

MESA POLICE Department Policy Manual	<h1>Program for Community Outreach</h1>	DPM 2.9.70 NEW DOCUMENT 8/08/2018
Approved by: Chief of Police	Chapter: Department Programs	Page: 1 of 4

1. PURPOSE

- The Program for Community Outreach is intended to provide guidelines to officers on how to assist citizens experiencing a crisis. This policy will give officers an effective tool to coordinate resources for our citizens during a crisis.
 - The crisis could include, but is not limited to:
 - Persons affected by mental illness or in crisis
 - Substance addiction
 - Homelessness.
- These coordination efforts will be utilized in an effective and compassionate manner. This is not meant to be an inclusive list of community issues, rather a guideline to help simplify complex situations officers encounter on a regular basis while assisting citizens in crisis.

2. GOAL GUIDELINES

Outreach, Educate and if necessary, Enforcement

- The goal of the Program is to contact citizens experiencing homelessness and/or other crisis related issues and make those citizens aware of the resources available to help alleviate the problem.
 - Assisting citizens that are homeless to housing assistance.
- Educate citizens in crisis and/or experiencing homelessness on:
 - How to receive resources and assistance.
 - What behaviors will get a negative response from law enforcement.
- Finally, if outreach and education fail, officers may take enforcement action and refer the person to Community Court.

3. DEFINITIONS

Sheltered homelessness:

- A person who does not have a traditional housing situation but is not living on the street. This could include staying with friends or acquaintances, a hotel/motel, living in a shelter.

Unsheltered Homeless:

- A person who does not have a traditional housing situation and is living on the street or in a car.

Resources:

- Services provided by our community partners such as Community Bridges, Marc Center, Save the Family, United Way, Family Promise etc. (this list is not inclusive) that provide services to community members in need. This could include but not limited to Housing, addiction recovery, mental health services.

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Path team:

- A 24/7 resource through Community Bridges Inc. (CBI). This CBI Crisis Response Team (CRT) is available to all officers in the City of Mesa (COM) to assist with citizens in crisis and experiencing homelessness. The Path Team is staffed with navigators to assist coordinating resources.

Navigator:

- A person who acts as a mentor and navigator to help community members transition out of homelessness, addiction or mental instability into services and stability.

Community Court:

- A specialty court within the Mesa City Court set up to help community members in need, connect to services or curb negative behavior. This is primarily for those who are services resistant and continued to engage in low level criminal behavior.

Service Resistant:

- Those persons who choose not to accept services when offered or continue to engage in low level criminal behavior.

SMI:

- Serious mental illness, a person with a mental illness diagnosis.

Substance addicted:

- A person addicted to substances such as opiates, alcohol, methamphetamine and any other addictive substance.

4. GUIDELINES –PROGRAM FOR COMMUNITY OUTREACH

Program for Community Outreach

- Designed to educate and connect to services through Community or by voluntary means for sheltered and unsheltered homeless persons, addicts and those with other community related problems.
- Streamline the court process for citizens with multiple arrests and active court dockets utilizing the Mesa City Community Court.

Officer Responsibilities

- When contacting a citizen in crisis, educate them on the applicable laws they are violating.
- Examples of laws violated as part of the Program for Community Outreach are:
 - Trespassing
 - Right of way violations

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- Possession of drug paraphernalia
- Liquor law violations
- Minor utility theft.
- Reference the Program for Community Outreach resource list on your district's daily mission to determine if this citizen has been contacted multiple times for the same offense(s) or crisis.
- If possible, provide citizen with a **DPM 2.9.20A, Community Outreach Pamphlet**, and explain the different resources available to them.
- If possible, contact resources for the citizen (i.e.: Path Team or Navigators) and arrange a meeting for the citizen to receive services being offered.
 - If the citizen takes a pamphlet and is willing to seek out services, or meets with service providers with PD present, provide them with a verbal warning and forward the contact to the affected District Community Action Officer via RMS field interview card, or
 - Document the contact in the Program for Community Outreach resource list, located on your districts mission via a hyperlink
 - Document the citizen's name, date of birth, date of contact, and mark with an "R" for resources provided, meaning a warning was given and resources were provided.

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- This allows resource providers and Community Action Officers to follow up with the citizen in crisis.
- If the citizen has been contacted multiple times, has previously been offered resources, is service resistant and still refuses to stop violating state statute and city code, issue citizen a citation for said infractions.
 - Place court date as close to **thirty (30) days** out from date of infraction and on **Mondays or Wednesdays at 1415 hours**.
 - The offender can self-seek services for housing, counseling, etc. and provide documentation of services to the Mesa City Court to possibly have charges dropped prior to arraignment.
 - If voluntary connections are made, the offender must make all contact with the court and make all arrangements with the City Prosecutor in charge of the Community Court.
- Document all contacts utilizing **DC1** or **DC8** and forward to the affected Community Action Officer. These contacts will be considered on-view activity when applicable.
- When completing the department report (DR) for an arrest, begin narrative with disclaimer that this report is part of the Program for Community Outreach, so it can be forwarded to the proper city prosecutor and defense attorney.
 - The disclaimer can be found on the district daily mission via hyperlink, or by contacting the affected District's Community Action Officer.

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- Citizens with multiple arrests as part of the Program for Community Outreach may be referred into the Community Oriented Project Person Program for repeat misdemeanor offenders.

5. GUIDELINES – HOMELESS ENCAMPMENT PROCEDURES

Homeless Encampment

- When a call for service or on view activity reveals a homeless encampment, determine the owner of said property and attempt to contact property owner.
- Determine if the property owner partakes in the City of Mesa Trespass Enforcement Program.
- If the owner of the property does not partake in the Trespass Enforcement Program and wishes to prosecute those that are trespassing on their property, have the owner complete **DPM 2.8.80F2, Trespass Enforcement Request Letter**, giving authority for MPD officers to arrest violators of **ARS 13-1502, Criminal Trespass in the Third Degree**.
- Contact Community Bridges Path Workers from the Community Outreach Pamphlet and advise them of the location of the homeless encampment.
- Officers visit the encampment with the Path Workers and advise all persons on the property they are in violation of **ARS 13-1502**, and the property owner wishes to assist in prosecution. Provide all persons on property with **DPM 2.9.20A, Community Outreach Pamphlet** for resources and allow Path Workers to visit with the persons in violation of **ARS 13-1502**.
- Advise all persons on property that they have **seventy-two (72) hours** to vacate the property with their personal belongings, and anything left behind will be disposed of as garbage by the Department of Transportation for City of Mesa (COM), or the property owner for private property affected. Refer private property owners to City of Mesa Code Compliance Department for assistance to see if assistance is available for property clean-up.
- Follow up with Path Workers **seventy-two (72) hours** after initial contact.
- If persons are still in violation of **ARS 13-1502**, issue citations in accordance with the Program for Community Outreach.

References:

- [DPM 2.8.85 Trespass Enforcement Program](#)
- [DPM 2.8.80F2, Trespass Enforcement Request Letter.](#)
- [DPM 2.9.70A, Mesa Program for Community Outreach pamphlet](#)