



Topeka Police Department

Volunteers in Police Service Patrol (VIPs)

Guidelines of Conduct

In conjunction with Topeka Police Department General Order PO1 *Professional Conduct*, the following shall serve as guidelines of conduct of VIPs Patrol members.

1. At all times recognize that the Topeka Police Department VIPs Patrol serves as a volunteer support service to the Topeka Police Department and does not assume any legal authority beyond those granted to any citizen. A member must not make any representation that the VIPs Patrol has been granted special authorities other than those that may be periodically, and specifically, assigned by a supervising police officer.
2. Adhere to a strict policy of nonphysical contact with any suspected violator of public laws, except in the event of an emergency situation where immediate action has to be taken to insure public or officer safety. The role of the VIPs Patrol is to observe and report incidents or concerns to Police Department officials, who will be the sole authority in determining whether response or action is required.
3. When on patrol, to "stand-down" from the scene of any Police Department activity, until specifically directed by an authorized official to provide assistance or to perform an assigned duty; or it becomes obvious that assistance is required. Good judgment and safety will be used at all times.
4. Assure a minimum of two (2) VIPs members per vehicle when providing community patrol services.
5. Do not carry any weapons, lethal or non-lethal, nor display any evidence of assumed authority, excluding equipment that may be specifically assigned or provided by the Topeka Police Department, and that the member is properly trained in the usage of the assigned or provided equipment.
6. VIPs Patrol members may from time-to-time receive confidential information, at the discretion of the Topeka Police Department, including but not limited to: the progress of an investigation, a known or reported law violation, or condition against which action is to be taken at a future time, or any proposed law enforcement operation. Such information shall be held in confidence and not provided to any other non-authorized party. No member shall use such confidential information to advance a personal belief or in support of any other organization, association, group, or movement.

7. No VIPS Patrol Member shall belong to, or support any organization whose goals and objectives may be in conflict with the generally recognized duties and responsibilities of the Police Department in assuring public safety and the enforcement of public laws. VIPS Members shall adhere to specific directions received from the administration and supervisors of Topeka Police Department.

8. No VIPS Patrol member shall conduct himself or herself in a manner that would bring discredit to himself or herself, members of the Topeka Police Department Volunteers in Police Service Patrol, the Topeka Police Department, or the City of Topeka.

9. No VIPS Patrol member shall publicly criticize the official action of a member of the Topeka Police Department, or any of the VIPS Patrol members.

10. No member of the VIPS Patrol shall use his or her membership in the VIPS Patrol in any form of advertisement or solicitation of business, or any manner that may conflict with the stated guidelines of conduct.

11. After having been officially notified, either verbally or in writing, members of the VIPS Patrol shall report as directed by subpoena, or by any notice that dictates his/her required appearance before any hearing board or court.

12. All members of the VIPS Patrol shall wear the full regulation uniform when engaged in patrol duties, or as directed by the Volunteer Coordinator. The term, "regulation uniform" shall mean the authorized shirt and pants, including shoulder patches, shirt badge, name plate, whistle, whistle chain, and duty belt. When appearing in court, members may wear the "regulation uniform" or professional business attire.

13. VIPS Patrol members shall report to a supervisor any incident that may adversely affect the efficiency or discipline of the Topeka Police Department.

14. Any contact with a Law Enforcement agency (e.g. speeding citation, etc.) while off duty must be reported to the Volunteer Coordinator within 24 hours or the next business day.

15. VIPS Patrol members shall report to the Volunteer Coordinator any lost, stolen, or damaged equipment. This information shall then be forwarded to the Division Commander, where a decision will be made on how and when the equipment will be repaired or replaced.

16. VIPS Patrol members shall avoid any derogatory criticism, idle conversation, or gossip.

17. VIPS Patrol members, while engaged in departmental business, shall not discriminate against, degrade, demean, speak despairingly or show partiality toward any person or organization as the result of racial, ethnic, religious, sexual, political, or personal prejudice.

18. VIPS Patrol members shall not mark, alter, or deface any posted Departmental notice or place any authorized notice on bulletin boards without the permission of a supervisor. No notice of a derogatory nature will be posted at any time.

19. VIPS Patrol members shall not mar, mark, or deface any surface on the premises of any Departmental building. No material shall be affixed in any way to any wall, door, or window in any Departmental building without the specific authorization of a supervisor.

20. While engaged in official patrol duties and/or dressed in the regulation uniform or any part thereof, no VIPS Patrol member shall become intoxicated or consume any beverage containing alcohol.

21. VIPS Patrol members shall not consume or ingest intoxicants while "off-duty", to the extent that evidence of consumption or ingestion is apparent when reporting for patrol duties and/or Court, or to the extent that his/her job performance is impaired.

22. While engaged in official patrol duties, no VIPS Patrol member shall have any beverage containing alcohol, or any narcotic substance, on his/her person, in his/her City vehicle unless the beverage or substance is involved in the performance of official departmental duties.

23. VIPS Patrol members shall not smoke or chew tobacco while performing duties at the scene of a police incident, while making personal contact with citizens in the performance of his/her patrol duties, while occupying a Departmental vehicle, or in any part of the Police Department.

24. VIPS Patrol members shall remain anonymous to whatever extent possible and shall not encourage public awareness of their responsibilities, activities or duties.

25. VIPS Patrol members will be issued departmental approved photo-identification badges. These ID badges will be prominently displayed or presented whenever the member is within department facilities, or when requested by a department official. The identification badge is not to be worn or used outside of the department and is not to be utilized for personal benefit.

26. VIPS Patrol members shall not wear any part of the regulation uniform or departmentally issued equipment in public unless the member is operating in an official VIPS Patrol capacity or department authorized special occasions. The only exception would be the wearing of the ID badge while the member is within the department facility.

27. When using Police band radios, VIPS Patrol members will keep air traffic to a minimum; restrict communications to active issues that require immediate action or need; and direct calls through the CECC. Cellular telephones will be used to relay more passive information, observations, or reports. As per City policy, any driver of a city vehicle will not operate a cell phone while the vehicle is in operation. The non-driving VIPS member should accomplish all radio and telephone traffic.

28. VIPS Patrol members shall not request warrant information or criminal history information through the Communications Center, unless specifically directed by a Police Officer; however, a VIPS Patrol member may request vehicle registration and drivers license information without having to obtain specific authorization from a law enforcement officer.