

TASKS OF INTERNAL AFFAIRS BODIES IN ENSURING PUBLIC ORDER AT THE NEIGHBORHOOD LEVEL

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Annotation:

This thesis provides a scholarly examination of the tasks and functions of internal affairs bodies in ensuring public order, highlighting the distinctive features of their implementation. It also explores the activities of neighborhood public safety centers and discusses pressing legal issues concerning the regulation of their operations.

Furthermore, the thesis presents a comparative analysis of the primary functions of public order enforcement agencies in foreign countries. Based on this analysis, proposals are developed aimed at enhancing the performance and effectiveness of national neighborhood public safety centers.

Keywords: internal affairs bodies, duties, functions, public order, cooperation, law enforcement practice, platform, performance efficiency criteria.

INTRODUCTION

Since gaining independence, the task of maintaining public order and ensuring societal security has remained a top priority in the activities of the internal affairs bodies of Uzbekistan.

An examination of international experience reveals that similar priorities are enshrined in the legislation of several foreign countries. For instance, the responsibility of internal affairs bodies for ensuring public order and public safety, as well as maintaining the peace of citizens, is established in the following legal acts:

- Article 2, paragraph 1, subparagraph 2 of the Law of the Kyrgyz Republic "On the Internal Affairs Bodies of the Kyrgyz Republic";
- Article 4, paragraph 1, subparagraph 3 of the Law of the Republic of Kazakhstan "On the Internal Affairs Bodies of the Republic of Kazakhstan";
- Article 3, paragraph 1, subparagraph 3 of the Law of the Republic of Turkmenistan "On the Internal Affairs Bodies of the Republic of Turkmenistan";
- Article 3, paragraph 2, subparagraph 1 of the Law of the Republic of Azerbaijan "On Police in the Republic of Azerbaijan";
- Article 2, paragraph 1, subparagraph 3 of the Law of the Republic of Belarus "On the Internal Affairs Bodies of the Republic of Belarus";
- Article 3, paragraph 1, subparagraph 3 of the Law of the Republic of Tajikistan "On the Police".

These legal provisions clearly state that internal affairs bodies are responsible for maintaining public order, ensuring public safety, and protecting the peace of citizens.

In recent years, new functions have been assigned to the internal affairs bodies of Uzbekistan in order to effectively fulfill the tasks related to maintaining public safety and order, as well as to ensure peace and stability in society.

At this point, it is worth clarifying the distinction between the terms “*duty*” and “*function*” as defined in academic lexicons. A *duty* refers to a set of responsibilities performed within the scope of an official position or rank, whereas a *function* represents a sequence of essential actions that serve to realize the given duty.

Internal affairs bodies have been designated as the primary institution responsible for maintaining public order at the neighborhood level. In accordance with Presidential Decree No. PQ-5050 dated April 2, 2021, titled “On Additional Organizational Measures to Further Improve the Activities of Internal Affairs Bodies in Ensuring Public Safety and Combating Crime,” neighborhood public safety centers—structural units at the grassroots level of internal affairs bodies—were established.

Moreover, amendments to the Law of the Republic of Uzbekistan “On Internal Affairs Bodies” introduced by Law No. O‘RQ-797 on October 27, 2022, provided for the establishment of these centers within local neighborhoods. According to Article 151 of the law, “*Neighborhood public safety centers are structural subdivisions of internal affairs bodies that operate directly within communities to maintain public order, prevent legal violations, and combat crime. They also ensure the safety and tranquility of citizens by organizing cooperative efforts between internal affairs bodies, other law enforcement agencies, and public organizations at the neighborhood level.*”

In line with the legislation, neighborhood public safety centers operate through the following personnel structure: a senior prevention inspector, a prevention inspector, and an assistant to the prevention inspector on public order (all of whom operate on a daily basis). Additionally, the following are assigned to serve the neighborhood: the inspector for women’s affairs from the district (or city) internal affairs body, a probation officer, an operative representative, patrol-post service officers, members of the National Guard of Uzbekistan assigned to assist in maintaining public order and preventing offenses, and representatives of other authorized state agencies and public organizations.

It is important to emphasize that the *mahalla* institution represents a unique form of local governance in Uzbekistan, with no direct analogues in other countries. Ensuring peace in the country is inherently tied to maintaining order in

neighborhoods and creating a secure environment for citizens. Therefore, special attention is being paid to law enforcement at the *mahalla* level.

Based on the analysis of law enforcement practices and current legislation, the following proposal has been developed to improve the effectiveness of internal affairs bodies in maintaining public order at the *mahalla* level:

Proposal: Full digitalization of the activities of internal affairs units operating in neighborhood public safety centers.

There are approximately 9,300 *mahallas* across the Republic. It is essential to leverage digital technologies in ensuring public order in these communities. A dedicated digital platform would significantly enhance the efficiency of managing, monitoring, and overseeing the activities of neighborhood public safety centers, as well as streamline the generation of reports in real-time.

To this end, the following draft normative-legal documents are proposed for development:

1. A draft Presidential Decree of the Republic of Uzbekistan “*On the Digitalization of Neighborhood Public Safety Centers*”;
2. A draft Resolution of the Cabinet of Ministers of the Republic of Uzbekistan “*On the Development and Implementation of the “Mahallada Huquq-Tartibot” Digital Platform.*”

The adoption of these documents will allow neighborhood public safety centers to operate in accordance with modern requirements and will serve as an effective mechanism for preventing crime and legal violations at the local level.