



Lynchburg Police Department Accountability and Transparency

A. Lynchburg Police Department (LPD) Foundations

1. **Hiring Process.** Only 2-3% of applicants are hired after a thorough vetting process that includes the following:
 - (a) Personal History Statement
 - (b) Preliminary background check (DMV, Criminal History, and Credit History)
 - (c) Physical Agility Test
 - (d) Written Test
 - (e) Oral Review Board
 - (f) Polygraph Examination
 - (g) Background Investigation
 - (h) Conditional Offer of Employment
 - (i) Medical Examination
 - (j) Psychological Examination
 - (k) Command Staff Review
2. **Ongoing Review.** Throughout their careers, officers receive ongoing performance reviews and evaluations that include:
 - (a) Annual evaluations
 - (b) Review of all Uses of Force (UoF)
 - (c) Quarterly review of Body-Worn Cameras (BWCs)
 - (d) Debriefs of critical incidents
 - (e) Annual mental wellness checks
 - (f) The Virginia State Police investigate all officer-involved shootings.
 - (g) Accountability: Since 2001, the LPD has had 54 individuals fired or resign in lieu of termination.
3. **Proactive strategies.** The LPD prides itself on exceeding industry standards and providing a level of service to our community that serves as a model for other agencies.
 - (a) LPD policies have been on our website since 2017.
 - (b) We instituted a BWC program in 2016.
 - (c) We created a Community Policing Advisory Group (CPAG) in 2015 that advises on policy, procedure, and reviews critical incidents.
 - (d) The LPD collects Use of Force data and provides this information to the Virginia State Police and the Federal Bureau of Investigation. We have reported Use of Force information to the FBI since January 2019, and are one of only 40% of all departments across the country that voluntarily reports this information to the FBI.



- (e) IAPro, Blueteam, and Early Intervention System are employee management systems that the LPD uses to thoroughly track all aspects of performance and complaints.
 - (f) Increased our social media footprint and reach to share important information with the public in as many formats as possible.
 - (g) Long Range Acoustic Device provides improved communication and volume in critical incidents, which allows both a suspect and residents to hear what we need them to do so everyone remains safe.
 - (h) The LPD worked with Horizon Behavioral Health to apply for a federal grant that would embed a mental health professional with an officer to answer calls for service that involve an individual in mental health crisis. We will hear back about this grant in the fall.
4. Training. After officers complete six months of training in the basic academy, they are required to undergo a minimum of 40 hours of additional training every two years. Below are some examples of training related to understanding implicit bias and de-escalation tactics.
- (a) Fair and Impartial Policing
 - (b) Excited Delirium
 - (c) Crisis Intervention Team
 - (d) Tactical Communication
 - (e) Verbal Judo
 - (f) Cultural Diversity
 - (g) Autism Awareness
 - (h) Communicating with the Mentally Ill
 - (i) Handling Mental Illness Calls for Service
 - (j) Best Practices for Dealing with Emotionally Disturbed Persons
 - (k) Threat Assessments of the Mentally Ill
5. Certification. The LPD has been certified by the Commission on Accreditation for Law Enforcement Agencies (CALEA) since 1989. This certification requires us to meet and maintain compliance with hundreds of standards.
6. Community Policing. The LPD has incorporated Community Policing as a organizational philosophy for many years. We are dedicated to partnering with our community to ensure our residents know and trust their police officers. The items below are just some of the many way we engage with our community to build this trust.
- (a) Community Policing Advisory Group
 - (b) Neighborhood Watch
 - (c) Citizens Police Academy
 - (d) Criminology Class at E.C Glass High School
 - (e) One Community One Voice
 - (f) Community Code Compliance Team



- (g) Lynchburg Loss Prevention Association
- (h) Business/Residential Security Assessments
- (i) College Cadet Program
- (j) Ride Along Program
- (k) South West Virginia Prevention Association
- (l) Presentations (Personal Safety and Know Your Rights)
- (m) Unity in Our Community
- (n) Books and Badges
- (o) Salvation Army Christmas Kettle Campaign
- (p) Badges for Baseball and Basketball with the Boys and Girls Club
- (q) Badges and Barbers
- (r) Rape Aggression Defense
- (s) Car Seat Safety Checks
- (t) Mental Health Association of Central Virginia
- (u) Commonwealth Autism Board
- (v) YWCA Advisory Board
- (w) Horizon Behavioral Health Board
- (x) Drug Court Advisory Board
- (y) The Lynchburg Optimist Club
- (z) Bicycle Safety Programs
- (aa) The Exchange Club of Lynchburg
- (bb) Virginia Alcohol Safety Action Program Board
- (cc) CASA Advisory Board
- (dd) Blue Ridge Regional Safety Board

B. LPD Present

1. Immediately following the tragic events in Minneapolis, we took an introspective look to ensure our practices and policies were aligned to safeguard our community. We are still in the process of formally updating policy, however, the following became effective Wednesday, June 10, 2020 and serves as an operational memorandum until the appropriate written directives can be updated.
 - (a) Use of Force:
 - (1) The Lynchburg Police Department has banned the use of chokeholds for at least the last 50 years. Sworn employees are never authorized to use the chokehold technique or any type of neck restraint unless deadly force is authorized.
 - (2) Duty to Intervene: Sworn employees have an obligation to protect the public and other employees.
 - (3) It shall be the duty of every sworn employee present at any scene where physical force is being applied to either stop or attempt to stop another sworn employee when force is being inappropriately applied or is no longer required.



(4) It shall be the duty of every sworn employee who witnesses inappropriate action by another officer to report that inappropriate action as soon as possible.

(b) Body-Worn Camera Systems: All sworn employees, including specialty units such as the Tactical Unit and Crisis Negotiation Team, must wear and activate their body-worn camera (BWC) system anytime they interact with a member of the public as outlined in PD17(2)-0408 Body Worn Camera System. Prior to this, BWCs were not required for Tactical Unit and Crisis Negotiations Team members.

2. Over the past two weeks, we have met with multiple individuals and groups to listen to their feedback and understand their concerns. We are gathering all this information and will use it to help inform decisions as we move forward.
3. We are currently working on an online complaint form that will provide another avenue for residents to express concerns with officer performance.

C. Community Recommendations

1. In 2015, President Obama's Task Force on 21st Century Policing developed recommendations for law enforcement agencies based around six pillars. When these recommendations came out, the LPD reviewed and has incorporated the majority of them. Details on this are in the document titled "LPD 21st Century Policing."
2. 8 Can't Wait Policies with LPD responses.
 - (a) Ban chokeholds and strangleholds: The LPD has banned the use of chokeholds and strangleholds since at least the 1970s. All officers receive this instruction during trainings and we are working to add this to policy, as noted above.
 - (b) Require de-escalation: Our officers are required to use de-escalation techniques when interacting with our community. They are trained in these techniques through several training methods, including Fair and Impartial Policing, Crisis Intervention Team, Tactical communications and Verbal Judo.
 - (c) Require warning before shooting: Officers are trained to give verbal warnings before firing their weapons, when safe and practical to do so.
 - (d) Exhaust all other means before shooting: Officers are trained to use the minimal amount of force necessary to address the threat with which they are presented.
 - (e) Duty to intervene: Officers are trained to intervene when they see another officer acting inappropriately. We are working to add this to policy, as noted above.
 - (f) Ban shooting at moving vehicles: Officers are prohibited from shooting at a moving vehicle except in the defense of their life or another.



- (g) Require Use of Force Continuum: The LPD has a Use of Force policy and Circle of Force model that matches the level of force with the level of resistance being demonstrated.
- (h) Require Comprehensive Reporting: Officers are required to report each time they use force and these interactions are thoroughly investigated.
- 3. The LPD supports a state and/or national de-certification registry that would prevent officers who are fired or resign in lieu of termination based on inappropriate actions from serving as a law enforcement officer in another agency.

D. LPD Moving Forward

- 1. As we look to the future, we will continue to prioritize the following:
 - (a) Policies. Below are policies/directives that have been under review in the recent past or currently to assess best practices and efficacy related to community feedback. All policies are reviewed on a regular basis as part of our re-accreditation process.
 - (1) Body Worn Cameras
 - (2) Employee Rules of Conduct
 - (3) Vehicle Pursuits
 - (4) Use of Force
 - (5) Alternatives to Arrest
 - (6) Active Pointing (under consideration for development)
 - (7) LGBTQ (under development)
 - (b) CPAG. We are committed to our continued partnership with CPAG and are working with them to develop a more robust review process for complaints.
 - (c) Recruiting. We need everyone's help to better reflect the diverse fabric of our community. This is a call to action for our leaders to help shape the future of the LPD.
- 2. Additionally, we also are exploring the following:
 - (a) Listening sessions. Beginning in July, we will hold weekly community listening sessions each Wednesday from 6 to 8 p.m. at various locations around the city. Members of the LPD will attend these sessions to understand the concerns of our residents.
 - (b) Police2Citizen. We are implementing a new portal that allows for online reporting and will include a crime map.
 - (c) Axon Citizen. This feature allows residents to provide photo or video evidence related to criminal activity or complaints in a streamlined format.
 - (d) Public Critical Incident Briefings. Going forward, if we have a critical incident, such as an officer-involved shooting, Chief Zuidema will release a public video outlining the incident and LPD's response.
 - (e) Training. We will provide standalone de-escalation training, procedural justice training, as well as Integrating Communication, Assessment, and



- Tactics (ICAT) training for all officers as part of our holistic approach to interacting with our residents. This training is dependent upon funding.
- (f) Data release. We are looking into the best ways to release monthly data to our community that demonstrates an increased level of transparency.
 - (g) Internal Diversity Committee. We are investigating the implementation of an internal diversity committee to advise both internal and external process improvements.