

Corvallis Police Department - Oregon State University



Greek Liaison Program Manual

Mission Statement

*To enhance community livability and safety
by working in partnership with the OSU
Greek community*

History

Founded in 2001, this community-policing program was designed to reduce the impact of disturbances that had become commonplace. The problem was highlighted in several news articles from that time:

- Corvallis Police fines fraternity \$45,000
The Barometer, November 1998
- Flirting with disaster, fraternities at OSU continue to flout fire safety rules
The Gazette Times, May 21, 2000
- Greek life coordinator assaulted at fraternity party
The Barometer and Gazette Times, May 2000
- Fraternity party leads to riot investigation
The Gazette Times, February 13, 2001
- Oregon student dies at Shasta
The Barometer, June 2005
- Accidental death at fraternity
The Barometer and Gazette Times, March 2002
- Disturbance interrupts campout
The Barometer and Gazette Times, May 2002

The Greek Liaison Program was a key factor in improving livability for the Greek and Corvallis community. The relationship built between the Corvallis Police and the OSU Greek community was able to create a safer, more respectful, and fun social experience by focusing on education and prevention. The success of the relationships was measured in fewer calls for service for the Corvallis Police Department, and more responsible behavior of OSU students, resulting in fewer citations and arrests.

The success of the Greek Liaison Program was recognized with several awards. Representatives of the program were invited to present at a regional and national level. As the program continues to evolve and adapt, the Corvallis Police Department remains committed to the Greek Liaison Program as a mutually beneficial partnership.

Greek Liaison Officers

Greek Liaison Officers volunteer to participate in the program. There are no extra incentives; every officer understands the importance of the program and wants to see its continued success. Each officer is assigned a few housed chapters. These assignments are generally made geographically, so the same officer is responsible for a particular block, side of the street, etc. A roster with contact information is distributed every school term.

Liaison officers have many responsibilities and act as a resource to the chapters by:

- Meeting with Greek leaders and chapter members
- Attending and participating in chapter dinners
- Providing educational presentations
- Offering information about services, crime prevention and safety programs
- Following-up with chapter leadership after an incident
- Taking Greek leaders on ride-alongs
- Maintaining good relationships through frequent contact

Greek Liaison Officers will make an initial greeting, followed by a meeting with chapter leaders, and make themselves available to the entire chapter for questions and answers. Greek Liaison Officers will also encourage chapter leaders to go for a ride-along. A ride-along request form is available at the Corvallis Police Department website: CorvallisPolice.org. Encouraging chapter leaders to attend the Corvallis Police 101 community academy is also recommended.

Greek Liaison Program Coordinator

The program coordinator is an officer that does not have specific chapters assigned to them. This allows the program coordinator to help with any needs the Greek Liaison Officers may have, as well as act as another level of assistance for all Greek chapters. If a specific Greek Liaison Officer is unavailable, the program coordinator can help with any questions, concerns or suggestions. Current contact information for the coordinator is available on the roster distributed every term.

Myths and Misconceptions

There are a few common myths about the program. A few are discussed below with the facts to dispel those misconceptions.

Myth: “Our assigned Greek Liaison Officer is the officer that will be sent to our house if there is any sort of call for service.”

The officer that is dispatched to your house for a call for service depends on who is working that shift, who is assigned to that patrol area, and who is available to take the call. Dispatchers do not assign calls based on who is assigned to that chapter through the Greek Liaison Program. If you need an immediate response, do not try to contact your assigned liaison officer, because they may not be on-duty.

Myth: “If we participate in the Greek Liaison Program, we will get a ‘get out of jail free’ card.”

You have the same responsibilities and face the same consequences regardless of participation in the Greek Liaison Program. The goal for the program is to prevent needing a ‘get out of jail free’ card in the first place through education and prevention.

Myth: “If the cops get called to our party, all we have to do is turn off the lights and pretend like we’re not home, and they will go away.”

The officer may leave if the party has quieted down, but it is just as likely they will come back later to make contact or issue citations. Depending on the circumstances and impact to community livability that the party is having, it is also possible to apply for a search warrant to enter the residence.

Myth: “CPD is required to give a warning the first time they come to a party complaint.”

Officers have the discretion to cite or warn people regardless of whether it is the first noise complaint. A warning is often given if the officer believes it will address the problem, but there is no requirement to warn before citing/arresting.

Myth: “CPD has to wait until somebody complains before they can deal with our loud party.”

CPD believes in proactive problem solving rather than reactive policing. Officers prefer to address issues before they become problems, so if you have a party that is getting out of control, you may see an officer before your neighbors call.

Myth: “If I give the officer another name or age maybe I can get out of an MIP ticket. It’s worth a try, right?”

Minor in Possession of Alcohol is a violation, similar to a traffic ticket. Providing False Information to a Police Officer is a crime. Officers figure it out most of the time, so is it really worth a try?

Myth: “CPD has nothing better to do than pick on OSU students, and they target OSU Greeks in particular.”

No officer considers responding to loud parties the highlight of their day, and no officer feels issuing a citation for Unlawful Amplified Sound or MIP is a major accomplishment. All officers, however, are responsible for promoting community livability. Officers go where the problems are, regardless of the magnitude of the problem. It is a tremendous success that by having a proactive partnership through the Greek Liaison Program, officers don’t have to spend nearly as much time responding to unlawful activities with OSU students.

Party and noise related calls make up a very small portion of the 28,000 calls for service we receive every year. Less than five percent of calls are for noise or party related issues.

Crime Prevention

The Corvallis Police Department is responsible for ensuring the City of Corvallis is a safe and livable community. This traditionally involves responding to and investigating crimes in-progress, but crime prevention is a significant part of what we do. Here is information that may help reduce the impact of crime and improve your safety.

Theft

Please know that thefts from cars are a persistent, yet largely preventable problem. About 50 people every month in Corvallis report that their car was illegally—there are likely many more that are not reported. We work to stop the problem in a variety of ways, but unfortunately, one thief can target dozens of people in a single night. How do you keep from becoming a victim of a car prowler? Don't leave valuables in your car. *It's that simple.* Your car is not a safe place to leave your laptop, backpack, cell phone, or any other valuable. If a car prowler sees that there is absolutely nothing in your car, they will move on.

Burglary

Burglaries are slightly less common, but usually more impactful. An average of 20 burglaries occur every month in Corvallis. How do you keep from becoming the victim of a burglar? Keep your ground floor windows closed and doors locked—both to your house and to individual rooms. Don't share door codes with others. Know who is in your house for social functions, and find a way to keep people out of 'off limits' areas.

Sometimes, the way a building or house is designed can either discourage, or even invite, criminal behavior. The Corvallis Police Department has police officers that are certified to assess design aspects of buildings, and make recommendations to lower the risk of crime. The concept is called Crime Prevention through Environmental Design (CPTED), and the service is free to the community. Learn more at CorvallisPolice.org.

Personal Safety

As upsetting as car prowls and burglaries are, broken windows and stolen property can be replaced. Your personal safety, however, is something that should be taken even more seriously.

Remember all those safety tips you were taught growing up? Just because you're an adult, doesn't mean they no longer apply:

- Walk with a friend
- Use well-traveled, well-lit routes
- Be aware of your surroundings—phone down, eyes up
- If your gut tells you something's not right, it's probably not right

Please know alcohol can have a serious impact on your personal safety. There are the dangers that come with overconsumption of alcohol, but there are some other side effects associated with the impaired judgment of intoxication:

- Less aware of surroundings
- Susceptible to suggestions you would not normally follow
- More boisterous and aggressive behavior
- Lowered inhibition

Alcohol consumption can also be an issue even if you're sober—other people can become more violent or unpredictable when they drink. Keep in mind it is difficult to reason with a drunk person, and if they are being aggressive, the best solution may be to simply walk away.

Corvallis Municipal Code

The following pages contain selections from Corvallis Municipal Code. Each topic has a brief synopsis followed by sections of the actual ordinance. If you have questions about City Ordinances, they are available on the City's website or contact your Greek Liaison Officer.

Loud Noise: Any unreasonable noise. What is reasonable can depend on the time of day and the type of the noise. Most often, unreasonable noise is related to loud voices, yelling, etc.

5.03.030.010 Loud Noises Prohibited

No person shall make, assist in making, continue, or cause to be made any unreasonably loud, disturbing, or unnecessary noise.

Amplified Sound: This is usually loud music. It is illegal if sound from a speaker or instrument can be heard more than 50 feet away *at any time*, or within another house or apartment between 10:00pm and 7:00am regardless of the distance from the source.

5.03.030.020 Specific Prohibited Noises

- 1) Playing, using, or operating any radio, musical instrument, phonograph, television set, tape recorder, loud speaker, or other machine or device for the producing, reproducing, or amplification of sound in such a manner as to be plainly audible:
 - a. within any dwelling unit which is not the source of the sound, between the hours of 10:00 p.m. and 7:00 a.m.; or
 - b. at a distance of 50 feet from the source of the sound.
- 2) As used in this Section, "plainly audible" means any sound for which the information content of that sound is unambiguously communicated to the listener, such as, but not limited to, understandable spoken speech, comprehension of whether a voice is raised or normal, or comprehensible musical rhythm or vocal sounds.
- 3) This section does not prohibit the reasonable use of mechanical loud speakers or sound amplifiers in the course of public events

for which a permit has been issued in accordance with Section 5.03.030.030.

MIP – Alcohol: If you are under 21 years of age, you can be cited for MIP Alcohol whether you are holding alcohol or it is actually in your system. You can also be cited just for trying to get into a bar underage.

5.03.040.010.03 Purchase or possession of alcoholic liquor by minors

- 1) The City of Corvallis adopts ORS 471.430 in its entirety.
 - 2) No person under the age of 21 years shall attempt to purchase, purchase or acquire alcoholic liquor. Except when such minor is in a private residence accompanied by the parent or guardian of the minor and with such parent's or guardian's consent, no person under the age of 21 years shall have personal possession of alcoholic liquor.
 - 3) For purposes of this section, personal possession of alcoholic liquor includes the acceptance or consumption of a bottle of such liquor, or any portion thereof or a drink of such liquor. However, this section does not prohibit the acceptance or consumption by any person of sacramental wine as part of a religious rite or service.
 - 4) Except as authorized by rule or as necessitated in an emergency, no person under the age of 21 years shall enter or attempt to enter any portion of a licensed premises that is posted or otherwise identified as being prohibited to the use of minors.
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Furnishing Alcohol to Minors: In addition to physically giving alcohol to a minor, this law includes making it available to minors (leaving it in the fridge where they can help themselves).

5.03.040.010.02 Providing alcoholic liquor to certain persons prohibited.

No one other than the person's parent or guardian shall sell, give, or otherwise make available any alcoholic liquor to a person under the age of 21 years. A person who sells, gives, or otherwise makes

available alcoholic liquor to a person with the knowledge that the person will violate this subsection.

Open Container of Alcohol in Public: You may not have alcohol in a cup or an opened can/bottle while on any sidewalk, street, parking lot or other area open to the public. There is no exception for “game days”.

5.03.040.010.06 Consumption of alcoholic liquor, possession of open container of alcoholic liquor in public places prohibited

Except as otherwise allowed by law, no person shall drink or consume any alcoholic liquor, or possess any open container of alcoholic liquor while in or upon any street, alley, public grounds, building, or place open and available to the general public, or while in a motor vehicle on premises open to the public.

Use of Marijuana in Public Place: Marijuana in any form may not be used in public.

5.03.040.020.04 Use of marijuana in public places prohibited

It is unlawful for any person to engage in the use of marijuana items in a public place.

Littering: Throwing your trash on the ground, or your open container of alcohol in the bushes is a crime.

5.03.110.10 Littering

No person shall intentionally discard, deposit, throw, or sweep any rubbish, trash, garbage, debris, decayed or decaying substances, or other refuse, including, but not limited to, leaves, broken glass, bottles, soil, and/or nails, upon the land of another without permission of the owner, or upon any public way or in or upon any other property owned, leased, or controlled by the City.

Interfering with Police: Running from a police officer telling you to “stop” is a crime. Refusing to stop can get you arrested.

5.03.080.100.03 Interfering with officer

- 1) No person knowing that another person is a police officer shall intentionally act in a manner that prevents, or attempts to prevent, a police officer from performing the lawful duties of the police officer with regards to another person; or
 - 2) Refuse to obey a lawful order by the police officer.
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Special Response Fee Notice (SRN): A SRN is a notice from the City of Corvallis that you are engaged in unlawful activity, and that if the Police Department has to return for any similar activity within 30 days, the City will recover the cost of the responses from you. In other words, you will have to pay the salary and equipment costs for all the dispatchers, police officers or firefighters that were involved. A new 30-day period begins with every response.

5.03.150 Special response fee

5.03.150.010 Notice provisions

- 1) When a police officer determines that one or more persons are engaged in an activity or conduct which violates the provisions of the Corvallis Criminal Code [Municipal Code Chapter 5.03] or the Criminal Code of Oregon, the police shall give written notice to one or more of the persons who are engaged in, or who are in control of, such activity or conduct that the activity or conduct must immediately cease.
 - 2) Notice recipients shall be liable for special response fees if a subsequent police response arising out of the activity or conduct is required within thirty (30) days following such notice. A special response fee will be charged to each person identified in subsection 5.03.150.020 of this Section. Separate fees shall be charged for the original and each subsequent police response. The special response fee is defined as the total cost incurred by the City in connection with such response, including but not limited to, police officers, equipment, dispatch and supervisor time.
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Chronic Nuisances Property (CNP), Section 5.07.020: The purpose of this law is to address locations that frequently cause livability issues for others by providing progressive civil penalties against the property. The process is triggered when a property has three valid complaints within 30 days or five valid complaints within 90 days, and one of the complaints included a citation or arrest.

Step One: Once the process is triggered, the Police Department sends a letter to the property owner advising them that their property was identified as a nuisance property. The property owner has 15 days to respond to offer a solution. The process ends if the problem is resolved.

Step Two: If the problem continues or the property owner does not respond, the matter will be referred to a Hearings Officer. If the problem is resolved, the process ends.

Step Three: If the problem has not been resolved in 30 days and it goes before a Hearings Officer, the Hearings Officer may decide the property is a Chronic Nuisance Property, and can order the property be cleared of all occupants for up to six months and order civil penalties up to \$250 per day.

You can view the full text of any Corvallis ordinance at CorvallisOregon.gov.