

# FLORIDA HIGHWAY PATROL POLICY MANUAL

	<b>SUBJECT</b> COMMUNITY SERVICE OFFICERS  TROOP C and D ONLY	<b>POLICY NUMBER</b> 28.01
	APPLICABLE CALEA STANDARDS	<b>ISSUE DATE</b> 01/01/99
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## 28.01.01 PURPOSE

To provide guidelines for Florida Highway Patrol Community Service Officers.

## 28.01.03 POLICY

The use of trained, responsible non-sworn personnel to respond to and handle many non-emergency, non-life threatening calls for service enables sworn members to dedicate a greater amount of time to proactive enforcement and in-depth investigation of traffic related offenses. Community Service Officers (CSO's), as authorized in Chapter 316, F.S., provide the Florida Highway Patrol with just such an opportunity.

## 28.01.04 RESPONSIBILITIES

- A. Community Service Officers are responsible for:
  1. Investigating traffic crashes which do not involve a reported disturbance or the possibility of criminal charges.
  2. Assisting disabled motorists and removing abandoned vehicles which obstruct roadways.
  3. Providing traffic direction and control at traffic crash scenes, road closures, inoperative or damaged traffic control devices, and other situations which necessitate manual traffic direction.
  4. Patrolling assigned areas.
  5. Reporting the location and nature of crimes in progress to the local communications centers without becoming personally involved.
  6. Acting as scribes and/or runners at command posts established at major crime or disaster scenes.
  7. Presenting testimony regarding official duties.
  8. Any other duties as assigned by supervisors
- B. Squad Sergeants will be responsible for day-to-day supervision of Community Service Officers.

- C. A District Lieutenant will be assigned to coordinate the Community Service Officer program and will:
  - 1. Provide oversight to the Community Service Officer program.
  - 2. Compile all necessary reports generated by the Community Service Officer program.
- D. Classroom and field training curriculums will be developed by the FHP Training Academy.

#### **28.01.05 OBJECTIVES**

To provide a safe driving environment on Florida's highways through timely and effective traffic crash investigation and motorist assistance.

#### **28.01.06 DEFINITIONS**

**COMMUNITY SERVICES OFFICER (CSO)** - A non-sworn employee trained to conduct traffic crash investigation and having the statutory authority to issue citations for non-criminal traffic infractions.

#### **28.01.07 PROCEDURES**

##### **A. SELECTION**

- 1. The Division will establish uniform procedures for selecting individuals for employment as Community Service Officers.
- 2. Individuals selected for employment as Community Service Officers must meet the minimum qualifications listed in the Job Class Specifications, possess a valid Florida driver's license, and successfully complete all steps of the employment process.

##### **B. TRAINING**

- 1. Community Service Officers must successfully complete all phases of training.
- 2. Training of Community Service Officers will, at a minimum, meet the requirements established by Florida Statutes for civilian traffic crash investigation officers.
- 3. Community Service Officers will receive field training provided by a sworn field trainer.

##### **C. UNIFORMS AND PERSONAL APPEARANCE**

- 1. Public Service Aide will be issued uniforms that are clearly distinctive from those worn by sworn members. Community Service Officers will be issued:
  - a. Five shirts

- b. Five pair of trousers
  - c. One black belt
  - d. One black ball cap
  - e. One reflectorized traffic vest
  - f. One rain coat
  - g. One whistle
2. Footwear, undershirt, and socks will be consistent with the requirements for sworn members (FHP Policy 6.01.07D) and will be provided by the Community Service Officer.
  3. Community Service Officers will adhere to the same standards for personal appearance as sworn members (see FHP Policies 6.01 and 6.02).

#### D. VEHICLES AND EQUIPMENT

1. A pool of specially marked non-pursuit vehicles will be maintained at the district office for use by Community Service Officers. Community Service Officers will not be permitted to take the vehicles to their residences. Each vehicle will be equipped with the following:
  - a. Law enforcement radio.
  - b. Amber warning lights mounted on the roof.
  - c. Fire extinguisher.
  - d. First aid kit.
  - e. Infectious disease kit.
  - f. Disposable blankets.
  - g. Fusees.
  - h. Battery booster cables.
  - i. 4-way lug wrench.
  - j. Rechargeable flashlight
2. Personally owned equipment such as cellular telephones and citizen band radios may be utilized, but are not to be permanently installed. The use of magnetic antennas and cigarette lighter plugs is acceptable. All such personal equipment should be removed from the vehicle at the end of the Community Service Officers shift.

3. Provisions of FHP Policies 6.03 and 17.15, will apply to Community Service Officer Vehicles except when not applicable to non-law enforcement vehicles.
4. **Emergency operation of Community Service Officer Vehicles is prohibited.** Community Service Officers are not to utilize emergency lights or violate any traffic law. Community Service Officers may activate the emergency lights and operate on the shoulder or between traffic lanes when in close proximity to a traffic obstruction and such activation will facilitate their response.

E. USE OF CONTROL

1. Under no circumstances will Community Service Officers be allowed to use physical force in the performance of their duties, except as a last resort in self-defense.
2. Community Service Officers have no arrest authority; therefore, they will not attempt or make physical arrests. If a situation arises where a physical arrest is indicated, a sworn member will be requested to respond to the scene, and the appropriate supervisor notified.

F. SCHEDULING

1. The scheduling and assignment to patrol zones of Community Service Officers will be done in accordance with the provisions of FHP Policy 5.04.07B.
2. Non-sworn personnel provisions of FHP Policy 5.04, Duty/Leave will apply to Community Service Officers.

G. RESTRICTED AREAS

1. The district commander may designate specific areas as restricted to Community Service Officers.
2. A list of restricted areas will be provided to all district supervisors and communications personnel.
3. Community Service Officers will not be dispatched into a restricted area nor will they be assigned to patrol within a restricted area.

H. DISPATCH TO CALLS FOR SERVICE

1. Community Service Officers may be dispatched to any call for service within the scope of their responsibility and not otherwise restricted by this policy.
2. If, upon arrival, a Community Service Officer determines that a sworn member is necessary due to disputes or evidence of a crime, they will advise the communications center. The communications center will dispatch a sworn member to respond. Community Service Officers are not to use physical means to prevent a person from leaving.

3. If a Community Service Officers response will be delayed due to their unavailability or distance from the scene, a sworn member will be dispatched. No call for service falling within the scope of responsibility of Community Service Officers will be unnecessarily delayed in being dispatched when a sworn member is available to respond.

I. REPORTING

1. Traffic Crash, Offense/Incident and other reports will be completed in accordance with the Instruction for Completing the Uniform Traffic Crash Report Forms, the Criminal Information Systems Forms Manual, and FHP Policy
1. Community Service Officers will complete the Weekly Report of Daily Activity in accordance with FHP Policy 17.12.
2. The District Commander may require Community Service Officers to complete supplemental activity reports when necessary to obtain information specific to the Community Service Officer program.
3. Report submission schedules/deadlines may differ from sworn members and will be established by the District Commander.