



# WEST CARROLLTON POLICE DEPARTMENT

*“Providing excellent service through leadership  
and partnership with the community.”*

## DESTINATION ZERO OFFICER WELLNESS SUBMISSION

The West Carrollton Police Department is currently comprised of twenty-three (23) fulltime sworn personnel, three (3) part-time sworn officers and four (4) non-sworn, support personnel. The department also has one (1) volunteer police chaplain. There are approximately 13,000 residents that call the 6.5 square miles of West Carrollton home. Chief Doug Woodard has been with the West Carrollton Police Department since 1988, and began serving as the Chief of Police in 2013. West Carrollton is just south of the City of Dayton and is considered a first-tier suburb. A major Interstate, I-75, completely bisects the city. Being in close proximity to the City of Dayton, as well the traffic from Interstate 75, adds significantly to the activity level of the police department.

The department has taken a multi-faceted approach in addressing Officer Wellness and Resiliency through the institution of policies and procedures, training, equipment, and programs.

### Policies & Procedures:

- The department has a policy that makes it mandatory for an officer to wear their vests while in uniform and for all officers to wear their vest during tactical operations.

All sworn personnel, which include patrol personnel, non-patrol sworn personnel and detectives, could be exposed to situations which require arrest at any given time and without notice. Therefore, all personnel are encouraged to wear protective vests when actively working. It is **mandatory** that **all sworn personnel** wear their protective vests when engaged in the following type of operations;

1. Part of a search warrant or raid team;
2. Engaged in a high-risk operation; and
3. Any other activity that a supervisor deems necessary.





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- The department has enacted a policy which permits an officer to have facial hair year-round.

Department personnel may grow and display a full beard, mustache or goatee while on duty. Beards must be kept neatly groomed and well-trimmed and shall not exceed one inch in length. Goatees will include a moustache and be kept neat and well-trimmed. Handlebar moustaches and other unusual or exotic facial hair styles are prohibited. The department was the first in our area to institute a policy like this. The policy has been viewed in an extremely positive light by department personnel and has caused other local departments to change, or consider changing, their policies about facial hair.

- Officers are permitted to have visible tattoos and are not required to cover them.

Employees may have visible tattoos while wearing the uniform of the day, with a few exceptions. Again, our department was one of the first police departments in our area to allow tattoos to be exposed. The reaction from our citizens has been very positive and they believe that it makes the officers more relatable.

- Recommendations Committee – This committee is made up of representatives from every segment of the department, both sworn and non-sworn employees.

The function of the Recommendations Committee is twofold. First, members of the department can bring ideas or suggestions regarding the internal workings of the department. For example, an officer can approach the committee with a recommendation concerning a piece of equipment that they think would be valuable for the department to purchase. The committee would discuss the officer’s recommendation and then forward their findings to the Chief of Police.

The committee is also utilized in regards to the employee recognition system. Any department member can nominate anyone else for one the many department awards that are available, such as employee of the year or meritorious service. The committee will decide if they believe that the recommendation meets the award criteria and then forward their findings to the Chief of Police. The department has been utilizing the Recommendations Committee for almost 30 years.

The Recommendations Committee allows department members to effect change, or to have other direct involvement with the administration of the department.





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## Programs:

- The department instituted a workout on duty program that allows any employee to workout up to one half hour per shift.

Providing the opportunity for members of our department to participate in physical fitness activities in such a work status presents a myriad of unique challenges. However, there have been some recent developments that could positively impact these challenges. One development involves the renewed focus that the department is placing on Officer Wellness and Resiliency. Physical fitness, or exercise activity, has been shown to provide numerous personal benefits, such as reducing a person’s stress level, making them less susceptible to injury, and reducing sick leave usage. The other development involves the addition to the officers’ uniform of the load bearing vest (LBV). Being able to rapidly put on, or take off, the LBV addresses several of the departments previous concerns. With that being said, all department personnel will be able to exercise in an on-duty, or on the clock status.

- The department participates in an Employee Assistance Program that is administered through the City Human Resource Department.

The department is committed to the total health and well-being of its employees and to appropriately addressing the stress issues problems which could benefit from counseling. Therefore, the department believes that it is in the best interest of the employees, families of employees and the community to provide an Employee Assistance Program (EAP). Employees and their families are encouraged to seek assistance from the EAP as needed. EAP program services are offered to all employees of the City of West Carrollton and any household members at no cost.

- The department operates a Peer-to-Peer Support program that allows specifically trained employees to offer support to members of our department as well as any other first responder in need.

The department has provided state certified Group Crisis, and Individual Crisis training to numerous department members. This training allows those members to conduct counseling sessions in a certified capacity. Because of their certification, the conversation between the employee and the certified peer support team member is





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viewed as confidential under the Ohio Revised Code. This cloak of confidentiality is extremely important to the Peer-to-Peer Support program as it assures that their conversations will remain private.

- The department has numerous members on the Greater Montgomery County Critical Incident Stress Management Team that have been specifically trained in Group Crisis and Individual Crisis Intervention.

Being certified in Individual and Group Crisis Intervention provides the department member the ability to become part of the regional Crisis Intervention Team. The Greater Montgomery County Critical Incident Stress Management Team is recognized and certified by the State of Ohio. This team has been requested to respond to numerous incidents to conduct debriefings, such as the mass casualty shooting incident in the Oregon District. The team has also been requested to respond in numerous Peer-to-Peer support sessions. These requests have come from agencies from all over southwest and central Ohio.

- Department members are able to obtain flu and/or hepatitis vaccines from the City at no cost.

Department members, and their families, through the City Administration, are able to address potential health risks by obtaining flu and hepatitis vaccines once a year.

- The department has a Police Chaplain program for more than the past 30 years.

The Police Chaplain assists members of the department in the performance of their duties in connection with calls for service involving emergency family crises, emotional trauma, and other mental and emotional problems of a critical nature. The Chaplain makes him/herself available for counseling and advice on a personal level to members of the department. They will be used in conjunction with the various social service agencies such as Suicide Prevention, Victim/Witness, South Community Mental Health, etc. This program promotes and fosters relationships with police officers, whenever possible, as they are able to ride along rotating between officers and shifts. The Chaplain may also conduct personal counseling while riding with officers.





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## Equipment:

- Load Bearing Vests (LBV's) are standard issue to all uniformed officers and detectives.

These vests help to keep the weight of the equipment off the officer's hips and back and distribute it more evenly around the torso. Wearing the LBV's helps to reduce strain and potential injury to the wearers back and hips. The idea of the LBV was brought forward by one of the officers to our Recommendations Committee. The committee presented the idea to the Chief who then discusses its feasibility with the Command Staff. It was determined that the purchase and wearing of the Load Bearing vests would be good for the officer's health and a wise investment for the department.

All Load Bearing Vests were purchased through a grant offered by the Ohio Bureau of Workers Compensation.

- Each cruiser is equipped with a patrol rifle, ballistic helmet, ballistic vest and ballistic shield that will provide the officer with additional protection.

Every marked patrol vehicle, as well as unmarked detective vehicles and the School Resource vehicle are assigned ballistic equipment that can serve as additional protection for the officer during certain tactical situations. The officers are trained in the use of this equipment, which includes training while at the firearms training facility as well as while using the use of force training simulator. It is vital that the department provide the officers with the added personal protection necessary to utilize in potential serious injury or deadly force situations.

- Each cruiser is also equipped with a go-bag that contains first aid supplies, additional ammunition and other items that may be needed in a tactical situation.

Every department vehicle is equipped with a go-bag that contains additional first aid items as well as ammunition for the officer's service weapon and patrol rifle. The go-bags provide department personnel with some reassurance that they will have the items that they may need if they find themselves in a dangerous or arduous situation.





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- Each officer is equipped and trained in the use of a tourniquet.

It has been demonstrated that the use and application of a tourniquet can be the deciding factor in a situation involving trauma to a citizen or another officer. Our officers are trained in the field use and application of a tourniquet during their first aid training as well while they are at the firing range and also using the use of force training simulator.

- The department has a gym facility that is available to all department members, as well as their families. The gym has a combination of free-weights and exercise machines as well as cardio equipment. Employees must receive instruction from a certified fitness instructor prior to using the gym facility.

The use and benefits of the workout facility have been described in the work out on duty program.

- The department has purchased and is utilizing a Virtual Force Training Simulator that allows the officers to be trained in all aspects of the use of less lethal and lethal force in a safe and controlled manner. This simulator is made available to other law enforcement agencies to utilize.

The department purchased a Milo Use of Force Training simulator that allows the department to conduct use of force training in a safe and practical manner. This training simulator allows the officers to be placed in numerous scenarios involving many different force options. These force options include everything from the officer's presence to the use of lethal force. Officers are placed in realistic video training scenarios and must react as they would during an actual call for service. Our instructors have the ability to critique the officer's actions while the officer can also review their actions as they watch the recorded video. This allows the officers to develop confidence in their abilities to deploy the various force options that might be necessary as well as for our instructors to determine if the force the officers used was appropriate.





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## Training:

- The department has two certified fitness instructors that meet with every employee to discuss a workout routine as well as nutrition.

It is important that the department personnel that chose to workout on duty are doing so in a safe and appropriate manner. The department has two officers that are state certified fitness instructors that are required to meet with each department member prior to participating in the work out on duty program. This allows the instructors to demonstrate the proper techniques involving the free weights or machines and to discuss nutrition plans. The instructors will periodically discuss the progress made by the individual as well as provide any additional guidance that may be required.

- The department also has two self-defense instructors that conduct defensive tactics training.

The department conducts self-defense training on an annual basis. This continuous training helps to instill confidence in the officer's ability to better handle themselves in a physical confrontation as well as reduce the need to escalate the use of force. The training also helps to reduce the number of injuries that officers may sustain.

- The department conducts traffic stop training utilizing an officer who is certified as an instructor.

Conducting a traffic stop is one of the primary functions that a road patrol officer does during their shift. The training they receive provides knowledge and confidence to each officer as well as addressing the area of officer safety.

- The department utilizes a licensed physical therapist from a local hospital at no cost to employees.

This therapist assists employees in their exercise and workout routines as well as in their prevention and recovery of on, or off duty injuries.





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- All sworn personnel receive an eight-hour training block on mental health first aid and as well as an additional 40 hours of Crisis Intervention Training.

The Alcohol, Drug Addiction and Mental Health Services (ADAMHS) of Montgomery County provides training to all sworn officers. The Mental Health First Aid is an 8-hour certification course that teaches a 5-step action plan encompassing the skills, resources, and knowledge to help an individual in crisis connect with appropriate professional, peer, and self-help care. The course teaches the unique risk factors and warning signs of mental health problems, builds understanding of the importance of early intervention, and, most importantly, teaches individuals how to help someone in crisis or experiencing a mental health challenge. MHFA is an evidence-based practice, basic level curriculum and is offered as a complement to the more intensive, specialized CIT program.

Crisis Intervention Training (CIT) is an intensive 5-day session that provides law enforcement with the knowledge and skills for responding to a person during a mental health crisis. The training is conducted by local CIT trained officers, mental health professionals, family advocates and consumers; offering practical techniques for de-escalating crisis situations.

- The department has had a licensed clinician, who specializes in the treatment of first responders, provide every member of the department an overview of the services that have been made available to them. The same clinician has also demonstrated how EMDR, Eye Movement Desensitization and Reprocessing, is used as a treatment and how successful this type of treatment can be.
- Every new officer is provided with a copy of, “Emotional Survival for Law Enforcement” written by Dr. Kevin Gilmartin.

This book has been recognized as one of the best resources for law enforcement officers as they enter and progress through their career. Each officer is encouraged to read the book and to ask any questions that they may have regarding anything that they read. They are also encouraged to have their family members read the book so that they might develop an understanding of what their loved one is experiencing and ways that they may be able to help.





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- Department employees have been provided with monthly training in topics such as;
  - Suicide Prevention and what every police agency should do
  - Officer Wellness and Resiliency
  - 10 Recommendations when dealing with suicide
  - Agencies can’t continue to address stress and trauma as they have in the past
  - How stress and trauma can affect you and how they can affect others differently
  - The 4 Pillars of Officer Wellness and Resiliency
    - Physical Fitness
    - Emotional Fitness
    - Mental Fitness
    - Spiritual Fitness

