

Maryland Police Training and Standards Commission
Community Policing Program
Annual Report

Agency: Montgomery County Department of Police

Region: II

Date of Report: 3/4/2020

Report Submitted By: Captain Sonia Y.W. Pruitt
Director, Community Engagement Division

Phone: 240-773-6948

E-Mail: MCPD_Engaged@montgomerycountymd.gov

Number of Sworn Members: 1307 **Non-Sworn Members:** 790

Jurisdictional Demographics

Population: 1,052,567 **Square Miles Serviced by the Agency:** 491.25

White: 43.4% **Black:** 19.9% **Hispanic:** 19.9% **Asian:** 15.6%

Native American: 0.7% **Hawaiin or Pacific Islander:** 0.1%

More Than One Race: 3.4%



The Montgomery County Police Department (MCPD) has been fully vested in the principles of community policing for many years. The department understands that community policing needs the buy in and participation of the public to be successful. In the MCPD Mission Statement, you will find, "We are committed to working in partnership with the community to identify and resolve issues that impact public safety." The MCPD Vision statement reads in part, "We, the Montgomery County Department of Police, in cooperation with the community we serve, will work to enhance community relations and build trust through transparency, accountability, and strong leadership." This refers to the department's commitment to the community, and to the ideals of community policing that speaks to relationship-building, which fosters trust, and which then creates legitimacy. A strong community partnership is key to solving and preventing crime, and engendering confidence in the police.

Top management, from the Chief of Police and all police executives, and every employee--sworn and non-sworn, new or veteran--is expected to participate 100% in community policing efforts. The message to all is that community outreach and engagement is the foundation for providing police services, ensuring safety, and building trust. Community policing stresses prevention, early identification, and timely intervention to deal with problems and concerns before they reach an unmanageable level. All members of MCPD are encouraged to spend considerable time and effort developing and maintaining relationships with residents, businesses, schools, and community organizations. This is accomplished daily throughout the County in several ways: 1) through patrol assignments to specific beats; 2) through the deployment of district community action teams and central business district teams who engage business and residential communities to identify and respond to crime trends and quality of life issues; 3) through our school resource officers (SRO) assigned to all of the public high schools in the County, who in partnership with school safety personnel, contribute to productive and enriching environments for teachers and students, and provide positive interactions between youth and law enforcement; 4) through community services officers (CSO) in each district who help identify community concerns, develop strategies, and coordinate resources to implement a solution; 5) and through district command staff, who actively participate in meetings, briefings, and events designed to inform, educate, and engage their respective communities so they are part of the solution when issues arise. The MCPD approach to community policing embodies the tenants of the six pillars of 21st Century Policing developed during the administration of President Barack Obama.



MCPD conducts training for employees through a variety of ways. For instance, the Community Engagement Division (CED) has been tasked with providing a two-hour block of training on community outreach to new police recruits who are in the police academy, starting their education in community policing from the beginning of their tenure with the department. Executive officers (the rank of lieutenant and above) and civilian directors and managers annually receive a block of instruction on current issues that affect community policing trends during executive in-service training.

The Public Service Training Academy (PSTA) offers the following courses/trainings to police employees to provide optimum service and interaction to the community: Leadership in Police Organizations (LPO) where supervisors augment community-related skills to their toolkits; Crisis Intervention Training (CIT) for all sworn police officers, that helps officers to identify members of the public who may be in medical or mental crisis; and a block of in-service training in modern day policing, which covers important contemporary community and policing issues that police officers encounter.

Throughout the four distinct police bureaus, patrol officers, investigators, and other departmental employees facilitate and conduct meetings and events to gather feedback from the public. Once a

week, police executives meet to share trends and discuss plans of action for crime prevention and community policing. In addition, the community is invited to contact the District CSOs and CED should they wish to share information, feedback or ideas. CED manages an electronic calendar of outreach and engagement events, which feeds into a Montgomery County online public calendar (DataMontgomery), so that members of the public can see what the police are involved in. In addition, the calendar serves as a way of collecting data on community policing efforts. In 2016, we captured 748 events; 1246 events in 2017; 1255 events in 2018; and 2158 events in 2019. Further, MCPD is connected to the Ring video doorbell and NextDoor app neighborhoods, allowing for information to be collected on possible criminal activity trends such as car break-ins.

Patrol officers conduct a variety of outreach events during the course of their tour of duty. Most striking are the efforts made by detectives from specialized units. For example, Fraud detectives focus on educating and preventing the senior population from falling victim to financial scams and identity theft; Special Victims Unit detectives conduct training for vulnerable members of the community, such as the elderly and teens, about how to stay safe; Major Crimes detectives are often sought after to teach at criminal justice classes at Montgomery College as well as CED's signature class at Edison High School called Law Enforcement and Leadership. The Special Operations Division (SOD) provides safety and school emergency training and education at each Montgomery County Public School, and CED officers also provide Citizen Response to Active Shooter Events (CRASE) training to public and private organizations, as well as school safety training, which is a Maryland state-level priority.

MCPD officers who are not assigned to CED attend a variety of community outreach events, such as cub scout meetings, civic association meetings, church community service days, mentoring sessions at elementary and middle schools, sessions with seniors and more.

MCPD also hosts two Citizens Academies for County residents, so they can learn about law enforcement operations from the police department. One of the citizen's academies is for Spanish speaking participants.

The MCPD Community Engagement Division (CED) was re-created in 2016, after a 7-year hiatus and the elimination of a more informal group, which included the Drug Abuse Resistance Education (DARE) and Police Athletic League (PAL) programs. CED is the central point of contact for community engagement and outreach for MCPD. CED works on long-term, collaborative solutions with residents and business owners, other government agencies, local organizations, community groups, and faith institutions. The goal is to establish partnerships that create new opportunities for enhancing communication and awareness, leading to mutual understanding between police and the community, and effective service from MCPD. Following are some other signature CED programs and responsibilities.

SCHOOL RESOURCE OFFICER (SRO) PROGRAM. The MCPD School Resource Officer (SRO) Program is managed by CED. The SRO program is an important nexus between the police department, the school community and the community at large, and is a vital link to relationship-building through interactions with students, teachers, parents and administrators. SROs are very effective

ambassadors, as MCPD has a robust, well-organized program with well-trained officers, who understand that their mission is not to arrest their way through issues at their schools, but rather to use relationship-building as the foundation for their work in the schools and with the students. We currently have SROs at each county high school, for a total of 26 officers.

HATE CRIMES AND BIAS INCIDENTS. CED is responsible for the review of reports of hate crimes and bias incidents for MCPD. The focus is on establishing if there are trends, especially in schools and faith institutions, and to assure adequate follow-up by investigative units, if warranted, and to examine if there are other resources to which the victims and effected community can be referred. CED gathers information in a monthly report, as well as confers with the state of Maryland on Hate Bias reporting, and that information (redacted) can also be found in the public database, DataMontgomery. An annual report is also issued. CED recently testified in front of the Maryland Judicial Committee on a House bill that will strengthen current Maryland Hate Bias laws, giving more resources to law enforcement officials in addressing critical hate bias incidents, and making it easier to hold an individual accountable for committing a hate crime. CED also participates on the Montgomery County Committee Against Hate Violence (CAHV), under the direction of the Montgomery County Human Rights Commission.



COPE TRAILER. CED, in conjunction with the Montgomery County Police Special Operations Division (SOD), has developed an educational tool called the Community Opioid Prevention Education (COPE) Trailer. The trailer is outfitted to look like a bedroom and bathroom in a home. A trained facilitator shows groups of citizens what areas in those rooms drugs can be hidden, and what those drugs and paraphernalia look like. It is a very popular part of community education, especially when addressing opioid deaths are a priority, and requests for its presence are many, by various stakeholders. Members of the Hispanic Citizens Academy will be trained to offer the tour in Spanish.

CITIZEN RESPONSE TO ACTIVE SHOOTER EVENTS (CRASE) TRAINING. Active shooter incidents are of ultimate importance. CRASE is one of CED's most requested training efforts. CED officers are trained in CRASE, and respond to requests for the training by government entities, private organizations, and faith communities.

LAW ENFORCEMENT & LEADERSHIP PROGRAM. The Law Enforcement & Leadership Program is another signature CED program. Through it, high school juniors and seniors spend two years learning the basics about law enforcement. The program is currently run out of Edison High School, and will be expanded to Seneca Valley High School in the fall, where two simultaneous programs will be run. It helps with not only community outreach to our diverse populations, but it is also a method of recruiting for the police department. In partnership with Montgomery College, many students in the LELP program get early college credits by successfully completing the program. These students then have the option of continuing their education at Montgomery College, with a head start.

OTHER CURRENT COLLABORATIONS AND PARTNERSHIPS

The Street Outreach Network (SON) of Montgomery County Health and Human Services. SON serves the county's youth in the prevention of gang involvement. MCPD SRO, CSO and CED officers partner with SON on much of their programming.

Montgomery County Office of Human Rights. The Office of Human Rights investigates incidents of hate/violence in the County, as reported to that office. CED is responsible for monitoring and reviewing reports of hate/violence and bias that come in through police reporting. The Office of Human Rights and CED then work collaboratively in order to address these issues, as well as provide support and resources for victims. CED officers are also members of the County's Committee Against Hate/Violence.

Office of Community Partnerships (OCP): OCP has a mission of strengthening relationships between the Montgomery County government and the residents it serves, with special focus on underserved and emerging communities, and works collaboratively with MCPD.

- *African Affairs Committee (AAC).* AAC is one of six Ethnic Advisory Groups (EAG) of the OCP. CED works to create relationships with all of the EAGs in the County. The AAC brings the perspective of our diverse African population to relationship-building with the police.



- *The Faith Community Advisory Council (FCAC) and the Faith Community Working Group (FCWG).* MCPD participates in a variety of events with the county's faith communities. The police department understands the value of having relationships built on embracing the differences of others, including in the area of individual faith. MCPD collaborates with all faiths, and is available for a variety of opportunities, such as workshops and security assessments, and also fellowship. CED also partners with FCWG to share the community engagement experience with delegations from different territories and countries, such as the Philippines, Africa, and Japan.

Age-Friendly Montgomery (AFM). CED meets monthly with members of this umbrella group, that is a resource and clearinghouse for the Montgomery County Community, and which supports senior residents in thriving and contributing to their fullest potential. CED participates on the Senior Public Safety Committee and in the planning of Senior Safety Forums.

Regional Service Centers (RSCs). Regional Service Centers provide effective, timely liaison between Montgomery County and its residents and businesses and by working with individuals, community groups, regional Citizens' Advisory Boards, and other public agencies to provide information, identify and assess regional problems and issues, and recommend and/or implement solutions. It is a great way for the community to find out what the pressing police-related issues are in that region. In addition, in the past, we have attended important community events to provide support and subject matter assistance and to provide training. There are five RSCs.

Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS). Besides management of the SRO program, CED provides training for MCPS staff. This past year, CED was responsible for ensuring that all SROs, school administration, and school security were trained in the curriculum of SafePlans of the Maryland Safe Schools Act. In addition, The Maryland Center for School Safety, Safe to Learn Act, mandates that each school district develop a policy for Behavioral Threat Assessment. CED will be participating in establishing training of school-based threat assessment teams, to include the principal, school staff, mental health professionals, and SROs.

African-American Liaison Committee and Hispanic Liaison Committee (AAC and HLC). The Chief's Office meets monthly with both committees, in order to provide pertinent crime and safety information, and to receive feedback and suggestions from these two important communities.

The Latino Public Safety Workgroup (LPSWG). This workgroup is an umbrella group of representatives from Montgomery County agencies that address issues of concern to our Latino population, including immigration and law enforcement relationships. CED meets with the workgroup monthly to address policing concerns.

Montgomery County Fire-Rescue (MCFR) Service. We have a historically effective partnership with MCFR (the unit formerly known as EEO and Diversity), as our missions and visions are parallel. We have mutual stakeholders and the communities we serve are the same. Being in collaboration with MCFR is a force multiplier for both groups. One of our most popular joint

events is a Public Safety Day at the Public Service Training Academy, where citizens and students are able to interact with police and MCFR personnel, and learn a bit about what public safety does.

Positive Youth Development Initiative (PYDI). CED is committed to taking as much opportunity as possible to engage youth. PYDI is another multi-agency approach to addressing family concerns, as well as youth and gang violence. CED serves with this important group, as a representative of the Police Department.

Collaboration Council of Montgomery County for Children, Youth, and Families. CED represents the police department on the board of directors of the Collaboration Council, in order to address pressing needs for our youth and families in Montgomery County.

The Montgomery County Family Justice Center (FJC). The FJC is a collaboration of public and private county agencies seeking to provide services to families impacted by domestic violence. This past October (2019), CED partnered with the National Black Police Association to collect over 120 handbags of toiletry items for women. The handbags were delivered to the FJC to be given to women who arrive there to escape domestic violence situations.

Of course, this list is not all-inclusive, but represents a variety of the best of what we do. We are committed to diversity in our outreach, engagement, and participation.

CED Expansion: Beginning in Fiscal Year 2021 (July 2020), the CED will become a part of a new fifth Montgomery County Police Bureau, called the Community Resource Bureau (CRB). CRB will include CED, the Public Information Office (PIO), and the Crisis Intervention Team (CIT). The goal is to make more efficient efforts in community policing. Increased staffing of CED will allow DARE and PAL to be re-established, as well as the ability to focus on other initiatives, such as LGBTQ concerns.

The Montgomery County Council has introduced a Community Policing Bill (Bill 33-19) to establish community policing guidelines and annual reporting requirements. Much of what will be required is already being accomplished by MCPD.

MCPD records information using a calendar application and publishes it on the County's open data portal (<https://data.montgomerycountymd.gov/w/3vk5-sf3t/tdqt-sri3?cur=X1I3Ljka-nS>). However, many efforts at community policing are not tangible, and the department must then depend on feedback from citizens as to our success. Thus, there is not only emphasis on common productivity measures such as clearance rates, numbers of arrests, number of community meetings, etc., but also emphasis on outcomes. The department employs methods to assess public satisfaction with services, and both individual officers and managers think about ways to improve based on this feedback.

In 2017, when Montgomery County administered the National Citizen Survey, 84% of residents gave positive ratings to the overall safety of Montgomery County, 94% reported feeling safe in their neighborhoods, and 91% reported feeling safe in Montgomery County's downtown/commercial

areas (www.montgomerycountymd.gov/survey2017). On being asked if Montgomery County Police Officers treated them fairly, 85% of County citizens agreed. Those numbers show that the public is noticing our efforts and still gives the police department opportunities to expand its thinking and actions as it relates to community policing. It is anticipated that the National Citizen Survey will be administered by the County again in 2020.