

**NEW SMYRNA BEACH POLICE DEPARTMENT
NEW SMYRNA BEACH, FLORIDA**

POLICY AND PROCEDURE DIRECTIVE

TITLE: CIVILIAN VOLUNTEER PROGRAMS

NUMBER: 13-1

EFFECTIVE: 4/14

REFERENCE:

RESCINDS/AMENDS: 2-1

REVISED: 11/21

ATTACHMENTS: [FSS 316.614.html](#)
[Code of Ethics.pdf](#)

A. PURPOSE

The purpose of this directive is to provide a scope of duties, limitations of authority, and guidelines for the establishment and operation of a Civilian Volunteer Program. The following are volunteer programs affiliated with the New Smyrna Beach Police Department.

- Citizens on Patrol (COPS)
- Victim Advocate Program
- Non-Paid Interns

B. POLICY

It shall be the policy of the New Smyrna Beach Police Department (NSBPD) to utilize volunteers, to assist law enforcement-related functions and to serve as a resource in emergency situations and during special events. It shall be the policy of the Department to prohibit the assignment of non-sworn volunteers to duties requiring sworn officer status.

C. PROCEDURE - ORGANIZATION

13.1.1 Each volunteer program shall be under the supervision of a designated supervisor.

1. All volunteer members shall be subject to supervisory control and follow the designated chain of command the same as any regularly compensated members.
2. All volunteer members shall be responsible to one supervisor; however, while performing duties in the field, volunteers shall accept the direction and guidance of full-time sworn officers.

D. PROGRAMS & DUTIES

13.1.2 Citizens on Patrol/Volunteers – upon completion of the appropriate training:

1. Members are non-sworn and may assist the agency with traffic and crowd control. Members shall request a sworn officer to respond to their location for any incident that becomes confrontational. Members are not authorized to detain any person pending the arrival of a sworn officer.
2. Conduct vacation house checks. Members shall request a sworn officer upon observing suspicious circumstance. Members shall not enter a home/business or otherwise investigate a suspicious occurrence.
3. As requested, and under the direction of a sworn officer, assist with search events.
4. COPS may not offer legal advice.
5. COPS shall not stop or attempt to stop any vehicle.
6. COPS shall not stop, attempt to stop, or otherwise investigate suspicious persons or event. COPS are limited to reporting suspicious events to law enforcement.
7. Trained members may assist the records section. Training may be on-the-job. Training shall be documented. Volunteers assisting the records section or other clerical positions within the agency may perform data-entry, filing, and other clerical duties. Clerical volunteers shall not offer legal advice or handle cash.

13.1.3 Victim Advocate Volunteers – upon completion of the appropriate training:

1. Provide victim services and advocacy under the direction of a tenured employee consistent with the positions job description.
2. Training is on-the-job and is provided by a tenured advocate. Training shall be documented.
3. Advocate volunteers are not authorized to disburse cash.

13.1.4 Unpaid Interns:

1. Duties are restricted to records filing, shredding and clerical duties.
2. Interns shall receive instruction and on-the-job training for the function they are assigned. Training shall be documented.
3. Interns are prohibited from receiving cash payments or making change related to records distribution.
4. Interns may not offer legal advice.

E. RECORDS

13.1.5 The Office of Professional Standards (OPS) shall maintain personnel and training records pertaining to the volunteer programs.

13.1.6 Volunteer members shall properly record and forward their hours of service performed to their supervisor monthly.

F. SUBPOENAS

13.1.7 Volunteer members receiving subpoenas as a result of voluntary duties shall be coordinated through the assigned supervisor.

G. DRESS/ UNIFORMS

13.1.8 Volunteer members shall not be equipped with, carry, or have access to weapons, handcuffs, or any other equipment owned by the Department, or by the member, which would place the volunteer member or the Department, in a position of potential danger or liability while performing duties.

13.1.9 Volunteer personnel are often in a position to represent the Department and are expected to present a neat, clean, and orderly appearance.

1. The Department will provide uniforms to volunteers when required as part of their duties. The Support Services Division Commanding Officer or designee shall determine the number of issued uniforms. Uniforms issued to volunteers shall clearly distinguish them from sworn personnel.
2. Volunteers are not expected to wear a suit and tie. However, their appearance shall be neat and appropriate, in accordance with the job function. Appropriate attire shall be business casual.
3. Members will not wear any item of Police Department equipment or any part of the volunteer uniforms when not on-duty. Members may wear the uniform when traveling directly to and from their residence and their assigned duty station. Volunteer members shall be issued the appropriate identification cards and will carry them on-duty.

H. RECRUITING/APPLICATIONS

13.1.10 All Department personnel are encouraged to actively participate in the recruitment of qualified volunteers. Blank applications will be kept at the front lobby window and on the City's website.

1. Front desk personnel can accept volunteer applications.
2. Applications shall be forwarded to the Administrative Assistant to the Chief
3. The Administrative Assistant will review the application for completeness and area of interest, and forward the application to the Special Operations Sergeant for interviews. If accepted, the application will be forwarded for background process.
4. No application will be rejected because of an omission or error that can be corrected.

13.1.11 A background investigator shall review applications and conduct backgrounds, criminal histories and driver's license checks, that may include:

1. Neighborhood check
2. Current or previous employment
3. FCIC/NCIC/local law enforcement records
4. Military records
5. Controlled substances

13.1.12 Upon completion of the background investigation, the application will be returned to the Support Services Division Commanding Officer to process signature approvals.

13.1.13 Upon approval, the application will be forwarded to the Administrative Assistant to the Chief to schedule drug screen testing. Upon passing the drug screen, the Administrative Assistant will send Human Resources a copy of the application and notify the Special Operations Sergeant to contact the applicant to schedule required training.

I. MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS

13.1.14 In addition to supplemental requirements which may be applicable to a specific volunteer program, all citizen volunteers must meet the following minimum qualifications for membership:

1. Applicants must be of good moral character;
2. Applicants must have been honorably discharged from the United States Armed Forces, if served;
3. Applicants must not have been convicted or have plead no contest to a felony or any offense that would be a felony if committed in Florida;
4. Applicants must not have been convicted of a misdemeanor involving perjury or false statements;
5. If the position applied for will require the member to drive a vehicle, then the applicant must possess a valid Driver's license.
 - Applicants must not have had more than one moving citation within the past three years;

13.1.15 In addition to supplemental requirements, which may be applicable to a specific volunteer program, all citizen volunteers must meet the following minimum requirements for service:

1. Citizen volunteers will be required to attend business and training meetings as deemed necessary.

J. CONDUCT

13.1.16 Volunteers represent the Police Department while acting in the capacity of a member of a volunteer program. As representatives, members must conduct themselves in such a manner as to demonstrate the highest standards of professionalism so as to earn the public trust and support.

1. Members shall be polite and courteous to the general public at all times.
2. Members shall abide by the departments [Code of Ethics](#).
3. Volunteers shall restrict their activity to those tasks and duties that do not require a sworn law enforcement officer.
4. At no time will a volunteer member display their identification card or uniform to secure special privileges or personal gain. Violation of this directive may result in immediate termination from the volunteer program.
5. Identification shall be displayed at all times while members are in Department facilities.
6. A member's position within the Department may provide them access to certain confidential or sensitive information. Whatever information is gained in this manner shall not be divulged to anyone else.
7. If a member cannot fulfill a scheduled duty assignment the member shall notify their supervisor or the coordinator at least four (4) hours prior to the start of the scheduled assignment.
8. No member shall consume alcohol or drugs likely to cause impairment while on-duty or perform any duties for the Department while under the influence of alcoholic beverages or any substance.
9. Commission of a crime during a member's tenure as a volunteer with the Police Department may subject the member to immediate dismissal.
10. The use of emergency warning signals is strictly prohibited except for traffic control direction at accident scenes, disabled vehicles and special events, or at the direction of a sworn law enforcement officer. COPS are permitted to activate the emergency lights while the vehicle is stationary in these situations only. Any use of the vehicle emergency lights or other equipment while the vehicle is in motion, or for any other reason, is strictly prohibited.
11. Under no circumstances shall a volunteer be knowingly placed or exposed to a dangerous or potentially dangerous situation.
12. Volunteers are not authorized to undertake any law enforcement or investigative actions.
13. Volunteers shall observe and report suspicious activity to the department.
14. Volunteers shall not knowingly expose themselves or others to any dangerous situation. In particular, volunteers:
 - Shall not approach suspicious persons or vehicles.
 - Shall not stop other vehicles under any circumstances.
 - Will remain inside their vehicles while working except while performing 'Good Samaritan' acts or additional assigned duties after having the proper training by the department.
 - May exit their vehicles to perform physical house checks during daylight hours if appropriately trained
15. Volunteers will not conduct interrogations of a person, act or identify themselves as law enforcement personnel, nor make a citizen's arrest.

13.1.17 The Police Department reserves the right to dismiss any volunteer for such reasons as poor performance, poor attendance, unwillingness to accept direction, disruptive behavior, sexual harassment, abusive and inflammatory language, or for other reasons.

K. INJURIES

13.1.18 Injuries sustained by volunteers while performing volunteer services are subject to Worker's Compensation Law.

1. Injuries shall immediately be reported to their supervisor or to the on-duty supervisor.
2. Copies of the reports will be forwarded to their respective Division Commanding Officer.
3. Injuries requiring hospitalization shall immediately be reported to their respective Division Commanding Officer.
4. The Division Commanding Officer shall make a full report to the Chief of Police.

L. TRAINING

13.1.19 No citizen volunteer member or intern shall perform duties unless they have completed training commensurate with their responsibilities.

13.1.20 Volunteers/Interns shall receive on-the-job instruction/training from a tenured employee and/or classroom training in those areas of non-law enforcement duties they may be required to perform to assist Law Enforcement Officers or the agency. Those duties may include but are not limited to:

1. Searching for lost children;
2. Providing aid to the injured or those in need during natural disasters;
3. Manning telephone lines to provide information during a crisis situation;
4. Aiding individuals requiring victim/witness assistance;
5. Data entry, records filing, associated clerical responsibilities;
6. Other tasks as identified.

All training shall be documented. Documentation may be in the form of a memorandum with a completed roster that specifies the specific areas of training and an acknowledgement by the trainee that he or she has received instruction on the topic specific to the job assignment. The completed and signed memorandum is forwarded to the Training Section for proper filing.

13.1.21 All COPS candidates must complete a minimum of twenty-five (25) hours of training before becoming certified as a member of the COPS. Training shall include, but not be limited to, the following fields:

1. Orientation, rules, duties and procedures;
2. Safety, first aid, CPR and blood borne pathogens;
3. Constitutional, civil law, criminal law, and liability;
4. Observation of crimes while on patrol;
5. Driving safety;
6. Communications and radio procedures with practical radio exercises;
7. Administrative forms and warning notices;
8. Field training with COP members during scheduled patrols;
9. Traffic direction and control;
10. Parking enforcement

M. CITIZENS ON PATROL PROGRAM ASSIGNMENTS

13.1.22 The Special Operations Sergeant or designee shall coordinate the allocation and distribution of COPS.

1. Citizen on Patrol members shall be assigned to positions that augment the Department's ability to provide services.

2. Volunteers may be assigned to clerical tasks.
3. Volunteers may be assigned to community relations and crime prevention services with the following restrictions:
 - Volunteers shall restrict their activity to those tasks and duties that do not require a sworn law enforcement officer.
 - The volunteer shall not carry nor have access to any personally owned or Department issued weapons or physical restraints devices.
 - Volunteers shall be trained in all areas in which they are expected to assist.

13.1.23 COPS may be assigned to assist in performing emergency supplemental activities with the following restrictions:

1. The COP shall not carry nor have access to any personally owned or Department issued weapons or physical restraint devices.
2. Training shall be commensurate with position.

13.1.24 COPS who have received training for specific services may be called out for searches for children, during disasters and other support functions.

N. SUPERVISION OF COP MEMBERS

13.1.25 Upon assignment to a position, COPS members shall be directed to an immediate supervisor, to whom they shall report.

13.1.26 The supervisor shall ensure that each COP member is properly trained and qualified to perform the assigned tasks and:

1. Is readily identifiable, via identification card;
2. Is appropriately attired;
3. Is properly supervised.

O. VEHICLE USAGE

13.1.27 The NSBPD maintains a limited number of vehicles for COP usage. These vehicles shall be clearly marked in a manner that readily distinguishes them from law enforcement patrol vehicles.

1. COP vehicles may be equipped by the Department with a roof mounted amber/red rotating or flashing warning lights. The use of emergency warning signals is strictly prohibited except for traffic control direction at accident scenes, disabled vehicles and special events or at the direction of a sworn law enforcement officer.
2. No pursuits, chases, or vehicle stops of any type shall be allowed.
3. All members shall use seat belts as required in [FSS 316.614](#).
4. Members shall not add to, take away from, or modify, in any manner, any equipment, including radio, amber warning lights, or any other device assigned to the vehicle.
5. No emergency signaling lights, devices, equipment, or markings shall be used by COP members except those supplied by the Police Department.
6. COP members may only use vehicles supplied by the Police Department when on patrol, or on special details and events. No vehicle will be assigned to any individual COP member.
7. Prior to driving the vehicle, COP members shall perform the following equipment checks before beginning patrol:
 - Check all fluid levels on the vehicle;
 - Check vehicle tires for excessive wear;
 - Check for faulty equipment such as headlights, windshield wipers, etc.
 - Inspect for body damage.

13.1.28 Note all equipment checks on the appropriate log. If any problems are found, notify the on-duty supervisor who will arrange for repair before the vehicle is used again. A spare vehicle will be assigned if available.

P. COPS RADIOS

13.1.29 COP vehicles may be equipped with a radio, which operates on a frequency separate from law enforcement personnel. COP members shall use this radio to report their activity and suspicious incidents to the Communications Dispatcher.

13.1.30 A limited number of portable COP radios exist. COP members will check out a portable radio for each member to carry with them on patrol at the same time they check out the vehicle.

Q. SUPERVISION

13.1.31 The COPS shall be supervised by a Patrol Sergeant who shall provide direction and guidance.

Revised: RR 11/21

Approved: Signature on File
Chief Mike Coffin