

LWVLGA Questions for the Police Chiefs in our Communities

1. Please describe the vetting process for candidates who apply to become police officers in your department.
 - A. Our vetting process consists of the following steps:
 - All applications are reviewed to ensure each candidate meets the established requirements and prerequisites for the position
 - All eligible applicants must attend a mandatory orientation session
 - All applicants must take and pass a written exam
 - The top 20 written scores then move on to a structured oral interview with the Police and Fire Commission
 - The combined written and oral exam scores are compiled and the candidates are placed on a certified Eligibility List in rank order. This list is in effect for a two year period.
 - Any vacancies are filled with candidates from this list
 - If a candidate is selected off the list for a current vacancy, we conduct a comprehensive background investigation that consists of a thorough character and criminal background check, polygraph, psychological, and medical examinations.
2. How often are veteran officers evaluated for compliance with Department policy and what is that process?
 - A. All officers, including veteran officers (from Chief on down) are continually trained and evaluated on department standards and policies. Compliance training consists of both internal and external training resources, annual certifications such as weapons and less lethal uses of force, de-escalation, crisis intervention, emergency management, cultural competency, legal procedure, constitutional rights, and human rights to name a few. We are also a nationally accredited agency that must meet or exceed best practices and national standards. We recently received our 6th reaccreditation award for being one of only 41 agencies in Illinois who are accredited by the Commission on Accredited Law Enforcement Agencies (CALEA).
3. What percentage of your officers are female? What percentage of your officers are African American, Latino/a, Asian American or other persons of color and how do those percentages compare with the demographics of your community? Are any of your females or officers of color in supervisory or management roles? Does your Department have a policy promoting diversity in hiring? Please describe the policy.
 - A. 14 percent of our current sworn officers are female. Although we currently have no African-American officers, we recently had an African-American sergeant retire several months ago after a 21 year career with our department. We do not have any Latino/a or Asian-American sworn officers on our staff but we are in the process of hiring one Asian-American officer in January 2021 for a current vacancy. The current racial makeup of our community is 98.32% white, 0.18% African-American, 0.04% Native American, 0.72 Asian-American, and 1.70% Latino/a.

4. Is there a clear and enforced use-of-force continuum that details what weapons and force are acceptable in a wide variety of civilian-police interactions? Please describe those policies. Are police officers required to intervene if they witness excessive force being used by another officer?

A. Yes, we have a clear and enforced continuum by department policy and standards. Basically, our policy allows for reasonable discretion by the officer based on the perceived and reasonable threat they encounter. It encourages the officer to de-escalate a situation with use of verbal tactics along with giving them time and distance between themselves and the possible threat. If use of force is allowed and reasonable, officers should always use the lowest and least lethal use of force before resorting to physical or lethal uses of force. For example, if force is warranted given the circumstances, officers should use either hands-on, pepper spray, or Taser before ever using baton strikes or deadly force with a firearm. Yes, our policy does require officers to intervene if they observe another officer using excessive force.

5. Is there an early-intervention system enforced to correct officers who use excessive force?

A. Yes, our agency does have an early warning/intervention system to identify and hold officers accountable who may have used excessive force.

6. Do all of your officers receive de-escalation training? If so, please describe the training.

A. Yes, all of our sworn staff does receive annual training on de-escalation methods. This training is offered in lecture, practical, scenario-based, and online training for our officers. We incorporate this training into our annual use of force and defensive tactics training curriculums.

7. What types of calls or required interventions did you receive in the last year [mental health, behavioral health, substance abuse, domestic violence, gun violence, traffic related, public disturbances, property damage, etc.]. Please indicate the percentage in each category.

A. 2020 to date :

- * Mental/behavioral calls for service – 23 (.0034 percent of our total calls)
- * Substance abuse calls for service – 14 (.0021 percent of our total calls)
- * Domestic violence calls for service – 46 (.0069 percent of our total calls)
- * Gun violence calls for service – 1 (.00015 percent)
- * Traffic related – (this includes our officer-initiated traffic stops) – 1508 (22.53 percent)
- * Public disturbances – 65 (.009 percent of our total calls)
- * Property damage – 51 (.008 percent of total calls)

8. Has your Department signed on to the 10 Shared Principles affirmed by the IL NAACP and the ILACP? If not, why not? If so, what is your Department doing to implement the principles?

A. Yes, we have signed on. All of these principles were already incorporated and implemented as part of our overall department policies and procedures. Again, being a CALEA accredited agency since 2004 proves that we meet or exceed over 400 national standards with many

relating strict oversight of fair and unbiased policing. These standards and culture are engrained into our department culture and philosophies.