	Winchester City Sheriff's Office Manual of General Orders Administration 109	Effective Date: May 1, 2014 Accreditation Standards: ADM .20.01 ADM .20.02
		Original Policy: May 1, 2014 Last Review Date: October 31, 2023 Next Review Date: October 31, 2024
		By Authority of: <hr/> William E. Sales, Sheriff
Subject: Community Relations		

Effective Date	Sections Changed	Changes	Reviewed by	Approved by
01-04-23	III E 3	Removed "The Sheriff's Office shall prepare an annual report that is available to the public via the Sheriff's Office website and the front lobby of the public safety building. This report will include Sheriff's Office activities and statistics for the calendar year."	BWD	WES

I. PURPOSE

The purpose of this order is to establish the community relation's function of the Winchester City Sheriff's Office and to provide for its maintenance.

II. POLICY

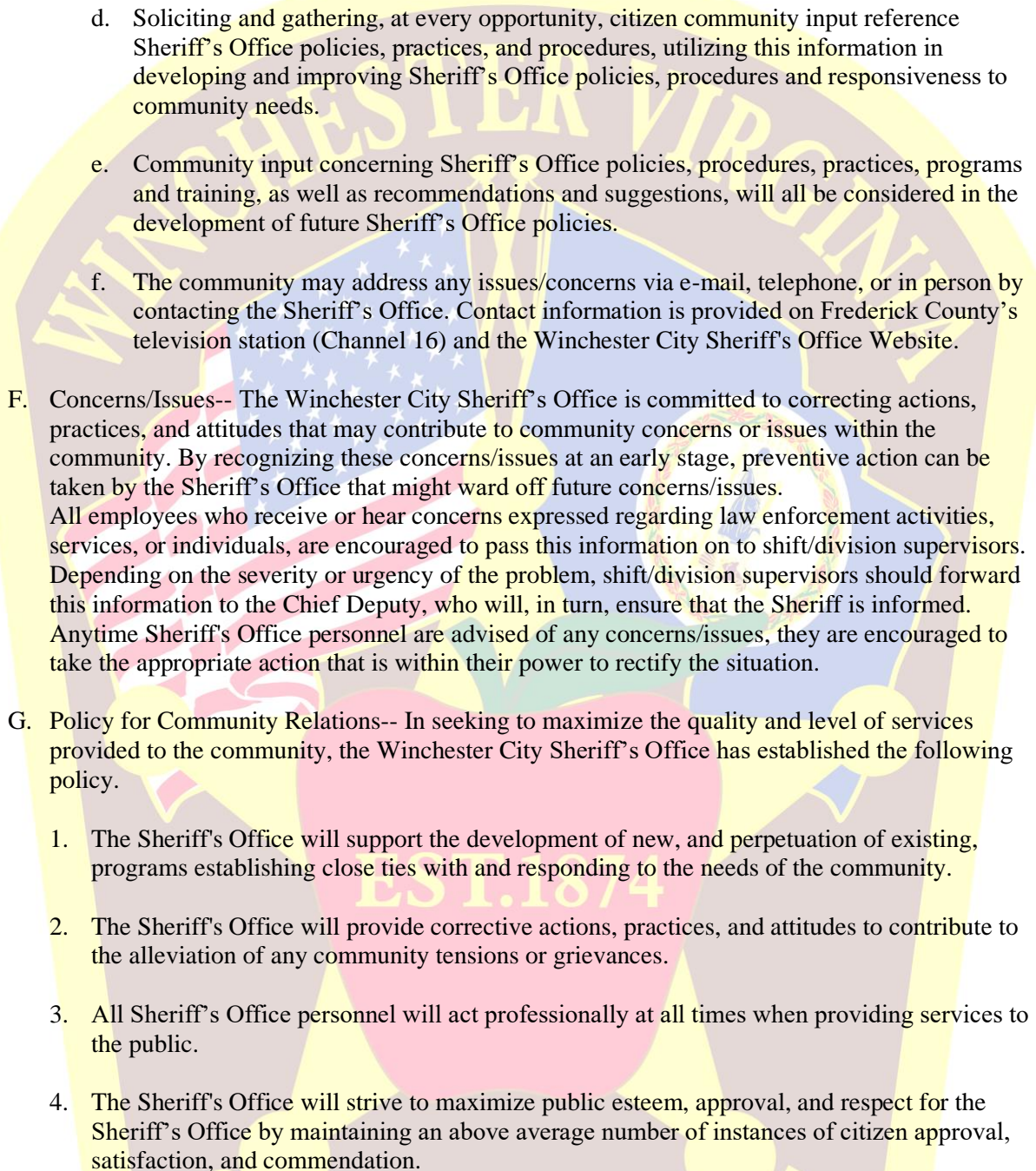
Community Relations are based on the principle that law enforcement officers are an integral element of the public they serve. Community relations are manifested by positive interaction between the community and the Sheriff's Office and represent unity and common purpose. A system of law and its enforcement is not superimposed upon an unwilling public; the people themselves, to control the behavior of those who seek to interfere with the community welfare, create the law. Accordingly, the Winchester City Sheriff's Office is committed to establishing close ties and responsiveness to the citizens of Winchester City. The Sheriff's Office shall strive to establish a climate in which a deputy may perform his/her duties with acceptance, understanding, and approval of the public. Additionally, the willing and practiced participation of the people in enforcing the law is essential for the preservation of freedom.

Recognition of individual dignity is vital in a free system of law. Just as all are subject to the law, all persons have a right to dignified treatment under the law. The protection of this right is a duty, which is binding on the Sheriff's Office.

A deputy shall treat a person with respect and be constantly mindful that the people with whom he/she is dealing are individuals with human emotions and needs. Such conduct is not a duty imposed in addition to a deputy's primary responsibilities; it is inherent to them. The Sheriff's Office conducts various public information and crime prevention programs to educate the public to eliminate specific crime problems and to foster positive community relations. In addition, the Sheriff's Office cooperates in developing new programs in those areas where the relationship with any group, or public as a whole, may be improved. In dealing with people, each deputy must attempt to make his/her contact one which inspires respect and generates cooperation and approval of the public. While entitled to personal beliefs, a deputy cannot allow individual feelings or prejudices to enter into public contacts. Since a deputy's prejudices may be manifested subconsciously, it is incumbent upon him/her to strive for the elimination of attitudes, which might impair impartiality and effectiveness.

III. PROCEDURES

- A. General-- Every Sheriff's Office employee is individually responsible for promoting community relations. The Sheriff's Office is concerned with specifically identifying and addressing problems arising between the Sheriff's Office and all segments of the city population, establishing formal relationships with community groups, learning of issues and responding to them before they become problems, and developing programs which increase community understanding and confidence in current and proposed Sheriff's Office activities and programs.
- B. The Crime Prevention Section is assigned primary responsibility for the community affairs function and will function as the contact point for developing and coordinating the Sheriff's Office community relations program.
- C. Responsiveness to the Community. The Sheriff's Office tasks are governed by law and policies, formulated to guide enforcement of the law, and must include consideration of the public will. Responsiveness to the public must be shown at all levels of the Sheriff's Office by a willingness to listen and a genuine concern for the problems. The total needs of the community must become an integral part of the programs designed to carry out the mission of the Sheriff's Office.
- D. Interpersonal Communication-- Each employee must be aware of the law enforcement needs of the community and of his/her assigned area of responsibility. Guided by policy, a deputy shall tailor his/her performance to attainment of the objectives of the Sheriff's Office to the resolution of crime problems in the area he/she serves. The Sheriff's Office shall provide programs to encourage productive dialogue with the public and to ensure that the unity between the Sheriff's Office and the people is preserved.
- E. Community Relations Objectives
 1. All contacts, official and unofficial, between a Sheriff's Office employee and citizens, in any grouping in our community, constitute a vital part of the Sheriff's Office community relations program. Ideally, all such contacts would contribute to the development of positive images toward the Sheriff's Office and its employees and activities.
 2. A wide variety of planned community relations activities are undertaken by the Sheriff's Office as a means of increasing public support, dialogue, understanding, and the development of the Sheriff's Office overall community relations policies. Activities include, but are not limited to:
 - a. Formal participation in and liaison with civic, social, business or other public and community groups.
Examples include civic club memberships, participation on committees of Retail Merchants, Chamber of Commerce, School committees, Social Services Child Abuse, and Training Academy Board.
 - b. Presentation of programs to community groups and organizations addressing crime prevention, as above, or other selected aspects of the Sheriff's Office programs, objectives, activities, development, successes, programs, and to help establish community groups.
 - c. Preplanned media releases in support of Sheriff's Office programs.

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- d. Soliciting and gathering, at every opportunity, citizen community input reference Sheriff's Office policies, practices, and procedures, utilizing this information in developing and improving Sheriff's Office policies, procedures and responsiveness to community needs.
 - e. Community input concerning Sheriff's Office policies, procedures, practices, programs and training, as well as recommendations and suggestions, will all be considered in the development of future Sheriff's Office policies.
 - f. The community may address any issues/concerns via e-mail, telephone, or in person by contacting the Sheriff's Office. Contact information is provided on Frederick County's television station (Channel 16) and the Winchester City Sheriff's Office Website.
- F. Concerns/Issues-- The Winchester City Sheriff's Office is committed to correcting actions, practices, and attitudes that may contribute to community concerns or issues within the community. By recognizing these concerns/issues at an early stage, preventive action can be taken by the Sheriff's Office that might ward off future concerns/issues. All employees who receive or hear concerns expressed regarding law enforcement activities, services, or individuals, are encouraged to pass this information on to shift/division supervisors. Depending on the severity or urgency of the problem, shift/division supervisors should forward this information to the Chief Deputy, who will, in turn, ensure that the Sheriff is informed. Anytime Sheriff's Office personnel are advised of any concerns/issues, they are encouraged to take the appropriate action that is within their power to rectify the situation.
- G. Policy for Community Relations-- In seeking to maximize the quality and level of services provided to the community, the Winchester City Sheriff's Office has established the following policy.
1. The Sheriff's Office will support the development of new, and perpetuation of existing, programs establishing close ties with and responding to the needs of the community.
 2. The Sheriff's Office will provide corrective actions, practices, and attitudes to contribute to the alleviation of any community tensions or grievances.
 3. All Sheriff's Office personnel will act professionally at all times when providing services to the public.
 4. The Sheriff's Office will strive to maximize public esteem, approval, and respect for the Sheriff's Office by maintaining an above average number of instances of citizen approval, satisfaction, and commendation.