Rockville City Police Department
GENERAL ORDER

Subject **PATROL PROCEDURES**		Procedure **G.O. # 4 - 13**
Authorizing Signature	**Effective: 02-26-10** **Revised: 01-21-15**	**Total Pages** **11**

I. POLICY

Patrol is a primary law enforcement function that embraces much more than the act of patrolling. The Rockville City Police Department expects officers to conduct patrol vigorously to prevent crime, improve community relations and detect and apprehend criminal offenders.

II. PURPOSE

The purpose of this General Order is to establish guidelines and procedures for the patrol function.

III. PATROL COMPONENT FUNCTIONS

A. Patrol is a generalized function of the Field Services Bureau in which officers engage in a variety of activities.

B. Patrol is responsible for the protection of life and property, the prevention of criminal activity, the apprehension of criminal offenders, the preliminary investigation of calls for police service, and continuous twenty-four (24) hour a day patrol by uniformed police officers in marked and unmarked vehicles. This responsibility will include, but not be limited to, such activities as:

1. Response to requests for service.

2. Preventive patrol.

3. Investigation of crimes, offenses, and incidents.

4. Crime prevention activities.

5. Traffic direction and control.

6. Maintenance of public order.

7. Provision of emergency services.

8. Reporting of information to appropriate organizational components.

9. Development of relationships between citizens and the Department.

C. Annually, as part of the Goals and Objectives process, objectives relating to the performance of the patrol component are reviewed.

1. Objectives shall be reasonable, attainable, quantifiable, and measurable where possible, yet provide sufficient flexibility to allow for change as needed.

2. Once approved by the Chief of Police, they are made a part of the fiscal year Goals and Objectives packet.

IV. INTER-DEPARTMENT COORDINATION

The Field Services Bureau will encourage and support the exchange of information with other specialized and support units in the Department for the purpose of coordinating work efforts. This will be accomplished by, but not limited to:

A. Attendance of officers assigned to specialized details and members of support units at roll calls to share information as to current activities, areas of needed assistance, intelligence information, etc.

B. Attendance of all supervisory personnel at department staff meetings, where departmental matters are discussed and ideas exchanged.

C. Daily review by all patrol personnel of information made available by utilization of information boards and daily bulletins.

D. Review of and input from all personnel in development of new policies and/or procedures.

E. Patrol personnel must also cooperate, share, and exchange information with Investigators and personnel of other functional areas of the Special Operations Bureau and the Montgomery County Police Department.

V. PATROL

A. General

1. The Rockville City Police Department operates 24 hours a day, seven days a week, to provide law enforcement and other community oriented services.

2. The Department provides the same services at all hours of the day or night in relation to answering calls for service, emergencies, preventive patrol, traffic enforcement, etc.

B. Continuous patrol coverage

1. In order to provide and maintain continuous 24-hour patrol coverage, there should be an overlap of shifts by at least one-half hour.

2. When the shifts do not overlap, it is the responsibility of shift supervisors to ensure an officer(s) is assigned as an early car or late car.

    a. The officer(s) assigned as the early/late car will not be the shift supervisor.

    b. The officer(s) assigned as the early/late car will report 30 minutes early/late for duty.

    c. This officer(s) will not attend the normal roll call for the shift.

    d. This officer(s) should review the material in the roll call room and go into service within 15 minutes.

    e. The supervisor should meet the officer(s) on the road or at the station after the remainder of the shift is in service to pass along any necessary information.

3. The early/late officer(s) will turn in their paperwork at the end of their tour of duty to the on-duty supervisor. This supervisor is responsible for reviewing and processing the paperwork.

C. Team assignment

1. Each team will consist of a supervisor, back-up supervisor, and a designated number of line officers.

2. Overall team assignment is the responsibility of the Field Services Bureau Commander. Assignment responsibilities include:

    a. Ensuring that sufficient personnel are available for daily assignment to meet prescribed minimum staffing levels. The number of personnel required to be on duty shall be based on conditions that exist at that time. If, because of sickness, emergency leave, etc., insufficient personnel are scheduled for duty, shift supervisors are authorized to hold over on-duty personnel or to call in off-duty personnel on an overtime basis as needed to facilitate appropriate staffing.

    b. Anticipating pre-planned major events and ensuring availability of personnel as required.

    c. Coordinating officer attendance at required training.

3. Officers possessing special skills such as Field Training Officer, Intoximeter, Speed Measuring Device operator, etc., will be assigned as evenly as possible.

4. This does not preclude the temporary reassignment of officers from one team to another for staffing standards. It does mean, however, that generally there will be no routine rotation of officers from one team to another on a daily, weekly, monthly, or quarterly basis.

5. The Chief of Police retains final authority for deciding team assignment priorities, practices, and procedures.

D. Beat assignments

1. The assignment of officers to particular areas will be the responsibility of each Shift Supervisor. The Shift Supervisor shall consider, but not be limited to the following criteria in making the daily beat assignments:

   a. Number of available personnel.

   b. Operational objectives.

   c. Officers' experience and specialty skills.

   d. Training priorities.

   e. Individual officer preferences.

2. Normally an officer will be assigned to the same beat on a 6-month basis. This is a preferred practice for the following reasons:

   a. Officers can become better acquainted with persons, businesses, organizations, and hazards in the beat.

   b. It places responsibility and accountability for events occurring in assigned beats.

3. Shift supervisors should rotate beat assignments when necessary to maintain a high level of officer interest and responsiveness.

4. Officers assigned to a patrol beat are encouraged to share significant law enforcement information concerning their patrol beat with other officers assigned to the same beat.

E. Shift rotation

1. The Rockville City Police Department operates on a rotating shift cycle. The rotation of the schedule provides for the rotation of days off. When a shift is working, the members of the team and the primary supervisor will not necessarily have the same days off. The back-up supervisor (O.I.C.) will be in charge when the primary supervisor is not working.

2. An exception to the above would be:

   Officers temporarily assigned to specialty assignments may be required to work a permanent schedule.

3. A schedule for all police officers below the rank of Chief of Police is maintained in the computer and is accessible agency wide. The schedule shows workdays, days off, and the rotation cycle.

F. Span of control

To ensure adequate supervision, guidance, and coordination of patrol officers, the span of control for first line patrol supervisors will not exceed eight (8). This policy however, shall not preclude the possibility of dealing with unforeseen or emergency circumstances that may require the span of control to exceed this limit.

G. Roll call

1. Roll call will be conducted at the beginning of each shift's tour of duty.

2. Roll call will include, but not be limited to the following:

a. Briefing officers with information regarding daily patrol activity, with particular attention given to unusual situations, current/potential hazards, directed patrol activity, stolen vehicle information, changes in the status of wanted persons, and important investigation information.

b. Notifying officers of schedule and assignment changes.

c. Informing officers of new/revised directives.

d. Evaluating officer readiness to assume patrol.

e. Provide personnel with roll call training.

3. Normally, roll call will be completed within 15 minutes. With prior approval of the Field Services Bureau Commander or Deputy Commander, roll call may be extended to hold training or briefings on more complex matters of significant importance to officers.

VI. COMMUNICATIONS

A. The communications system is the lifeline of police operations. Radio and electronic communications must be clear, concise, and professional. Several factors affect the quality of police transmissions, which in turn affect, the quality of the messages being received. Police communications equipment is sophisticated, complex, fragile, and expensive. Proper care and concern for the equipment is critical. Successful communications depend on correct and proper operation by all users.

B. Most deficiencies usually result from incorrect or improper operation. Users must become familiar with their equipment and always practice correct techniques.

C. Only one radio can successfully transmit on any one frequency at a time. If two or more attempt to transmit simultaneously, both signals will be concealed (covered) so that neither transmission will be received.

D. One of the most important elements in good communications is to speak slowly and distinctly with a well-modulated voice. Also, tone has an impact on how your listener receives the message. Use of emphasis or allowing emotion and excitement to affect the voice can cause distortion.

E. The Department uses plain English radio protocol adopted by the Washington Area Council of Governments (COG).

F. Use of the police communications system is restricted to relaying information, requesting information, or giving instructions relating to official police business.

1. It is not appropriate to use the police radio to carry on general conversations, convey/send confidential information or lengthy messages, argue, or convey personal feelings regarding a complainant, suspect or any other situation.

2. Messages should be thought out and organized thoroughly before transmission is attempted.

G. Police personnel engaged in a field assignment will have constant access to radio communication.

1. All personnel assigned to the field shall have a portable transceiver as a part of their uniform equipment.

2. In addition, each police patrol vehicle is equipped with an in-car mobile radio.

3. When away from the vehicle, the employee shall have the assigned portable transceiver operational.

H. Operations are more efficient and personnel safety is enhanced when dispatchers, supervisors, and fellow employees know the status of other personnel, their locations, the nature of cases and developments in their investigation.

I. Situations requiring field units to notify and inform communications of their status include, but are not limited to:

1. When responding to an emergency.

2. Upon arrival at the scene of dispatched and initiated incidents.

3. When making vehicle or pedestrian stops, providing location of stop and information identifying vehicle or pedestrian before leaving the patrol vehicle.

4. Before leaving the patrol vehicle when handling any assignment or administrative duty in the station or elsewhere.

5. Code Enforcement personnel will call out when they will be conducting inspections that will take them *inside* any structure, e.g. a single family home, an apartment building, condo, hotel, or commercial establishment. Code Enforcement personnel may also, at their discretion, call out and inform the Communications Center whenever they deem it necessary to identify their location.

J. Personnel identification

1. All personnel are assigned a unique identification number when they are hired. This ID number will remain theirs as long as they are employed with the Department.

2. When police personnel are off-duty, and needs to communicate on the radio, they will use OD (off-duty) followed by their ID number. Example: *OD 5537*.

3. Designated police personnel are also provided with a unit number. This number is relative to their current assignment.

a. Officers: The first number indicates the officer's shift assignment. The middle symbol is always the letter C. This indicates City of Rockville. The last symbol is a number, which indicates the response area assignment. Example: 4 C 2.

b. Civilian police personnel: The first two letters designate the unit followed by a two digit number. Example: CE51 for Code Enforcement, unit 51.

~~4.~~ Administrative and specialty units are assigned a car number. Example: C100

K. Assignments to calls

1. Rockville dispatchers are responsible for processing and entering into CAD all calls for service to be dispatched by MCPD Communications. The dispatching of a unit carries the authority of an order. To ease effective dispatching and minimize response time, officers will remain in their assigned beats until directed by the dispatcher or their supervisor. A supervisor may countermand or modify the dispatching of a unit.

2. When assigning a call, the dispatcher will call for a specific unit or units, as determined by CAD. Once a call for service has been dispatched the assigned unit or units will acknowledge the transmission. Any unit that is closer to a call will make this fact known to the dispatcher, who may reassign the call.

3. Response to some calls may require several officers or personnel to deal effectively and safely with the problem. Situations requiring the response of at least two police officers are:

a. The potential or actual assault on an officer.

b. Possibility of or actual on-scene arrest.

c. Potential or actual resistance to arrest.

d. Possibility of or actual use of force.

e. Crime in progress.

f. A fleeing suspect.

g. Alarms.

h. Fights.

i. Domestic disturbance/assault.

j. Prowler.

k. Personal injury collisions.

l. Calls of an unknown nature.

m. At the request of the initial responding unit additional units will be assigned.

n. Any other call, where in the judgment of a supervisor, officer or dispatcher the need exists for additional or multiple units to respond.

4. As deemed necessary, the shift supervisor may require an increase or decrease in the number of units assigned to, or responding to calls to deal effectively and safely with a situation.

5. Any unit that responds to a call will notify the dispatcher. Units that have information about a call, which would require additional units, will advise the dispatcher and the dispatcher will dispatch additional units, if necessary.

L. Incidents requiring presence of supervisors

Shift supervisors shall respond to and assume command of the following types of incidents:

1. Any on-duty injury to police department personnel.

2. An action by any police personnel, while on or off-duty which results in (or is alleged to have resulted in) an injury to another person or property damage.

3. Collision involving a police vehicle.

4. Fatal traffic collisions.

5. Major crimes (until relieved by appropriate authority).

6. Barricade/hostage situations (until relieved by appropriate authority).

7. Disasters, catastrophes, or severe weather producing emergency conditions; (until relieved by appropriate authority).

8. Complaint or incident involving any police personnel.

9. Injury or serious accident involving City personnel or property.

10. Any incident where a Shift Supervisor is requested.

VII. POLICE HAZARDS/POTENTIAL HAZARDS

A. Many hazardous situations in the City such as bad road and/or weather conditions, unsafe structures, potentially dangerous calls for service, etc. will normally be identified by the patrol officers on the street and called into the communications center.

B. When appropriate, information concerning the hazard or potential hazard will be given to the local media.

C. Information as to any hazardous or potentially hazardous situation will be reported to the appropriate agency for correction.

D. Any officer who is aware of a situation, which could be hazardous to the welfare of officers, is encouraged to relay that information to others by way of roll call or by using the daily bulletin.

VIII. NOTIFICATIONS

A. Emergency Messages

1. Emergency messages of any legitimate type, dealing with the health and welfare of persons and/or their property, death notifications, and messages dealing with attempts to locate individuals, as defined by the person receiving the message, will be delivered in person if possible.

2. Notifying the next-of-kin in a case where there is a death, serious injury, and/or serious illness, can place the officer in a delicate and uncomfortable situation. The following procedures should be used whenever possible and practical:

a. Notification should be made as promptly as possible.

b. The presence of a relative, neighbor, or close friend (if known) should be obtained whenever possible before notification.

c. If notification has to be made alone, the officer should offer assistance to the next-of-kin in contacting a relative, close friend, and/or minister.

d. The person receiving notification should be advised of the means used in transmitting the notification to the Department, i.e., teletype or call from another law enforcement agency, unverified telephone call to the Department, etc.

3. Notification requests received from other law enforcement agencies for persons residing in the City will be honored. The agency recipient will obtain whatever pertinent information about the situation is available to help the person receiving the message.

B. Non-emergency messages

1. Notification of the medical examiner

The on-scene-investigating officer in incidents involving death shall notify the medical examiner's office. The name of the victim, location, telephone number, and any preliminary facts about the death will be given to the medical examiner.

2. Street/highway/public utility personnel

When a situation exists that creates a hazard or potential hazard, the officer identifying the situation will request that the dispatcher make proper notification so that the situation may be corrected in as short a time as possible. Typical situations and timing of notifications are as follows:

a. Immediate notification to the proper agency.

(1) Essential traffic light in need of repair.

(2) Large holes in the roadway.

(3) Electrical power lines down.

(4) Large debris, etc., in the roadway.

(5) Breaks in water, gas, or other utility lines.

(6) Snow/ice, etc., on the roadway.

(7) Fire hazards needing immediate attention.

b. Notification at beginning of next business day.

(1) Nonessential traffic control in need of repair.

(2) Small (non hazardous) holes in the roadway.

(3) Streetlights in need of repair.

(4) Dead animals in the roadway.

(5) Potential fire hazards not requiring immediate attention.

c. Some hazardous situations may demand immediate notification of local radio and television stations in order to request immediate public service announcements. The Chief of Police will advise the Public Information Officer, who will in turn notify the media.