

COMMUNITY PATROLS

A community patrol is a volunteer based group within a specific neighborhood with a goal to deter crime by being actively present and visible as witnesses to suspicious or potential criminal behavior. Community patrols do not work for the police and in no way should the volunteers be given the perception that they are our agents.

There are several active community patrols within Anchorage and they meet on the first Friday of every month. Communities who are thinking of starting a patrol are encouraged to attend this meeting to inquire how those community patrols operate.

Things to consider when starting up a patrol:

1. Attend a community council meeting in your area and inquire about starting up a patrol.
2. Create a committee that will be in charge of selecting the volunteers who apply and clearly define your mission and that of your patrol members.
3. Set clear guidelines and expectations for your patrol members
4. Obtain background checks for ALL potential members through DPS.
 - A free and basic background check can be done by checking court view. Court view will only show history a person has been convicted of. It will not show what the original charge was.
 - To obtain a formal background checks contact the AK Troopers.
<http://www.dps.state.ak.us/statewide/background/>
 - The cost is \$25.00 for a basic back ground check.
 - Consider not allowing a person to be part of the patrol who has any history of Domestic Violence or have had Protective Orders placed against them at any point. Other disqualifiers should be people who have any history of what could be considered a violent person crime such as assault.
5. Determine number of dedicated hours you intend to serve per month.
6. Require members to be satisfactorily equipped with cells phones, flash lights etc.
7. Ensure all patrol members are clearly identifiable. Consider safety vests, magnetic markers for vehicles or even business cards.
8. Once a group is formed encourage them to act as great witnesses, but refrain from becoming involved in dangerous situations. Advise them to report from a distance or safe location. Continually remind them that they do not replace law enforcement.
9. Come up with a schedule that best meets the volunteer's needs as well as times within the neighborhood that people would like the extra surveillance.
10. Become proficient in using the Anchorage crime map program online.
11. Have a NextDoor account to keep your community informed of suspicious activity.
12. Keep a log that can be passed around to the different volunteers.

Lastly, discourage confrontation and encourage people getting to safety if a situation turns dangerous.

Because community patrols are volunteer based money can often be a factor that causes patrols to become inactive. Consider funding through grants or through Anchorage Coalition of Community Patrol. You may also want to come up with a fund raiser that raises money for equipment and fuel cards. Consider teaming up with the other community patrols and community councils to start a fund raiser or to get donations.

When to call the police:

Call 911 when a crime is actively occurring and know your location prior to calling, either from an intersection or an actual address.

Call the non emergency 786-8900 when a crime occurred but the suspect is no longer on scene.

Make a report on online, crimes with no suspect information such as;

Theft, Identity Theft, Fraud, Harassing phone calls or vandalism. If you are unsure when to call or go on line, start by filling out an online police report and if the police need to respond the program will advise you.

<http://www.muni.org/Departments/police/forms/Pages/OnlineReportingSystem.aspx>

To report suspicious activity or suspicious vehicles:

Call Crime Stoppers at 561-STOP (7867)

or

Go on line;

<https://www.tipsubmit.com/WebTips.aspx?AgencyID=124>

Here are additional resources:

- * Citizen's Academy - Apply on line muni.org/APD. Graduates of the APD Citizen's Academy Alumni Association, potential life long connection
- * Pathway to Policing Youth Academy (Jr & Srs).
- * Ride Along program (18 and older) pass background check
- * Join Nixle by texting your zip code to 888-777 or join on Nixle.com
- * ASK APD- The AskAPD e-mail forum is designed to answer questions from the community and others that are not addressed in the many other links on this web site. Please look first for a specific topic among those links before using this forum as it is not monitored on a regular or full time basis. *If you have a crisis or an emergency, do not use this email address to contact APD. Call 911 if you have an emergency or 786-8900 for a non-emergency police response.*
- * Neighborhood watch- Neighbors watching out for neighbors property
- * APD Facebook page
- * Coffee with a Cop. Happens once a month at a different location. Check the APDEA facebook page for updates.
- * National Night Out, 1st Tuesday in August