



## **Town of Cicero Police Department Police Explorer Program Rules & Regulations**

### **Program Overview**

The Town of Cicero Police Explorer Program is a partnership between the Town of Cicero Police Department and the North East Regional Law Enforcement Educational Association (NERLEEA).

The program's goal is to provide young men and women with hands-on experience and education in law enforcement through:

- Classroom instruction and guest lectures
- Facility tours
- Practical training sessions
- A ride-along program with sworn officers

Explorers gain leadership skills, community service experience, and insight into law enforcement careers.

### **Program Structure**

- **Advisors:** Sworn members of the Town of Cicero Police Department serve as Program Advisors and Associate Advisors.
- **Membership:** The program may accept youth ages 14–21, subject to the Advisor's discretion and program capacity.
- **Leadership Positions:** The post may have an Explorer Captain, Lieutenant, and Sergeant to assist with leadership and organization.

### **Membership Requirements**

To be considered for the Police Explorer Program, applicants must:

1. Complete all required forms, including:
  - Explorer Program Application
  - Liability Waiver (signed at 1<sup>st</sup> meeting)
  - NERLEEA Cadet Application (after program application review)
  - Acknowledgment of Rules & Regulations
2. Pass a background investigation, which may include:
  - Criminal history check
  - Character reference checks
  - Contact with applicant's school
3. Maintain good moral character, with no arrests or convictions for serious offenses, including crimes of moral turpitude.
4. Be enrolled in and maintain good academic standing in school, or have graduated.

## **Meetings**

- Meetings will be scheduled and led by the Post Advisor.
- Each meeting will have a training theme and agenda.
- Attendance is expected at each meeting unless an absence is excused by the Post Advisor.
- During meetings and activities, Explorers must follow the instructions of supervising sworn officers.
- Active members must maintain at least **80% attendance** to remain eligible for ride-alongs.

## **Training Requirements**

Explorers will receive training in:

- Traffic control and flare use
- Police radio use
- Accident investigation basics
- First aid
- Crime prevention
- Crime scene procedures
- Patrol techniques
- Public relations

**Mandatory annual training** will include traffic control, flare use, radio familiarization, and review of program rules.

## **Confidentiality**

Explorers may be exposed to sensitive or confidential information.

- All such information must remain confidential.
- Sharing details of incidents, investigations, or observations outside the program is strictly prohibited.

## **Uniforms & Equipment**

- Explorers must wear the approved uniform or business attire for program functions.
- Uniforms must be clean, pressed, and worn properly.
- Equipment allowed: flashlight, flashlight holster, gloves, notebook, pen, and whistle.
- No unauthorized police equipment may be carried.
- Uniform and personal appearance must meet the standards in **Appendix A**.

## **Finances**

- The Post will maintain a no-interest checking account managed by the Post Advisor.
- Dues will be determined by the Advisor and collected monthly. (Currently Dues are \$0)
- All financial transactions will be recorded, and receipts provided.

## **Liability Insurance**

NERLEE provides liability insurance for members and leadership, supplemental to any personal insurance.

## **Ride-Along Program**

Eligibility requirements:

- At least 80% meeting attendance
- Completion of required training
- Good standing in the program
- Approval by the Post Advisor

Rules:

- Explorers are observers only and must follow officer instructions.
- Explorers must remain in the patrol vehicle unless directed otherwise.
- Ride-alongs are allowed:
  - **Weekends & school vacations:** 8-hour shifts (0600–1400 or 1400–2200)
  - **School nights:** 4-hour shifts (1400–1800 or 1600–2000)
- No ride-alongs are permitted between midnight and 0600.

## **Conduct & Disciplinary Actions**

Explorers represent the Town of Cicero Police Department and are expected to maintain high standards at all times.

**Immediate Termination Offenses** include, but are not limited to:

- Violating criminal laws or serious traffic offenses (DWI, reckless driving, etc.)
- Possession or use of illegal drugs or alcohol
- Weapons violations (see Appendix B)
- Integrity violations, such as lying, impersonating an officer, or sharing confidential information
- Major safety violations

**Suspension/Demotion Offenses** may include:

- Poor academic performance (below 70% GPA)
- School discipline issues
- Certain traffic infractions
- Attendance violations (less than 80% attendance)
- Social media violations (see Appendix C)

## **Social Media**

Explorers must follow the Town of Cicero Police Department's social media policy in **Appendix C**. Violations can result in suspension, demotion, or termination.

## **Acknowledgment**

I have read and understand these Rules & Regulations. I agree to follow them and understand that violations may result in suspension, demotion, or termination from the Police Explorer Program.

**Explorer Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Parent/Guardian Signature (if under 18):** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Post Advisor Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Chief of Police or Designee:** \_\_\_\_\_



## **Appendix A**

### **Personal Appearance & Grooming Standards**

#### **Town of Cicero Police Department Police Explorer Program**

The Town of Cicero Police Explorer Program expects all members to maintain a neat, professional appearance at all times. These standards are designed to promote professionalism, safety, and public confidence.

#### **Personal Hygiene**

- Maintain good personal hygiene and a clean, professional image.
- No offensive body odor or overly strong fragrances (perfume or cologne).

#### **Hair Standards**

**General:** Hair must be neat, clean, and well-groomed. Hairstyles that draw undue attention or appear unprofessional are not permitted. Wigs or hairpieces must meet the same standards. Hair must not interfere with wearing uniform headgear properly.

#### **Male Members:**

- Hair may touch but not fall below the top of the ear or the top of the uniform collar.
- Sideburns must not extend below the opening of the ear, be no wider than 1 inch, and end in a clean, horizontal line.
- Mustaches must be neatly trimmed, not extend over the upper lip, and not extend more than  $\frac{1}{4}$  inch beyond the corners of the mouth.
- Beards are prohibited.

#### **Female Members (Uniformed Assignments):**

- Long hair must be styled in a bun or similar updo; no excessive pins, combs, or barrettes.
- Short hair must be pinned back from the face and above the collar.
- Ponytails, pigtails, or grab-able hairstyles are prohibited during uniformed duties.

#### **Female Members (Non-Uniformed Assignments):**

- Hair must be neatly groomed and professional in appearance.

#### **Makeup & Nails**

- Female members may wear conservative makeup in moderation.
- Fingernails must be no longer than  $\frac{1}{4}$  inch beyond the fingertip.
- Nail polish:
  - Uniformed female members — clear polish only.

- Non-uniformed female members — conservative colors only.

### **Jewelry**

- All members must wear a functional, conservative wristwatch while on duty.
- Jewelry must be conservative and not pose safety risks.
- No visible nose pins or religious symbols while on duty.
- Maximum of three rings may be worn.
- No visible chains, necklaces, or bracelets with the uniform unless approved by the Department.
- Female members may wear one pair of small button-style earrings; no other earrings are permitted.

### **Tattoos, Body Art, Brandings, and Piercings**

The purpose of these rules is to maintain professionalism, neutrality, and public trust.

#### **Prohibited Tattoos/Body Art/Brandings:**

- Obscene or sexually explicit content
- Symbols of discrimination, gang affiliation, extremist groups, or drug use

#### **Placement Restrictions:**

- No brands or tattoos on ears, head, neck, face, scalp, or hands (unless medically necessary and approved).

#### **Piercings:**

- No visible facial piercings (except approved earrings for female members).
- No visible piercings on the tongue, lips, or eyebrows during program activities.



**Appendix B**  
**New York State Penal Law 265.08 –**  
**Criminal Use of a Firearm 2<sup>nd</sup> Degree**  
**Town of Cicero Police Department**  
**Police Explorer Program**

**Official Law Text**

Under **New York State Penal Law 265.08**:

**A person is guilty of criminal use of a firearm in the second degree when:**

1. They commit any class C violent felony offense, as defined in section 70.02 of this chapter, and
2. In the course of committing such crime, they either:
  - **(a)** Possess a loaded firearm, or
  - **(b)** Display what appears to be a pistol, revolver, rifle, shotgun, machine gun, or other firearm.

**Classification:** This offense is a **Class C felony**.

**Penalties:** Conviction can result in significant prison time and a permanent criminal record.

**Plain Language Explanation for Explorers**

This law means that if someone commits a violent felony **and** has a loaded gun or even shows something that looks like a gun, they can be charged with an additional serious crime — **criminal use of a firearm in the second degree**.

- It does **not** matter if the gun is real or fake — if it looks like a firearm, it counts under the law.
- Being charged under this section adds serious penalties on top of the original felony charge.
- For Explorers: possession of any firearm, weapon, or replica while in the program will result in **immediate termination** and possible criminal charges.

**Explorer Program Policy**

- **No firearms** of any type may be possessed or carried by Explorers during any program activity — **including BB guns, airsoft guns, paintball guns, or replicas**.
- Violations will result in immediate removal from the program and referral to law enforcement.

- Any questions about whether an object is considered a firearm or weapon should be directed to the Post Advisor before bringing it to any program function.



## **Appendix C**

### **Social Media Policy**

#### **Town of Cicero Police Department**

#### **Police Explorer Program**

### **Purpose**

The Town of Cicero Police Explorer Program recognizes that social media is a part of everyday life. However, Explorers represent the Police Department both **on and off duty**. Inappropriate online conduct can damage public trust, harm the program's reputation, and violate department policy.

This policy applies to all social media platforms, including but not limited to: Facebook, Instagram, X (Twitter), Snapchat, TikTok, YouTube, Reddit, and any blogs, forums, or group chats.

### **General Rules**

Explorers must:

1. **Represent the program professionally** — online activity should reflect integrity, respect, and responsibility.
2. **Follow all laws** — do not post anything that could be considered illegal, threatening, harassing, discriminatory, or obscene.
3. **Protect confidential information** — do not post photos, videos, names, or details from calls, investigations, ride-alongs, or training without explicit written permission from the Post Advisor.
4. **Avoid negative commentary** about the Town of Cicero Police Department, its employees, other Explorers, or community members.
5. **Separate personal views from the program** — if expressing personal opinions on controversial topics, avoid references to the Explorer Program or the Town of Cicero Police Department.

### **Prohibited Content**

Posting, sharing, or engaging with the following content is strictly forbidden:

- Photos or videos in uniform that were not authorized by the Post Advisor.
- Images showing unsafe or unprofessional behavior while in uniform or during program activities.
- Use of alcohol, drugs, or tobacco products.
- Lewd, obscene, or sexually suggestive content.
- Hate speech or discriminatory remarks based on race, religion, gender, sexual orientation, disability, or any other protected category.
- Any material that promotes violence, illegal activity, or gang affiliation.

### Use of Official Logos and Images

- The Town of Cicero Police Department logo, patches, badges, or uniform images may **not** be used on personal accounts without prior written approval from the Post Advisor.
- Explorers may not imply they are sworn law enforcement officers in any online setting.

### Privacy & Group Chats

- Official Explorer group chats will be moderated by an Advisor.
- Private group chats among members must remain respectful and free from harassment, bullying, or inappropriate content.
- Messages sent in a group chat are **not private** — screenshots can be used as evidence in disciplinary matters.

### Consequences for Violations

Depending on severity, violations of this policy may result in:

- Verbal or written warning
- Suspension from the program
- Demotion of rank within the program
- Termination from the program
- Referral to law enforcement (if criminal conduct is involved)

### Acknowledgment

I have read and understand the Social Media Policy for the Town of Cicero Police Explorer Program. I agree to follow these rules and understand that violations may result in suspension, demotion, termination, or legal consequences.

**Explorer Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Parent/Guardian Signature** *(if under 18)*: \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Post Advisor Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Chief of Police or Designee:** \_\_\_\_\_