



## What is a Block Captain?

A block captain (sometimes called a block contact) is exactly what it sounds like; they are in “charge” of their block’s houses with respect to neighborhood association or crime watch activities. Often they are involved in working for the community before the association or watch group gets started, but sometimes it is the new neighbor down the street who has the time and energy to help out. Don’t be afraid to ask for help!

### **Who is a block captain?**

- ✓ A block captain is a point of contact between individual residents and the leadership of the neighborhood or homes association. They may or may not be an ‘elected’ position.
- ✓ A block captain is someone who knows who to contact, whether it is the Kansas City Police Department, Animal Control, or Public Works, to get help for a resident when they ask.
- ✓ A block captain should know when new neighbors move into their block, and be willing to meet them and introduce them to their new soon-to-be-friends. Don’t be shy!
- ✓ A block captain is a person with the time and energy to be there when residents need to communicate information or ask for help. They can be retired, in school, on sabbatical or working from home. Some especially large or complicated blocks may want to select two captains, to help even out the responsibility and improve response time. Don’t forget to use tools like voice mail, e-mail, and cellular phones if they are available!

### **Who is not a block captain?**

- ⊗ A block captain is not a vigilante; no one should expect them to go out and stop a crime in progress. That is what the police are there for! You can help by gathering information and giving it to the block captain to relay to the police, along with any information they may get from other residents on your street.
- ⊗ A block captain is not a “nanny” or mother for the neighborhood; don’t expect them to solve your intra-neighborhood disputes for you. Try to work out difficulties with neighbors for yourself; the City of Kansas City, MO has a Mediation program if you need help: 513-1836.
- ⊗ A block captain is not a free babysitter, lawnmower, or trash collector. Remember that they are a volunteer, helping out as best they can, just like you are. Remember to do your part!