

**NEW BEDFORD**  
**POLICE DEPARTMENT**  
**DIRECTIVE**

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**TO:** All Personnel

**FROM:** Office of the Chief of Police

**SUBJECT:** HIGH-ENERGY PATROL INITIATIVE

**DATE:** January 26, 2006

In 2004, the New Bedford Police Department began an effort to increase our efforts at targeting those individuals who engage in violent activity within our neighborhoods. As part of that effort we have asked each of you to increase your activity in engaging persons that you find in your patrol sectors through the use of any legal means to deter criminal conduct, as well as identifying offenders and removing them from the streets. A primary goal of these efforts is to find those illegally carrying weapons, arresting them and removing those weapons and individuals from our neighborhoods.

I know that many of our officers are out on the streets every day and night doing everything that they can to help remove guns from the streets. We have removed guns from the streets at an amazing rate, and continue to do so on a daily basis. Your efforts are recognized and appreciated. We have seen phenomenal, and heroic actions on the part of New Bedford police officers. These efforts have emerged from all elements of the organization from the patrol force, to detectives, to the community police officers. I am extremely proud of the efforts and commitment that you have demonstrated in targeting guns and the thugs that use them to bring fear into our neighborhoods.

Recent events have driven home to me the need to re-energize our efforts in targeting those thugs whose main goal is to generate fear in our neighborhoods through the indiscriminate use of guns to settle disputes. We have seen that goal expanded to include even middle school age children in recent days. This is a circumstance that none of us can either accept or tolerate. That is why I remain committed to using every legal means at our disposal to combat this threat to the lives and safety of our community. Our response to these thugs must be immediate, certain, and most of all effective in removing them from our city.

Therefore, the purpose of this directive is to remind commanding officers that they are responsible for implementing a strategy of zero tolerance to gun violence through the use of directed neighborhood-safety patrols. These patrols shall be implemented during the uncommitted patrol time of sector units. They shall be used in conjunction with, and in supplement to, currently employed directed patrol strategies. The tactics employed to accomplish these patrols should include, but not be limited to threshold inquiries, field interviews, motor vehicle stops, warrant checks, and street encounters with individuals. It must be clearly understood by all officers that no stop, search or seizure should be conducted without the appropriate level of legal justification. These high-energy patrol activities are not

intended to deny any individual's civil or constitutional rights, but are designed to provide the means for officers to engage in targeted activity against those individuals who have committed, are committing, or are about to commit any violation of the law.

The importance of these tactics increases during those times between the hours of 10:00PM and 5:00AM when the majority of these violent incidents occur. Officers assigned to patrol districts during these hours are expected to approach those individuals that they encounter and question them concerning their activities. Consensual encounters offer a unique opportunity for officers to garner useful information about criminal conditions in their patrol area. These encounters may generate information that leads up the ladder to a circumstance in which reasonable suspicion is developed and further action on the part of officers is warranted.

Additionally, officers are expected to use every legal means at their disposal to target violators. I expect every stop conducted by officers engaged in these strategies to end in some form of documentation. This documentation may range from something as mundane as a notation that a particular individual was seen in a particular area and at a particular time; to the completion of a field interview report, the issuance of a citation, a PC, or an arrest.

The goal of these patrol strategies is to increase our opportunity to develop information, as well as to increase the opportunity to uncover illegal activity. This strategy must be accompanied by zero tolerance for any illegal activity discovered. If cause exists to take any legal and justified enforcement action, then officers must be prepared to take that action.

Commanding Officers and supervisors must be involved in the direction and oversight of this strategy. Although these tactics are important tools in preventing and investigating criminal activity, even when conducted with respect for involved citizens and in strict conformance with legal justifications, they can be perceived by some as a means of police harassment or intimidation conducted in a discriminatory manner against groups or individuals. Supervisory participation in these activities alongside patrol officers whenever possible will assist in ensuring that procedural compliance occurs.

I believe that these high-energy patrol initiatives on the part of every officer provide the framework for an effective strategy to reduce the incidents of gun violence plaguing our neighborhoods. Understand that I support your efforts in addressing this activity and stand ready to defend you against any unwarranted challenges to your work to provide a safe and secure environment for the good citizens of the City of New Bedford.



David A. Provencher  
Acting Chief of Police

cc: Policy Manual