POLICE TRAINING AND STANDARDS COMMISSION MODEL POLICY

Positive Community Feedback

Senate Bill 7, Chapter 549, 2024 Legislative Session
Article – General Provisions, §4-311(c); §4-351(a)
Article – Public Safety, §3-207(m); §3-519.1

Adopted by the Police Training and Standards Commission, 10/2/24

I. PURPOSE

The law enforcement profession is a continually changing field that challenges police officers on a daily basis. Often, police officers face scrutiny of their interactions with the public. While police officers understand the importance of public oversight and accountability, the pressure can be difficult to manage. It is equally important for agencies to acknowledge, record, and recognize officers for their good work and community engagement that helps to improve job satisfaction and the morale of police officers. Gathering positive community feedback and creating a mechanism for direct community dialogue promotes and strengthens mutual trust and respect between police and the community.

II. POLICY

It is the policy of _____ AGENCY NAME _____ to provide a means to efficiently receive and document all positive community feedback concerning the department and its employees.

III. PROCEDURES

A. Individual employees and/or specialized units that are the subject of a compliment will be notified of the positive community feedback.
   1) If the compliment was received in writing (letter or electronic submission), the employee will be provided with a copy of the compliment.
   2) If the compliment was received telephonically, the compliment will be summarized in writing by a supervisor and a copy provided to the employee.
   3) Original copies of all written compliments and summations of compliments will be provided to the employee's supervisor and included in the employee's personnel file.

B. It is the responsibility of command officers and human resource managers to ensure compliments are properly documented, disseminated, and maintained, in accordance with the agency's retention policy.

C. All positive community feedback may be included in the respective officer's performance evaluation.

D. A law enforcement agency shall ensure that every formal compliment received shall be acknowledged by the agency in writing, with a copy to the involved employee(s).

E. General complimentary comments received that do not specifically identify an employee or unit shall be acknowledged by the agency.

IV. <u>**Website**</u>
   A. A law enforcement agency shall post their Positive Community Feedback policy on the agency website, if the agency maintains a website.
   B. An agency may establish an on-line process for submitting a compliment or providing positive community feedback.
   C. Information provided through a website portal shall be routed through a designated individual or unit that will collect the information and disseminate it to the appropriate supervisor of the officer receiving the compliment.
   D. All information received will be recorded and tracked to ensure the supervisor and recipient of the compliment are notified and a response is provided to the citizen.
   E. Law enforcement agencies should consider publishing positive community feedback on their respective website and/or agency social media site.

V. <u>**Consolidating Complaint and Compliment Process On-Line**</u>
   A. Agencies may consolidate the compliment and complaint process on their website.
   B. Consolidating processes on-line allows citizens easy access to the law enforcement agency and encourages an open dialogue with community members.

VI. <u>**Legal Considerations**</u>
   A. Pursuant to Public Safety Article §3-519.1(C), notwithstanding any other provision of law, records maintained under subsections (B) of this section are subject to public inspection in accordance with the Maryland Public Information Act.
   B. Pursuant to General Provisions Article, §4-311(C), a record of positive community feedback that was not solicited by the police officer who is the subject of the feedback, is not considered a personnel record for purposes of this section.