

## OUTLINE FOR COMMUNITY DISCUSSIONS ON REIMAGINING POLICING IN THE VILLAGE OF HUDSON FALLS

The Hudson Falls Police Department serves the law enforcement needs of all the citizens of the Village of Hudson Falls, and strives to do so in a professional manner, respecting the rights of all our citizens without regard to race, color, nationality, creed, gender or sexual orientation. Our policies and procedures are developed and carried out with that goal in mind, and our officers are selected, trained and supervised with that same goal in mind.

We use our knowledge, experience and professional judgment, combined with available information, data, analysis and research to develop our Police Department policing strategies, policies and procedures. Some of the relevant strategies, policies and procedures and related issues are set forth below for community discussion and comment.

1. **Deployment:** Here is how/where our officers are currently deployed:

- Prior to each shift our officers engage in shift briefings to familiarize themselves with locations of higher crime rate or where civilian complaints have come in.

**Policing Strategy:** Our reason for deploying our resources where and how we do so is:

- By reviewing previous shift synopsis and calls for service.
- Department uses a NYS Certified Crime Analyst to create data sheets from our reporting system for our use in locating and directing patrols.

Question: Do you see this deployment practice or policing strategy as demonstrating any racial bias?

Question: Do you feel that this deployment practice or policing strategy results in unfair, disproportionate policing of communities of color?

Question: Do you see any other problem with this deployment practice?

2. **Use of Force.** Our policy on use of force:

- Has recently been overhauled due to newly enacted laws. And it follows MPTC policy. Use of Force Policy can be found on the front page of the departments website: [www.hudsonfallspd.com](http://www.hudsonfallspd.com).

Question: Do you have questions/suggestions about our use of force policy?

3. **Procedural Justice:** Our policies that promote procedural justice are:

Departmental policies requiring courtesy, respect, responsiveness, equal treatment irrespective of race, gender, sexual orientation, etc., transparency, citizen and community engagement.

Question: Are there additional steps you can suggest that would help give people confidence that we treat all citizens equally and fairly?

4. **Bias:** Our anti-bias policies and implicit bias training are:
- Newly enacted laws have created updated policies and training specifically addressing bias and discrimination. Our departmental policies follow MPTC model policy and training standards. As stated in the Procedural Justice Section we again have policies to promote courtesy, respect, etc.

Question: Are there additional steps we could take to assure citizens that our agency is free of bias in our actions? Are you aware of any studies that would support such additional steps?

5. **De-escalation:** Our de-escalation training and practice are:
- Newly enacted laws have created updated requirements specifically addressing De-escalation and discrimination. Our department has begun this training and this training is also required on a yearly basis. Our Use of Force Policy has been updated to include de-escalation tactics.

Question: Do you have questions/suggestions on our de-escalation policy?

6. **Law Enforcement Assisted Diversion Programs:** We do the following things, in an appropriate case, to divert persons out of the normal criminal justice system in the early stages and into needed services and programs:
- Last year myself and Capt. Kibling began attending LEAD meetings and we are in the process of potentially adopting this program.
  - Washington County Probation Department handles a large number of arrest cases that are made by members of the Hudson Falls Police Department.

Question: Do you have suggestions on additional programs and services to which our agency could divert individuals in an appropriate case?

7. **Restorative Justice:** “Restorative Justice” is a response to crime that involves organizing a meeting between an offender and the victim, so they share their experience of what happened, discuss who was harmed and how, and to create a consensus for what the offender can do to repair the harm.

Question: Do you think such a program should be run by a law enforcement agency such as your police department, or would it be more appropriately run by probation or a non-governmental agency?

8. **Community Based Outreach and Conflict Resolution:** The concept of community-based outreach works best in cities and smaller municipalities, where an officer can be regularly assigned to the same neighborhood. With larger geographic jurisdictions, it is more difficult. However, we do foster community-based outreach and non-arrest conflict resolution by:
- Security Checks (Business, School, House), Church Crossings, Eddie Eagle Gun Safe Program (Pre K – 3<sup>rd</sup> grade - school), Coffee with a Cop – community, Stranger Safety (Pre K – 2<sup>nd</sup> grade – school) 911 Awareness (Pre K – 1<sup>st</sup> grade – school), Cyber Awareness/Cyber Bullying (5<sup>th</sup> grade – 6<sup>th</sup> grade – school), Drug Awareness (4<sup>th</sup> grade– 6<sup>th</sup> grade – school)

Question: Are there ways we can expand community outreach without requiring additional resources. Are there additional community outreach programs that would justify expending additional village resources?

9. **Problem Oriented Policing and Hot Spot Policing:** Problem oriented policing and hot spot policing are similar concepts, involving identifying and analyzing specific crime problems and locations and targeting resources toward solving those problems. We employ those concepts, in effect, when we:
- As stated earlier, prior to each shift our officers engage in shift briefings to familiarize themselves with locations of higher crime rate or where civilian complaints have come in. Officers also reviewing previous shift synopsis and calls for service.

Question: Are there additional ways we can identify and target high crime areas, serious crime trends, etc.?

10. **Focused Deterrence:** “Focused Deterrence” is a crime reduction strategy which aims to deter crime by increasing the swiftness, severity and certainty of punishment, usually directed at a specific crime problem such as gun violence. Law enforcement can play a role in focused deterrence, but the swiftness, severity and certainty of punishment are primarily determined by actions of the prosecution and the courts.
- Traffic Safety Grants provide funding for officers to perform Road Checks and Traffic Safety Issues. (Seat Belt Enforcement)

Question: Is there a particular crime problem in our village that you think could be best addressed by devoting police resources and effort toward focused deterrence of that crime, and what steps would be taken to effectuate that?

11. **Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design:** Attention to environmental design can help to increase the probability that an offender will be caught. Studies show that increased probability of capture tends to deter the commission of crime. Examples of crime prevention through environmental design would be better lighting in crime-prone areas, conspicuous placement of security cameras with attendant conspicuous signage, elimination of shrubbery where it could serve as a hiding place for an attacker, etc. Environmental design is not usually a function of law enforcement, but law enforcement can play a role by identifying possible improvements in the built environment which could help deter criminal activity in the area.

Question: Who should have primary responsibility for identifying and addressing crime-detering environmental design issues?

12. **Violence Prevention and Reduction interventions:** Violence prevention refers to the reduction in the frequency of new cases of violent victimization or perpetration through direct efforts to remove or reduce the underlying causes and risk factors, such as alcohol abuse, drug abuse, gang activity, illegal weapons possession, domestic conflicts, etc.
- Our agency has an Officer assigned as a NYS Field Intelligence Officer
  - Detective is assigned to monthly MDT meetings
  - Detective is assigned to the local Drug Task Force

- Officer is assigned to Sex Offender Management
- Capt. Assigned to Domestic Violence Task Force
- Department involved with school safety committee

Question: Do you have suggestions on violence reduction strategies that could be implemented by the Police Department or by other entities?

13. **Model Policies Promulgated by the Municipal Police Training Council:** The State MPTC from time to time develops a model policy on one or another aspect of police operations, which it offers to police agencies for consideration for adoption. Other organizations also develop model policies. Not every model policy is suited to adoption by every agency. Many agencies develop their policies and procedures by studying model policies from many sources, and by studying actual policies being successfully used by other law enforcement agencies around the country.
  - Our Police Department has adopted many model policies developed by MPTC, as being well suited to our agency. (ex. Use of Force, Suspect Identification, and more)
14. **The New York State Law Enforcement Agency Accreditation Standards:** The Law Enforcement Agency Accreditation Council establishes a set of standards with which a law enforcement agency seeking accreditation must comply. Law enforcement accreditation is not mandatory for police agencies in New York State, and not every agency is able to attain accreditation from the Council.
  - The Hudson Falls Police Department meets all the standards established by the LEAAC and has been an accredited agency since 1994. We were most recently re-accredited March 7<sup>th</sup>, 2019. Re-Accreditation is performed every five years.

Upon reviewing this document, you may respond with any suggestions that you, as a Hudson Falls Village resident, may have. Please feel free to respond without fear of being punished for your thoughts or suggestions. This is your chance to let us know what services you are hoping to gain from your local police department. All responses MUST contain the address and name of the village resident as this document is intended for village residents ONLY. We will gladly accept positive responses about the Hudson Falls Police Department as well. As this reform moves forward committee meeting discussions will be posted for your review and response at [www.hudsonfallspd.com](http://www.hudsonfallspd.com). Thank you for your cooperation and I look forward to hearing from you. Chief Scott J. Gillis

All responses must be received by January 20<sup>th</sup>, 2021.

Responses can be dropped off in person, emailed or mailed via U.S. Postal Service:

Chief Gillis – Hudson Falls Police  
218 Main Street  
Hudson Falls, NY 12839

hfchief@villageofhf.com