needs if arriving on the scene first.
- Special Events: The C.O.P. is authorized to cover special events as needed and as requested. Based on the event they may be present to deter crime, walk the event, use vehicles and/or bicycles as needed. In other instances they will be present with a mixture of officers.
- General Assistance: The C.O.P. will provide additional assistance to officers and the public as needed and as directed by the Watch Commander, Officers, or Communication Center as deemed appropriate for the trained volunteers. This assistance could be a result of being first at a traffic accident and gaining the information needed to validate the need for a fire response or simply securing the area until an officer arrives. It could be answering questions in a parking lot or park, or it could be a result of being flagged down by a citizen with a question or needing assistance or information. C.O.P. members are expected to provide assistance to the citizens of Des Plaines or the general public passing through the city. C.O.P. members have been trained to use the safety tactics of having the window only partially down and doors locked when approached by a citizen until the circumstances are known.
- Transporting Citizens: The C.O.P. is authorized to transport citizens as needed when deemed safe to do so. This includes those who have been involved in accidents, citizens locked out of their vehicle when entry was not gained, (transport to their homes for spare keys), and other situations as approved. In cases where necessary, the driver will be run through LEADS to insure safety. The C.O.P. will follow normal procedure of advising radio of the transport, the person(s) being transported, location from and to, as well as starting and ending mileage. Radio and the C.O.P. will also record the time of the transports. Delays from trains or other events will be recorded as necessary.
- Pickup and Drop Off of Cages: The C.O.P. will be instructed by the Watch Commander, desk personnel, or the PNRC to pick up and return cages from Northwest Animal Hospital, resident's homes, the police station, or the PNRC. As noted above, cats and kittens may be picked-up and delivered to Northwest Animal Hospital.

1.26.9 C.O.P. PATROL GOALS & REQUIREMENTS

C.O.P. members are interested in helping make Des Plaines a better place. During their tour of duty on patrol, they will typically:

- Serve as an extra set of eyes and ears for the Department. They will look for suspicious activity and bring it to the attention of sworn officers to investigate. This is an important function of C.O.P. and should not be discouraged. All reports of suspicious activity will be thoroughly investigated by assigned unit(s)
- C.O.P. members are trained not to exit their vehicle to approach situations or become involved in them. They are trained to maintain a safe distance from any incident or suspicious activity and to call for a sworn officer. When officers arrive at the scene, they are instructed to resume patrol unless directed otherwise by the officers. If they want to speak with an officer regarding an incident, they are advised to make the request via the telephone.
- C.O.P. members are trained to avoid the area should they happen upon police activity while on patrol. They are also not to respond to police calls unless directed to do so by the Communications Center or an officer.

1.26.10 REQUIRED COMMITMENT

C.O.P. members will generally be expected to volunteer 8 hours each month for patrol time (most break their time up into 4 hour shifts) and to attend the monthly training night. Members may select their patrol times based on their own personal schedule.

1.26.11 PATROL TRAINING

New C.O.P. members will be assigned to perform their initial patrol time tours with established and experienced C.O.P. member trainers until they are released for general tours of duty by the Volunteer Coordinator.

1.26.12 DRESS CODE

Members of C.O.P. will wear the official uniform of C.O.P. as outlined in the C.O.P. Manual, whenever they are on-duty as a C.O.P.

1.26.13 ADHERENCE TO RULES & PROCEDURES

While members of C.O.P. are not sworn officers, they are held to the same standards as officers and are expected to follow Department policies and procedures and the chain of command.

1.26.14 COMMUNICATION

The C.O.P. will be assigned their calls via the radio in the normal manner. The C.O.P. will follow established radio protocol and will call in plates and other information needed to complete their duties. The Communication Center will follow the normal procedure of running the plates and obtaining other information needed to insure the safety of the volunteers. The C.O.P. will code out events and record the RD Numbers of calls that they are assigned.

The C.O.P. are assigned a cellular telephone and should use it for all non-essential communication.

1.26.15 SPEED AWARENESS PROGRAM

C.O.P. members have been trained in the use of police radar units and are authorized to deploy the radar under the Speed Awareness Program. Under this program, the C.O.P. will use the radar to obtain the speed of vehicles in an assigned location. They will log date, time, speed, license plate info, and other descriptive information on vehicles exceeding a threshold limit. At the end of their tour of duty, they will turn the log sheet in with their other paperwork. The log sheet will be forwarded to the Traffic Unit for follow-up. The Traffic Unit Supervisor will review the log. He or she may compare description information captured by C.O.P. to data on file with the Secretary of State. He or she may send a courtesy letter to the registered owner advising them of the violation. This letter should include a request to encourage drivers of their vehicle to obey speed limits.

The Watch Commander may assign C.O.P. to specific locations to implement this program. C.O.P. will only implement this program at the request of the Watch Commander, the Coordinator of Volunteers, or other supervisor. Any C.O.P. implementing this program at the request of someone other than the Watch Commander will notify the Watch Commander that they will be setting up the program and give the location where they will be running radar.

1.26.16 EMERGENCY CALLOUT

C.O.P. is available for call-out for emergencies or special events. The C.O.P. has a callout procedure and reverse 911 configuration in the event of an emergency or other need: The Watch Commander should use discretion in making the decision to call C.O.P. out for emergency situations. Long-term assignments such as traffic direction during serious accidents and power outages should normally be assigned to EMA first. The C.O.P. Director's number is documented at the station as well as on the schedule posted in the Watch Commanders Office. Any last minute changes should be recorded on the Watch Commander copy of the schedule. The Watch Commander also has the home, cell, and pager numbers of C.O.P. members for use if needed.

The Watch Commander should call the C.O.P. Director in the event an emergency callout is needed. The C.O.P. Director will make the necessary calls to C.O.P. members to arrange their response to the station. In the event the C.O.P. Director can't be reached, use the alternate contact as listed in the Watch Commander's Telephone Reference Manual.

By order of:

Jim Prandini, Chief of Police
City of Des Plaines