

SUMMERSTRAND NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH

CODE OF CONDUCT

The Summerstrand Neighbourhood Watch (SSNW) was formed to assist the police in their attempts to manage and control crime in the Summerstrand area of Humewood SAPS.

1. Members take on the responsibility voluntarily and are fully aware of the risk it involves. However, due to the nature of the task, members must refrain, as much as is reasonably possible, from placing themselves, public, security companies or police at risk.

Members must operate as the eyes and ears of the community and must cooperate with the South African Police Services (SAPS)

2. Members will therefore at all times remain passive observers, assisting the police and security companies only by using their cellphones or the dedicated Summerstrand Security Watch Companies two-way radios or PTT to call for their assistance.

Members must assist SAPS and other safety and security services and partners to safe guard the local community and their property, to manage and control crime prevention initiatives and to discourage crime in the area.

- ❖ Members undertake to call in any suspicious individuals, vehicles or situations, which will be investigated by the police on duty at the time.
- ❖ Only private vehicles are to be used and patrollers need to be aware that, as their assistance is voluntarily, neither SAPS nor the SSNW can be held responsible for any damages to said vehicles.
- ❖ No form of vigilantism will be accepted, by any patrollers practicing this will be removed by ExCo.

In order to protect the members of the Summerstrand Neighbourhood Watch, we the SSNW Committee, have drawn up a code of conduct that we expect SSNW members to adhere to.

NB: Should any member ignore these rules, they do so at their own risk and without our express consent or knowledge.

3. A member must at all times act in accordance with the principals enshrined in the constitution of the Republic of South Africa and must –
 - a) Act in a manner that will uphold the and promote the aims and objectives of the SSNW
 - b) Respect and protect the dignity and rights of every person in the neighbourhood, including the right to free movement
 - c) Act within his or her rights as a private person, and not beyond those rights
 - d) Serve the community in the area in an unbiased, apolitical, and impartial manner to create confidence in the SSNW and build unity in a safe neighbourhood.
 - e) Act in a non-violent manner and may not take the law into his or her own hands.

- ❖ This code of conduct and the constitution shall be binding on all Neighbourhood Watch Structures and the members thereof.
- ❖ The Neighbourhood Watch Structures and its members must at all times act in a non-violent manner. No member may take the law into his or her own hands irrespective of the circumstances.
- ❖ No member of the Neighbourhood Watch Structure shall display racism, sexism or any other form of discrimination towards any member and / or any other person.
- ❖ The Neighbourhood Watch Structures shall not allow any member to carry any weapons perceived to be dangerous that could inflict serious bodily harm and / or damage to property, this shall include dangerous weapons as defined by law, when patrolling. Only weapons for sole purpose of self-defense as approved by the Provincial Commissioner South African Police Services may be used.

Should a member be found guilty of a criminal offence, their Neighbourhood Watch Structure must respect the decision of the courts and immediately institute disciplinary measures as defined herein.

Members may not divulge any confidential or privileged information that they may have acquired as a result of their membership of their Neighbourhood Watch Structure, including information from WhatsApp or Facebook Groups.

4. No member may exploit his or her membership of the SSNW for his or her own personal advantage or benefit.

- ❖ Members found to be making public statements and / or addressing the media without the explicit authority duly mandating the member to act for and on behalf of the Neighbourhood Watch Structure shall be found guilty of serious offence, resulting in the immediate suspension of the member pending expulsion, subject to the merits of the matter. The Neighbourhood Watch Structure shall with immediate effect rectify the matter and make a public statement in this regard.

5. A member may not discriminate unfairly against any person on the basis of language, age, gender, religion, ethnic or social origin, colour, sexual orientation, disability, political persuasion, or any other constitutionally-protected orientation.

- ❖ No member may accept any payment, commission or gratuity in connection with his or her membership of the Neighbourhood Watch Structure, except after being duly authorised to do so by the Neighbourhood Watch Structure.
- ❖
- ❖ Notwithstanding the above, should any payment, commission, or gratuity be offered to a Neighbourhood Watch the Executive Committee of such Neighbourhood Watch shall act in the best interest of their Neighbourhood Watch. Neighbourhood Watch accepting the offer shall with immediate effect and in writing advise the Neighbourhood Watch Structure of its decision and / or actions in this regard.
- ❖ No member may exploit its membership of the Neighbourhood Watch Structure for its own personal advantage or benefit.
- ❖ Members must at all times act in a manner that will uphold and promote the aims and objectives of their Neighbourhood Watch Structure as highlighted by the Neighbourhood Watch Structure's Constitution and Code of Conduct.

- ❖ Pepper spray or CS gas emitters and electric stun guns are permitted but may only be used in self-defence, when physical damage has been committed or you are certain that an offence will be committed.
- ❖ Each member going on patrol must have at least one cellphone in each car or group of members on foot patrol. Members of SSNW are not expected or required to confront any persons of any race creed or gender whether they are suspected of being about to commit a crime. The duty of the members on patrol is to report any suspicious person or vehicle in the neighbourhood, Members shall use their own discretion as to whether to drive around their allocated Sector or whether to remain stationary and in the latter instance whether or not to keep the vehicle's engine running.

SSNW members shall follow any instructions from the response vehicle as to whether to follow the suspects or maintain observation. No physical interference can be directed by SAPS.

- ❖ SSNW members shall withdraw from any scene or incident forthwith upon any violence being used or threatened and shall not confront the perpetrators.
- ❖ NOTHING herein contained shall restrict the rights of any member as an individual to defend him or herself using reasonable force to do if faced with a situation where the member or any other person on duty with such a member subjected to actual or reasonably anticipated violence.
- ❖ Any incident shall forthwith be recorded briefly in writing with detail of time: place; number of suspects or perpetrators; description of perpetrators by age, size and colour and clothing followed by a brief description of incident.

A. The Neighbourhood Watch Structure will appropriately penalize a member of a Neighbourhood Watch Structure if such a member is found guilty of misconduct or has brought the good name of the association into disrepute, depending on the merits of the case.

- ❖ The Neighbourhood Watch Structure and its members is not a substitute for the South African Police Services.

Disciplinary Measures:

All disciplinary measures entail:

- Verbal warning
- And written warning
- Expulsion subject to investigation

In the event of any complain being lodged against a member of a Neighbourhood Watch, the Neighbourhood Watch concerned, may propose to reprimand, suspend, or expel the member, subject to an investigation and to deal with the matter at its earliest convenience and advise the complainant of its action. Furthermore the Neighbourhood Watch will with immediate effect advise SAPS owner who we fall under of its decision and the action taken.

6. To be in possession of any dangerous weapons under circumstances which makes him or her guilty of a contravention of section 3(1) of the Dangerous Weapons Act, 2013(Act 15 of 2013)
A "weapon" was defined as "any object, other than a firearm, which is likely to cause serious bodily injury if it were used to commit an assault"

B. Patrollers are not allowed to do the following while carrying out their duties:

- ❖ To disobey any of the traffic laws, such as operating their vehicle in a manner that jeopardizes their safety or the safety of others, by exceeding speed limits in emergencies.

- ❖ To pursue another vehicle or a person fleeing from a crime scene.
 - ❖ Confront a suspect or attempt to make an arrest without the presence of a police officer.
 - ❖ Members are not allowed to enter a crime scene.
 - ❖ Confront, assault and shooting fleeing suspects.
 - ❖ To perform law enforcement in the absence of a police officer.
 - ❖ Patrollers do not have the legal authority to stop and search anyone.
 - ❖ Not allowed to carry out the function of the police.
 - ❖ Citizens who respond to emergencies or carry out a citizen arrest are expected to follow the laws and regulations.
 - ❖ Any member who contravenes the Code of Conduct will face a disciplinary hearing.
7. Patrollers shall undergo a patrol training sessions as instituted by the Operations Director.
8. Amendment to this Code of Conduct may be made, as required, and will be published by the SSNW.