

**TEXARKANA, TEXAS POLICE DEPARTMENT  
GENERAL ORDERS MANUAL**

<i>Effective Date</i> <b>January 11, 2020</b>		<i>Amended Date</i>	<i>Directive</i> <b>2.24.1</b>
<i>Subject</i> <b>Community Outreach</b>			
<i>Reference</i>			
<i>Distribution</i> <b>All Personnel City Manager City Attorney</b>	<i>TPCA Best Practices Recognition Program Reference</i>  <b>2.24.1 Community Outreach</b>	<i>Review Date</i>  <b>August 11, 2023</b>	<i>Pages</i>  <b>2</b>

**This Operations Directive is for internal use only and does not enhance an officer's civil or criminal liability in any way. It should not be construed as a creation of a higher standard of safety or care in an evidentiary sense, with respect to third party claims. Violations of this Operations Directive, if proven, may only form the basis for a complaint by this Department, and only in a non-judicial administrative setting.**

**SECTION 1 PURPOSE**

The purpose of this policy is to guide personnel and to affirm the department's commitment to seek out opportunities to interact with the public and to build trusting relationships with the community. Feedback from the community and effective community outreach are expected from all employees.

**SECTION 2 POLICY**

It is the policy of the Texarkana Police Department to embrace the tenants of community policing and engage the community in a positive and trusting manner. Community involvement is essential to the successful operation of any police department. Without the assistance and acceptance of the community, a police agency's effectiveness will not reach its full potential. Whenever possible, all avenues should be utilized in promoting the respect and cooperation of the public we serve.

All employees will extend reasonable assistance to the public. Reasonable assistance means the level of assistance that call load and current demand levels would permit. Employees must not neglect community services in the belief that the police function is restricted to crime control. It is the goal of the Texarkana Police Department to promote good relationships with the public and this goal can be facilitated by professional conduct and effective community outreach.

**SECTION 3 PROCEDURES**

- A. **Manager's and Supervisor's Role** – Managers and Supervisors, by their words and actions, are to set the example for their subordinates in establishing and maintaining professionalism when interacting with the public and other employees. All managers and supervisors shall ensure their employees maintain professionalism in their conduct and support them in promoting the respect and cooperation of the community in our daily contacts. Managers and supervisors are expected to keep their subordinates apprised of specific community problems and concerns. Managers and supervisors should strive to cultivate avenues of communications with individual residents and groups within the community where they are assigned. Whenever practical, managers and supervisors should assign personnel to attend neighborhood meetings and civic functions. Managers and supervisors are responsible to ensure that community feedback is sought by all personnel.

The Chief of Police (or designee) will coordinate the community surveys and approve the content of the questions. Regardless of workload, the Chief of Police and all command staff are also expected to attend community meetings and to seek out opportunities to meet with all segments of the community.

- B. The Employee's Role – No one can do more to foster positive police/community relations than the employee who is in contact with the public on a day-to-day basis. Employees must realize that their actions in every community contact have an impact on how the Texarkana Police Department is perceived by those we serve. Whenever possible, employees are expected to cultivate the respect and cooperation of the public through these contacts. Employees shall provide reasonable assistance to all residents in need of service. All personnel are expected to seek out opportunities to promote trust and positive dialog with the public.
  
- C. Community Outreach –The Texarkana Police Department is committed to seeking out constructive community outreach programs that provide opportunities for members of the community and the police department to come together. Department employees are also expected to seek feedback from community members. If action plans or a new approach is needed to help solve a community concern, police personnel are expected to follow established internal protocols to recommend viable solutions.

Examples of Community Outreach Programs that are endorsed by this agency include, but are not limited to:

- Community forums
- Neighborhood Watch Programs
- National Night Out
- “Coffee with a Cop” meetings at local venues / restaurants
- Social media outlets
- Community surveys
- Attendance at civic and religious functions
- Pedal Cars with Drunk Goggles
- Shop with a Cop and Firefighter
- The Policing Experience
- Character Camps
- Police Exploring
- College Criminal Justice Internships

- D. Community Feedback Mechanisms – seeking community feedback, and just as important - following up on the feedback, is crucial to the success of police community relations. The Texarkana Police Department is committed to actively seeking community feedback and whenever viable options for improvement can be found – to act on those findings. The following methods will be used to seek community feedback (with prior approval of appropriate city personnel):

Citizens will have the ability to report any concerns via a link on the City website. These concerns are delivered directly to the Chief of Police for followup. In addition, information for reporting a concern or compliment will be listed on the police department website. These concerns or compliments will go to the Office of Professional Responsibility.

Feedback opportunities are also available via the agency's social media outlets.

Social Media is an effective tool for community outreach; however, the Texarkana Police Department will not rely solely on this mechanism for community outreach. It is important for all employees to seek out effective outreach programs that impact all segments of our community.

All survey results will be sent to the Chief of Police for review and action.

#### E. RESPONSIBILITY

1. All members of the Department shall know and comply with all aspects of this directive.
2. All Division Commanders and supervisory personnel are responsible for ensuring compliance with the provisions and intent of this directive.