

# VICE, DRUGS & ORGANIZED CRIME

WILLIAMSTOWN POLICE DEPARTMENT POLICY & PROCEDURE NO. <b>2.27</b>	ISSUE DATE: 02/10/2022
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## I. GENERAL CONSIDERATIONS AND GUIDELINES

Vice, drugs, and organized crime are quality of life issues which can disrupt a neighborhood or an entire community. Police responses to such complaints may include direct patrol interdiction, relying on confidential informants, and assigning police officers as undercover agents.

Obtaining and documenting reports of such activity are important first steps in addressing such problems. The reports may begin an investigation or augment an existing investigation. The true value of such information may never be realized if it does not reach the investigator or entity that needs it.

The purpose of this policy is to provide guidance in reporting and forwarding such complaints.

## II. POLICY

### COORDINATION

It is the policy of this department that reports of vice, drug and/or organized crime activities in this community shall be documented and forwarded to the Chief of Police or Lieutenant for further investigation or intelligence purposes.

The Chief of Police or Lieutenant will coordinate the intelligence and operational activity within the Department, and with outside agencies, for **Drugs, Gangs, Organized Crime and Vice Control** functions. This will be accomplished through the Sergeants who will have overall responsibility for enforcement activities, and will receive, coordinate and share intelligence information related to these functions with other law enforcement agencies.

**FILES:** Because of the highly sensitive nature of the information and intelligence received regarding Drugs, Organized Crime and Vice, special handling of complaints and investigations is required. All substantiated investigations and activity reports shall be filed as normal offense reports. The investigations report module in the department computer will be used to document in narrative form all complaints received from any legitimate source or information conveyed to any outside agency.

Electronic files shall be secured by password or software privilege settings.

When upon review or investigations, information or intelligence is found to be unverified, misleading, obsolete, or otherwise unreliable; the Sergeants may direct the investigating officer to purge the material from the files.

### **III. PROCEDURES**

#### ***Vice, Drug and Organized Crime Complaints***

##### RECEIPT

- All vice, drug, and organized crime complaints, including information conveyed by outside agencies, shall be provided with an incident number and recorded in IMC.
- Telephone, mail, e-mail, and anonymous tips shall be provided with an incident number and transposed to a preliminary investigation form by the person taking the tip.
- Any log entries accompanying the tip shall be entered with minimal information to avoid disclosing the name, address, or other identification of the target.

##### PROCESSING AND INVESTIGATION:

All complaints received by the Department regarding Drugs, Gangs, Organized Crime or Vice activity shall be analyzed by the Chief of Police or designee in order to determine if the need for investigation exists. This analysis should be based on:

- Whether the original intelligence information is valid;
- What the criminal nature of the problem is;
- c. The importance of the problem with relation to the community;
- The existence of lead information;
- The investigative techniques which will be required;
- The resources needed internally and externally; and,
- The potential operational problems.

Information which is found to be pertinent to another agency will be forwarded to the appropriate contact within that agency.

The person disbursing such information shall include a record of such information in the incident report attached to the receipt of the information.

Any other applicable logging of such information shall also be accomplished. See the department policies **4.07 – Criminal Offender Records Information** and **2.26 - Criminal Intelligence**.

The responsibility for both the preliminary and follow up investigations lie with the Sergeants. All officers or employees who receive complaints or reports of drug sales, gang activity, organized crime or vice activity shall obtain as much information as possible.

Officers assigned to investigate drug activity, gangs, organized crime, or vice activity shall submit reports as needed and determined by the LT/Chief. Decisions to conduct covert or overt operations shall be made by the Lieutenant or with the approval of the Chief of Police based on evaluations of the investigative evidence. This includes surveillance activities and equipment; use of informants involving formally organized outside investigative units, such as the Mass. State Police Organized Crime Unit from the Attorney General's office, the FBI, and any other specially formed task force; and coordination and cooperation with federal, state, or county prosecution units.

#### LIAISON WITH OTHER AGENCIES:

The Lieutenant or Sergeants may act as liaison with other agencies regarding organized crime or vice activity operations, as well as the Chief of Police. A record of all information received from outside and conveyed to agencies and their liaisons will be maintained by the command staff and available for review at any time by the Chief of Police.

- The command staff shall keep the Chief of Police apprised of all active vice, drug, and organized crime investigations.
- This report shall include and summarize all complaints, intelligence, and arrests.

#### COVERT OR DECOY OPERATIONS:

If an organized crime or vice control activity requires the use of these operations, it shall be the responsibility of the Sergeant to coordinate the operation and when necessary, enlist the assistance of other agencies when jurisdiction is an issue. This shall be done with the knowledge and approval of the LT/Chief of Police.

#### RAIDS

The LT/Chief must grant authorization for any planned drug, organized crime, or vice control raids. The LT/Chief will have knowledge of all planned raids. The LT/Chief will also act as supervisor or coordinator or will designate a detective to do so. All planned raids must have a pre-determined plan that will include:

- making sure of the legalities of affidavits and search warrants, and obtaining them;
- developing strategies and plans for approaching, entering, searching, and leaving the target; (Note: Use of Force will always be as according to policy);
- selecting the necessary equipment and personnel required to effect the raid and issuing the necessary equipment by verbal order;
  - surveillance equipment such as night vision goggles, binoculars, and video recording devices.
- developing a reliable communications plan;
- preparing for the processing of potential arrests and evidence control by ensuring the proper back up personnel and transportation equipment is available;
- arranging for evidence gathering and control;
- the selection and outlining of responsibilities for any specialized support units, such as the State Police. Ensure communication capability with these units;
- Anticipating the potential need for medical assistance, and ensuring documentation of this assistance;
- conducting a de-briefing and critique session with all involved personnel upon completion.

### ***Records***

Because of the highly sensitive nature of the information and intelligence received regarding Drugs, Organized Crime and Vice, all substantiated investigations and activity reports shall only be accessed by certain Officers. The Incident Report module in IMC will be used to document in narrative form all complaints received from any legitimate source or information conveyed to any outside agency.

