



*Medicine Hat Police  
Service*

*Volunteer Handbook*

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## **1. Introduction**

1. Welcome and thanks for choosing to dedicate your free time and effort to volunteering with the Medicine Hat Police Service (MHPS). Volunteers enhance the effectiveness of the police and provide a key connection with the community as a whole.

## **2. MHPS Core Components**

1. Mission – Serving and protecting our community with pride through professional and progressive policing:
2. Vision – To optimize the safety and security of our community; and
3. Values – Integrity, respect, accountability and courage.

## **3. History**

In 1882, Medicine Hat, District of Assiniboia, Northwest Territories began to be settled by workers who had begun construction on the wooden trestle bridge that would eventually cross the South Saskatchewan River to be used by the Canadian Pacific Railway.

Over the next few years, businesses and inhabitants grew and in 1884 with the discovery of natural gas, Medicine Hat became an unincorporated town. This growth began to tax the NWMP who with only five members were busy in the surrounding district and as such on January 13, 1899 Bylaw Number 8 was passed to create a position of Town Constable.

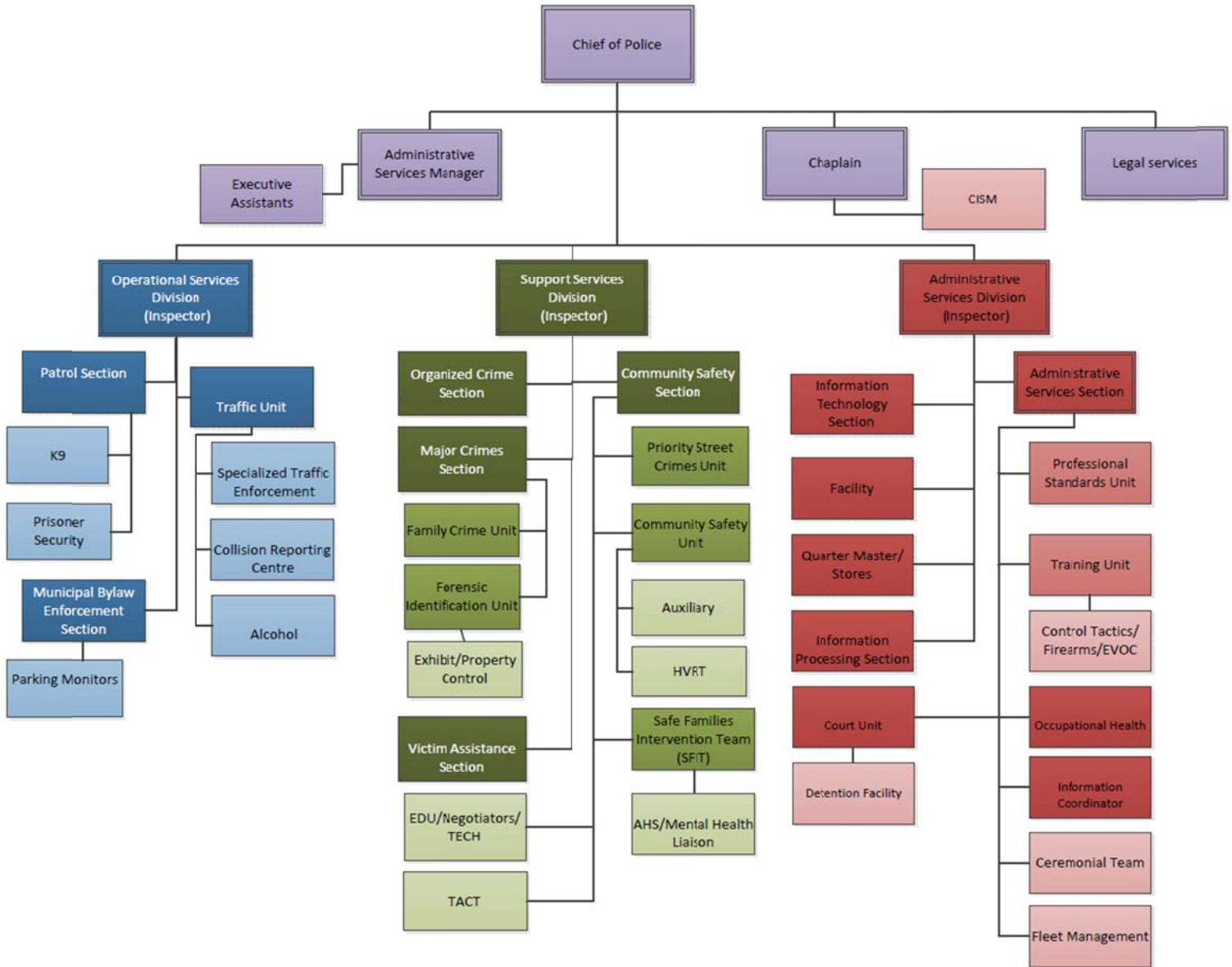
The bylaw was drawn up outlining the duties of a combined Inspector, Health Officer and Policeman. By 1906, with a population of about 11,000 residents, Medicine Hat became a city and the police force had grown in strength to 14 members.

As was the case in most Canadian cities at the time, the population growth in Medicine Hat was stagnant over the years of the First World War. As the city's growth renewed after the war years, so did the growth of its police force. After sharing a car with the Fire Department, the Service bought its own vehicle in 1917 that was to be used during emergency cases, but they reserved bicycles to be used for patrolling at night.

During the depression of the 1930's, members were kept busy dealing with the unemployed who were riding the trains back and forth across the country in search of employment. Horses and motorcycle patrols were soon added to the transportation mode of the Service as a means of getting around a rapidly growing city.

With 38 members, in the 1940's the Service outgrew the existing quarters in the basement of City Hall and moved to a new building along 1st St. SE. When Alberta's oil boom took hold at the end of the 1970's, the city grew substantially necessitating an increase in strength for the Service to nearly 70 members. Since that point, Medicine Hat has continued to grow and thrive, drawing citizens from all parts of Canada and the world to enjoy the comforts and security this city provides.

## 4. Medicine Hat Police Service Organizational Chart



## **5. Volunteer Code of Conduct**

- Volunteers are expected to support the Core Values of the MHPS;
- Volunteers are amenable to the MHPS procedures which governs volunteers
- Volunteers will not undertake any function of activities that must be performed by members of the police service;
- Volunteers are permitted to be engaged in community based crime prevention and victims assistance initiatives under the supervision of members of the police service;
- Volunteers are not authorized to drive any police vehicle except as authorized by the Office of the Chief;
- Volunteers shall not purport to be a member of the MHPS;
- Volunteers shall not use their status as a MHPS volunteer to gain personal advantage or favour from any member of the public, business or MHPS member;
- Usage of MHPS equipment shall be related to the duties of the volunteer and not for personal use and will be subject to monitoring;
- Volunteers shall not speak on behalf of the MHPS, nor be interviewed, nor impart information relating to volunteer duties except with permission of the Office of the Chief. Any requests by the media should be directed to a police officer or the Community Engagement Coordinator.

## **6. Volunteer Application Process, Training and Assignment**

- Community members interested in volunteering should contact the Community Engagement Coordinator;
- Candidates for the MHPS volunteer program must meet selection criteria; undergo a background and security check prior to being accepted as a MHPS volunteer. Priority will be given to community members who work, attend school or reside in Medicine Hat and Cypress County;
- Upon successful completion of the application process, the volunteer may be required to take an Oath/Affirmation of Confidentiality;
- An orientation session will be provided to all volunteers prior to participating in their assignment. Annual training will be offered to all MHPS volunteers; and
- Volunteers will be provided with an assignment by the Community Engagement Coordinator in conjunction with the Supervisor of the section within which the volunteer is placed. Assignment is based on volunteers' desire, interest, skills and abilities, along with the Services' requirements.

## **7. Volunteer Rights and Responsibilities**

### **As a Medicine Hat Police Service Volunteer you have the Right to:**

- MHPS orientation and access to ongoing training;
- Work in a healthy, safe, inclusive and harassment free workplace;
- A clear understanding of your role and function as a volunteer;
- Be respected and provided with appropriate levels of support and management by MHPS members, fellow volunteers and the community;
- Be recognized and provided with feedback for your contributions; and

- Meet new people, learn more about your community and have an enjoyable experience.

**As a Medicine Hat Police Service Volunteer you have the Responsibility to:**

- Adhere to and be cognizant of the procedures and guidelines set out in the MHPS Volunteer Handbook and Service Policy;
  - Adhere to the MHPS Shared Values;
  - Take an Oath/Affirmation of Confidentiality;
  - Fulfill a one (1) year commitment to the Volunteer Program;
  - Attend a mandatory orientation and training session prior to the commencement of any volunteer activity;
  - Attend supplemental training as required;
  - Attend and be on time for your shift;
  - Record your volunteer hours and forward the totals at the beginning of each month to the Community Engagement Coordinator;
  - Contact your Volunteer Team Leader/Supervisor/Manager when unable to report for a scheduled volunteer activity;
  - Conduct yourself in a courteous and professional manner at all times;
  - Promote an inclusive environment;
  - Carry out your duties to the best of your ability;
  - Wear your uniform or identification when performing volunteer activities;
  - Wear your Identification so that “Volunteer” identifier is clearly visible at all times with the MHPS building;
  - Do not alter your ID Tag in any way;
  - Contribute to the continuous improvement of the volunteer program by identifying and communicating suggestions for improvement to your Team Lead; and
  - Be an ambassador for the MHPS and community.
  - Volunteers are responsible to read and comply with the following MHPS policies;
- i) Part 1 Chapter A Guiding Principles
  - ii) Part 9 Chapter A Information Sharing
  - iii) Part 9 Chapter C Release of Information
  - iv) Part 9 Chapter E Media
  - v) Part 10 Chapter A Units Overview and Functions
  - vi) Part 11 Chapter B Building - Fire Evacuation
  - vii) Part 11 Chapter C Building Safety and Security
  - viii) Part 11 Chapter G Security Clearance
  - ix) Part 12 Chapter A Code of Conduct
  - x) Part 17 Chapter A Respectful Workplace
  - xi) Part 17 Chapter C Personal Protection Strategies
  - xii) Part 17 Chapter D Occupational Health and Safety
  - xiii) Part 17 Chapter E Workplace Violence

**8. Conflict of Interest**

MHPS volunteers shall maintain a professional and ethical standard of conduct. A volunteer who is unsure whether a particular situation represents a conflict of interest should consult with the Community Engagement Coordinator who shall refer the issue to the Administrative Staff Sergeant.

## **9. Disclosure of Information**

To ensure the safety of all volunteers and MHPS members and to support the integrity of the volunteer program, volunteers must disclose any criminal charges or allegations laid against them, their immediate family or residents of their home once they become a volunteer.

Volunteers are subject to continued background security checks.

## **10. Workers Compensation Declaration of Understanding**

Volunteers are required to sign the Workers Compensation Declaration of Understanding prior to commencing volunteer activities with the MHPS. The Workers' Compensation Board has ordered, under section 14(5) of the Act, that volunteers for the city of Medicine Hat are deemed to be workers of the City of Medicine Hat for the purposes of the Act. Volunteers for the MHPS are de facto volunteers for the City of Medicine Hat and cannot sue the MHPS or the City of Medicine Hat or any other employer or worker covered under the Workers Compensation Act.

## **11. Smoke/Drug/Alcohol – Free Workplace**

Smoking is not allowed in any MHPS facility. Volunteers may only smoke in during a break in designated areas. Drug and Alcohol use while on duty or on police property is prohibited and is grounds for immediate termination of a volunteer.

## **12. Termination**

Volunteer placement may be terminated by the Office of the Chief or designate under the following conditions:

- Failure to abide by the applicable policies and procedures, the volunteer code of conduct and the volunteer responsibilities;
- Breaching the Oath/Affirmation of Confidentiality;
- Misconduct or insubordination;
- Abuse or mistreatment of MHPS members, civilians, volunteers or community members;
- Undisclosed criminal allegations or charges;
- Failure to meet minimum yearly time requirements;
- Conduct deemed unbecoming of the position, or
- Upon recommendation of the Administration Staff Sergeant.

## **13. Identification/Uniform**

Volunteers working within the MHPS facilities will be issued with Photo ID Cards which must be worn and visible at all times.

Volunteers that work in the Police headquarters will dress in accordance with the Civilian Staff standards:

- Monday to Friday - Acceptable business clothing – including but not limited to dresses, skirts, slacks, blouses, sweaters and appropriate footwear.
- Weekend and Nightshifts - Same as above, but also includes the wearing of jeans.

Volunteers with the Parks Ambassadors Program will wear a vest identifying them as Parks Ambassadors. The Vest will have the Medicine Hat City Parks Logo and MHPS Logo on the front of the Vest, with “Volunteer” in Bold Letters on the Back of the vest.