	PALACIOS POLICE DEPARTMENT
	Policy 1.5 Mutual Aid
	Effective Date: 1/4/2021 **Replaces: 02/07/2006**
	Approved: _Milton H. Rivera_ **Milton Rivera, Chief of Police**
	Reference:

I. POLICY

On occasion the need arises to request assistance from or give assistance to a neighboring law enforcement agency. This need may result from an emergency such as civil disorder, fire, flood, or other disaster, but it is most often requested for backup on calls where officers are at risk and local backup is unavailable. Before the need arises, agencies must clarify and plan emergency procedures. Available county and state support systems shall be used to support operations.

II. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to establish procedures, duties, and responsibilities for providing assistance to or requesting assistance from another law-enforcement agency and to provide for the use of statewide law-enforcement support systems.

III. PROCEDURE

    A. Jurisdiction

        1. Generally, the legal jurisdiction of the department stops at the city limits, as defined by charter and ordinances; however, officers also have authority to act as peace officers in other areas within the state when requested through a properly executed mutual aid agreement. This authority may be used for the following reasons:

           a. Assisting neighboring law-enforcement agencies, the county sheriff, or the Texas Department of Public Safety in handling emergency calls and at times when they are unable to respond immediately.

           b. Assisting neighboring law-enforcement agencies, the county sheriff, or the Texas Department of Public Safety when they are in need of assistance in safely completing a task or assignment.

    B. Mutual aid

1. For the purpose of this policy, mutual aid is defined as the assistance given or asked for between the department and other law- enforcement agencies during emergencies. The circumstances that require mutual aid can include one or more of the following situations:
   a. Enforcement of laws that control or prohibit the use or sale of controlled drugs;
   b. Any law-enforcement emergency involving an immediate threat to public safety;
   c. When executing orders for the temporary detention or emergency custody of people for mental health evaluation;
   d. Any public disaster, such as fire, flood, epidemic, or civil disorder.
2. Mutual aid may be requested from or provided to another law-enforcement agency by the department at the discretion of the on-duty supervisor. However, officers must remember that they are primarily responsible for providing law-enforcement service to their own jurisdiction. There are generally three levels of mutual aid assistance as follows:
   a. Short duration, approximately 30 minutes or less, where an additional show of force, backup, traffic control, or assistance with prisoner transportation is required.
   b. Medium duration, approximately one to four hours, where the senior officer on duty may provide or request assistance from the neighboring law-enforcement agencies, the county sheriff, or Texas DPS; however, their role is normally confined to a show of force, backup, transporting prisoners, or traffic control.
   c. Long duration, more than four hours, when full-scale assistance is required. The on-duty supervisor shall immediately notify the chief of police who will assist in coordinating additional aid as required.

3. When taking law-enforcement actions at an emergency site, including uses of force, officers from this department shall at all times adhere to this department's policies and procedures and utilize only those weapons and tactics that they have been trained and deemed qualified to use.

4. Occasionally it is necessary to request assistance from a federal law-enforcement agency, such as when a major crime has occurred, and the suspect may have left the state. The Chief of Police shall decide whether or not to notify the FBI or other appropriate agency.

5. If the department, with the help of neighboring law-enforcement agencies and DPS, is unable to cope with an emergency, such as a riot or other civil disturbance, the chief may contact the governor's office for National Guard assistance.

C. Statewide law-enforcement support.

   1. The department is a member of and participates in the use of the Statewide Interdepartmental Radio System (SIRS) and complies with the procedures

for its use. A copy of these procedures can be found posted in the department communications office.

2. The department participates in the use of the Texas Crime Information Center (TCIC) and complies with the procedures for the use of this exchange. In addition, the department participates in the Uniform Crime Reporting system administered by the Texas Department of Public Safety.

3. Some state-owned law-enforcement resources may be made available to the department for special use. These resources, and the state agency to contact, include:

    a. Special Weapons and Tactics (SWAT) teams.
    b. Canine teams —DPS. Canine teams, if requested, shall be used only to track, and great caution shall be used in deploying teams in heavily populated or congested areas. Handlers are responsible for compliance with their own agency policies and procedures.
    c. Helicopter or fixed-wing aircraft: DPS. Normally the Chief of Police requests the use of this equipment in advance from the DPS director. The equipment may be available on an emergency basis.
    d. Polygraph: DPS
    e. Riot truck and equipment: DPS.
    f. Bomb disposal: DPS.

D. State law-enforcement assistance during declared emergency or disaster situations

1. Only the governor has the authority to provide state law-enforcement assistance during an emergency or disaster situation. State equipment and personnel can be used to support local emergencies or to protect life and property in natural disasters per the governor's authorization. The Chief of Police shall request the mayor to contact the governor if state law-enforcement assistance is required.

2. During declared emergencies and disasters, the support listed in section C above is requested through the mayor in the regular NIMS process.