



Wichita Police Department Standard Operating Procedure

Approved by:

H.O.T. - Homeless Outreach Team

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Maintained by: Field Service
Bureau Commanders

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STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURES



HOMELESS OUTREACH TEAM – H.O.T.

Homeless Outreach Team (H.O.T.)

Homeless Outreach Team (H.O.T.) members are commissioned Wichita Police Officers who are assigned to Patrol South Community Policing as a patrol unit. The purpose of the team is to address homeless issues for both patrol and the community, thereby improving the quality of life of the citizens of Wichita. Dealing with the homeless population poses unique challenges. A nontraditional policing approach incorporates flexibility, creativity, and partnerships in the homeless intervention process. The Wichita Police Department recognizes that homelessness is not a crime.

Work Parameters

1. There will be a minimum of two (2) and a maximum of four (4) officers assigned to H.O.T.
2. The H.O.T. unit reports to the Patrol South Community Policing Sergeant and will work out of the Patrol South Community Policing office or designated office. Although H.O.T will work out of Patrol South, H.O.T. is considered a citywide unit.
3. The H.O.T. unit will work 4-10 hour shifts. They will be assigned to 2nd shift with F-S-S and S-S-M off. H.O.T. will work a flexible work schedule to meet the demands of the community and will try to work similar hours to that of the homeless providers. All H.O.T. members will be paid shift differential and be allowed to split their work shift according to the current F.O.P contract.
4. H.O.T. officers will be allowed to drive home police vehicles as available and at the approval of the Bureau Commander to assist them in their demanding and flexible work schedule. Vehicles will be assigned by time and grade in the unit similar to community policing. The purpose of the take home vehicle is address homeless related concerns such as camping complaints, meetings or public events involving homeless related issues.

Responsibilities of the Homeless Outreach Team

1. The team's outreach efforts will connect homeless people with available services, encourage self-help, offer potential quality of life enhancements, and serve as an alternative to jail. Team members must make reasonable attempts to assure the safety of each homeless individual so that he/she gets appropriate shelter and care.
2. Serve as the primary dispatched unit to homeless related calls for service such as panhandling, camping complaints, and other vagrancy type calls.
3. The Homeless Outreach Team will be encouraged to meet once a week to discuss intelligence, review goals, and disseminate information to the field if need be.
4. Create and update the Homeless Outreach Team intel hub.
5. Update and provide statistical data to the H.O.T. supervisor/coordinator on the accomplishments and reached goals of the team.
6. Attend homeless meetings within the community.
7. If requested, provide safety presentations to community groups or businesses that wish to understand how to deal with the homeless population.
8. Enforce and respond to anti-camping calls for service.
9. Document homeless outreach service calls on an approved WPD Homeless Outreach Team Form (#32-072).
10. Maintain statistical data and contact information on the approved H.O.T. ODAR.
11. Organize neighborhood cleanups that are related to homeless camping grounds.
12. Attend training in regards to homeless issues when feasible to do so.
13. Answer and respond to calls on the H.O.T. phone system, which will be provided by WPD. If feasible to do so, H.O.T. may respond to phone calls after hours. If the phones are answered afterhours, this will be compensated by comp-time.

Quality Assurance

1. Statistical data and team goals will be regularly reviewed by the H.O.T. coordinator.
2. The Homeless Outreach Team and coordinator will meet on a weekly basis to discuss intelligence, review goals, and disseminate information.
3. The concept and role of the Homeless Outreach Team may be reviewed annually. This review will involve all command level supervisors with personnel assigned to this effort. During this review period, the above evaluation measures will be examined and any issues can be identified (i.e. – communications, statistical data, overtime, etc).

H.O.T. Officer Selection Criteria

1. When a H.O.T. Officer position comes open, a process will be held for H.O.T. Officer positions. This process will consist of:
 - A. Notification via Interwatch
 - B. Interested officers will submit a written request for a H.O.T. Officer assignment to the Field Service Division Chief stating:
 - Tenure on the department
 - Education
 - Relevant training or experience in fields related to the responsibilities of this unique position.
2. The Field Services Standardized Matrix will be utilized for selection of H.O.T. Officers.
3. Officers on a “D” penalty reckoning period will not be eligible for a H.O.T. officer assignment until they are off the reckoning period.
4. The ideal H.O.T. Officer candidate is flexible and innovative. He or she possesses excellent communication and organization skills. The H.O.T. Officer must be self-managed and motivated. The H.O.T. Officer must be willing to adapt to an ever-changing work environment often with little guidance when addressing public safety issues. An ideal H.O.T. Officer will be CIT certified. The H.O.T. Officer will have knowledge and experience in working with homeless and also possess training in working with the homeless population.