

[Tips for Meeting with Local Law Enforcement Leadership](#)

As “All politics is local” our city police departments and county Sheriff’s office have the most impact on our communities. As a grassroots organization, it is important for the LWV to know, understand and communicate with their local law enforcement agencies and leaders on a regular basis.

The time to start talking is before a crisis. Every law enforcement leader our working group spoke with echoed that sentiment. Your first meeting is designed to open lines of communication. Effective communication works both ways. Be prepared to both speak and listen.

The League is here to learn. You must know and understand the public policies of law enforcement agencies in North Carolina before you can know that agencies are following/enforcing their policies.

The League is here to share. Some government officials may know about the League, but you should take information about your local League to help them understand you better.

The League is active in our community. As League members and individual citizens, we attend meetings, follow government and speak to our elected leaders. We are stakeholders and should be recognized as such.

[Preparation](#)

Review the resources available on the LWVNC [Law Enforcement Practices Working Group \(LEPWG\) page](#). Find your law enforcement agency websites, Facebook and Twitter accounts. Follow them. Before meeting in person, see if you can find out about:

Leadership – Who is your Chief or Sheriff? What is their experience?

Budget – How much of the City/County budget goes to law enforcement? Can you get a detailed budget for the agency itself?

Staff – How many officers and staff work at the agency?

Policies and Procedures – Is your local agency’s policy open and public?

Contact the agency Public Information Officer, Community Outreach Officer or other administrative personnel to set up an in-person meeting with your police chief and sheriff. Be prepared to explain the general purpose of your meeting, how long you would like to meet and who will be there.

[Meeting](#)

Plan on taking 2-3 League members* to your meeting. Too many members may appear you are ganging up on your Chief/Sheriff -- too few members risks having a single point of view or forgetting to ask everything you want.

Prepare a list of important topics or questions. Refer to “[5 Questions to ask](#)” for ideas on framing questions to your sheriff/police chief.

Share what your League does within your community. Invite the Chief/Sheriff** and key staff to LWV events. Try to set up regular meetings. You may then find the agency reaching out to you in the future to ask questions and get your input.

*At least one member should reside within the jurisdiction of the agency you are visiting.

**Note – The County Sheriff is an elected official. Be aware of League Nonpartisan Issues especially during active campaign/election seasons.

Before or after your meeting: Contact the LEPWG and ask questions or share your experiences. We can all learn from each other.