

	Houston Independent School District Police Department Directives	DIRECTIVE: 410-010
	SUBJECT: Community Relations	EFFECTIVE DATE: April 15, 2003 REVISED DATE: January 12, 2022

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 is expected from all employees. This directive applies to all Houston Independent School District Police Department Personnel.

POLICY

It is the policy of the HISD 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 calls load and current demand levels. Employees must not neglect community services because the police function is restricted to crime control. It is the goal of the HISD Police Department to promote good relationships with the public, and this goal can be facilitated by professional conduct and effective community outreach.

COMMUNITY OUTREACH

Managers and Supervisors

By their words and actions, managers and supervisors 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. They should strive to cultivate avenues of communication with individual residents and groups within the community where they are assigned. Managers and supervisors should assign personnel to attend neighborhood meetings and civic functions whenever practical.

Managers and supervisors are responsible for ensuring that all personnel seeks community feedback. 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 seek opportunities to meet with all community segments.

EMPLOYEE’S ROLE IN COMMUNITY RELATIONS

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 impact how the HISD 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 opportunities to promote trust and positive dialog with the public.

COMMUNITY OUTREACH

The HISD Police Department is committed to seeking out constructive community outreach programs that provide community members and the police department opportunities to come together. Department employees are also expected to seek feedback from community members. If actions plans or a new approach are needed to help solve a community concern, police personnel must 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:

- a) Community forums
- b) “Coffee with the Chief” meetings at local venues/restaurants
- c) Social media outlets
- d) Officers eating lunch at area schools with students
- e) Teen and Police Service Academy (TAPS)
- f) DARE
- g) High-Five Friday
- h) Mentorship programs with local at-risk youth
- i) Regular attendance at civic and religious functions
- j) Blue Santa
- k) Infant seat installation safety checks
- l) Navidad En El Barrio
- m) Citizens Police Academy
- n) Any other opportunity to positively engage the community

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 HISD Police Department is committed to actively seeking community feedback, and whenever viable options for improvement can be found, act on those findings.

The following methods will be used to seek community feedback:

- a) An electronic survey will be created and posted on the department website. The community will be encouraged by all personnel to take the survey and the Chief of Police (or designee) will seek out local media outlets to promote the survey
- b) All forums with the public will include a survey that can be submitted by those attending the meeting

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

SURVEYS

The HISD Police Department shall conduct a community survey at a minimum of once every three years.

Approved By



Pedro Lopez Jr. Chief of Police