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Sheriff

HARFORD COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE PERSONNEL POLICY

Public Safety Cadet Program

Distribution:	All Personnel	Policy Number:	PER 0407
Responsible Unit:	Community Services Division	Rescinds:	N/A
Original Issued Date:	12/15/16	Revision #:	1
Latest Revision Date:		Latest Revision Date:	07/31/25
Required 3-yr. Review Was Completed:	12/15/16	Next Review Due:	01/30/26

1. Purpose

To describe the operational practices of Harford County Sheriff's Office (HCSO) Public Safety Cadet (PSC) Unit #6600.

2. Policy

The HCSO PSC Program offers youth an opportunity to learn about many facets of law enforcement. The program provides an opportunity for those interested to interact with and learn from Harford County Deputies. The program also provides an opportunity to learn the requirements to succeed in a law enforcement career and teaches the cadet about leadership, discipline, courage, honor, and integrity.

3. Definitions

PUBLIC SAFETY CADET: A youth, aged fourteen (14) to twenty (20) who has applied to and been accepted as a member of the HCSO PSC Unit.

UNIT MENTOR: An employee of the HCSO who has been approved by the Sheriff to supervise and guide the unit.

MENTOR: Agency personnel, sworn or civilian, approved to participate in the PSC Program as a mentor, guide and supervisory figure to the public safety cadets.

NON-EMPLOYEE ADVISOR: An adult volunteer mentor for the PSC Program that is not a paid employee of the HCSO. A mentor working in this capacity will apply for the position and volunteer in adherence to the "Volunteers in Policing Support Policy."

4. Procedures

A. Overview

1. The role of a PSC is to learn about the criminal justice system generally, and the law enforcement profession specifically.
2. PSCs and non-employee mentors are considered to be civilian volunteers of the Agency.

- a. PSCs and civilian mentors are not sworn law enforcement or correctional officers and have no law enforcement or correctional authority.
- b. PSCs and non-employee mentors are not employees of the HCSO or Harford County Government.

B. Scope of Authority

- 1. The PSC will participate in the program under the direction and control of the Unit Mentor.
 - a. While participating in the PSC Program, a Unit Mentor is under the command authority of the Community Services Division Commander.
 - b. Outside of scheduled Unit activities, PSCs and non-employee mentors will not act or represent themselves as a Deputy Sheriff or an HCSO employee.
 - c. PSCs, non-employee mentors, and civilian employees will not be used in a position or duty that requires the authority of a sworn deputy.
- 2. PSCs will wear the approved uniform and will be clearly distinguishable from sworn deputies.
 - a. The PSC uniform will be approved by the Sheriff.
- 3. PSCs, non-employee mentors, and civilian employees will not possess any firearms, weapons, or less-lethal instruments, except as may be approved by the Unit Mentor during approved training or familiarization exercises, and only under the supervision of the Unit Mentor or a qualified instructor.

C. Selection

- 1. The selection process will include, at a minimum:
 - a. application to the PSC organization.
 - b. PSC Unit 6600 Membership Application.
 - c. interview by the Unit Mentor or other Agency personnel; and
 - d. a review of qualifications and background.
- 2. All PSC and non-employee mentor applicants will be subject to a background investigation that may include the taking of fingerprints, a check of the applicant's criminal history, Court records, Agency records and Motor Vehicle Administration records; if any.

D. Rules and Regulations

- 1. PSCs will abide by the unit manual. Each PSC will be trained in the provisions of the manual, will be supplied with a copy of the manual and will sign the acknowledgement form in the back of the manual indicating receipt and understanding of the manual.
- 2. PSCs are subject to applicable rules, regulations, policies, and procedures of the HCSO, except those that, by nature of their duties, are not applicable.

3. PSCs and mentors can be removed from the program at any time with or without cause. Reasons for removal include, but are not limited to:
 - a. violation of any law, ordinance, statute or regulation of the State of Maryland or the United States of America;
 - b. criminal or significant traffic charges filed against the PSC.
 - c. arrest;
 - d. violation of the rules, regulations, policies, or procedures of the HCSO and/or the PSC organization; and/or
 - e. any other moral or ethical violation that would cause the Unit Mentor to recommend dismissal.

E. Duties

1. Duties of PSCs and mentors include:
 - a. compliance with all laws, ordinances, statutes and regulations of the State of Maryland and the United States of America;
 - b. compliance with all rules, regulations, policies and procedures of the HCSO and the PSC organization;
 - c. regular attendance at meetings, events and functions of the PSC Unit;
 - d. performance of all assigned activities and operations in compliance with instructions, training and applicable regulations; and
 - e. representation of the HCSO and the PSC organization in a professional manner.
2. The Unit Mentor will be assigned by the Community Services Division Commander. They will be the primary supervisor and liaison between the PSC Unit and the Office. Duties of the Unit Mentor include:
 - a. supervision of the PSCs;
 - b. monitor and assess the mentors and their interactions with the PSCs;
 - c. development and updating of the Unit Manual and Agency policy;
 - d. maintaining and updating the PSC Unit schedule;
 - e. liaison with civilians / community groups in need of PSC assistance;
 - f. Unit representative with the Potomac Boundaries Advisors Association (PBAA); and
 - g. coordinator for the Agency representation at the National Conference.

3. Coordination of all aspects of Unit activities will be the responsibility of all mentors, but will be coordinated through the Unit Mentor, to include:
 - a. meetings;
 - b. field trips;
 - c. activities;
 - d. details;
 - e. personnel issues;
 - f. selection, retention, and removal of PSCs; and
 - g. supervision of PSCs at community events.
4. All mentors will assist with the preparation of an annual review and evaluation of the Unit.
 - a. The report will be submitted, via memorandum, to the Sheriff through the chain of command, no later than January 31st of each year.
 - b. This date may be revised with the approval of the Sheriff.

F. Training

1. PSCs may participate in training on topics related to their duties and other topics of interest. Training topics may include, but are not limited to:
 - a. law enforcement operations;
 - b. the criminal justice system;
 - c. correctional operations;
 - d. crime scene activities;
 - e. traffic enforcement and traffic direction;
 - f. crash investigations;
 - g. communications;
 - h. community policing;
 - i. youth protection training; and
 - j. first aid, CPR, body substance isolation, to include blood borne pathogens.

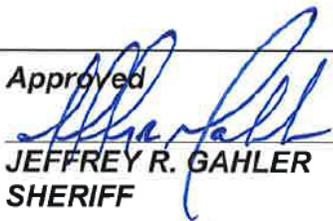
2. Unit Mentors and Agency personnel prior to beginning curriculum-based programs, meeting with and/or being assigned a PSC ride-along must take a Youth Protection Training Program, www.publicsafetycadets.org. (Note: Youth Protection re-training must be completed every two years)
3. Ride-Alongs can be used as a training opportunity for the PSCs. Any Ride-Along conducted by a PSC will follow the Agency Ride-Along Policy.

F. Donations/Fundraiser

1. All donations and fund-raising efforts will be conducted under the auspices and in accordance with the procedures of the PSC organization.
2. Donations and fund raising will be accepted in the name of the PSC Program for the specific use of the PSC Unit.
3. The Unit Mentor is responsible for all donations, funds and fund-raising activities, and is answerable to the PSC organization for these activities.
4. All donations received by or for the PSC Unit are not considered as HCSO funds, and will therefore be controlled separately from Agency funds.

5. Summary of Changes

- A. On July 31, 2025, this policy was revised to replace the reference to the "Explorer Program" with the "Public Safety Cadet (PSC) Program" throughout the document.
- B. On January 13, 2026, the Agency 3-Year review was conducted, and no changes were made to this policy.

Approved

JEFFREY R. GAHLER
SHERIFF
DATE 8/13/25