

# SPECIAL ORDER



## DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

<b>Subject</b> <b>Special Liaison Division</b>
<b>Number</b> <b>SO- 11- 15</b>
<b>Effective Date</b> <b>July 13, 2011</b>
<b>Rescinds:</b> SO-11-12 (Special Liaison Division), Effective Date June 30, 2011
<b>Related to:</b> GO-OPS-304.14 (Deaf or Hearing Impaired Arrestees) GO-PCA-501.02 (Handling Interactions with Transgender Individuals) SO-01-16 (Bias-Related/Hate Crimes)

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## I. BACKGROUND

The Metropolitan Police Department (MPD) is committed to providing every citizen with exemplary police service and to assisting citizens who have difficulty communicating with or reporting criminal violations of the law. In many cases, police officers are the first to encounter citizens that are unable to communicate effectively due to a limited English proficiency and/or are in need special resources to enhance their ability to communicate. The MPD strives to provide every citizen with a means of communication (e.g., a translator, a mechanical device, access to the Language Line).

The purpose of this Special Order is to establish the rules and procedures relative to the Special Liaison Division (SLD). The SLD consists of the Asian Liaison Unit; the Latino Liaison Unit; the Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, Transgender Liaison Unit; the Deaf and Hard of Hearing Unit; the Hate Crime Unit and the Language Access Program. The SLD also has affiliate members assigned to various elements within the MPD. SLD units report to the Director, Special Liaison Division. These liaison units are available twenty-four (24) hours a day to assist members in need of the communication skills of the various liaison units. They also address the needs of

the community by building trust and respectful partnerships.

## **II. DEFINITIONS**

When used in this directive the following terms shall have the meanings designated:

1. Affiliate SLD Member – MPD member who has successfully completed the forty (40) hours of Special Liaison training and assigned to various elements in the MPD. Not officially assigned to the SLD, these members perform SLD functions as situations arise.
2. Bias-related Crime – Designated act that demonstrates an accused's prejudice based on the actual or perceived race, color, religion, national origin, sex, age, marital status, personal appearance, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, family responsibility, homelessness, physical disability, matriculation, or political affiliation of a victim of the subject designated act. (D.C. Official Code § 22-3701)
3. Deaf Person – Person who has a hearing impairment which is so severe that the person is unable to process linguistic information through hearing, with or without amplification.
4. Gender Identity or Expression – Gender-related identity, appearance, expression, or behavior of an individual, regardless of the individual's assigned sex at birth. (DC Official Code § 2-1401.02 and DCMR § 4-899)
5. Hearing Impaired Person – Person who, because of a hearing impairment, cannot readily understand oral communications or who cannot communicate effectively through speech.
6. Home Visit – Scheduled or unscheduled visit to the residence of an individual(s) by a Special Liaison Unit member(s) designed to initiate or enhance community outreach.
7. Language Line – Private telephonic oral interpretation service that can be obtained through Language Line, Inc., Instructions for accessing the Language Line through a land line or wireless telephone are provided in GO-SPT-304.18 (Language Access Program).
8. Outreach Campaign – Session that focuses on many interrelated issues within the community that requires the assistance of various government agencies, nonprofits, and community based organizations to eradicate a large problem. Examples of these issues include, but

are not limited to, robberies, burglaries, thefts, gangs, assaults, youth violence.

9. Outreach Event – Event that is organized either by the Metropolitan Police Department and or community group(s) focusing on public education and situational awareness. This form of outreach can occur during a carnival, block party, or public assembly.
10. Outreach Session – Session that focuses on the social issues that may contribute to the victimization of the community. This form of outreach is conducted on a small scale normally focusing on grassroots methods of educating the community at large.
11. Qualified Sign Language Interpreter – Interpreter who has been certified by the National Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf, and is able to interpret effectively, accurately and impartially both receptively and expressively, using any necessary specialized vocabulary.
12. Transgender – Adjective that refers to any individual whose identity or behavior differs from stereotypical or traditional gender expectations, including transsexual individuals, cross-dressers, androgynous individuals, and others whose appearance or characteristics are perceived to be gender-atypical. (DCMR § 4-899)
13. Transsexual – A person whose personal sense of his or her gender conflicts with their anatomical sex. Some, but not all, transsexuals undergo medical treatments (such as hormone therapy or surgery), to change their physical sex so that it is in harmony with their gender identity.

### **III. REQUESTING THE SERVICES OF THE SPECIAL LIAISON DIVISION**

Members in need of the services of a Special Liaison Unit shall:

- A. Voice the request over the radio; or

NOTE: Special Liaison Units monitor the radio channel of the patrol district in which they are physically located and will go in service with the respective dispatcher.

- B. Notify the Command Information Center (CIC) and request a Special Liaison Unit.

NOTE: The CIC maintains list of contact numbers for the Special Liaison Units.

**IV. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

**A. Special Liaison Division Members**

1. All sworn members assigned to the Special Liaison Division are **patrol members** and shall be held accountable for conducting community meetings, outreach, and patrol duties in areas where their target citizen base is known to frequent.
2. Upon coming into service with the dispatcher, sworn members shall advise the dispatcher that they are members of a Special Liaison Unit.
3. Members shall provide training and education to members of the MPD on issues affecting the community by attending roll calls, staff meetings and PSA team meetings.
4. Sworn members shall walk at least four (4) hours per day within their assigned area(s) of responsibility.
5. Sworn members shall be acquainted with business owners within their assigned area(s) of responsibility.
6. Members shall engage the community in dialogue that furthers the operational mission of the Special Liaison Division.
7. Sworn members shall complete a weekly Special Liaison Activity Sheet that documents their weekly activities. This report shall be scanned, and emailed to the PSSSB administrative box to the attention of the Director, Special Liaison Division.

**B. Special Liaison Division Affiliate Members**

Special Liaison Division Affiliate Members shall:

1. Refrain from making comments regarding the legal status of any non-English speaking citizen or ask any citizen their legal status.
2. Be courteous and helpful when dealing with members of the public.
3. Address citizens by the gender they prefer.
4. Exhaust all options to aid each citizen with reporting a crime or

incident.

5. Work as a team to deal with specific needs of the community in their assigned district.
6. Schedule, develop and coordinate at least one (1) school visit or public safety seminar per month.
7. Ensure their district is properly supplied with adequate literature and information regarding community resources.
8. Monitor and post relevant information to the MPD Email List Group.
9. Continue with their regular patrol responsibilities as directed by their district officials. In addition to those duties, affiliate members are responsible for the following:
  - a. Upon coming into service with the dispatcher they shall advise they are a member of specific liaison unit, (e.g., Asian, Latino, Deaf and Hard of Hearing or the Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, Transgender Liaison Unit.)
  - b. Notify the CIC of the following:
    - (1) Name;
    - (2) District;
    - (3) CAD number;
    - (4) Shift;
    - (5) Language spoken (if applicable); and
    - (6) Assigned Special Liaison Division unit.
10. In the event that an affiliate member is called to assist another patrol district, the member shall:
  - a. Notify his/her immediate supervisor of the call for service.
  - b. Prior to switching radio zones, advise the dispatcher, "Be advised, I will be switching to the (identify the district zone) and monitoring that zone until further notice."

- c. Upon switching to the radio zone of the district in which he/she is dispatched, advise the dispatcher, "This is (voice the call sign), and I will be responding to (cite location), and I will be monitoring your zone until further notice."
  - d. Upon departing a district, advise the dispatcher of the radio zone of the district he/she is departing, "This is (Call Sign). I am switching back to the (state district radio zone) at this time."
  - e. Upon returning to his/her assigned district, advise the dispatcher of his/her return and provide a disposition. Members shall document all activity on their PD Form 775 (Daily Vehicle Inspection and Activity Report) and their weekly affiliate activity sheet.
11. Coordinate a minimum of one (1) outreach campaign per month that targets the members of the District community.
  12. Maintain a monthly calendar outlining their upcoming events and community meetings.

**C. Special Liaison Division Squad Supervisors**

Special Liaison Division Squad Supervisors shall ensure:

1. Each unit coordinates a minimum of one (1) outreach campaign per month that targets the members of the community.
2. Each officer schedules, develops and coordinates at least one (1) school visit or public safety seminar per month.
3. Each unit maintains a monthly calendar outlining their upcoming events and community meetings.
4. Each calendar of events is submitted to the Director of the Office of Community Outreach for review and approval.
5. Each unit confirms all police districts are properly supplied with adequate literature and information regarding community resources.
6. Each unit confirms all police districts have posters notifying the public of their right to effective communication at no cost.

7. Each unit conducts weekly home visits.
8. Each unit initiates roll call training for the various police districts to further the awareness of issues affecting their communities.
9. Each member monitors and posts relevant information on the MPD Email List Group.

D. Patrol District Special Liaison Division Affiliate Captains

Patrol District Special liaison Division Affiliate Captains shall:

1. Ensure that all affiliate members complete a weekly Special Liaison Unit Activity Sheet that documents their weekly activities.
2. Ensure that all Teletypewriter (TTY) machines and video phones at their district are operational.
3. Ensure that their district is properly supplied with adequate literature and information regarding community resources.
4. Ensure that their district stations have posters notifying the public of their right to effective communication at no cost to them.
5. Obtain weekly affiliate activity sheets from their affiliate members and complete a weekly report for their specific district.
6. Ensure language access procedures are prominently displayed in a public area of their building. These procedures shall include how the public can access and utilize:
  - a. Telecommunication Devices for the Deaf (TDD);
  - b. The Language Access Line; and
  - c. Interpreting Services (verbal and sign language).
7. Submit a monthly memorandum, through channels, to the Assistant Chief, Patrol Services and School Security Bureau no later than the fifth (5<sup>th</sup>) of each month, outlining the operational status of their TDD and monthly activity report of SLD members assigned to the District.

E. District Commanders

District Commanders shall:

1. Designate a member the rank of captain to serve as the SLD District Liaison (i.e., "Patrol District Special Liaison Division Affiliate Captain").
2. Ensure their assigned members adhere to the requirements of this order.

**V. CROSS REFERENCES**

- A. GO-SPT- 304.18 (Language Access Program)
- B. D.C. Official Code § 22-3701 (Bias Related Crimes)
- C. D.C. Official Code § 2-1401 (Human Rights Law)
- D. D.C Municipal Regulations § 4-899 (Definitions)

  
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Chief of Police

CLL:PAB:MOC