

C.O.P. - GENERAL RULES OF CONDUCT

- 1) YOU ARE NOT A VIGILANTE.** You are simply acting as an extension of the Police Department's eyes and ears.
- 2) IT IS STRONGLY RECOMMENDED FOR PATROL MEMBERS NOT TO CARRY WEAPONS OF ANY KIND** (i.e., GUNS, KNIVES, STICKS, and PEPPER MACE). To do so will jeopardize your own safety and the viability of your patrol if involved in any altercation.
- 3) YOU ARE STRONGLY ENCOURAGED NOT TO GET OUT OF THE CAR WHILE ON PATROL.** Observe suspicious activity and suspects inconspicuously and at a safe distance. Remain in your car. When the officer arrives, **do not** exit your car unless the officer instructs you to do so.
- 4) DO NOT ATTEMPT TO BLOCK A SUSPECT OR A VEHICLE FROM LEAVING THE AREA.** Obtain a good description of the individual and vehicle and the direction of travel. Report the information immediately to your base station and/or the police (911). Never confront or attempt to chase a suspect or vehicle. When possible maintain a direction of travel, only if it can be done at a safe distance.
- 5) OBEY TRAFFIC LAWS.** Drivers must have a valid operator's license, tags and insurance coverage.
- 6) While on patrol, do not stop or park your vehicle in a position where it may present a potential traffic hazard.** When stopped, use your hazard lights to alert approaching traffic. When at the scene of an accident, use discretion when positioning your vehicle. Keep in mind that emergency equipment will be arriving and that clear access to the scene is of the utmost importance.
- 7) Do not attempt to direct traffic or otherwise place yourself in danger from moving vehicles unless otherwise instructed by law enforcement personnel.**
- 8) Operate the vehicle slowly (approximately 15 miles per hour) to enhance observation.** However, be aware of other traffic and avoid causing disruption of traffic flow. Also, to be seen, it is advisable to utilize your hazard lights when patrolling.
- 9) Make certain that all vehicle lights and turn indicators are in proper working order prior to going out on patrol.** Make sure that you can see and be seen by other traffic. Also check radio or telephone equipment to make sure it is operational prior to starting your patrol.
- 10) Watch for people coming home.** Stop and wait to make certain they are inside safely and that no one is watching their arrival home. Indicate your presence through a quick sound of the horn to let the individual know you are there and not to create panic in the person you are watching.
- 11) Patrol drivers should be at least eighteen years of age.**
- 12) Information learned by volunteers that is confidential in nature should not be discussed with unauthorized persons.** This includes information regarding persons that the police are looking for, homes that are vacant in the community, crime information that is entrusted to COP participants, etc.
- 13) Do not acknowledge the presence of detectives or unmarked vehicles.** To do so may jeopardize an investigation or the safety of officers.
- 14) AVOID ALL CONFRONTATIONS.** The safety of patrol members is paramount. Be cautious in the use of flashlights to illuminate any area or suspects. The light could draw attention directly to you or your vehicle. The same caution would also apply to the use of video cameras. Using video cameras may put you close to the

scene and expose you to unnecessary risk. ALWAYS LEAVE AN AREA IF IT IS POSSIBLE THAT A CONFRONTATION MAY OCCUR