

Officer Safety

The Pell City Police Department is a municipal law enforcement agency located in St. Clair County, Alabama. Pell City is the largest city in the county and the county seat for the Southern Division. Our agency has thirty-seven (37) full time sworn law enforcement officers, five (5) part time sworn officers, two (2) full time administrative assistants and four (4) Public Safety Assistants.

The Chief of Police is Paul A. Irwin Jr. who was hired in April of 2017 with over 23 years with the Birmingham Police Department, which is the largest law enforcement agency in the State of Alabama.

In the 21 months since Chief Irwin arrived, we purchased a high quality ballistic vests to replaced out of date vests and got vests for officers who did not ever get a new vest. We have now purchased 29 new Safariland vests that are the most comfortable and breathable. The Department purchased Ten (10) Plate Carriers with Twenty (20) plates to supplement officer's vests from rifle fire. We have a mandatory wear policy as well which allowed the department to receive a grant to assist with funding. We also purchased new uniforms that are a polyester/cotton blend uniform for comfort and durability.

We began monthly firearms training for the entire department which is scenario based which included Shooting and movement drills with a magazine change, loading and reloading drills, malfunction drills, transition drills, weak hand and off/hand shooting, deadly force scenario situations, hostage situation scenario, simunitions weapon training, dot drills, firearms recertification and reverse course training, shooting with the shield, use of weak hand when your strong arm is disabled and reload, combat course with the use of vehicle, shotgun usage and elevated heart rate shooting drills.

We hired two part time officers who are firearms instructors, active shooter instructors and S.W.A.T. Instructors who worked with the Chief at the Birmingham Police Department to assist in training. They both lead active shooter training at the High School for all personnel during the summer of 2018.

We purchase a new device called a pivotal training and did shoot or no shoot. This target system turns and has different targets that are shoot or no shoot.

The Chief developed and approved a Patrol Rifle Policy and Training Class he had previously attended at the City of Birmingham. The Firearms instructor has held multiple classes certifying officers in the use of the Patrol Rifle. The department purchased 20,000 rounds from either military surplus or off the state bid list to have the ability to send every officer through the program so each vehicle has a shot gun and a rifle once every officer has qualified and continued to recertify with the rifle shotgun.

We focus on having our own instructors and multiple officers have become firearms instructors, mace instructors and use of force instructors. The department already had a certified Taser instructor and in 2018 purchased 10 new Tasers from Axon on a lease-to-own program and every officer is issued a Taser.

We have put ballistic shields in the high school and on patrol in the last year and we have trained every officer in the police department on the proper use of the ballistic shield. This has been accomplished through city funds and police foundation funds. The future goal is for every officer to have his or her own shield.

In November of 2018, the Chief applied for a grant and issued every officer NARCAN NASAL Spray to be able to save officer and co-worker's lives who may be exposed to an opioid in the field.

The Department has recently applied for another grant to purchase full tactical gear for the SWAT Team.

All officers are issued and required to wear traffic safety vests when directing traffic, every officer was recertified in C.P.R. in 2018, every officer has been issued a tourniquet that was purchased by the Police Foundation several years ago and they have been trained to utilize this tourniquet. An Officer and Sergeant were both certified as defensive tactics instructors in 2018.

The Chief has a standard that with effective training everyone win because not only does the ability of awarding an officer with the ability to obtain training it also makes the department more professional. The entire department will attend one of three overnight trainings at the YMCA Camp Cosby where they will do three team building building exercises and the Chief will teach a class covering the last two year of the US Supreme Court Cases that apply directly with Law Enforcement.

Officer Wellness and Safety Memo regarding the Pell City Police Department

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The Chief went to the existing Police Foundation, got funding, negotiated with a fitness company for the purchase of physical fitness equipment, and built a gym, which has grown since its beginning in 2017. A fitness policy was approved to allow officers to work out during their tour of duty each day up to One (1) Hour in a structure of 15 minutes warm up 30 minutes of exercise and 15 minutes to shower and redress.

The entire police department runs the physical agility test every 6 months and if they do not pass there is a workout program developed for them by our physical fitness instructor who is a SRO. During the physical agility test the officer has the opportunity to run the entire APOST Course and if they successfully pass it they are awarded a day off with pay. The SRO who monitors the program works out with our high school football team and is a role model to the players and students. He played football at the Samford University and for the Tennessee Titans before joining our department.

Because of the high level of physical fitness in our department, the Chief of Police began a SWAT Team in April of 2018. There were two tryouts and the Chief participated and passed both with the personnel applying to be on the SWAT Team. There were 10 employees who passed the tryouts and 3 who were not qualified and will try out in the Spring of 2019. The officers who did not pass continue to train to achieve a passing score on all events.

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The Chief and his Command Staff participated in the Cities' Dances with Our Stars, received over \$18,000 in funding, and won the event.

The Chief got the Police Foundation to apply funds for each officer to purchase equipment they wanted through an online portal for equipment they believed they needed.

The Police Department applied for a grant and got the Council to approve the purchase and installation of a paid program for a Records Management System called Southern Software, which is more user friendly and an aid to our agency in organizing information, sharing and obtaining information. The grant was approved and the city matched funding for this Records Management System.

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The Chief meets with his staff and discusses at risk employee issues and noticing signs to make sure officers are not developing challenges that effect their lives and work. The Chief has debriefings on all crime scenes and employees are allowed to express input of their feels and the result of the exposure and the positives and negatives of the investigation. The City of Pell City have psychological services in which we have referred officers that is confidential and they can refer the person back to service or removal from duty if needed.

The Pell City Police Department has a mandatory seatbelt policy. All police vehicles are monitored for speeding through a GPS handheld and patrol unit radio systems. All new vehicles purchased

this year have been equipped with non-stop dash camera recording that can be pulled. The system allows for labeling but the camera is constantly recording. Officers are awarded an officer of excellence award that was incorporated this year into policy for a combination of completion of entire physical fitness test successfully and no negligence accident during the year. The award will be issued during Police Week each year beginning in 2019.

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