

CODE OF CONDUCT

Devil's Peak Vredehoek Neighbourhood Watch (DPVwatch)

(UPDATED October 2024)

1. What is the Code of Conduct?

- 1.1. All individual members of the DPVwatch have to ensure that they comply fully with and are aware of the provisions of this Code of Conduct when operating as a DPVwatch member.
- 1.2. The Code of Conduct must be read together with the latest adopted DPVwatch Constitution.

2. Aims and Objectives

- 2.1. Ensure that all members of DPVwatch behave in a manner that is law-abiding, non-violent, non-racist, non-sexist, non-religious and non-partisan; and
- 2.2. in a manner that is respectful, ethical and nurturing of a sense of community and good neighbourliness.

3. Identity Cards

- 3.1. All members of DPVwatch on patrol must have identity cards and must carry these cards at all times when on any patrol on behalf of DPVwatch.
- 3.2. The identity cards of members must contain a recent photograph of the member, his or her full names, DPVwatch membership number and the member's legible signature.
- 3.3. The identity cards shall refer to Cape Town Central Police Station and be signed by the station commander.
- 3.4. All identity cards shall be valid until membership is terminated.
- 3.5. Where non-members accompany a member on patrol, such persons do so at their own risk and DPVwatch cannot be held liable in the event of injury or accident, howsoever arising, including by any negligent act or omission.

4. Conduct

- 4.1. All members of DPVwatch must at all times act in a non-violent manner. No member may take the law into his or her own hands irrespective of circumstances.
- 4.2. No member of DPVwatch may display racism, sexism or any other form of discrimination towards any other person.
- 4.3. No member may carry any weapon perceived to be dangerous or which could inflict serious bodily harm or damage to property when patrolling on behalf of the DPVwatch. Only weapons for the sole purpose of self-defence as approved by the Provincial Commissioner, SAPS – Western Cape may be used.
- 4.4. Should a member of DPVwatch take a registered and legal weapon on patrol, they do so in their personal capacity, and not for and on behalf of the DPVwatch.

- 4.5. Should a member of DPVwatch be found guilty of a breach in the code of conduct committed when the member is operating formally as a DPVwatch member, DPVwatch will take such disciplinary actions as are considered appropriate by its Executive Committee and will issue a public statement regarding its action if necessary.
- 4.6. Members of DPVwatch shall not divulge any confidential or privileged information that they may have acquired as a result of their membership of DPVwatch.
- 4.7. No member of DPVwatch may exploit his or her membership for personal advantage or benefit.
- 4.8. Members of DPVwatch must at all times act in a manner that will uphold and promote the aims and objectives of DPVwatch.
- 4.9. A DPVwatch member who has been found guilty of a criminal offence will have his or her membership revoked immediately.

5. Patrol Procedure

- 5.1. Members may undertake patrols on a scheduled programme or ad hoc basis, on foot or by vehicle and must notify the patrol group coordinator and service providers.
- 5.2. Patrols are voluntary and DPVwatch is not responsible for any damage caused to private vehicles or any equipment during the duration of a patrol.
- 5.2.1. No DPVwatch member or patroller may use their vehicle to stop and/or barricade another vehicle or suspect.
- 5.3. Members of DPVwatch are permitted to carry and use high intensity torches of up to ten million candlepower.
- 5.4. Pepper spray or CS gas emitters or electric stun guns are permitted but may only be used by members in self-defence when physical injury or threat has been committed or is reasonably expected to be committed.
- 5.5. Each member going on patrol should have at least one two-way radio or cell phone in each car, or for each group of members on foot patrol, and must have the contact number of the service providers partnering with DPVwatch.
- 5.6. Each patrol member shall at all times carry a DPVwatch or equivalent Neighbourhood Watch reflective vest and have a Patroller ID card at hand.
- 5.7. Each DPVwatch patroller must update their SAPs clearance at least every 12 months.
- 5.8. Members shall use their own discretion as to whether or not to confront an individual, and they do so at their own risk and are not required by DPVwatch to take any action other than calling for assistance or reporting the incident.
- 5.9. DPVwatch members must report any suspicious persons or vehicles to service providers via radio network or relevant patrol WhatsApp group.
- 5.10. Any pertinent information about an incident should be recorded with detail including: time, place, number of suspects or perpetrators; description of perpetrators by age, gender, height and any other distinguishing physical details as well as a description of clothing followed by a brief description of the incident.
- 5.11. In the event of an active crime incident, members on patrol are to be guided by Section 7 of this document (Working with SAPS).
- 5.12. In the event of a crime incident the members on patrol who have assisted, are to encourage the victim to report the incident to SAPS and to log a detailed incident on the DPVwatch website.

5.13. In the event of a contact crime, members on patrol are to check whether the victims need assistance and to communicate the need for assistance with the DPVwatch support team (volunteers with specific skills set) if necessary.

5.14. No member of DPVwatch or patroller shall release a statement to any media or social media channel on any matters concerning crime, crime stats and arrests unless the content of any statement has been agreed upon by the Executive Committee.

5.15. All DPVwatch patrollers shall respect the privacy of residents and represent themselves in a professional manner in person or via any social media channel.

5.16. Each new patroller is required to attend at least a minimum of three patrols with an experienced patroller or Executive Committee member.

5.17. Each patroller is required to sign an indemnity form upon their first patrol.

6. Radio Protocol

6.1. Only members and security service providers and SAPS RC may use the radio network.

6.2. On receipt of the radio (loan or purchase) the member must agree to abide by the radio guidelines and protocols.

6.3. Radios may only be used for communication relevant to DPVwatch patrols and activities. A member may not make any comments that can be construed as racist, sexist or derogatory in any way on the radio network.

6.4. Keep transmissions short, calm and to the point.

6.5 For the purpose of discretion, safety and security of patrollers will be assigned a Delta Victor (DV) call sign.

6.6. After an incident, report back to fellow radio users and relevant security providers on the outcome of the situation.

7. Working with SAPS

7.1. When possible SAPS may provide its members or reservists to accompany DPVwatch members on patrol.

7.2. When on patrol, DPVwatch members shall follow any instructions from the response vehicle as to whether to follow a suspect(s) or maintain observation. SAPS may not direct a member to interfere physically in any situation.

7.3. When on patrol, DPVwatch members shall withdraw from any scene or incident immediately should any violence be used or threatened and shall not confront the perpetrators.

7.4. DPVwatch and SAPS must share information on matters pertaining to crime prevention and the apprehension of alleged criminals.

7.5. DPVwatch will alert SAPS to any areas of concern within the sector and assist SAPS with targeted action to combat these concerns.

7.6. DPVwatch will work with the sector commander to share information and assist where needed.

8. Social Media

8.1. WhatsApp groups have been established for zones, patrol group and special focus areas, on approval of the Executive Committee.(See Addendum 1: WhatsApp Rules).

8.2. Each WhatsApp group has designated Group admins.

8.2.1. WhatsApp Group admins must remove posts that are deemed inappropriate or offensive.

8.3. Only members can be added to the WhatsApp groups.

8.3.1. Only the Office Admin (Secretariat) may add new members to the WhatsApp groups.

8.4. No content may be shared with any third parties or other social media platforms from DPVwatch WhatsApp groups without permission from the Executive Committee.

8.6. No jokes, hate speech, racism, political comments, religious comments, personal comments and other offensive posts are allowed on any DPVwatch Social Media Platform

8.7. Any members who persist in posting content that is inappropriate, will be removed from the platform by the administrators.

8.8. Absolutely no advertising will be permitted on the social media platforms

8.9. Absolutely no personal information is to be shared or reposted on any social media platforms.

8.10. Any posting on behalf of the DPVwatch on any social media platforms, must be approved by the DPVwatch Communications Portfolio first

Addendum 1: DPVwatch Zone Group WhatsApp Rules

DPVwatch WhatsApp Zone Groups are for DPVwatch members to report and receive updates on live incidents.

All members must be respectful at all times.

By agreeing to the DPVWatch Constitution and Code of Conduct, you are agreeing to abide by these rules.

Appropriate posts on Zone Groups

1. Only report/post information relating to active incidents.
2. An incident is defined as an event that has happened recently / is currently happening / is about to happen, and has an impact on the safety and well being of the residents of the area.
3. Postings are strictly limited to reporting suspicious behaviour/concerns/crime related information and information relevant to our area.
4. Only comments relevant to the incident e.g. updating the location of a suspicious person or feedback on the outcome e.g. arrest or suspect taken by SAPS for profiling are allowed.
5. If a message is directed at one person, please DM (direct message) or respond privately.
6. WhatsApp Group Admins must remove inappropriate posts that contravene POPIA, are offensive in terms of the Constitution or amount to hate speech.

Please avoid cluttering the Zone Groups

7. If you wish to express your gratitude to someone, 'react' to their message with an emoji, and do not post messages directly in the chat.
8. Please move non-incident related and general discussions to Other WhatsApp Discussion Groups (see below).
9. Avoid posting opinions or monologues.
10. One post for lost pet notification is allowed per incident, per zone (with a picture).

Inappropriate posts on Zone Groups

11. Discussions around on-going or deep-rooted problems in the community are not appropriate.
12. Personal information is not to be shared or reposted on **any** social media platform.
13. Jokes, hate speech, racism, political comments, religious comments, personal comments and other offensive posts are not allowed on **any** DPVwatch WhatsApp Group.
14. Advertising of services is not permitted on the Groups, except if done so with permission of the DPV Exco, and only with the intention to generate funds for the DPVwatch.

Use of Images and Content

15. Images and footage shared on the Zone Groups are useful to help identify and apprehend potential suspects.

16. Once a suspect has been apprehended, the images will be removed to protect privacy and ensure that active cases are not compromised.
17. Under no circumstances may any content from the WhatsApp Zone Groups be shared with third parties or other social media platforms.

Other WhatsApp Discussion Groups

These groups are not crime related. You can access these groups by means of the DPVwatch Community.

- **Pets Lost and Found WhatsApp Group:** For reporting and discussing lost and found pets within the community.
[Join the group](#)
- **Upper DPV WhatsApp Group (Not Monitored by DPV Watch):** For discussions related to the upper part of DPV. This group is not monitored by the DPV Neighbourhood Watch.
[Join the group](#)
- **Lower DPV WhatsApp Group (Not Monitored by DPV Watch):** For discussions related to the lower part of DPV. This group is not monitored by the DPV Neighbourhood Watch.
[Join the group](#)
- **Municipal Services WhatsApp Group:** For reporting and discussing issues related to municipal services.
[Join the group](#)