

ARTICLE 89 COMMUNITY POLICING

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Accreditation Standards: 29.1, 29.2, 29.3

1. Purpose

- 1.1. Traditional policing adopts the crime control model as its primary orientation. Community policing —also known as relationship-based policing or partnership policing— incorporates a mixture of order maintenance and community service. The responsibility for community relations is on every officer. The emphasis shifts from one of bureaucratic process to concrete results, and the power base shifts from complete police control to a shared power with the community.

2. Policy

- 2.1. It is the policy of the Athens Village Police Department that all employees of the Department engage and interact with the community to solve community problems and that they ensure that other policies within the department support the strategy of community policing. Community policing is a process of sharing information and values between the police and the community through partnerships of mutual trust, respect, disclosure and shared values reinforced through regular interaction and feedback. The goal of community policing is to foster an environment that enables the police and community to work together to solve problems that affect the quality of life in the community. Instead of distancing themselves from the community, the police become community advocates.

3. Community Partnership

3.1. Community Engagement

3.1.1. Walking/ cycling

Weather permitting, 20-30% of total policing time should be spent either on foot or on a bicycle in the Village. The goal of policing in this manner is to increase visibility and direct contact with the community as well as improve public perception of the police. While walking or cycling, officers are expected to stop and talk with residents, make regular checks on local businesses and “check-in” with elderly or high-risk residents.

3.1.2. Community engagement activities

All officers are expected to perform at least 10 hours of community policing activities per year. They are encouraged to choose activities that match their skills and interests, such as participating in school fund-raising events, serving food at a church’s community dinner, or holding ‘Coffee with a Cop’ open hours, where residents are free to speak their minds with officers.

3.1.3. The Athens Police will be present at Athens Community Day and Street Festivals, where they should be taking the opportunity to interact with residents. When staffing allows, a booth to conduct bike safety, car seat installation safety, or other pertinent community engagement should be established.

3.1.4. The Athens Police Department will take part in the Athens Summer Recreation Program by providing bike safety courses or highlighting police vehicles and equipment to the participating youth.

3.1.5. Ride-along programs will be made available to local education facilities. Ride-alongs must be approved by the Village Board.

3.2. Relationships with local businesses

Police/ Business partnerships in Athens are intended to focus on a certain type of crime or a particular situation, most commonly a public order problem that has reached the point where intervention is needed. These partnerships continue until the specific problem is solved. Because they

may be short-lived, such partnerships may not need to be formal or institutionalized.

So that businesses in the community can develop personal relationships with the Athens Police Officers, the Officers are encouraged to routinely frequent local businesses while on and off duty.

3.3. Relationships with religious and non-profit groups

Similar to local businesses, Athens Police Officers should be familiar with all local religious organizations and non-profit groups. These should be included in routine rounds of the Village and Officers should introduce themselves and check-in to offer assistance as needed. In accordance with section 2.1.2 above, Officers are encouraged to work with these groups to find community engagement opportunities.

4. Community Safety Forums and Neighborhood Watch

4.1. Community Safety Forums

4.1.1. People want transparency with their police departments. The effectiveness of a law enforcement agency and its officers depends enormously on the relationship the department has forged with the community it serves. The Village of Athens intends to continue to foster this relationship by providing regular forums for residents to speak directly with Police and Fire departments to voice concerns and understand the role these departments play in solving local issues.

4.1.1.1. Community Safety Forums will:

4.1.1.1.1. Be held quarterly/ Bi-annually with the Police & Fire Department's.

4.1.1.1.2. Be attended by leadership from both Police and Fire Departments

4.1.1.1.3. Include businesses.

4.1.1.1.4. Tie-in to Town Hall meetings when appropriate.

4.2. Athens Neighborhood Watch (to be formed only when Community or Police determine a need)

- 4.2.1. In the event that a Neighborhood Watch is desired, those citizens interested will work with the police to initiate, recruit and organize neighbors to join.
- 4.2.2. Contact the Village Board to schedule a meeting at a convenient time and place. It is essential to work in collaboration with Village law enforcement to be a true cooperative effort - proposed by group of residents at a board meeting?
- 4.2.3. Discuss community concerns and develop a communication that will work best - meetings or social media or both. If law enforcement is unavailable to come to the first meeting, have the meeting to discuss the top three concerns and report those issues to the Village Police liaison. The goal is to lessen the impact of the top three concerns of neighbors.

5. Transparency & the use of social media

5.1. Expectations for use of social media by Athens PD

- 5.1.1. Use of social media by the Athens Police Department is intended for two uses:
 - 5.1.1.1. Post community engagement activity photos and stories to promote and highlight these events
 - 5.1.1.2. Posting pertinent announcements and helpful hints such as tips on child seat safety, helmet safety, CPR training and other classes to aid in our community outreach
- 5.1.2. Officers wishing to post an item shall get supervisor approval and coordinate with the Village Communications Committee to post *content to the Athens Village FaceBook Page (<https://www.facebook.com/villageofathensny>), The Village website (<https://athensvillageny.com/>) or other appropriate local social media outlets*

6. Community Oriented Policing & Problem Solving (COPPS) Program

- 6.1. The Village of Athens Police Department utilizes the philosophy of Community Oriented Policing and Problem Solving (COPPS).
- 6.2. The COPPS theory of law enforcement is based upon the premise that officers and members of the community they serve create partnerships and work together to solve problems that affect the quality of life in the community. The

application of problem solving strategies is a vital element of this philosophy of policing.

6.3. This philosophy supports the "beat" officer perspective, wherein the officer is familiar with the business owners and residents in his/her patrol area. With a COPPS Philosophy, the officers are empowered to address any and all problems within their assigned area and make every effort to solve these concerns.

6.4. Goals & Partnerships

6.4.1. The goal of COPPS is to utilize available resources to address community problems. COPPS does not limit the police to criminal problems only. The Village of Athens Police Department takes pride in providing a safe, crime-free environment for all its residents. By creating "community partnerships" (as described in section 2 above) with local businesses, the CA School District, faith-based organizations and local charities, our department can provide an invaluable amount of help and Special Services

7. Special Services

7.1. Extra Watch on Patrol

7.1.1. Village residents should contact our department when problems or circumstances exist where the resident would like additional patrols at their residence. Domestic problems, family death, disgruntled employees, etc. are often reported and require additional follow-up patrols.

7.2. Vacation Checks

7.2.1. Village residents can contact our department at least 24 hours prior to a departure. Emergency contact information will be obtained. Additional information on pets, mail, parked autos, and lights can also be listed. If possible, officers will make periodic checks of the residence during this time.. Residents must notify the Department immediately upon their return.

7.3. Checking on Our Residents (COORS)

7.3.1. The Village of Athens cares about the residents of our community. We especially try to look out for senior citizens and residents with

special needs. However before we can help, we must identify these residents.

- 7.3.2. If a village resident falls into one of the above categories, or knows someone who does, they should go to the Village website, <https://athensvillageny.com/> or stop by the Village Office and pick up a COOR registration form. The information on the form will be used to identify and contact these residents during times of power outages and / or natural disasters. Once contacted, we can provide help with water, transportation to climate controlled shelters, and notify relatives of their whereabouts and needs. Be assured that personal information will not be provided to anyone outside of the Athens Village resources to our citizens in their time of need.

7.4. Senior Call-in Program

- 7.4.1. The Greene County Sheriff's Office has a Senior Call-in Program to help ensure the safety and well-being of Greene County Senior Citizens. The program assists seniors daily in making sure that they are in good health.
- 7.4.2. If a senior fails to call in by an appointed time the Greene County Sheriff's Office will first call that person and/ or call relatives and friends of that person. In the event that contact cannot be made a patrol unit will be dispatched to the residence to check the well being of the listed senior.