**Maryland Police Training and Standards Commission**

Community Policing Program

Annual Report

**Section I Appendix C**

Agency: Harford County Sheriff's Office

Region #: 3 Date Report Submitted: July 31, 2022

Submitted By: Name: John Bowman

Title: Captain Phone: (443)409-3151

Email: bowmanj@harfordsheriff.org

Number of sworn members: 501 Non-sworn members: 157

*Jurisdictional Demographics:* Population: 262,977

Square miles serviced by the agency: 527

White: 77.9% Black: 15.4% Hispanic: 5.1% Asian: 3.1%

Native American: 0.1% Hawaiian or Pacific Islander: 0.1% More than one race: 3.0%

**Section II**

**Instructions**: Provide a detailed description of your agency’s Community Policing Initiative by responding to the following **key points**. These key points address the Guiding Principles of Community Policing, as well as the SixPillars identified in the Task Force on 21st Century Policing Report (see Guidelines for Reporting for explanation). Examples of specific programs, initiatives, and partnerships with community groups should be discussed along with any statistics or other relevant information. See *Appendix D:* *Examples of Best Practices in Community Policing* for you convenience and consideration.

**Key Points**:

* How community policing is integrated throughout your agency and how your agency incorporates community policing into its daily operation.
* How top management emphasizes or supports community policing within the agency.
* Training your agency has received in community policing and future plans to provide additional or specialized training to agency members to improve interaction with community members or problem solving efforts.
* How crime problems or community issues are identified and the method of communicating any trends with communities the agency services.
* How your agency partners with all segments of the community to prevent crime and address identified community problems. Segments of the community should include residential and business communities, schools, youth, minority groups, hospitals, senior population, faith based organizations, etc.
* How your agency measures the effectiveness of its community policing program.

**ANNUAL REPORT**

1. ***How is community policing integrated throughout your agency and how does your agency incorporate community policing into its daily operations?***

Response:

The Harford County Sheriff’s Office is committed to adhering to the founding principles of community policing. Those principles have established that for law enforcement agencies to progress and evolve, they must be willing to espouse innovation; particularly when it comes to working with their respective communities to solve problems. This approach to policing insists that in order to flourish, the law enforcement agency must establish, and continue to enhance, an atmosphere of cooperation among those they serve. The agency must strive to continually improve relationships and partnerships with local communities and must foster the inclination among its members to never rest upon past successes but instead to investigate opportunities of working with the community to solve emerging trends. Finally, the agency must foster a willing exchange of ideas between its members and the community while recognizing the importance of community input in creating a better law enforcement agency.

The Harford County Sheriff’s Office strives to stimulate these partnerships between local communities and agency members. The Maryland “Community Policing” guiding principles are practiced at every level of the Harford County Sheriff’s Office and community policing is a mindset that stands at the heart of the Sheriff’s Office’s mission, vision, and values. These community policing efforts are integrated into the policies and procedures followed by every member of the Sheriff’s Office. The Sheriff’s Office adheres to the community policing philosophy and strives to ensure that community members are the means of coping with problems and not merely persons from whom to take a report of an incident. The Sheriff’s Office sees its community partners as allies willing to identify community concerns and allies with whom agency members can work to solve problems.

To reduce crime, strengthen community and understand the needs of the community, The Sheriff’s Office has built programs and protocols at every level. Listed below are each aspect of proactive outreach to build community policing.

Patrol Operations:

One technique the Harford County Sheriff’s Office emphasizes is sector based policing. Sector based policing allows deputies to be routinely assigned to specific areas and become familiar with geographical and community areas, so they may build relationships with stakeholders. This allows deputies to not only be accountable for designated areas, but respond to immediate concerns with community members or crime trends. This practice allows deputies to build trust and fosters positive relationships, both with our commercial and residential population.

Citizen's Police Academy:

The Harford County Sheriff’s Office offers Harford County residents an 11 week program designed to provide them with a better understanding of the Sheriff’s Office and its operations while fostering partnerships between the Sheriff’s Office and the communities it serves. The Citizen's Police Academy is free of charge and open to any Harford County resident 18 years of age or older. Each weekly class is two hours and community groups, businesses, and elected officials are encouraged to participate or nominate community members. Weekly classroom instruction is held at various Sheriff’s Office facilities throughout the County, which include overviews of nearly every aspect of Sheriff’s Office operations, from Patrol Services and Criminal Investigations to the Agency’s K-9 Unit, Court Services, and Special Operations Divisions. Deputies provide presentations on topics such as personal safety, drug identification, and gang activity. Attendees supplement their classroom training with field trips to the Harford County Detention Center, the Harford County Emergency Operations Center, Harford County Circuit Court, the Southern Precinct, and the firearms training facility at Broad Creek. As part of the Citizen’s Police Academy, attendees also have the opportunity to participate in real life role play scenarios that test their ability to make the same split second decisions deputies make on a daily basis. In addition, students are given the opportunity to sign up for special classes with the state of the art VIRTRA judgemental use of force simulator.

The Harford County Sheriff’s Office also offers a Citizen’s Police Academy Alumni Association, which is formed from graduates of the Harford County Sheriff’s Office Citizen’s Police Academy. The Citizen’s Police Academy Alumni promote and improve community relations and crime prevention awareness; provide opportunities for alumni continuing education and involvement; and assist the Harford County Sheriff’s Office in any appropriate manner. Members from the Alumni Association also volunteer on many of the Agency's community outreach projects and program and special events.

Community Policing for Children:

The Harford County Sheriff’s Office has placed an importance on building relationships with all levels of youth.

School Resource Officers:

The first example can be seen with School Resource Officers (SRO’s). SRO's are assigned to every middle and high school in the County and three (3) SRO's are assigned to cover the elementary schools. Not only do the SRO’s provide a valuable security aspect of protecting the schools, but the mentorship element is equally as important. The Harford County Sheriff’s Office SRO’s build relationships each and every day with students and faculty. In addition to the daily activities, the SRO’s can be routinely spotted after hours at sporting events or mentoring criminal justice programs.

Youth Academy:

Twice a year in the summer, the Harford County Sheriff’s Office hosts our Youth Academy for high school aged children. This provides a tremendous opportunity for adolescents to learn about the criminal justice system and local law enforcement procedures. Attendees of the Youth Academy spend five days and four nights at the Harford Glen Environmental Education Center at no cost. In addition to classroom instruction and hands-on activities, those enrolled in the youth academy will learn a broad spectrum of law enforcement responsibilities. They will also tour various Agency sites, interact with law enforcement directly and take part in summer camp activities such as canoeing and ROPES course team building initiatives.

While the Youth Academy program has been suspended due to the COVID pandemic, the Harford County Sheriff's Office is looking forward to restarting the program next summer.

Explorer Program:

The Explorer Program is affiliated with Boy Scouts of America. The Program is designed to expose youths between the ages of 13 to 21, to law enforcement. By interacting with youth in positive settings, they have a better understanding of various components within law enforcement and often become ambassadors for law enforcement among their peers. The Explorers participate in many community events throughout the year. Bi-annually they attend the U.S. National Law Enforcement Explorer Conference. Many of the Sheriff’s Office Explorer graduates have chosen to enter into careers as members of law enforcement and/or corrections.

Community Policing Unit (CPU):

The Harford County Sheriff’s Office maintains a five person unit that specializes in crime prevention and community outreach. This cutting edge unit routinely participates in programs to provide guidance, mentorship, and education to our community members while building valuable relationships between the Agency and the public. The CPU programs encompass all socioeconomic regions of the County and are designed to incorporate the ten guiding principles of Community Oriented Policing. Listed below are the different programs the Harford County Sheriff’s Office offers, through the Community Policing Unit, that encourage groups to promote safety, involvement and the well-being of the many communities served by the Agency.

Neighborhood Watch:

The Neighborhood Watch Program, which began nationally in 1972, recognizes that the safety of a community, and the health of its members, depends largely upon community members taking action to assist law enforcement. While it does not espouse vigilantism, it does dictate that there is a partnership between local law enforcement and the community to deter crime. This partnership exists with the goal of having community members act as the eyes and ears for law enforcement. Community members work with police by pointing out those engaged in or likely to engage in criminal activity. These organized groups of civilians devoted to deterring crime and vandalism work with police to enhance crime prevention efforts.

The aim of the Neighborhood Watch Program is to educate residents of communities on crime prevention measures while striving towards achieving safer and more secure neighborhoods. This nationally recognized program affords communities the ability to be directly involved with the safety and security of their own communities; as well as enhancing or opening lines of communication with local law enforcement. The Harford County Sheriff’s Office actively participates in the Neighborhood Watch Program and has assisted neighborhoods to empower their citizens for over 25 years.

Pledge Program:

With the current Opioid Epidemic and increased questions from parents about “when” and “how” to have that dreadful conversation with their children about drugs, the Harford County Sheriff’s Office, in partnership with the Harford County Office of Drug Control Policy, has developed the Pledge Program. The goal of the Pledge Program is to reach children early, between the ages of 8 – 11, before being exposed to drug abuse and supply them with the coping skills and knowledge that can be utilized in the future. This interactive program requires involvement and participation from the children while learning the concepts to comprehend drugs and abuse. These concepts include the ability to analyze drug influence of family, friends, peers, and culture; effective coping and communication skills to be assertive to outside influences of peer-pressure; and developing self-confidence and the ability to advocate for personal, family and community health. This program is taught through subject matter experts, doctors, age appropriate testimonials, and scenario based role playing.

Community Out-Reach Effort (C.O.R.E.)

In August of 2022 the Harford County Sheriff's Office is excited to unveil the new and innovative C.O.R.E. Program (Communinity Out-Reach Effort). C.O.R.E. is a specifically designed mobile learning trailer, that will comprise all levels of crime prevention. The mobility of this educational tool will be crucial to providing drug education for the most vulnerable and at-risk segments of the population throughout Harford County.

This mobile center will be broken down in two separate sections. The first section will be a crime prevention element, which will encompass the traditional outreach efforts and resources, such as adult crime prevention, adult drug education, kids educational materials, adolescent awarness materials and county resources.

The second area will be comprised of a interactive adolescent drug learning center. The learning center will include six kiosk stations which will provide lessons and consequences of using drug and alcohol to pre-teen and teenagers. The learning objectives of the lessons include the ability to standup to self-pressure, peer pressure, negative influences, mental health issues and help adolescents make informed decisions based on facts about drugs and promote healthy coping skills.

HOPE House (Heroin Overdose Prevention Effort):

The Harford County Sheriff’s Office Heroin Overdose Prevention Effort (HOPE) House is a mobile educational tool designed to raise awareness and inform parents of the warning signs of drug experimentation and abuse. This Program is a unique approach by law enforcement to promote education and treatment of the nationwide opioid crisis. The HOPE trailer, set up to simulate a young person's bedroom and bathroom area, offers adults and parents a chance to be educated on some of the places drugs can be hidden in plain sight and other potential signs of drug use. An area near the front of the unit has literature that those going through the trailer can take with them about what they have seen in the simulated bedroom and bathroom. The HOPE House is a project conceived by the HOPE workgroup established by the Sheriff to lead in the fight against Harford County’s spiraling opioid abuse epidemic. The HOPE House was brought to reality as the result of partnerships between the Harford County Sheriff’s Office, HOPE Workgroup, Harford County’s Office of Drug Control Policy, Harford County Narcotics Task Force, Harford Sheriff Foundation, the Citizens’ Police Academy Alumni Association, and the Harford Fire and EMS Association.

This project, managed by the Community Policing Unit and staffed by trained volunteers, is demonstrative of the unique efforts taken by the Sheriff’s Office to partner with communities to help solve problems. The opioid epidemic has negatively affected all parts of the State and Harford County is no exception. No socioeconomic group can claim immunity from the terrible consequences of opioid addiction. The Communty Policing Unit and other members of the Sheriff’s Office continually strive to use unique efforts such as the HOPE House to help combat this terrible affliction which directly impacts so many communities.

Drug Take Back Program:

The Harford County Office of Drug Control Policy, in conjunction with the Harford County Sheriff's Office, hosts periodic Prescription Drug Take Back events for the safe collection of unused or expired medications so that they may be disposed of safely and without harm to the environment. No questions are asked of the participants who turn in their medications for proper disposal. This program also supports Maryland’s efforts towards protecting our waterways and specifically the Chesapeake Bay.

Additionally, the Harford County Sheriff's Office also installed and maintains drug take back boxes at both precincts and in front of it's headquarters building. These receptacles allow members of the public to discreetly and anonymously drop off unwanted and unused drugs to the Sheriff’s Office for disposal. Without fear of reprisal, community members can dispose of these drugs, thus ensuring that they never reach the street.

Residential and Commercial Security Surveys:

The Comminty Policing Unit offers community members the option to have their residence or business receive a free security survey. A security survey is a thorough physical examination of a home or facility and its operations that looks at helping the community member to safeguard personal or company assets. Members completing the survey will provide suggestions to mitigate liability and improve the all-around safety of the home or business. The focus of these dedicated surveys are to provide timely crime prevention methods geared towards protecting one’s home or business while reinforcing the idea that law enforcement can be proactive in reducing crime and not only reactive in responding to crimes already committed.

Catalytic Convertor Registration Program

The theft of catalytic convertors is a recurring problem for our community and agency. Commercial and personally owned vehicles have often been targeted during the thefts and this proactive preventative program addresses these crimes. This program is offered to the community on a voluntary basis, which consists of marking converters with high heat spray paint. The serialized markings are then recorded by the HCSO.

The program also includes developing a relationship with local scrap yards to be on the look out for recorded stolen catalytic converters. The goal of the program is to cut off the market for the stolen converters. Marking them reduces their value to the buyer, the recycler. The program also signals to the public, thieves and recyclers that we as an agency are making every attempt to deter these thefts.

Area Law Enforcement and Retail Together (ALERT)

The Harford County Sheriff’s Office organizes routine ALERT meetings to provide a forum for networking, information sharing and collaboration between retailers and law enforcement, in combatting retail crime issues at the local, regional, and national levels.

Personal Safety:

The Community Policing Unit works with community members to help them achieve more comprehensive levels of personal safety. An essential fact taught regarding personal safety is the importance of being aware of your surroundings. Recognizing that personal safety is foremost a personal responsibility, the Unit works with community members to educate them on ways of being more cognizant of their surroundings and ways of safeguarding their own welfare. The unit teaches community members that personal crime prevention starts with the use of the common sense, which is easily ignored when one becomes busy completing everyday tasks. These programs are age specific and the unit provides a wide range of topics designed for specific audiences. This partnership teaches community members to learn to reduce crime through awareness and attentiveness.

Senior Safety:

The elderly are a particularly vulnerable part of society across the Nation and in Harford County. Harford County is not immune to the types of crime directed at this at-risk segement of our society. Crime and the fear of crime create special problems for the elderly. Crime prevention is everyone's responsibility and not just a job for law enforcement. The Community Policing Unit teaches seniors that they can learn to protect themselves from crime. These programs, geared towards not just the elderly but also towards “care-givers” responsible for elderly community members, provide the means to learn to not be a victim simply because of age. These programs are provided in various senior centers and nursing homes throughout the County and reflect the partnerships developed by the Sheriff’s Office with those entities serving the senior members of Harford County communities.

Pedestrian Safety:

Pedestrian safety is an issue that affects all communities regardless of the age of those in the community. Many unnecessary injuries and fatalities occur as a result of intoxication or inattentiveness of either the driver or the pedestrian. The Sheriff’s Office Community Policing Unit works with communities to address those areas identified as being particularly problematic in regard to pedestrian accidents. Using data supplied by the Criminal intelligence and Analysis Unit, Agency members tasked with addressing this issue have the ability to focus on those statistically significant locales wherein pedestrian accidents occur. Together with community members, the Sheriff’s Office strives to reduce pedestrian accidents through education and enforcement efforts.

Prepare Because You Care:

Harford County has developed the Prepare Because You Care (PBYC) citizen training class. PBYC is designed to address preparedness for a wide-range of disasters and emergency situations. PBYC classes are free of charge and are offered multiple times each year at different locations around Harford County.

Firearms Safety:

Gun safety rules and practice recommendations are intended to avoid accidental or negligent discharge, or the consequences of firearm malfunctions. Their purpose is to eliminate or minimize the risks of unintentional death, injury, or property damage caused by improper possession, storage, or handling of firearms. The Sheriff’s Office works within communities to promote gun safety by providing free gun locks and education designed to reduce, minimize, or mitigate the likelihood of a negligent weapon use accident.

Robbery Prevention:

The Community Policing Unit works with local retailers to ensure that their employees are trained in the latest methods of robbery prevention. This is designed to improve the safety of those victimized by a robbery in addition to helping the employee improve their ability to provide information that may aid in the apprehension of the criminal. Additionally, members of the CPU provide education that may help lessen the emotional after effects of being involved in an armed robbery.

Cyberspace Safety:

The Community Policing Unit works with community members to develop strategies that will reduce the incidence of cyberbullying. The Unit strives to increase public awareness of the issues while proactively promoting cyber safety through the establishment of key partnerships between Harford County Public Schools, Harford County Government, local law enforcement agencies, and the community.

Daycare Safety:

The Sheriff’s Office Community Policing Unit recognizes that the safety of children should be of paramount concern. Whether in childcare centers or in home-based care, providers are responsible for ensuring safety both inside and outside of their child care settings. The Unit works with these facilities to ensure that providers are well versed in best practices to ensure the safety of children in the facility. Additionally, the Unit works with providers to educate them on the means of ensuring the safety of the children when transporting this precious cargo. The Unit works with providers to help them be prepared to prevent injuries and illnesses and teaches them how to handle emergencies.

Handle with Care:

The Harford County Sheriff’s Office participates in the state-wide Handle with Care program. The Handle with Care program utilizes the trauma informed approach to recognize and react to adverse childhood experiences to prevent future victimization or criminality. Utilizing on scene deputies and School Resources Officers, the Agency is able to give a “heads up” to school administrators when a child has been identified at the scene of a traumatic physical, or emotional event. In addition to providing notice, deputies also build positive relationships with students by interacting on a regular basis. These deputies visit classrooms, stop by for lunch, and simply chat with students to help promote positive relationships and perceptions of the police.

Active Shooter Awareness:

Active shooter incidents, both in the workplace and in schools, have increased in frequency and affect every community. No community, including those in Harford County, is immune. The Community Policing Unit works with community and civic groups to educate on the background and history of active shooter incidents while teaching community members how to respond should an event ever occur in their place of business, school, or house of worship. Unit members teach citizens how to respond and what actions to take that may save their lives in the event of an active shooter incident. This Program is offered to both the public and private sectors within Harford County.

Bullying Prevention:

Bullying is often the precursor to active shooter events. Bullying can threaten students’ physical and emotional safety at school while negatively impacting their ability to learn. The Community Policing Unit recognizes that the best way to address bullying is to stop it before it starts. Partnering with schools and local community entities, the CPU educates on the myriad of ways school staff can make schools safer and prevent bullying. In the Program the Unit addresses public school staff and students on methods used to prevent and address bullying which can help sustain bullying prevention efforts over time.

Halloween Safety:

During the Halloween Season, the Community Policing Unit teaches that there are several easy and effective behaviors that parents can share with kids to help reduce their risk of injury. This program offers suggestions on how to keep kids safe during the Halloween festivities.

In addition, the Harford County Sheriff's Office conducted a Trunk or Treat at the Southern Precinct in October of 2021, in coordination with the National Faith and Blue Program. This safer alternative to door to door trick or treating partnered local law enforcement with community organizations and faith based institutions. This Trunk or Treat and Faith and Blue program facilitates safer and stronger communites by connecting local residents with law enforcement and faith based organizations.

Holiday Safety:

During the holiday season, increased criminal activity is an issue that is particularly prevalent from late November to mid-January, when families gather, parties are scheduled, and travel spikes. The Community Policing Unit teaches community members basic precautions to ensure their family remains safe and injury-free throughout the season. This Program incorporates personal safety and theft prevention during the holidays.

Shopping Safety:

The Community Policing Unit works with retailers and community members by educating them on how to ensure safety in malls and parking areas.

McGruff (the “Take a Bite out of Crime" Prevention Program):

This Program promotes positive interactions between parents and children while working together on non-threatening educational information about important social topics. The Program provides a section for interactivity between the child and the educational message. It encourages parents to read to, and be positively involved with their children. This Program encourages strong positive experiences between law enforcement personnel, responsible adults, and children.

Bicycle Rodeo:

A bicycle rodeo is a clinic to teach children the necessary precautions and skills to ride a bicycle safely. This Program is a step to teaching children how to safely navigate their bicycles within their communities and includes the proper use of bicycle safety equipment.

Kid Print:

The “Kid Print” ID Program is a high-tech tool that provides law enforcement and other community organizations virtually instant access to pertinent demographic information, including a recent photo of a child. Community members participating in the service receive a CD with photo and fingerprints to help aid law enforcement should they ever need to report the child as missing.

Badges for Baseball, “The Ripken Way”:

This Program is designed to enhance the relationship between law enforcement and children in underserved communities across the County using baseball as the conduit. Law enforcement professionals are utilized as coaches and mentors during the Program. The Program emphasizes “team” sports and includes lectures on “Healthy Choices, Healthy Children.” The curriculum is designed to instill important lessons such as teamwork, communication, respect, and leadership. These skills can be utilized by participants both on and off the field.

Teen Court:

A partnership between the Sheriff's Office, Harford County Community Services, and the District Court of Maryland; Teen Court is a diversionary program focused on first time offenders. The main objective of the program is to keep these youth from entering the Juvenile Justice System.

1. ***How does top management emphasize or support community policing within your agency?***

Response:

Sheriff Jeffrey Gahler, recognizing the value of the community policing philosophy, established a Community Services Coordinator as a vital link in ensuring communities receive the services they need to flourish as safe and productive parts of the County. The Community Services Coordinator, assigned to the Community Services Division, works as a specialist to coordinate various community and youth activities. These include the “Feed the Hungry” campaign which, with support from local grocery stores, helps feed those in need. The Sheriff’s Office Christmas Drive which has been in place for over three(3) decades that annually serves approximately 130 families by providing both food and wrapped gifts. Finally, “Badges for Baseball,” a Ripken Foundation affiliated baseball program for at risk youth that operates in partnership with the Boys and Girls Club of Harford County.

Additionally, the coordinator is assigned as an advisor for the Sheriff’s Office Law Enforcement Explorer Program which is celebrating its thirteenth year of introducing exceptional youths who are seeking future employment in the criminal justice field. Together, these efforts represent only a small portion of the continuing Sheriff’s Office efforts to involve the many communities in the County in their goal of making Harford County a safe place to live and raise a family.

The Agency also developed a position specifically designed for initiating and maintaining external partnerships for the purpose of working collaboratively with other agencies and entities on special projects as assigned by the Sheriff. The Community and Legislative Coordinator is intended to identify, cultivate, and serve as a liaison with community organizations, associations, and boards in furtherance of the interest and mission of the Sheriff's Office. This positon also serves as the Sheriff's representative to the various local, state and federal government affairs programs and is responsible for drafting legislative policy and position papers representing the interest of the community.

In addition, the Sheriff and command staff have fully embraced and understand the importance of crime prevention and building relationships within the community. Command staff members can often be seen at community events, not only during weekdays, but also on evenings and weekends.

Harford County Sheriff’s Office command staff has fostered a mindset or “buy in” that encourages Agency members to constantly seek new and fresh ideas for building community relationships to ensure the community is safer, educated on the current trends and continuing to strengthen positive community relations. This outlook has resulted in ideas such as the Pledge program and Hope House and will continue to allow the Harford County Sheriff’s Office to be on the cutting edge of crime prevention and education.

1. ***Describe training your agency has received in community policing and future plans to provide additional or specialized training to agency members to improve interaction with community members or problem solving efforts.***

Response:

As part of the entry level police academy, each deputy receives class room and practical instruction on productively interacting with community members. More specifically, the law enforcement academy recruits receive an eight hour block of instruction pertaining to community policing. Subject matter experts, from the Harford County Sheriff’s Office Community Policing Unit, highlight the importance of building community relationships, principals of crime prevention and a variety of different outreach programs.

In addition, each member of the Community Policing Unit is required to attend the four day Residential and Commercial Crime Prevention training, instructed by the Maryland Police and Correctional Training Commission.

1. ***Describe how crime problems or community issues are identified and addressed, and the method of communicating any trends with communities the agency services.***

Response:

The Harford County Sheriff’s Office has a very advanced internet based program. Aside from a well-designed web site that provides current trends, a calendar with upcoming Agency community events and resources, the Harford County Sheriff’s Office has a very active social media platform which routinely produces professional videos for crime awareness, prevention, education, and upcoming events.

Like most twenty-first century law enforcement agencies, the Harford County Sheriff’s Office participates in weekly CompStat (Computer Statistics) meetings. These comparison meetings include nearly every criminal justice organization in the County from law enforcement, to prosecution and probation. These meetings are designed to define problem trends and assign resources such as the Community Policing Unit or Crime Suppression Unit to address the problems.

1. ***Identify how your agency partners with all segments of the community to prevent crime and address identified community problems. Segments of the community should include residential and business communities, schools, youth, minority groups, hospitals, senior population, faith based organizations, etc.***

Response:

The Harford County Sheriff's Office has established a variety of different work groups from minority, faith based, and hospital communities. These groups were designed to combat specific issues within the Agency or community. Some of these teams include the Heroin Overdose Prevention Effort (HOPE) workgroup to address the drug epidemic and minority hiring work group to find ways to improve diversity within the Agency's ranks.

The most recent is the Sheriff’s Community Board, developed to build better relationships with the community from a non-law enforcement perspective. This 18 member multidisciplinary diverse group attends a four-week orientation on the scope and responsibility of the Agency and how it operates. Following the orientation, the board meets regularly to discuss what the Harford County Sheriff’s Office can do to improve its relationship with the public.

Furthermore, the Youth and Community Services Coordinator acts as a vital link in ensuring communities receive the services they need to flourish as safe and productive parts of the County. The Community Services Coordinator, assigned to the Community Services Division, works as a specialist to coordinate various community and youth activities.

The Agency also developed a position specifically designed for initiating and maintaining external partnerships for the purpose of working collaboratively with other agencies and entities on special projects as assigned by the Sheriff. The Community and Legislative Coordinator is intended to identify, cultivate, and serve as a liaison with community organizations, associations, and boards in furtherance of the interest and mission of Sheriff's Office. This positon also serves as the Office's representative to the various local, state and federal government affairs programs and is responsible for drafting legislative policy and position papers representing the interest of the community.

Along with these efforts, the Harford County Sheriff’s Office developed, and routinely participates in numerous outreach programs to provide guidance, mentorship, and education to our community members while building valuable relationships between the Agency and the public. The programs, which were previously described, encompass all socioeconomic regions of the County and are designed to incorporate the ten guiding principles of Community Oriented Policing. Many of those programs are offered and managed by “subject matter experts”, from the Harford County Sheriff’s Office Community Policing Unit with the purpose of promoting safety, involvement and the well-being of the many communities served by the Agency. Aiding with all these outreach and community building programs are the “frontline” personnel, who practice the community policing philosophy while handling daily calls for service.

To address and combat specific crime trends, like previously discussed, the Harford County Sheriff’s Office participates in weekly CompStat meetings. These comparison meetings include nearly every criminal justice organization in the county from law enforcement, to prosecution and probation. These meetings are designed to define problem trends and assign resources to address and solve the problems.

1. ***How does your agency measure the effectiveness of its community policing program?***

Response:

In October of 2021, the Harford County Sheriff's Office conducted a Police-Community Survey on Public Safety and Law Enforcement. The results were overwhelmingly favorable, which include the following ratings.

1) Are you satified with the job your Sheriff's Office/Police Department does providing public safety to County residents:

87% of thoses polled reported they were very satified or somewhat satisfied.

2) How safe do you feel in your community:

98% of thoses polled reported they felt very safe or mostly safe.

3) How would you describe the relationship between the community and Deputies/Police:

83% reported Excellent or Very Good

4) Rate the job the Deputies/Police does protecing and promoting public safety in your community:

88% reported Excellent or Very Good

5) How would you rate your satisfaction during a traffic stop?:

90% rated the police contact as very satisfied or somewhat satisfied.

6) Rate the overall compenence of your Law Enforcement agency:

88% reported Execellent of Very Good

The complete Executive Summary and Demographic Analysis for the Harford County Public Safety survey can be found at:

https://harfordsheriff.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/11/Harford-County-Police-Community-Survey-Oct-2021-Final-Rept.pdf

In programs such as the Pledge program, the Sheriff's Office has implemented a quantifiable component which includes pre and post test. To date, this measurable has revealed a large improvement and retention of the lessons taught. The average Pledge Program pre test score is 63% and the average post test score is 94%. In addition, at the conclusion of the Pledge Program, parents and students complete a evalution of the program. These program evaluations have resulted in several improvements of the program since its inception.

The Sheriff’s Office recognizes that they are partners with the communities they serve and that only through diligent efforts working with those partners will those local communities thrive. The Sheriff established the goals to reduce crime in the County with more community policing and "data-driven" strategies and the men and women of the Sheriff’s Office strive to follow that philosophy each day. Community Policing is an integral part of the Sheriff’s Office mandate and will remain a focus of the Agency to reduce crime and make Harford County a safe environment for all. Through myriad of previously explained partnerships and diverse programs and efforts, the Sheriff’s Office works with its communities to make Harford County a safe place to live, work, and raise a family.

***NOTE: Email Agency report and document(s) to:*** [***pctc.mandates@maryland.gov***](mailto:pctc.mandates@maryland.gov)