

ACCOUNTABILITY

The Atherton Police Department's objective is to protect our community and preserve the quality of life for all those whom we are sworn to protect. Simply managing and developing our excellent relationship with the community is not enough. The speed of media and the rapid magnification of incidents involving police nationwide have raised public questions regarding police accountability. We are motivated every day to improve as professionals and ensure Atherton Police Department's reputation remains one of the most professional and innovative policing organizations around.

In May of 2015, the President's Task Force on 21st Century Policing produced a report to identify six pillars of modern policing for law enforcement agencies committed to building and keeping our public's trust. These pillars match up well with Atherton Police Department's current and established best practices.

Pillar 1 – Building Trust and Legitimacy

Our police officers understand the expectation that every contact must begin with fairness and equity, and all our contacts must be treated with the utmost dignity and respect. We train our officers to understand the value at the end of a contact to answer questions and explain our actions for understanding.

As a highly proactive police department, our officers know their professionalism and procedural justice practices are required in every situation they encounter. Officers are reminded daily that our community's eyes are on them, and that their community expects top professionalism from the department. Supervisors are regularly reminded of the national narrative – the fact that police are highly scrutinized based on highly publicized and sometimes very negative contacts between the police and the public. Although action by the police viewed negatively by the public may not be frequent in this jurisdiction, Atherton Police Department personnel know the impact of these events affects everyone. Our officers are prepared to answer questions from the public about police legitimacy and accountability, and when it is our agency involved, we are transparent and open about self-accountability.

Recruiting a Diverse Workforce

The Atherton Police Department recognizes the importance of developing a workforce that is reflective of the community we serve, and we represent the language and culture of our diverse neighborhoods. We are always striving for an accurate representation in addition to seeking the most qualified candidates to serve the Town. We continue to

seek new and innovative ways to recruit, retain, and groom the very best and brightest representatives to preserve peace and order in our Town. We look for candidates who have a high level of dedication and who embody our motto '*To Serve with Honor Integrity and Professionalism.*'

Partnership with Our Community

The Atherton Police Department shares a deep bond with our community.

The Atherton Police Department has expanded its community partnerships through various messaging and social media platforms. Thousands of subscribers are directly connected for public safety messaging through News flashes with Civic Plus, Citizens RIMS, Nextdoor, Nixle, Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram.

The Atherton Police Department has established a leading-edge public messaging and social media program with a reputation for swift, transparent messages that informs the community and interacts with the public to help us stop, solve, and prevent crime. This program is the glue in a relationship of trust with our community. Residents know they can turn to the Atherton Police Department first in a crisis for critical information.

Our social media platforms have also been helpful in connecting concerned community members with Police Officers to report crimes, suspicious activity, and quality of life issues. We've found that our virtual and personal connections are the secret ingredient to true collaboration in keeping Atherton safe.

We pride ourselves on being available to our community in both formal and informal ways. By taking both approaches, we allow ourselves to be relatable in casual, non-enforcement settings where actual community engagement can occur, as well as in more structured, presentation style meetings where more focused discussions take place. Regardless of the forum, we use both opportunities to educate and inform our public.

Impacting Youth Positively

Over the past numerous years, the Atherton Police Department has developed its school resource officers (SRO), working with all 9 schools in Town.

The SRO is a part of an innovative partnership between the Sequoia Union High School District, the Menlo Park School District, Menlo School, Sacred Heart Prep, and the Atherton Police Department.

School resource officers are a component of the community policing philosophy that offer a plentiful amount of benefits in the schools they're utilized in. An SRO's primary role is built off a solid foundation of law enforcement and enhancement of security, however, their job guarantees so much more. The position offers a school institution the opportunity of building a positive relationship with law enforcement and allows students a clear sense of approachability. These particular relationships between SRO's and students have the potential to assure the satisfaction and trust in police at young ages and are likely to span beyond the student's years in school.

Here are the reasons why every school should have a School Resource Officer ~

- **A resource to go to for bullying related situations** – Approx. 49% of students in grades 4-12 have reported to be bullied. Growing up today is a lot different than it was in the 1900's. Social media has amplified bullying to a whole new level. Students need a resource to go to with these issues, especially if they involve criminal actions such as cyberbullying (now illegal in 34 states).
- **They serve as an investigative unit within inside/outside the school** – A SRO's presence within a school system is critical when it comes to getting to know the youth in a community. They become familiar with who hangs out together, who has bad blood with whom, and who is causing trouble. Furthermore, their investigative services are highly desired when it comes to gang activity, assaults, and theft such as cell phones.
- **They are role models for the youth.** Teach students the significance of Law Enforcement and Public Safety. With the proper interactions and communication, a SRO can become an idol for the youth. Students will begin to look at the SRO's high moral standards and influence in a respectful manner over time.
- **They are law educators** – They teach various law enforcement topics and safety among the student population. Educating the student body about the duties and responsibilities of law enforcement and public safety is essential in today's world. Reaching the youth will help change the perception of Police in America rather than what they see in the mainstream media.
- **They build powerful relations with the community;** between students, teachers, and parents. Lifelong relations are often formed between SRO's and the citizens. For example, parents may reach out to the SRO if they are concerned with the drug/alcohol use of their child. Officers are trained to deal with these situations and by doing so, they spread value while potentially saving lives at the same time.
- **They provide enhanced safety & security** – Last and most important of all the school admin. and students benefit from the officer's training, experience, &

knowledge to handle situations. An SRO's installment within a school system guarantee maximum safety of the institution overall.

Pillar 2 – Policy and Oversight

Policy and Oversight

Police Officers are required to 'think on their feet' and make split-second, life-altering decisions – often by themselves, with no back-up. It is critical to the Atherton Police Department public safety mission that through proper policy, training, and oversight we give our personnel the decision framework they need to make the very best choices in the field. Therefore, we are committed to providing an outstanding array of policy, training, and equipment so our officers can give our community the safety and quality of life expected here in the Town of Atherton.

The Atherton Police Department continuously strives to be an innovative leader among law enforcement agencies. The department wants to ensure useful public information is accessible for review and use by members of the public. Access to public records is an important priority for us as we believe that public trust is essential to good community policing strategies and maintaining accountability.

Providing information online about the way we work and the policies that govern us is just one of the police department's transparency initiatives. The ability to readily access public information encourages inclusion, keeps residents better informed about police department operations, and encourages residents to help us keep their community safe.

The Atherton Police Department's policies are managed by Lexipol, and industry-recognized leading vendor that works in partnership with our policy team to ensure that policies are constantly revised in accordance with changing laws and industry-best practices. Our policies are the culmination of laws, legal decisions, best practices, and community input. They serve as a daily guide for our employees and are one of the many ways we ensure we maintain a professional workforce and act in a way that is consistent with training and national standards.

The department policy manual is available online and we encourage your review of it. The manual can be found using the following link:
<http://www.ci.atherton.ca.us/DocumentCenter/View/7862/Lexipol-Policy-6-9-2020>

Pillar 3 – Technology and Social Media

Technology and Social Media

Advances in technology have made the Atherton Police Department more capable, more efficient, and more accountable to our citizens. There is no substitute for in-person connection with our community and proactive police work, but technology helps make policing more efficient and effective. Our community's privacy is important to us, and each of the advances described in this section is being implemented and explored with your privacy in mind.

Automated License Plate Readers

The Atherton Police Department has patrol vehicles and cameras equipped with automated license plate readers (ALPRs) to better safeguard our community, helping to not only locate stolen vehicles and missing persons, but also wanted violent felons. ALPR devices have also proven time and again to identify crime trends and provide precise, investigation-specific information to help solve crime.

For a more complete discussion on ALPRs, including our policy, visit our website at <http://www.ci.atherton.ca.us/DocumentCenter/View/7863/Automated-License-Plate-Readers---ALPRs---Policy>.

Body Cameras

For more than a decade, the Atherton Police Department has equipped every sworn police officer with a Body Worn Camera (BWC). Officers are required to wear their assigned BWC and are expected to activate them on all enforcement activities, and when speaking with members of the public who are related as reporting parties, witnesses, or victims in the situations being investigated.

BWC are a tremendous evidence collection tool, provide accountability to all persons being captured on video, and offer an increased level of transparency to our community.

Mobile Technology for Officers

Mobile phones issued in every police vehicle provides the ability to digitally collect photographs, videos, and audio recordings that are all managed digitally through cloud storage. Electronic ticket writers print out copies of citations for the public and electronically transfer the data to the courts. All police vehicles carry Automatic External Defibrillators (AEDs) for medical emergencies.

Computer forensic tools help Atherton Police detectives keep up with suspects as technology changes. Criminals used to hide paper notebooks, transportation routes, and other evidence in pockets, bags, and backpacks. Most of this is now stored on mobile devices.

Shared Information Keeps Officers Aware and Makes the Peninsula Safer

Software has been deployed countywide to create a seamless network of local dispatch and records systems to share information across the county. City limits or boundaries make no difference to criminals as they are known to frequently target multiple jurisdictions in a short period of time. The integrated systems allow officers to share information across our local jurisdictions, making your local officers much more aware and prepared for crime trends and heightened safety situations.

This advanced technology extends to the transfer of police reports to the San Mateo County District Attorney's Office. Reports, many of their attachments, and now even officers' body worn camera footage can be electronically relayed to the courts for processing. This process is more environmentally friendly and saves time.

Social Media

We believe a connected community is a strong and safe community. In addition to reporting crime activity, the Atherton Police Department strengthens its social media output with regular safety tips, features on our police officers, recruitment messages for all available positions, and reflections of our robust community engagement strategy.

Pillar 4 – Community Policing and Crime Reduction

Community Policing and Crime Reduction / Community Partnerships

Community policing has always been a foundational principle at the Atherton Police Department. Community policing is the first substantive reform in the American police institution since it embraced the professional model nearly a century ago. It is a dramatic change in the philosophy that determines the way police agencies engage the public. It incorporates a philosophy that broadens the police mission from a narrow focus on crime and law enforcement to a mandate encouraging the exploration of creative solutions for a host of community concerns— including crime, fear of crime, perceptions of disorder, quality of life and neighborhood conditions. Community policing, in its ideal form, not only addresses community concerns, but it is a philosophy that turns traditional policing on its head by empowering the community rather than dictating

to the community. In this sense, policing derives its role and agenda from the community rather than dictating to the community. Community policing relies on the belief that only by working together with people will the police be able to improve quality of life.

Community policing consists of two primary components; community partnerships and problem solving. It is a partnership, or an enhanced relationship between the police and the community we serve. It is a partnership in that the police must assist people with a multitude of problems and social conditions including crime, and it is a partnership because we as the police must solicit support and active participation in dealing with these problems.

Community partnership begins at the top of our organization with meaningful connections that occur through hands-on interactive programs like the Citizens' Police Academy. This program is a one-day citizen engagement program that is designed to provide Atherton residents with first-hand information about how their Police Department works. Training is in an "academy setting" with a few hands-on exercises designed to give the participant a more realistic sense of what it's like to work as a peace officer. Participation in the Academy requires a commitment of one full day and early evening.

Our objective is to put the resident in the shoes of an Atherton Police Department employee. Whether you're learning what it's like to field an emergency 9-1-1 call, collecting a fingerprint at the scene of a crime, or learning how to share your car with a furry 4 legged partner (K9), our goal is to give you a behind the scenes perspective about the policies, philosophies, and guiding principles of the Atherton Police Department.

Participants learn how community oriented policing works; the basics of criminal investigations; how different types of crimes are processed from Dispatch to Doorstep to the DA. Partakers will also learn about CitizenRIMs and how to use it in their neighborhood, securing one's home, and the use of security cameras in the community.

Officers on the street are tuned-in to the communities they patrol and maintain direct relationships with residents. More formally, our officers and command staff regularly attend community and neighborhood meetings, both to gain direct insight to neighborhood issues, and to make ourselves available for face-to-face interactions. Events like Coffee-with-a-Cop, the Torch Run, National Night Out, and neighborhood Town meetings help facilitate these as well.

Dedication to Youth

The Atherton Police Department has long been dedicated to building the bond between cops and kids through the Atherton Police Activities League (PAL), a non-profit that offers college scholarships to those attending an Atherton high school but not need to be an Atherton resident. To date, we have provided over \$200,000 in scholarship funds. PAL also has donated equipment to schools for sports, runs the annual “Shop with A Cop” and back to school shopping for the elementary schools in Town. All funds are 100% donated by the kindness of our residents in Town.

Our current SRO is trained in the Big Five – a unifying format between the responding police and school districts for action in the event school safety is compromised. Youth and faculty safety education are important to us. Active Shooter response training is on-going in our schools in Town.

Pillar 5 – Training and Education

Training and Education

Police officers in the State of California receive some of the most relevant and progressive training in the nation. Trainees must complete over 800 hours of basic police training affiliated with local colleges. This six-month long process includes basic police skills training, plus progressive topics like community policing, addressing people with disabilities and cultural differences, crisis intervention, and trauma-informed care. Adult-based learning techniques and reality-based scenarios help trainees understand and demonstrate all these important skills. Academy trainees engage with the community through volunteer work on local community-based projects during the academy. In addition to the six-month police academy, new officers must complete a two-week in-house orientation and an additional four to six-month field training program, where they are paired with an experienced field training officer to learn the difference between the academic training they have received and all the variables of real-life encounters with the community.

Policing is a dangerous job to the officers who serve and protect our public, and often police engage in dangerous action to keep our public safe. All this activity has to potential for damage and harm, and our police officers engage in career-long training to ensure we operate with the best possible practices to provide the most responsive and safest possible service to our public.

All California peace officers are required by law to participate in 12-hours of perishable skills training (driving, firearms, and arrest/control) every 24-months. Officers assigned to specialty or collateral assignments like FTOs, Detectives, Traffic, Special Weapons and Tactics / Hostage Negotiators (SWAT/HNT) require even more specialized training

and practice. Our police department conducts over 2,00 hours of department-wide training annually. Classroom, reality-based, and virtual reality training techniques cover these continuous professional training (CPT) requirements and much more.

Bias Awareness Training, Social Justice, and Equity

We pride ourselves in Atherton for maintaining a diverse and educated workforce whom accurately reflect the demographic makeup of our Town. In addition, our officers are provided the most advanced, relevant training and are held accountable for their actions. Our officers undergo continual training throughout their career with our Town. They have been trained to recognize the differences between racial bias and signs of criminal or suspicious activity. We've invested in racial profiling and implicit bias training, crisis intervention techniques, advanced de-escalation communication tactics, continue the use of body-worn cameras to ensure transparency, and have embraced California's Act to Save Lives - AB 392.

De-Escalation and Force Options

Atherton Police supervisors and Command staff review all uses of force committed by our police officers and identify important examples to discuss and train best practices. Officers have completed training in de-escalation and varying levels of non-lethal force to accomplish our goals whenever possible. Our officers are ingrained with a respect for the sanctity of life.

Pillar 6 – Officer Safety and Wellness

Officer Safety and Wellness

Policing takes a toll on the mental and physical well-being of a police officer. We understand the necessity to care for our own wellness to make space and fully show up for our community members who are experiencing a crisis.

The Atherton Police Department ensures that all incidents having potential for heavy emotional impact on our officers are addressed, either through peer counseling, trained Critical Incident Response Team (CIRT) members, or incident stress debriefs with certified police psychologists. Stress debriefings include everyone involved, including call-takers, dispatchers, and leadership – no-one is immune to the potentially debilitating stress of an emotionally tough situation.

Physical Fitness

Police officers are physically tested and tried every day on patrol. Officers stay in shape and push each other to maintain the physical conditioning needed to keep them ready

to respond and more able to prevent injuries. We maintain a fitness center within the police facility, and officers are encouraged to use it. Entire teams can often be seen working out together in the facility.

Mental Strength

The Atherton Police Department's access to an employee assistance program (EAP), and our Peer Support Unit is available 24/7 to department staff and has become increasingly integral in managing the mental health of officers and their families, as well as connecting them to services and counseling. We also have a Police Chaplain that is called out for specific incidents and will work on de-briefings with staff once a critical incident has been completed. As policing evolves, it becomes increasingly challenging to the morale of the department. We must show up for each other, to show up for our community.