



Interoffice Memorandum

Date: June 15, 2020

To: Dr. L. Pettis Patton, City Manager

From: Angela M. Greene, Chief of Police

Re: Policing Updates Regarding Current Affairs

ISSUE:

In response to recent incidents occurring nationally due to police officers' excessive or deadly use of force, we have implemented the following changes to immediately prevent these incidents from occurring in the city of Portsmouth and future plans to continue programs that will increase the trust and transparency with the community.

DISCUSSION:

Immediate Steps Taken:

As a result of the tragic death of George Floyd on May 25th, I met with my entire training division to go over the key factors surrounding this horrific event and the message we needed to make clear to our officers:

1. Any chokeholds, shunting of breath or restricted breathing is **PROHIBITED** and against our policies – which have been in place and already existing.
2. Direct Duty to Intervene – all officers are responsible to stop any behavior that may bring harm or disrepute to citizens and the department as well as inform supervisors and Chief of Police of same.
3. De-Escalation – We must first make every attempt to not create a situation where we have to use force. If it becomes necessary to use force, we must start immediately de-escalating the force to match the lessened threat or use of resistance by the citizen.

To immediately re-emphasize our policies and expectations of our officers, I sent out a department wide email on **May 29th** reminding our officers of our main goal to preserve life, duty to act, Oath of Honor, requesting all supervisors to immediately do training/discussions with officers, and be on look-out for mandatory on-line training within a few days regarding these topics.

In an effort not to wait for the entire department to go through our annual In-Service Training beginning June 8 – October, we wanted to implement on-line training so that officers were made immediately aware of our expectations and standards and their review/participation of the training could be verified via computer log in and acknowledgment of the training. Therefore, on **May 31st** the Lieutenant in charge of training created a PowerPoint presentation on these important topics regarding the incident surrounding George Floyd for all police officers to review by June 12th.

Training Revised to Implement National Incidents:

Our annual **In-Service training** of all officers on the department started on **June 8th**. In light of recent national events surrounding use of force, we tailored our training to specifically discuss the incidents of **George Floyd** that occurred on **May 25th** as well as the **Taser** incident that occurred in Fairfax County, VA on **June 7th**.

Additionally, we put an emphasis on our **De-Escalation Training** with recently certified trainers within our department, of the most recent de-escalation program sanctioned by nationally recognized PERF (Police Executive Research Forum). The training is called **ICAT** (Integrating Communications, Assessment and Tactics De-escalation Training). We want to ensure officers are taking every opportunity to not create deadly or excessive force situations by utilizing the proper communication techniques. But when force is necessary they are able to quickly recognize how and when to begin the de-escalation of force to match the lessened resistance or force used by the citizen.

Policy Updates:

In March of 2020, before any of these national incidents occurred, we secured an outside vendor/expert to review all of our existing policies to bring them current and within national standards and practices that reflect 21st Century policing.

In an effort to include citizen's input as well as specialized groups on our draft policy surrounding our Use of Force, I met with **NAACP** representatives on **June 2nd** as well as **June**

8th. We had a meeting scheduled for June 16th, but that has been cancelled due to active investigation surrounding incident that occurred on June 10th.

But during the two prior meetings, at the time, the only issue the NAACP had with our Use of Force policy is the word “reasonable.”

Citizen Discussions:

On **June 4th**, I held a **TEAMS** meeting with our clergy members that attend our **Faiths Behind the Badge** meetings to discuss what we are doing in light of these national events to ensure we don't have similar incidents here in Portsmouth. There were about 14 clergy members that participated in that video conference.

On **June 5th**, the City's Marketing Team recorded a **video** of me highlighting our community efforts and encouraging our citizens to be a part of our policy revision process and we are listening to their concerns and want to develop new policies that improve our transparency and trust within the community we serve.

On **June 9th** we held a **Prayer & Conversation** event at Grove Church to discuss community leaders' concerns, questions and future outlook for the police department in order to increase community trust and participation in our policies moving forward. There were approximately 50 individuals that attended that event, which was captured by the media.

IN PROGRESS:

We are in the process of creating a draft policy for **Duty to Inform** and **Duty to Intervene**. Once we have created the draft policy we will forward to outside vendor, Randy Means, to review and make sure same is in compliance with current state of affairs and national standards.

Also in process of creating a **Chief's Citizen Advisory Board**, to discuss implementation and oversight of new policies within the police department.

I will call the National NAACP chapter today to request another representative from the NAACP, which was not involved in the June 10th incident, to sit down with us and continue talks surrounding an amenable Use of Force policy.

At our next In-Service training on **June 22nd**, we will implement the situation of **Mr. Rayshard Brooks'** deadly use of force in **Atlanta**, as part of our use of force training and de-escalation tactics to prevent a similar incident from occurring.

We will advertise the rescheduled date of our **Citizen's Academy** that was cancelled due to COVID. We are planning to start the next Citizen's Academy on **September 14th**. This will give

us the opportunity to keep the dialogue open with our citizens as well as a good pool of candidates to become a part of the **Chief's Citizen Advisory Board**.