

Peoria Police Department Policy and Procedure Manual

Policy 4.25 Neighborhood Mediation Program



**“Our Community...
Our Commitment”**

I. POLICY

The Police Department is committed to involving citizens in solving community problems. The Department will establish, staff, and maintain a volunteer Neighborhood Mediation Program to address neighborhood conflicts. By referring parties to Neighborhood Mediation, employees can reduce the time spent on such calls, and can reduce the number of lower priority cases entering the court system. (45.2.1.h)

II. PROCEDURE

A. General Provisions

1. The purpose of this program is to serve as a resource to Department employees in situations where there is no suitable legal remedy, yet an ongoing conflict exists and police involvement is desired by one or more of the involved parties.

2. The program shall be the responsibility of and coordinated by the Department's Community Services Section Supervisor.

B. Procedure

1. The Neighborhood Mediation Program will be accessible to citizens only through a referral from an employee of the Peoria Police Department or the Peoria Municipal Court. Referrals shall be made in the following manner:

a. On calls where an employee determines that no formal or appropriate legal remedy exists or is prudent, the employee may refer the matter to Neighborhood Mediation.

b. The nature and severity of the initial dispute is not of primary importance; often in Neighborhood Mediation, a larger conflict is exposed and resolved.

c. The employee shall inform the parties that a referral is being made to Neighborhood Mediation, and determine that all involved parties are willing to participate.

d. The employee shall complete an incident report, to include a brief description of the dispute, the parties' information (name, address, phone), and whether or not both parties indicated a willingness to participate in Neighborhood Mediation. The incident report shall indicate a disposition of Neighborhood Mediation.

e. A copy of the incident report shall be forwarded to the Community Services Section Supervisor, who will contact the involved parties to schedule a Neighborhood Mediation session.

2. A Neighborhood Mediation session shall be scheduled if the following criteria are met:

a. All involved parties are willing and available to participate.

b. The dispute does not involve an active or pending civil or criminal case.

3. The nature of the mediation process requires that:

a. The process is removed from the criminal justice system.

b. Participation is voluntary.

c. All parties follow confidentiality guidelines. Everything that takes place during a mediation session shall remain confidential, with three notable exceptions:

(1) If abuse of a child is discovered.

(2) If abuse of an elder or vulnerable adult is discovered.

(3) If the threat of or actual violence is observed. (The appropriate authorities will be contacted as needed.)

4. Neighborhood Mediation sessions shall be conducted by at least two Department approved mediators.

a. Mediators shall complete the Department approved training course prior to participating in the Neighborhood Mediation Program.

b. Mediators are Department volunteers, and have undergone a background investigation.

c. For the purpose of safety and security, mediation sessions shall be conducted in the Peoria Municipal court building or the Police building, only after all participants have passed through the court's security check point.

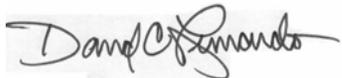
5. Mediators do not render a decision or impose a resolution to the conflict. A successful Neighborhood Mediation session results in the generation of a binding agreement between the parties:

a. Each party shall receive a copy of the agreement.

b. While the police cannot enforce such a document, courts do recognize these agreements when and if disputes continue and result in litigation.

c. Upon successful completion of the mediation session, the Community Services Section Supervisor will retain a copy of the Agreement to Participate in Mediation and the Mediation Settlement Agreement.

Peoria Police Department
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