



## **Guidelines for Village Policing**

### **Yellow Springs, Ohio**

*The Village of Yellow Springs has a progressive police department that helps to ensure a safe and welcoming environment for those who live, work and visit. The department earns trust through consistent, meaningful engagement with our community, and Yellow Springs Peace Officers strive for nonviolent conflict resolution whenever possible. The Village intends inclusion and compassion in all of the department's workings, recognizing and addressing systemic issues of injustice and implicit bias that lead to inequities. This is accomplished through adherence to the principles listed below.*

#### **Safety-Centered**

Safety is the primary need identified by Yellow Springs community members with regard to police services. Most community members feel that Yellow Springs is a safe community, which is facilitated by cooperation among residents, officers and other community members. The Yellow Springs Police Department (YSPD) supports safety in our Village by being proactive and ensuring that . as much as possible . unsafe situations do not occur. For example, a police vehicle stationed on Xenia Avenue can remind motorists to obey the speed limit, as opposed to setting up a speed trap situation. Friendly police presence around town can also aid in effective police-community relations, so it is important that officers are known and respected by community members.

Other ways that the YSPD meets our needs for safety include helping elderly or disabled individuals, responding quickly to medical emergencies and traffic accidents, and defusing potentially violent situations. The community expects the YSPD to deal effectively with criminal activity and to serve the victims of crime with respect and professionalism . using best practices, data and research to guide the work. Yet, because the rate of actual crime in Yellow Springs is low, it is the more everyday activities that impact how the community experiences and responds to the police.

#### **Resolution-Oriented**

Our officers will not seek or initiate conflict, but when our police officers must interrupt unlawful behavior, the community expects that they will act with compassion, flexibility and reasonableness, treating everyone fairly and consistently. Yellow Springs Peace Officers use nonviolent conflict resolution in every way that they can to ensure the safety of the public as well as their own safety. The YSPD seeks to limit the use of weapons and reduce the use of force whenever possible.

Enforcing the law in the case of a minor offense does not warrant risking the safety of the citizen or officer involved. Furthermore, we acknowledge that our department is part of a larger criminal



justice system that is often heavy on law and order. Our goal is that the processes and practices of policing in Yellow Springs be perceived as fair, even by someone who has been arrested, because we know this helps create a community that is safe for our officers and for the public.

### **Demonstrably Inclusive**

Mutual respect is critical to engender a sense of safety for all residents and visitors of Yellow Springs. This underscores the importance of appreciating the diversity of the individuals who live and interact in our Village. The community expects our officers to protect human rights and civil liberties, proactively working to be fair and impartial . particularly in light of the history of institutional prejudice and discrimination in our country based on race, gender identity, religion, sexual orientation, class, ability, age, heritage and nationality. Our officers must be trained to understand and act with compassion when interacting with individuals managing mental health issues.

The Village of Yellow Springs aims to be not simply tolerant but proactively inclusive and anti-racist. The Village of Yellow Springs and our police department commit to identifying, challenging and changing the values, structures and behaviors that perpetuate systemic racism. The Village prioritizes equitable practices of hiring and continuing education. And, our officers are expected to engage with all community stakeholders including youth and parents, community of color churches and civic groups, all faith based communities, business owners and entrepreneurs, local education, and nonprofit leaders, and service workers and artists as well as with groups promoting social justice, equity and human rights to establish relationships, exchange ideas, initiate projects and create learning opportunities. For these collaborative relationships to be successful, the YSPD needs to attract and retain a diverse work force who are open to and excited about meaningfully engaging with our community.

### **Locally-Minded**

The Village of Yellow Springs actively promotes long-term investment and participation in our community by our police officers. Exposure to local culture and events is critical, as developing relationships among community members and officers encourages dedication to and longevity with the Village. It is important that YSPD team members are an active part of our community and feel connected, and the Village needs to facilitate this.

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Yellow Springs Village Council and the Village Manager in collaboration with the Chief of Police will use these Guidelines for Village Policing to inform policy, hiring, training, evaluation and leadership decisions that are aligned with community values and support best practices in the Yellow Springs Police Department. The Department should look for opportunities for innovation to enact these Guidelines, and Village leaders should consistently seek community support for and trust in YSPD officers through communication and community engagement.