

**MANITOBA CITIZENS ON PATROL PROGRAM INC.
POLICY & PROCEDURE #4 - FORMATION OF GROUPS**

**COPP PROVINCIAL
BOARD**

Policies and Procedures

Subject: Formation of Groups

Date of Issue: November 6, 2010

Date Amended: September 10, 2016

February 25, 2017

September 27, 2019

October 27, 2019

May 28, 2020

Sections 1 and 2 of Provincial Board By-law #2-20 provides for the formation of new COPP groups in Manitoba. Individuals or groups interested in developing a community based COPP group must apply to the Provincial Board for acceptance into the program.

- 1) A representative of the Provincial Board or Regional Representative will forward information to the applicant outlining the COPP standards and procedures.
- 2) If the applicant is interested, they are required to complete a registration application and return it to the Provincial Board.
- 3) Upon receipt of the completed registration form, the Provincial Board will approve or decline the application based on set criteria.
 - a. If the application is declined, the Provincial Board will contact the applicant and explain why.
 - b. If the application is approved, the Provincial Board will contact the applicant to advise them of approval and forward the Letter(s) of Agreement for the group and for the volunteers. The signed Letters of Agreement must be returned, finalizing the registration of the COPP group within the COPP Program.
- 4) Registered groups are entitled to and provided with:
 - Contact information for their Provincial Board Regional Representative
 - Coordinator Resource Guide
 - Volunteer Training Manual
 - Training
 - Equipment
 - Representation at the annual conference
 - Program recognition
 - Ongoing support
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5) Group Responsibilities

The conduct of COPP groups is important for member safety. Groups are responsible for the actions and conduct of its volunteers.

The established COPP group must agree to the following:

- a. Conduct Criminal Record Searches of all members, through a local law enforcement agency, upon application to become a member of the group. Additional Criminal Record Checks may be requested by either the police liaison or local group coordinator, at any time, without cause. Failure of a volunteer applicant to complete such a request will be cause for them to be removed from the group and all equipment must be returned to the local group coordinator.
- b. Members must be 18 years of age, or older, and a Canadian citizen or a landed immigrant to be eligible to become a COPP member. Youth members only participate in the program according to program policies.
- c. Submit monthly reports to the Provincial Board outlining patrol and volunteer hours.
- d. Notify the Provincial Board of any changes in membership information or membership status, including changes in the local coordinator or the police liaison officer.
- e. All members sign a "Letter of Agreement" with MB COPP and forward a copy to the Provincial Board. This agreement can be terminated without notice by either party.
- f. A minimum of two members will patrol together while on foot. For vehicle patrols, please refer to Policy & Procedure #10 Vehicle Patrolling Alone.
- g. Keep all equipment in good working condition and ensure the equipment will be used for COPP purposes only.
- h. Return all equipment to the MB COPP Provincial Board, should the group disband.

Failure to agree to the above responsibilities will result in the group's application being denied or may result in the dismissal of a group or member from MB COPP.

6) Member Conduct and Responsibilities

The conduct of Citizens on Patrol members is extremely important. Member safety can be compromised if his or her actions instigate or contribute to a confrontation. Members of COPP groups must agree to the following: Members are to maintain confidentiality regarding the activities of COPP and information concerning police matters by ensuring information is divulged only to authorized people.

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- a. Members must always represent themselves as a volunteer, never as a police officer, and will immediately correct all misunderstandings.
- b. Members will avoid any verbal or physical confrontations while on patrol and will not take any type of enforcement action under any circumstances unless directed to do so by a law enforcement officer in need of assistance.
- c. Members are not to engage in any activity that is seen as a breach of personal privacy.
- d. Members are to conduct themselves ethically, professionally, and respectfully at all times.
- e. Each member is responsible for their own actions while on patrol.
- f. Members' actions will safeguard their patrol partners' personal safety.
- g. Members are to follow program policies.
- h. If members experience difficulties with the equipment, they are to notify their group coordinator as soon as possible.
- i. Members will participate in all training.
- j. Members will not carry weapons of any kind during patrol, nor consume alcohol or drugs prior to, or during, patrol.
- k. Members using their own vehicle to drive on patrol are responsible to maintain a valid driver's license and current vehicle insurance. If using a bicycle, members will register their bicycle, if required by town/city by-laws.

Failure to adhere to the above responsibilities may result in the suspension or dismissal of a group or a volunteer from the Manitoba COPP Program.

7) General Liability Insurance

- a. Groups are covered by commercial liability insurance purchased by Manitoba COPP.
- b. Groups are encouraged to arrange to be included under their local government's general liability insurance, if available, to supplement this coverage.

8) All COPP members within the program will have access to basic training so they can perform their duties efficiently and safely, including topics such as:

- priority setting
- note taking
- observation techniques
- personal safety
- reporting practices