Patrol

400.1 PURPOSE AND SCOPE

The purpose of this policy is to define the patrol function and address intraorganizational cooperation and information sharing.

400.2 POLICY

The St. Mary's County Sheriff's Office provides patrol services 24 hours a day, seven days a week and will prioritize responses to requests for emergency services using available resources to enhance the safety of the public and office members.

400.3 FUNCTION

(a) The Patrol Division consists of uniformed deputies generally in clearly marked law enforcement vehicles in assigned jurisdictional areas (Districts) of St. Mary's County. The function of patrol is to respond to calls for assistance and reports of criminal activity, act as a deterrent to crime, enforce state and local laws, identify community needs, provide support and assistance to the community and respond to emergencies. Also assigned to each Squad is a canine team.

(b) The Patrol Division also consists of District Lieutenants, each responsible for their assigned geographical area (Districts 1,2,3 and 4). Community events are planned, crime reports are examined, trends are developed and proactive enforcement strategies are implemented in coordination with patrol operational squads and other agency divisions. Community Oriented Policing (COPs) deputies work flexible schedules and are deployed to all four Districts to foster community relationships and / or conduct proactive enforcement.

(c) Patrol services include, but are not limited to:

1. Responding to emergency calls for service.
2. Apprehending criminal offenders.
3. Providing mutual aid and assistance to other agencies for emergency and law enforcement-related activities.
4. Patrol that is directed at the prevention of criminal acts, traffic violations and collisions, the maintenance of public order and the discovery of hazardous situations or conditions.
5. Responding to reports of both criminal and non-criminal acts.
6. Responding to routine calls for service, such as public assistance or public safety.
7. Traffic direction and control. For procedures, see the St. Mary's County Sheriff's Office LE Procedures Manual: Traffic Direction and Control

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8. Crime prevention activities, such as residential inspections, business inspections and community presentations.
9. Community-oriented policing and problem-solving activities including the application of resources to improve or resolve specific problems or situations and contacting or assisting members of the public in a positive way.
10. The application of resources to specific problems or situations within the community that may be improved or resolved by community-oriented policing and problem-solving strategies.
11. Conducting or referring wellness checks as required by Md. Code PS § 3-531 (see the Medical Aid and Response Policy for additional guidance).

400.3.1 ASSIGNMENT

(a) Squad Assignment

1. All patrol operations officers will be assigned to a patrol squad. Officers are assigned to squads at the direction of the Patrol Commander based on available manpower and needs of the agency. All squad members follow a rotation based on available manpower at the direction of the Patrol Commander. This does not preclude schedules from being modified as needed for special assignments, manpower issues, etc.

(b) Shift Assignment

1. Patrol operations assignments will be issued during each roll call. Ideally, officers will be given a permanent assignment each shift, for familiarity purposes. Assignments can be modified at the duty officer's discretion, as the need dictates (i.e. manpower issues).

(c) Unit Assignment

1. Patrol community assignments will be at the direction of the Patrol Commander and/or based on the member's position description for the Unit the member was selected to work in (i.e. COPs Unit, or Community Engagement Officer).

400.4 INFORMATION SHARING

(a) To the extent feasible, all information relevant to the mission of the Office should be shared among all divisions and specialized units on a timely basis. Members should be provided with opportunities on a regular basis to share information during roll calls.

(b) Additionally, information should be shared with outside agencies and the public in conformance with office policies and applicable laws.

400.5 CROWDS, EVENTS AND GATHERINGS

(a) Deputies may encounter gatherings of people, including, but not limited to, civil demonstrations, civic, social and business events, public displays, parades and sporting events. Deputies should monitor such events as time permits in an effort to keep the peace and protect the safety and rights of those present. A patrol supervisor

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should be notified when it becomes reasonably foreseeable that such an event may require increased monitoring, contact or intervention.

(b) Deputies responding to an event or gathering that warrants law enforcement involvement should carefully balance the speech and association rights of those present with applicable public safety concerns before taking enforcement action.

(c) Generally, deputies should consider seeking compliance through advisements and warnings for minor violations and should reserve greater enforcement options for more serious violations or when voluntary compliance with the law is not achieved.

(d) Deputies are encouraged to contact organizers or responsible persons to seek voluntary compliance that may address relevant public safety concerns.

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