

**Charlestown Police Department Standard Operating Procedures**

**- TITLE III: Rules and Regulations -**

**Article 3 Department Relations**

**Chapter 1: Community Relations-**

Section E: Neighborhood Watch Programs

The Department Chief of Police may appoint department personnel to organize and manage a Charlestown Community Neighborhood Watch Program (“this program”), as outlined in this section; for the purposes, goals and objectives of:

- Partnering with the community for purposes of education and promotion of personal, home and business property crime prevention practices; while creating a network of responsible citizens with common goals of safety and security;
- Facilitate higher communication between the community and law enforcement for purposes of reducing crime, increase the quality of life, and bolster a greater sense of security, responsibility, and personal control;
- Encouraging and organizing disaster and emergency situation preparedness; not only at home and business, but also as an additional community support system in times of crisis or need;
- Foster a volunteer group that builds community pride and unity, while preparing for helping others in the community; as well as support to the department year.

IMPORTANT NOTICE OF CLARIFICATION: The above summarized program purposes, or any other directive, description, method, guideline, philosophy, policy and/or procedure outlined here within; or verbal communication by any department personnel; should NEVER be construed or interpreted as authorizing, requesting, condoning or facilitating any civilian program member or associate to engage in any physical (directly or indirectly) contact, pursuit, detention, apprehension, or investigation of any criminal activity or infraction violations, suspected or otherwise.

This program, the Charlestown Community Neighborhood Watch Program, in no way shall ever authorize, encourage, or condone vigilante activity or law enforcement false impersonation; including but not limited to any type of legal authority or representation of the department, by any citizen, as part of association with this program or any other likewise implication.

The Charlestown Community Neighborhood Watch Program is wholly and completely a volunteer group; freely benefiting and comprised of community citizens while complying with applicable Federal civil rights laws. Active members of this program agree to promote and conduct themselves in accordance with the program’s purposes, goals, and objectives outlined in this Section. Active (registered) members, for purposes of this section, are defined as individuals who periodically and/or routinely associate or participate, directly or indirectly, with the program and/or its sponsored activities. This program does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, disability, or sex. This program does not exclude people or treat them differently because of race, color, national origin, age, disability, or sex.

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Program General Description: A Neighborhood Watch program is a group of people living in the same area who want to make their neighborhood safer by working together and in conjunction with local law enforcement to reduce crime and improve their quality of life. Neighborhood Watch groups have regular meetings to plan how they will accomplish their specific goals and assign responsibilities to group members. Neighborhood Watch is homeland security at the most local level. It is an opportunity to volunteer and work towards increasing the safety and security of our homes and our homeland.

Neighborhood Watch empowers citizens and communities to become active in emergency preparedness, as well as the fight against crime and community disasters. Activities conducted by Neighborhood Watch groups across the country are as diverse and varied as their volunteers and the neighborhoods they represent. Groups traditionally distribute crime prevention information, assist with business assessments or home security surveys. Where disorder problems are, the primary focus of Neighborhood Watch members commonly mobilize volunteers to conduct neighborhood clean-ups, or work with faith-based organizations to assist with the homeless and mentally ill who wander the streets. As law enforcement officers learn the needs of their various Neighborhood Watch groups and the dynamics of their volunteers, they can tailor activities and responses to meet the ever-changing needs of their citizens.

In order to reach the citizens, local law enforcement agencies have been given a charge to involve the people in their community. Anyone and everyone can be involved in a Neighborhood Watch group. By partnering together, crime can be prevented or reduced, and the overall quality of life can be improved.

Neighborhood Watch Programs modernly and commonly use an “extra eyes-and-ears communications” approach to crime prevention to a much more proactive, community-oriented endeavor. Neighborhood Watch groups are now incorporating activities that not only address crime prevention issues, but which also restore pride and unity to a neighborhood.

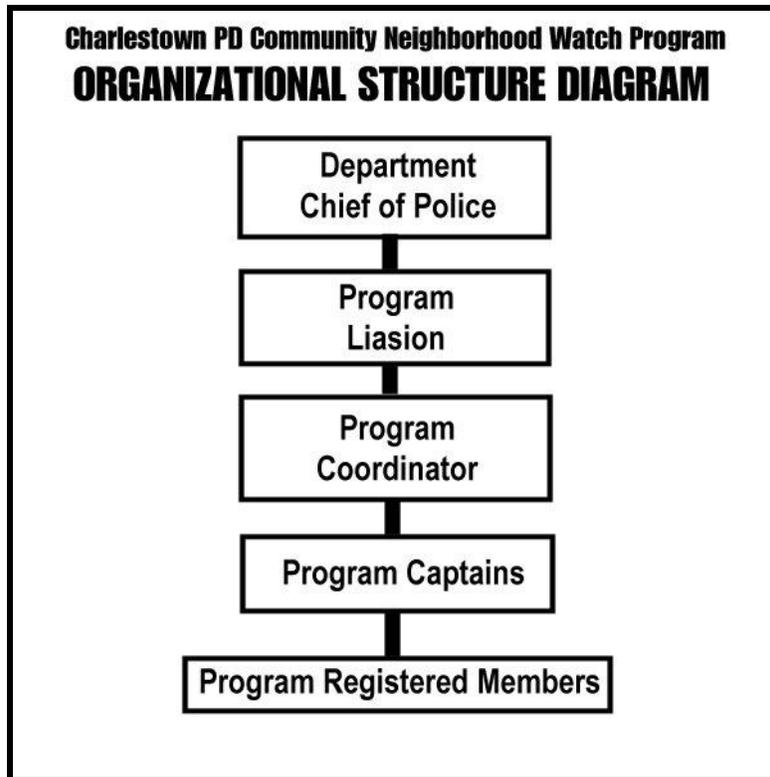
Neighborhood Watch groups are a way for law enforcement and citizens to work together not only for disaster preparedness but for all hazards and encourage citizens to volunteer in their communities.

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Program Organization:

The importance of a “chain of command” type of organizational structure is imperative to maintaining clarity of communications and decision making for any program. This type of organizational structure, for continuity purposes, also mirrors that of the department’s. This program shall be comprised of the following positions/identities within its organization hierarchy: Program Liasion, Program Coordinator, Program Captain, and Program Member. The basic descriptions of each are outlined in the following.



- *Program Liasion:* This individual is a Department member, appointed by the Department Chief of Police, and is responsible for being the liaison, at all applicable levels prescribed by the Chief of Police, between the Department and this program. The Program Liasion ensures the continuous supervision of this program, through these rules and regulations, and/but not limited to the guidance of this program’s activities, purposes, goals and objectives outlined in this Section. The Program Liasion reports, on a regular basis, to the Chief of Police; the progress, plans, and activities of the program. The Program Liasion reports, on a regular basis, to program members; the progress of crime prevention endeavors, statistical analysis of community neighborhood crime trends, and response to citizen concerns pertaining to neighborhood safety and security hazards; as well as, department operations.

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Program Organization (continued):

- *Program Coordinator:* This individual is appointed by the Program Liasion with the approval of the Department Chief of Police, and is responsible for being the liaison, at all applicable levels prescribed by the Chief of Police, between the Program Liasion, Program Captains and Active Members of this program. The Program Coordinatator must be a private citizen and not a member of the Department; for purposes of this policies and procedures. The Program Coordinator assists the Program Liasion in ensuring the continuous supervision of this program, through these rules and regulations, and/but not limited to the guidance of this program's activities, purposes, goals and objectives outlined in this Section. The Program Coordinator maintains a database and reports, on a regular basis, to the Program Coordinator; current contact roster information for captains and active members of the program.
  
- *Program Captain:* This individual is an active member of the program who voices interest and accepts responsibilities as a Program Captain. Program Captains are appointed by the Program Liasion and/or Program Coordinator and act as a liaison between active members (and general community of their nieghborhood) and the Program Coordinator. Program Captains assist the Program Liasion and Coordinator assists in the continuous supervision of this program, through these rules and regulations, and/but not limited to the guidance of this program's activities, purposes, goals and objectives outlined in this Section.

For purposes of this section, neighborhood is defined to include, but not always limited to:

- Businesses and residences within an established subdivision development;
- Businesses and residents within an established apartment/condo complex; or
- Businesses and residences within a geographically identified area.

Program Captains concentrate their program efforts and representation within the neighborhood of their established residence; connecting the program with their neighborhood. Mutliple Captains within any one community neighborhood is beneficial and encouraged.

Neighborhoods, as defined above, with organized internal watch groups or even home owner associations are also encouraged; but also encouraged to appoint one of their members as a Captain on the Department's program. Such collaboration will greater ensure consistent sharing of community-wide information, problem solving, and communication.

Program Captains assist with visiting/networking and inviting new residents to their neighborhood to join the program; notifying them of meetings and training sessions. Contacting neighbors as often as possible to discuss possible crime problems, needs for assistance, and suggestions for program improvement.

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- *Program Member:* Community citizens and business owners who recognize the value and importance of regular collaboration with local law enforcement; to address the same purposes, goals, and objectives outlined in the beginning of this section; generally describes these individuals. Program members routinely attend meetings, acknowledge communications, interact, and participate in program activities. Program members are asked to provide reliable contact mediums, including but not limited to no cost email and mobile application registration use.

Communications and Social Media: The program will use efficient digital mediums, such as email, social media platforms, and mobile messaging applications, to maintain communications and relay of information relating to activities, objectives, and purposes of the program. Additionally, a page or section of the Department website will be reserved for program information, crime prevention reference, liaison, coordinator and captain contact information, as well as meeting and activities notices.

Rules for use and purpose of program sponsored communication mediums; including but not limited to social media platforms, may be implemented to help ensure mutual respect, reduce abuse, and maintain purpose.

Meetings and Activities: Regular meetings, open for public attendance, will routinely be scheduled and announced with at least a seven day notice. Meeting announcements will be maintained on the program's social media platform; as well as, the department website program page. The location of meetings may vary according to planned agenda items, however, most will be held at the department headquarters facility.

Regular meetings will conform to an agenda; including a period of public comment for voicing concerns and questions relating to crime prevention, community safety, disaster preparedness, and department operations. The agenda will help ensure timely and efficient management of meetings. Whenever possible, regular meetings will be live audio and video streamed over the internet using the program's social media platform and/or department website.

The program reserves the right to hold closed planning and organizational meetings of its liaison, coordinator and captains. Planning and organizational meetings may be held virtually for documentation and convenience purposes.

Disclaimer: This amendment to the Standard Operating Procedures is designed to provide you with information about policies, procedures, rules and regulations of the Charlestown Police Department. Nothing in this amendment is intended in any sense to constitute a contract of employment or expectations of continued employment. This amendment cannot anticipate every circumstance or question about policies, procedures, rules and regulations. The Charlestown Police Department, therefore, reserves the right to revise, supplement, or rescind any portion of the SOP, as it deems appropriate.