



# ALLEGANY COUNTY OFFICE OF THE SHERIFF

## LAW ENFORCEMENT POLICY & PROCEDURE

Number: **L.E. 501**

Effective Date:

Subject: **Community Relations**

Reference:

Approved By: **Sheriff Ricky L. Whitney**

Supersedes:

### I. PURPOSE:

- A. To create within the Allegany County Sheriff's Office policy and procedures for community relations and related activities.

### II. DISCUSSION:

- A. The Allegany County Sheriff's Office recognizes the importance of maintaining an atmosphere of openness with the community we serve. We actively seek to establish a cooperative relationship and keep the community informed on matters of public interest.

### III. POLICY:

- A. The Sheriff is the Community Relations Officer for the Allegany County Sheriff's Office. However, all personnel in the office should project a positive image and become involved in community needs. Every employee must be aware of the different programs that the agency has so they can inform the community

### IV. PROCEDURES:

- A. Relations with the public:

#### 1. Courtesy

- a. Employees must be courteous to the public both in person and on the telephone. Employees shall not use coarse, violent, profane or insolent language or gestures, and shall not express any prejudice concerning race, religion, politics, national origin, life-style or similar circumstances.

#### 2. Citizen Complaint

- a. Employees shall refer all complaints made by a citizen against any member of this office to the Sheriff. Employees may attempt to resolve the complaint, but shall never attempt to dissuade any citizen from lodging a complaint against any employee of this office.

B. Interpersonal communications.

1. To promote understanding and cooperation there must be interpersonal communication between members of the community and employees at all levels of this office.
2. Each employee must be aware of the law enforcement needs of the community and their particular assigned area of responsibility.

C. Identification.

1. All employees shall carry their issued badge and identification at all times, except when impractical or dangerous to their safety in an investigation.
2. All employees shall furnish their names and exhibit their badge to any person requesting that information, when they are on duty, or holding themselves out as having official capacity, except when the withholding of such information is necessary for the performance of their police duties.

D. Request for office speakers.

1. All requests for office personnel to speak at public gatherings, luncheons, service clubs, civil associations, etc., will be referred to the Sheriff.
2. The Sheriff will evaluate all requests and determine which Sheriff's Office member is best suited for the assignment.
3. If an employee receives a request for his/her personal appearance, the employee will seek approval from the Sheriff.

E. Individual dignity.

1. All persons have a right to dignified treatment under the law and the protection of this right is a duty which is binding on all members of this office.
2. Employees must treat persons with as much respect as that person will allow and be mindful that the people with whom they are dealing are individuals with human emotions and needs.

F. Equality of Enforcement.

1. Consistency in application is a primary and fundamental element of uniform enforcement of the law.
2. The Sheriff's Office services a community comprised of individuals with varied ethnic and socio-economic composition, having unique life styles or particular crime problems. All people have a right to the protection and security that is afforded by fair and impartial law enforcement.
3. Employees shall use physical force only to the extent that is reasonable and necessary. Use of physical force shall be in accordance with the law and departmental procedures.

G. Responsiveness to the community.

1. The office must be responsive to the needs and problems of the community. This regard for the community must be shown plainly at all levels of the office by an obvious willingness to listen and a genuine concern for the problems of individuals or groups.

H. Community access to police information.

1. It is necessary that there be full public disclosure of policies and sincerity in matters of public interest.
2. The office will disseminate accurate and factual accounts of occurrences of public interest.
3. The office will strive to make known and accepted its objective and policies.