

# The Mercer Island Police Department Operations Report / Public Trust



July 14, 2020  
AB 5724

# Policing in America



- Challenging Time for our communities and Law Enforcement.
- Public Trust in Law Enforcement is suffering in many communities.
- What has the MIPD done to build and maintain public trust?

# Mercer Island Police Department

What are we doing to build and maintain trust with our community?

1. Hiring Process
2. Initial Training
3. Clear Policies
4. Ongoing Training
5. Accountability



# Hiring Process

Hiring – (It starts with hiring)

- Testing process
- Oral Boards
- Background Investigation
- Chief's Interview
- Conditional Job Offer



# Initial Training

- Pre-Academy
- Basic Law Enforcement Academy
- Post-Academy Training
- Field Training
- 18-Month Probationary Period





# Policies

## Contemporary Policies

- Lexipol / Daily Training Bulletins
- Use of Force policy
  - Officers can only use the amount of force that reasonably appears necessary.
  - Neck restraints **are not allowed** as a restraining technique.
  - Officers have a duty to intervene if the witness excessive force.
  - Verbal warnings are required when feasible.
  - All applications of force are reviewed by supervisors.
- Biased- Based Policing
  - Our policy strictly prohibits racial profiling / biased based policing.
  - Annual training is required.
  - Officers are responsible for promptly reporting any known instances of racial or bias-based profiling to a supervisor.



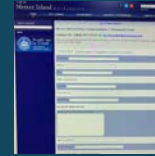
# Ongoing Training

- As per State law, officers are required to attend a minimum of 24 hours of training annually.
- MIPD Officers typically receive more than the minimum training requirements, resulting in a well-trained department.
- Coalition of Small Police Agencies (CSPA)
  - MIPD pools training classes and shares trainers.
  - CSPA sponsors annual Anti-biased policing training, bringing in different trainers each year to cover different topics, all aimed at preventing biased policing.
    - Implicit Bias
    - Cultural Awareness/Appreciation
- Crisis Intervention Training
- Use of Force and De-Escalation Training.



# Accountability

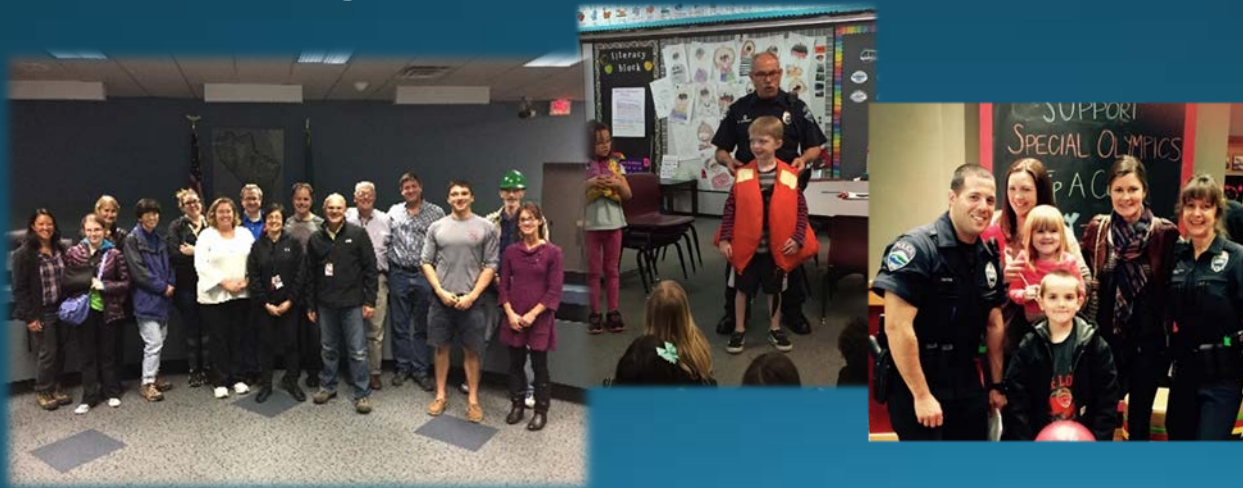
- We receive very few complaints.
  - All complaints are taken seriously and investigated.
    - Outcomes can include: Coaching & counseling / verbal warning / written reprimand / suspension / termination.
  - If gaps are identified, additional training is completed to prevent future issues.
  - Citizens are given the outcome of their complaint.
- We very rarely must use force.
  - Hands-on force is applied on average once every other year.
  - All applications of force require a separate Use of Force report.
  - All application of force are reviewed by supervisors, and necessary notifications are made.
  - Corrective actions are taken when necessary.
  - Criminal and / or Administrative investigations are initiated when appropriate.





# Conclusion

1. We recognize that Public Trust is earned and must be maintained.
2. From “hire to retire” we continually look for ways to improve the service we provide this community.
3. We need and appreciate the support we have from our community, and value the strong partnerships we have.



# Questions?

# Mayors Commit to Action Pledge

The Pledge calls on mayors across the United States to commit to the following four actions:

1. REVIEW police use of force policies.
2. ENGAGE communities by including a diverse range of input, experiences, and stories in the review.
3. REPORT the findings of the review to the community and seek feedback.
4. REFORM the community's police use of force policies.

# Mercer Island Response to Pledge

- The Police Chief recently reviewed the Department's Use of Force policy and made simple revisions.
- The fourth action point to REFORM policies assumes that the current use of force policy is inadequate or misguided.
- MIPD contracts with Lexipol, a company that writes policies for police departments and currently uses and supports Lexipol's Use of Force policy, as it comports with federal and state law.
- The Pledge is designed for cities whose Use of Force policies do not include best practices (banning neck holds as a restraining technique, requiring officers to intervene when they observe another officer applying excessive force, requiring a verbal warning before application of deadly force, and requiring thorough reporting when force is used). MIPD's policy include all of these provisions.

# Mercer Island Response to Pledge

- Since the Pledge is a commitment to action, the City Council must authorize Mayor Wong to sign the Pledge.
- Considerations:
  - The MIPD's Use of Force Policy already includes best practices and comports with current law.
  - At the June 16 meeting, the City Council directed staff to engage a consultant to conduct listening sessions to allow the Council and community to hear first-hand the stories of minority experiences on the Island, and gather ideas for what we can do to make the island a safe and welcoming place for people of all races and ethnicities.