

## **GENERAL OFFICER SAFETY PROGRAM**

### **THE WEST PALM BEACH POLICE DEPARTMENT**

The city of West Palm Beach was founded as a town in Florida in 1894. West Palm beach is in Palm beach County which is the second largest county in Florida. West Palm Beach has a population of 113,000 citizens and spans a total of 58.1 square miles. West Palm Beach is a vibrant, growing, waterfront city and the oldest incorporated municipality in southeast Florida.



The West Palm Beach Police Department was established in 1894. The Chief of Police is Franklin Adderley. It has the largest municipal police department in Palm Beach County and is a law enforcement agency with a total of 422 positions. Out of the 422 positions, 388 are filled. There are 290 sworn police officers and 98 civilians. According to the National Law Enforcement Memorial and Museum law enforcement fatalities report, out of all the U.S. states, Florida had the second highest number of law enforcement fatalities with 52 line-of-duty deaths in 2021. We take our obligation to look after the safety of our personnel seriously and we make sure that we provide our employees with the necessary resources and training to ensure their safety and the safety of the public we serve.

## **GENERAL OFFICER SAFETY PROGRAM**

### **Body Armor and Protective Gear**

The West Palm Beach Police Department issues custom-fit body armor to all of our sworn employees. A properly fitted vest, is a worn vest. Per policy, all sworn personnel engaging in field duty or special duty

are required to wear the issued soft body armor protective vests. In addition, Crime Scene Investigators, Multit-media Technicians and Community Service Aides who are issued soft body armor will wear the issued soft body armor on any active scene. Officers assigned to our S.W.A.T Team are provided threat protection level IV tactical body armor, with front and rear rifle threat protection.

### **Gator Hawk Helix HX02**



All officers are issued active shooter kits with rifle plates and ballistic helmets. The rifle plates are level IV ceramic rifle plates in a black outer carrier. The front plate is a shooters cut while the back is a full cut. The ballistic helmets are full-cut level IIIA with acrylic face shields.



In addition all of our officers are issued Avon C50 gas masks and they are fit tested annually.



For ease of accessibility and to increase officer-safety in armed encounters, ballistic shields with tactical lighting are assigned to select personnel on each shift on the first day of their rotation. Ballistic shields are also carried in the rear of every sergeant's vehicle making them immediately accessible.



### **Sergeant's Vehicle Equipment**

Every Sergeant in road patrol is assigned a Ford F-150 or Ford Explorer that is outfitted with a ballistic shield with tactical lighting and a breaching tool kit which includes a Boom and Halligan. Having these tools out on the road provides immediate access to the tools necessary to safely breach doors and windows in order to render aid to victims and to address suspects/active shooters behind locked doors.



### **Officer Trauma Bags, Tourniquets and Training**

Every West Palm Beach Police Officer is issued a trauma bag which is to be kept hanging from the head rest on front passenger seat. This way, everyone knows where the trauma bag is located in a time of need. The trauma bag contains tourniquets, quick-clotting agents, sucking chest wound patches, bandages, tape, scissors, gloves, and a mask, to be utilized in self-help, officer down, and citizen medical response.



We have 5 training officers and two who are certified in tactical first aid. We use a mannequin, which is properly outfitted for field injuries to annually train our Officers in tactical first aid which covers the use and application of all contents contained within the trauma bags.



All officers are also issued tourniquet holders to be worn on their duty belts or outer tac-vest for immediate accessibility in the event of traumatic injury. Our officers have saved numerous lives, by applying techniques learned with HyFin chest seals, tourniquets, and using gauze and pressure to stop bleeding where a tourniquet can't be applied. In the year 2020 alone, Officer Testa saved four gunshot victim's lives. On March 1, 2020, Officer Anthony Testa saved two gunshot victim's lives by applying two HyFin chest seals on them. On August 24<sup>th</sup>, 2020, Officer Anthony Testa responded to another shooting where he applied a tourniquet and a HyFin chest seal to a gunshot victim while two other officers applied tourniquets as well, due to the victim being shot eight times in various parts of his body with multiple large caliber rounds and ended up saving his life. On November 28, 2020, Officer Testa responded to another shooting scene where he saved another gunshot victim's life by applying HyFin chest seals and tourniquets to the multiple gunshot wounds of the victim. Unfortunately, Officer Testa died of COVID on September 25, 2021. In his memory we are naming a new award called the Anthony Testa Tactical Lifesaving Award to our current list of awards and admonitions for officers. This is to recognize officers that exhibit the same lifesaving efforts Officer Testa displayed. Other life-saving

efforts displayed by our officers include the following but are not limited to; four other officers that utilized their tourniquets which ended up saving lives as well, several incidents involving wounds where a tourniquet could not be applied, and officers packed the wounds and applied pressure to stop the bleeding which resulted in saving the lives of several victims, and application of another Hyfin Chest seal. The Chief of the West Palm Beach Fire Department Diana Matty wrote a letter stating, “The West Palm Beach Police Department should be commended for ensuring their officers are trained and equipped in life-saving efforts”.



### **Lieutenant's Tahoe Mini Mobile Command Post**

Lieutenants in road patrol supply necessary and essential information on unfolding events and are assigned a Chevy Tahoe outfitted as a mobile command post for better scene management, tracking of deployed personnel [e.g., their location], communications, and briefing of arriving personnel. The Tahoe is equipped with green and white lights indicating it as the command post. Each Tahoe has a rear mounted radio system for ease of communications, with a 150 w outlet for plug-ins, markers and a dry erase board with a transparent plastic cover to insert printed pictures of suspects, building layouts, etc.



Also carried in the rear, to better prepare for mass casualty events is a mass casualty trauma bag, which contains large quantities of tourniquets, quick clotting agent, gauze, and HyFIN chest seals to allow us to provide essential medical care to critically injured citizens or law enforcement officers until they receive EMS care.

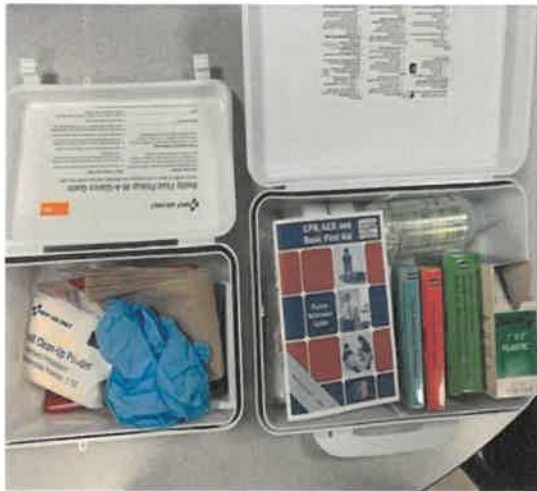


### **First Aid Kits and Blood Borne Pathogen kits**

To better serve our community and fellow officers, all patrol Division Officers are issued Ambu bags,



CPR mask, first aid kits, blood borne pathogen kits, and spit masks along with their trauma bags and tourniquets.



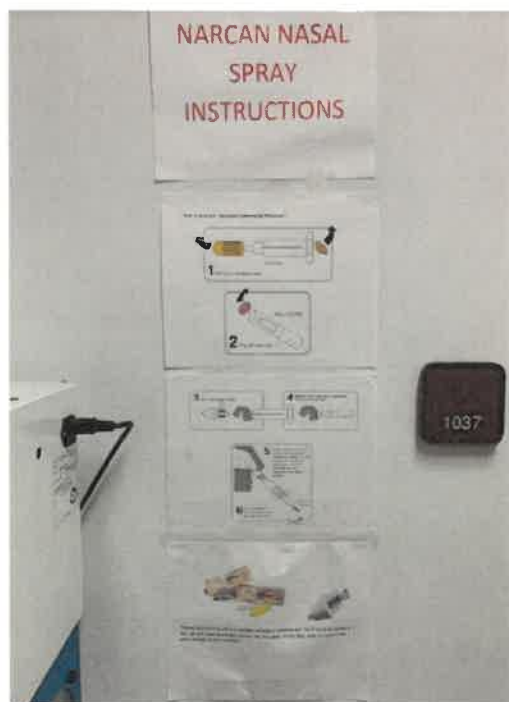
### **Personal Protective Equipment Usage and Training**

To safeguard our personnel from blood-borne pathogens, body fluid, and other hazardous substance exposure, blood-borne pathogens and hazardous communication training is required of all officers on an annual basis. In addition, Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) are provided to all sworn personnel. This includes protective eyewear, facemasks, contamination suits, and booties.



### **AED's, Narcan and Testing Fume Hoods**

While testing unknown substances in the field and at our station, several of our officers were exposed to fentanyl prior to 2017. In response to those exposures, we purchased Naloxone nasal spray kits and three Air Science Fume Hoods. These hoods were placed in our Narcotics Division office, Crime Scene, and Evidence Section. All police officers are required to test any substance using gloves and one of the three fume hoods. There are also AED's and Naloxone spray kits placed by each fume hood along with instructions for administering the nasal spray. Inside the Naloxone nasal spray kits are several Naloxone nasal sprays along with an ambu bag and CPR mask. We also have fourteen AED'S strategically placed throughout the Police station [gym, Crime Scene office, processing bay in the basement, in-door shooting range, etc.]. Every officer is CPR certified and has been trained on the use of the AED and the nasal spray. Members in units that have a higher probability of exposure to opioids, such as K-9 handlers, personnel assigned to the narcotics division and crime scene may be individually issued Naloxone nasal spray. Since the implementation of the fume hoods and the Naloxone nasal spray kits in 2017 we have had zero fentanyl exposures.



## **Employee Infectious Disease Exposure Protocol**

In the event that an employee is subject to a blood-borne pathogen, body fluid, and other hazardous substance exposure, Florida Law allows and a procedure is in place that requires the person causing the exposure to be tested for disease. Employees who, while in the performance of their duties, encounter an exposure to blood and body fluids having the potential for a contagious or infectious disease, are required to document the exposure in a report of on-the-job accident form and an infectious disease exposure notification form. These forms along with the offense incident report will be forwarded to Risk Management. If the source person consents to the withdrawal of a blood sample, the draw may be performed at a local hospital.

**AFFIDAVIT**

**STATE OF FLORIDA**  
**COUNTY OF PALM BEACH**

1. I am Dr. \_\_\_\_\_ and I am over the age of 18.

2. I am a physician licensed under Chapter 458 or Chapter 459, Florida Statutes.

3. I reviewed the statement of WPBPO (name) \_\_\_\_\_ regarding an incident on \_\_\_\_\_, 20\_\_\_\_, where a person arrested by Officer (Name) \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
(describe circumstances of exposure).

4. Based on the statement of the WPBPO (name), in the matter involving WPBPO \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ (arrestee), I certify that, in my medical judgement, a "significant exposure" has occurred as that term is defined in section 381.004, Florida Statutes.

5. I also certify that, in my medical judgement, a medical screening, including the drawing of blood for bloodborne pathogens, of \_\_\_\_\_ (arrestee) is medically necessary to determine the course of treatment for WPBPO \_\_\_\_\_.

I have read the foregoing Affidavit consisting of one page and it is true and correct.

EXECUTED this \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 20\_\_\_\_.

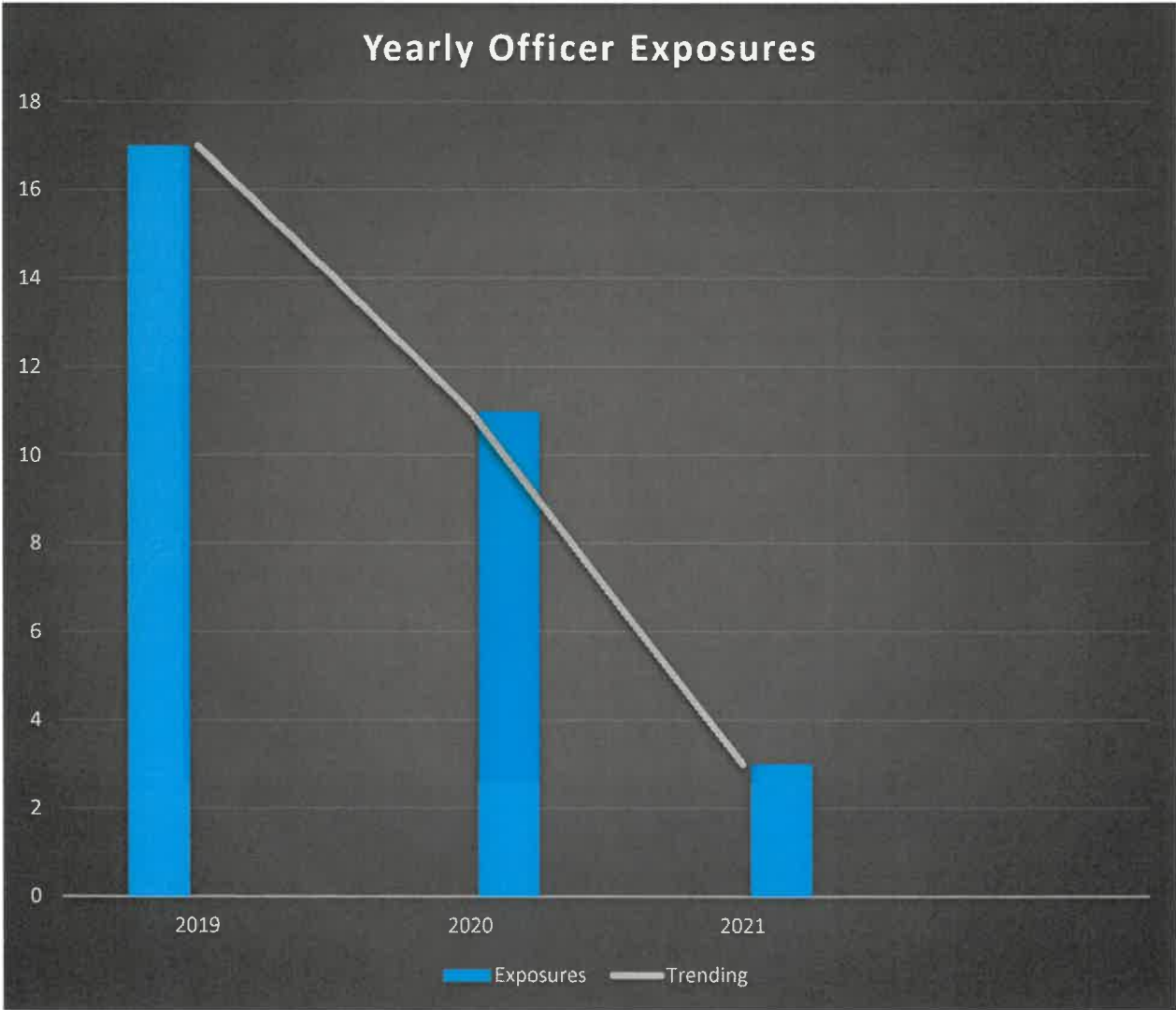
Dr. \_\_\_\_\_

Sworn to (or affirmed) and subscribed before me this \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 20\_\_\_\_, by \_\_\_\_\_, who is personally known to me or who produced \_\_\_\_\_ as identification.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Sworn Police Officer

Should the source person refuse to consent, every Sergeant and Lieutenant are trained and provided with all the necessary forms which include a court order, motion, and physician affidavit that are fill in the blank templates in order to expedite the ordering of the blood draw for contagious disease testing

purposes, because time is of the essence with administering the treatment. The forms are digital due to the electronic warrant system used between the courthouse and law enforcement agencies in our county. This also helps speed up the process of obtaining time-sensitive warrants because it erases the travel time to and from the courthouse and/or the judge’s house. The results of the test and notifications are provided to Risk Management, the source person, and the affected employee. It is important to note, we have had a total of Thirty-one exposures in the last three years, which has been drastically declining year after year. In 2019 we had seventeen officer exposures, in 2020 we had eleven officer exposures, and in 2021 we had 3 officer exposures. We believe this drastic decrease in exposures is due to the training our officers receive and due to our officers taking every precaution necessary to help prevent exposures when feasible.





IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF THE FIFTEENTH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT, CRIMINAL DIVISION  
IN AND FOR PALM BEACH COUNTY, FLORIDA

LAW ENFORCEMENT AGENCY:  
POLICE REPORT NO.:

STATE OF FLORIDA

vs.

Defendant:

STATE'S EX-PARTE MOTION FOR HIV/HEPATITIS/OTHER COMMUNICABLE DISEASES  
TESTING OF DEFENDANT

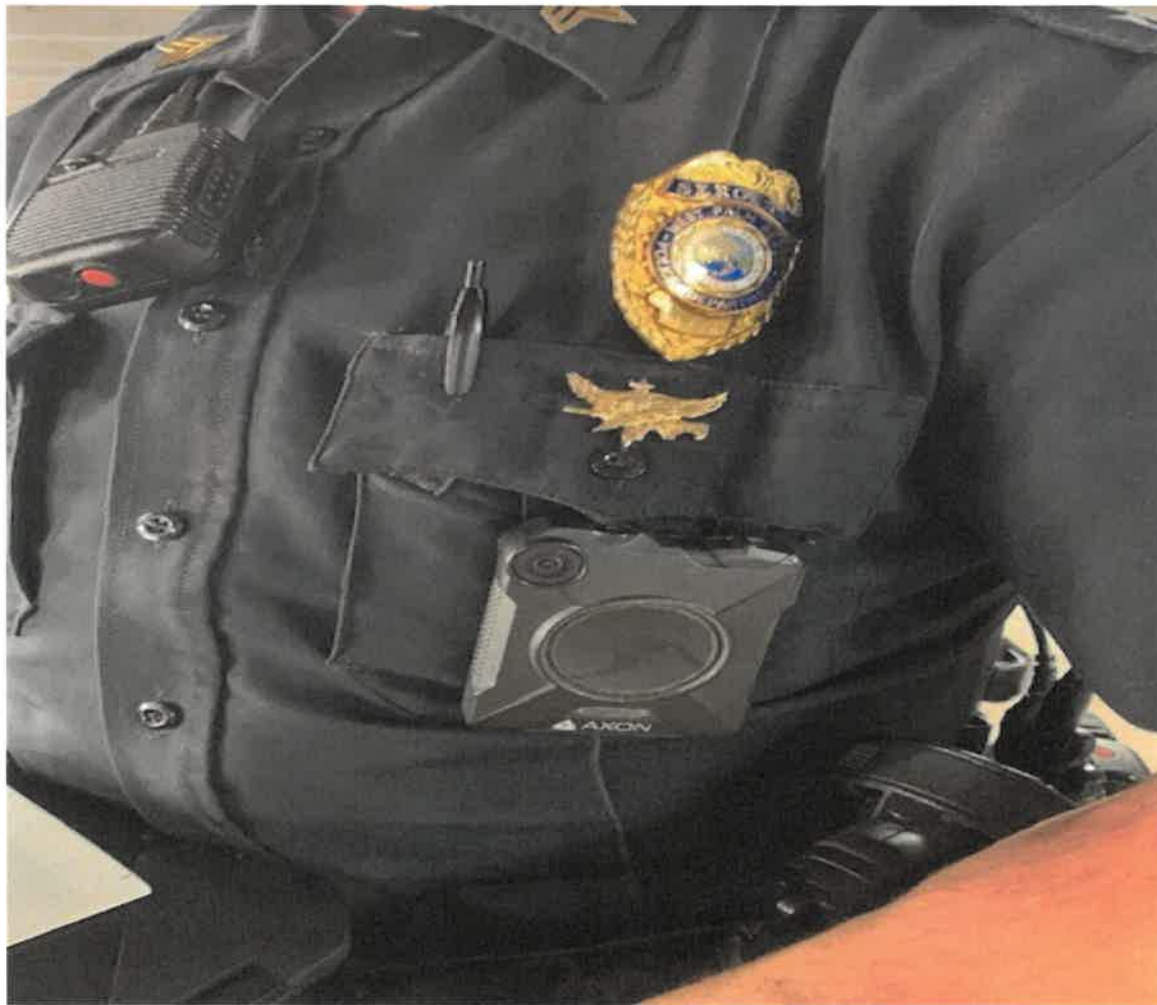
COMES NOW the State of Florida, by and through the undersigned Assistant State Attorney, and respectfully moves this Honorable Court for an order compelling the above-named Defendant to submit to HIV/HEPATITIS/OTHER COMMUNICABLE DISEASES testing, pursuant to Florida Statute 381.004 and as grounds therefore states as follows:

1. The defendant in this case is charged with [IDENTIFY CRIMES & STATUTE NUMBERS]
2. The crime alleged involves the transmission of body fluids from the Defendant to Officer \_\_\_\_\_ at the time of the offense. The facts surrounding the transmission of body fluids from the Defendant to Officer are that [ ]
3. The officer victim has requested the test be performed.
4. Attached to this motion is the sworn affidavit of Dr. \_\_\_\_\_, who states the test is medically necessary.
5. The State requests HIV/HEPATITIS/OTHER COMMUNICABLE DISEASES testing of the Defendant under the direction of the Department of Health, in accordance with F.S. 381.004 and the results disclosed to the officer victim.

### Body-Worn Cameras

It is the policy of the West Palm Beach Police Department to utilize a body worn camera to document law enforcement interactions with the public by providing recorded evidence of actions, conditions and statements. Body-worn cameras or BWC's have evidentiary value. The need to ensure and monitor proper

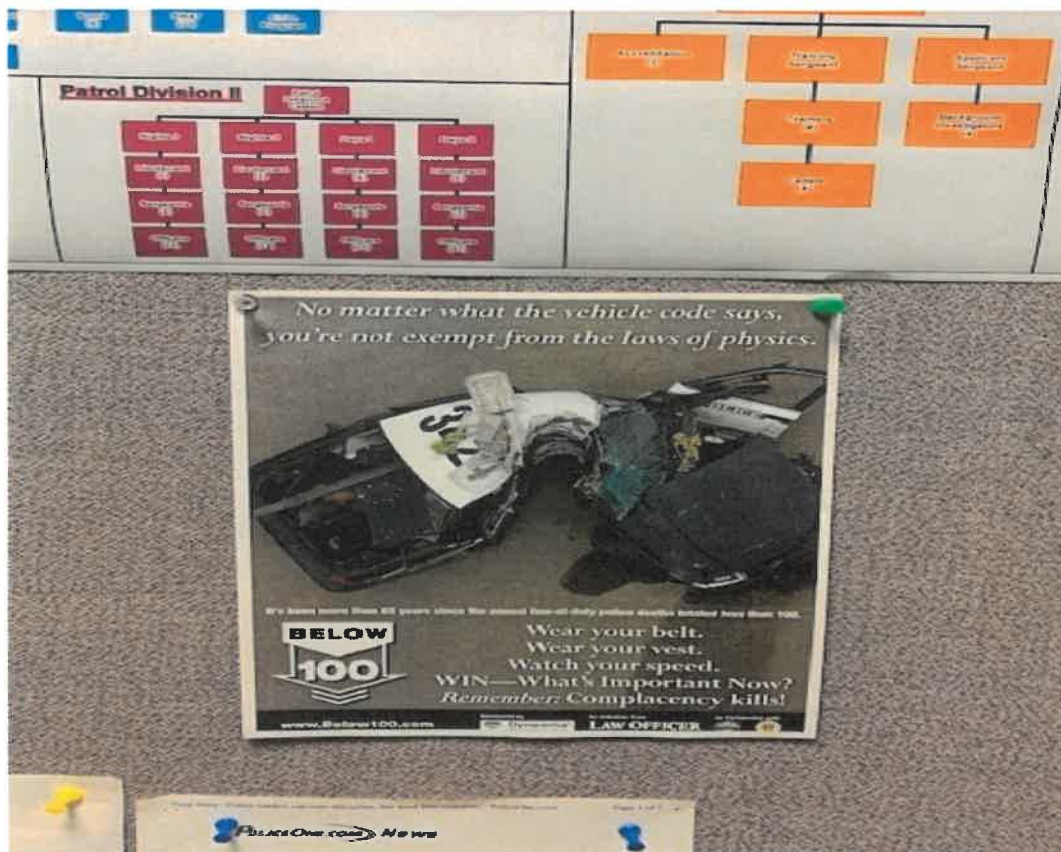
conduct by West Palm Beach Police Officers, and to help safeguard these officers against false claims of misconduct, HD-quality digital body-worn cameras (BWC) have been issued to all officers. The BWC can be started manually with the push of a button or are automatically activated when an officer activates their Taser. When BWC footage review is called for, officers observed providing exceptional customer service can be rewarded for their efforts through the commendation process, while officers found acting outside of policy or in an unsafe or discourteous manner are counseled or disciplined, as necessary.



### **Mandatory Wearing of Safety Belts**

The West Palm Beach Police Department's policy requires all persons riding in a city owned vehicle to wear their seat belts/restraining devices unless specifically exempted. Child restraint device usage is

mandatory while transporting a child in a city owned vehicle. When the driver's seat belt becomes inoperable the vehicle will be taken out of service until fixed. If the front passenger seatbelt is inoperable, no one will be transported occupying that seat. Violators will face progressive discipline if they are found to have violated this seatbelt policy. There are several posters located around the station that reinforce wearing your seat belt and watching your speed.



### **Emergency Vehicle Operations Training**

West Palm Beach Police Department uses the resources at Palm Beach State College law enforcement academy. The academy is one of several approved police academies in the state of Florida. The academy has their own driving pad which we utilize throughout the year for our annual in-service driving training.

The training includes pursuit training, N.E.V.O (no-evasive vehicle operations), felony stops, pursuit termination devices, safe and legal traffic stops, racial profiling, and force on force scenarios with critiqued response.

### **Vehicle Pursuit Policy and Review**

The West Palm Beach Police Department has a comprehensive pursuit policy and officers are initially trained on it during the FTO process and retrained on it annually every year during our in-service training. Periodically, officers are asked to explain [in detail] the process during roll call training briefings. The policy details the following. Under what circumstances/conditions pursuits are to be initiated, the proper supervisor monitoring, and termination requirements. We document all our traffic stops where the offender flees from us, but we do not pursue as it does not meet our pursuit requirements. These stops are documented under failure to yield (FTY). All of our pursuits go before our pursuit review board for review. When the review board meets, any commendations for exceptional performance or corrective action, including formal discipline is recommended. The purpose of the review board is to reward good behavior and change risky behavior.

### **Instructor Training**

All our instructors are certified by the Florida Department of Law Enforcement. Certification examples include, defensive tactics, firearms, less-lethal systems, emergency vehicle operations, chemical munitions, ASP baton, CPR, etc. In order to ensure that their training is up to date, recertification is required of all of our trainers before their due date.

### **Weaponry**

The West Palm Beach Police Department offers our officers the opportunity to be issued a department owned shotgun and/or a rifle at the officer's request. The officer will be trained in the operation, maintenance, storage and carry of the weapon system(s) chosen. Once certified to carry the weapon



system(s), they would be issued said weapon system(s). The issued patrol rifles are up-fitted with red-dot optic, tactical lighting, tactical slings and three extra magazines.



The shotguns are equipped with rifle sights, sidesaddle shell holders, tactical lighting, and tactical slings. The patrol shotguns and patrol rifles issued to officers are held in secured drawer systems in the rear of the vehicles.



### **Annual Firearms Qualification**

The Florida Department of Law Enforcement mandates that all peace officers qualify with their issued duty handgun every 24 months. We take the responsibility of firearms proficiency and safety seriously

and require additional range training. We require an annual qualification for our duty handgun, patrol shotgun and patrol rifle. Each year our sworn personnel are required to successfully complete tactical range training with their duty handgun, patrol shotgun and patrol rifle. They are also required to complete low light range training with their handgun. Annually, officers are required to go through active shooter scenarios in our range, with role players and critiqued response from our training unit. Additionally, officers are required to annually qualify with all off-duty/extra-duty weapons they are authorized to carry. Those officers, who desire to do so, are also encouraged to attend several open range dates throughout the year to increase their firearms proficiency with all weapons that they are issued and/or carry. In addition to annual live fire training, we conduct force on force scenario training with Simunition training weapons in our own shoot house, coupled with a critiqued response from our training unit.



## **Shoot House**

To increase officer safety, proficiency, and confidence in our officers, we built our own shoot house in the basement of our garage for simunition force on force scenarios. The shoot house interior can be re-configured, so officers don't have the same room layout year after year. Attached to one of the entry points is an RTE TRAINER breaching door. All officers are trained to use the same Boom and Halligan (see p.4) tools that are in every breaching kit located inside of every Sergeant's vehicle to show they can safely and successfully open inward and outward opening doors if the need ever arises.



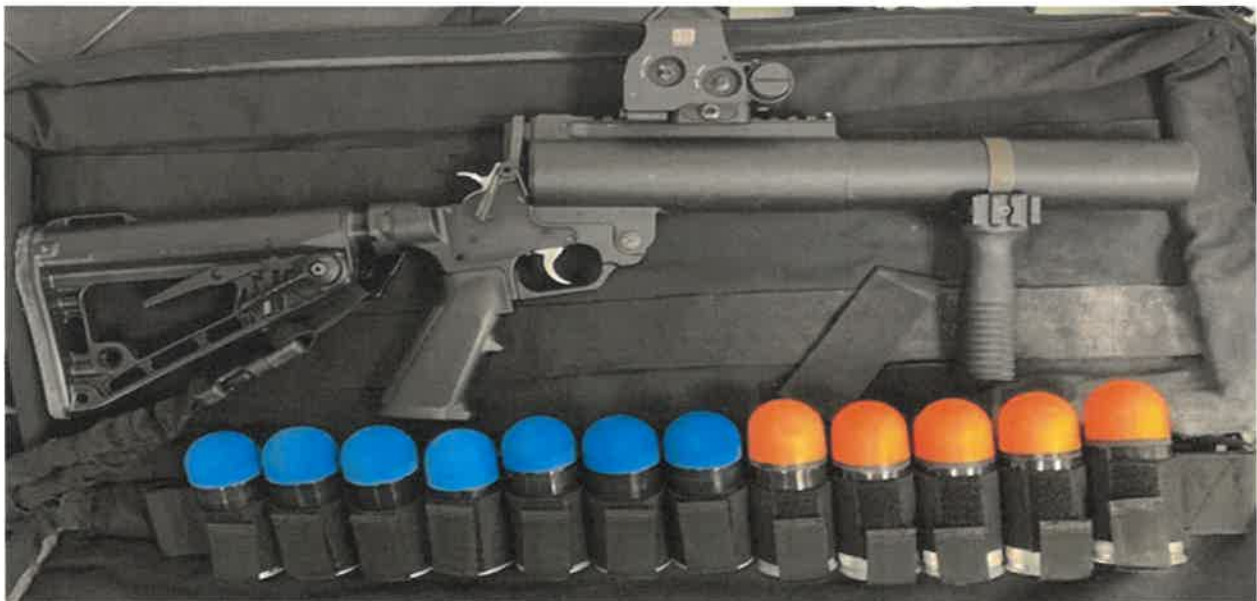
## **Secondary Weapons Authorized**

To increase safety, officers are authorized to carry back-up weapons and must qualify with them annually on the FDLE mandated 40 round course of fire. To ensure proper authorization and tracking, officers are

required to submit a form that is used to request the carry of the specific backup weapon and is also utilized to track successful range qualification with the weapon. All secondary weapons are inspected by the range master. Final authorization is given by the Chief of Police.

### **Less-Lethal Systems**

Understanding that not every encounter with a person with a weapon should require a lethal response, the Defense Technology 40 mm less lethal launcher systems with a bandolier of 40 mm Direct Fire Munition rounds and 40 mm Direct Impact OC crushable foam rounds are issued to qualified operators at the beginning of each rotation to have immediate access on the road when needed. Less lethal operators are required to train and qualify with the 40 mm system on a bi-annual basis in order to maintain their certification. We have deployed our 40 mm less lethal launcher system on multiple occasions which resulted in the offenders surrendering without further incident.



Other less-lethal options are also provided to each officer including electronic control device (Tasers),



oleoresin capsicum (OC) or "pepper spray" and Peace-Keeper expandable batons.



### **Electronic Control Device**

The West Palm Beach Police Department issues every officer an electronic control device (ECD) or Taser upon being hired. Each officer is trained and certified in the authorized use, storage, reporting and the need for proper medical treatment for suspects to which the Tasers were applied. Our policy provides for the authorized usage, reporting, and the need for proper medical treatment for suspects. Two of our trainers are master trainers for Axon and they keep us up to date on all requirements, legal updates and new training that is rolled out from Axon. Annual training qualifications are



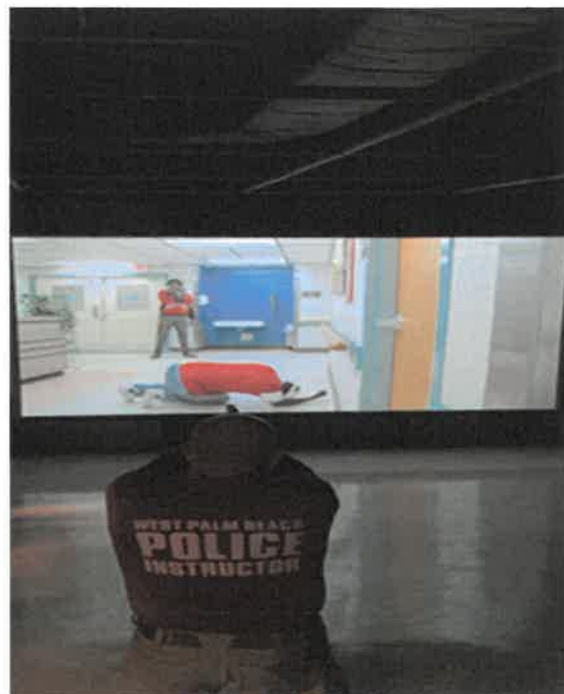
required for our electronic control device with scenarios and a critiqued response from our training unit.

### **Crisis Intervention Training**

Understanding the need for de-escalation in many calls to which we respond for service and to decrease the chances of employees becoming injured in unnecessary physical confrontations with suspects, Chief Adderley Mandated all sworn personnel to complete the 40-hours of Crisis Intervention Training (CIT). At present, 75% of our department is CIT certified with the remainder preparing for completion by the end of the year. CIT has been shown to improve law enforcement's ability to recognize symptoms of a mental health crisis, enhance their confidence in addressing such an emergency, and reduce inaccurate beliefs about mental illness. It has been found that after completing CIT, peace officers felt encouraged to interact with people suffering a mental health crisis and to delay their "rush to resolution." CIT was also identified in the Final Report of the President's Task Force on 21st Century Policing as being critical in enabling law enforcement officers to improve the way in which they and the community respond to people experiencing mental health crises.

### **Use of Force and De-Escalation Scenario Simulator**

The West Palm Beach Police Department believes in scenario-based training when dealing with active shooters, armed assailants and violent individuals in shoot or don't shoot situations. To better train our officers, we also use a Meggitt firearms training simulator for some of these scenarios with a critiqued response. Officers can use a handgun or rifle during these scenarios. If the scenario calls for it, officers have the option to use less lethal



options on their duty belt to include OC spray and taser. We are currently looking at purchasing a new training simulator through Ti Training.

### **COVID Mitigation Plan**

In response to the COVID outbreak, we implemented a COVID mitigation plan to keep all of our employees safe. We implemented the following measures; outside and remote briefings utilizing micro-soft teams in order to limit contact with large numbers of officers, we issued N-95 masks, extra gloves and extra hand sanitizer to all personnel, we mandated officers to wear masks when interacting with the public, when it didn't affect their quick response or officer safety by having to address an immediate threat, we bought an aerosol battery operated disinfectant machine to sanitize all areas in the station, all offices, vehicles, and desk of those personnel that contracted COVID, in addition we implemented a preventative scheduled sanitization of highly trafficked areas in the station, we offered non-essential employees the opportunity to work from home which most of them choose to do, we adjusted the work times of our detectives and staggered them to limit the number of detectives on the floor at one time to limit possible exposure, we mandated the wearing of masks inside all of our city buildings, through our city emergency management we offered free vaccinations to all of our employees and the city offered monetary incentives to those who received the vaccination, we contracted with a local hospital and private vendors to provide immediate covid testing to our employees to assist in stopping the spread of COVID, we assigned staff at our station to act as liaisons to answer any questions or concerns employees had in relation to COVID, and to help facilitate their quick return to work through our established protocol with testing, quarantining and treatment which was done through telehealth which prevented additional exposure to others.

### **Speacial Weapons and Tactics Team (S.W.A.T.) and Lenco BearCat**

In order to safeguard our personnel in real life-threatening situations which require the use of special weapons or tactics beyond the capabilities of normally equipped and trained officers, we maintain a S.W.A.T. Team that is available year-round to handle certain high risk situations. To ensure our S.W.A.T. Team has immediate access to medical attention if the need ever arises, there are two City of West Palm Beach Fire Department Medics assigned to the Team who are also fully certified and sworn police officers in the State of Florida. The West Palm Beach Police Department has a Lenco Bear Cat G2 tactical armored tactical vehicle since 2013. The Bear Cat is built to provide blast and ballistic protection to defeat .50 Cal ammunition rounds. The Bear Cat protects first responders and allows them to safely approach potentially deadly situations under the cover of an armored rescue vehicle. The armor allows us to rescue wounded citizens and first responders, and to evacuate citizens from life-threatening situations, such as barricaded suspect and active shooter scenarios. To ensure the proper operation of the vehicle, members of the West Palm Beach Police Department's Special Weapons and Tactics Team (S.W.A.T) team took part in a training session in which training experts provided them hands-on training in the utilization of the Bear Cat.



The Bear Cat deploys anytime there is a potential for armed-subject encounters, such as active shooter situations, barricaded armed subjects, tactical situations, high-risk search warrant executions, and at the



request of our fire department. We have also utilized the Bear Cat in training scenarios with surrounding law enforcement agencies and fire departments. We have successfully utilized the Bear Cat on numerous occasions, one of which was an armed barricaded subject in a hotel room in our city. The Bear Cat was used to break the window/curtains in order to provide a better visual of the room and to deploy gas in the room, all the while providing our officers protection from being shot. This brought the situation to a successful close where none of our officers were harmed and the armed subject was taken into custody.

### **Emergency Field Force (E.F.F.)**

To enhance officer-safety during civil unrest, we deployed our Emergency Field Force (E.F.F.) team. This team is specially trained for civil unrest and riot control response and containment and is available year-round. Team members are equipped with matching black utility uniforms, level III threat protection soft body armor, helmets with face shields, riot batons, and additional upper torso protection, hand, elbow, shin, and knee protection. The team is provided with acrylic riot shields. The E.F.F. members are qualified and trained in the use of pepper ball guns and our 40 mm less-lethal launchers. Properly training and equipping these officers for this type of duty, ensures proper responses are made in these situations to enhance officer safety. The E.F.F. team has an enclosed work body truck outfitted with emergency lights to efficiently transport all of their necessary tools to address any situation they are responding to.



Numerous incidents of civil unrest happened across this great nation of ours as reaction to lethal law enforcement response. We experienced several incidents of civil unrest in our city as well and we were able to rapidly deploy our E.F.F. Team successfully to disband the rioters and end the unrest. We train annually with the Palm Beach County Sheriff's Office's E.F.F. Team in order to be able to provide and/or receive substantial assistance if needed. Properly training and equipping area law enforcement officers for such civil unrest and riot control is necessary and appropriate to help ensure public and officer safety, which again proved to be true during the recent periods of civil unrest.

### **K-9 Team**

In order to ensure the safety of the citizens we serve and the police officers of the City, we maintain and deploy handlers with trained canines. We have five certified explosive detection and apprehension canines, three narcotics detection and apprehension canines, one currency canine, and a missing/endangered person canine which is a bloodhound. In addition to the 400-hour canine school, each handler and their canine will go through in-service training which consists of 5 hours of each discipline of supervised on-duty training each week for each canine team. This training consists of physical exercises for the canine as well as the handler, refresher training in obedience, agility, tracking, searching, criminal apprehension, narcotic detection, explosive detection, and handler protection.



### **Small Unmanned Aircraft System (sUAS)**

The West Palm Beach Police Department maintains a s.U.A.S. Team. The s.U.A.S. Team currently has four drones. Two DJI Phantom IV's, a Matrice 210 DJI that is equipped with thermal imaging and zoom capabilities, and DJI Mavic mini for clearing inside of buildings. The s.U.A.S. video surveillance equipment will only be used for conducting search and rescue operations, endangered missing persons, locating fleeing suspects or escaped prisoners, aiding or assisting in other life safety operations, etc. Each pilot is properly trained and must maintain a current Remote Pilot Certification (Part 107) set forth by the FAA, which there is a bi-annual test. Pilots must also participate in monthly training, along with a required observer. Observers are not required to be operators, but they are required to train in night-time operations on a yearly basis which includes a written test.





### **Catchment Officers**

Located in our City is Grassy Waters Preserve. This preserve is 23 square miles of a wetland ecosystem called the catchment. This preserve serves as the freshwater supply for the City of West Palm Beach and the towns of South Palm beach and Palm Beach Island. Citizens frequent this area and in order to ensure their safety and to protect this resource, we have three catchment officers specifically assigned to this area. They access it with our three Honda ATV'S, three Ford F-250 4X4 trucks, and two airboats one being a 14' Floral City and the other being a 16' Diamond Back.





## **Bomb Squad**

In order to safeguard our personnel in real or potential explosives-related incidents, we maintain a bomb squad. The bomb squad currently has one QinetiQ Talon robot and one containment trailer in its inventory. The robot, which is primarily used for surveillance/scene safety/small package manipulation, but it can be used for any bomb squad operation where distance from the command post is short (300') and package weight is light. This robot is classified as a medium-sized robot that can handle any operation needed by the squad from surveillance, hazardous environment monitoring with sensors, package manipulation and disruption, X-Ray capabilities, assisting in SWAT operations or any other task needed by the squad.

The robot is housed in a Ford F-550 enclosed work body truck with a containment trailer to allow it to be safely towed to an emergency scene.

The containment trailer in the bomb squad inventory is a NABCO containment trailer with rigging capability through a pulley system for remote loading and unloading of a package. This trailer has also been fitted with ramps for the robot to insert or remove a package. We also have two certified explosive detection K-9's assigned to the Bomb Squad.



### **Hostage Negotiations Team**

In order to ensure the safety of our citizens and police officers we maintain a Hostage Negotiations Team (H.N.T.). The H.N.T. team is available year-round and is outfitted with an enclosed Ford 250 Transit work van to respond to situations where a suspect(s) is believed to be barricaded or holding hostages and may reasonably be expected to possess deadly weapons which could be used against innocent citizens, hostages, or any law enforcement officers. The enclosed work van allows team members to operate in any weather condition(s) and is outfitted with emergency lights, computers, printers, police radios, two cell phones, and one throw phone. H.N.T. will also respond to incidents involving individuals barricaded suspects who are a threat to themselves and suffering from a mental health issue. Members of our H.N.T. Team are required to complete the 40-hour Negotiator level I class and the 40-hour C.I.T. class, along with on-going monthly team training. HNT members who are assigned to our patrol division have been proven to be valuable assets repeatedly as they have immediately responded and successfully talked and negotiated peaceful outcomes on numerous occasions, thus keeping our officers and the citizens we serve, safe.



### **Dive Team**

The City of West Palm Beach sits along the intercoastal waterway and has many other bodies of water. In order to ensure the safety of our citizens on our waterways and our police officers, we maintain a DIVE Team to safely patrol our waterways, to assist citizens on capsized vessels, and to conduct underwater search and recovery operations. The DIVE Team is outfitted with two boats, one being a 25' aqua scan and the other a 29' safe boat, along with a DIVE trailer to transport all of their necessary equipment.



### **Crime Scene Investigators and Mult-Media Technician**

In an effort to keep our employees safe at crime and accident scenes we provide them with state-of-the-art equipment and technology. However, it does little good to provide our personnel with this equipment if

they do not have the appropriate means to transport it safely to a scene. Our Crime scene personnel drive Ford Transit 150 work vans with scene lighting and they have professionally customized interiors, specifically designed for their intended purpose. They are designed to safely carry the equipment to the scene. We also have a multi-media technician that drives a Ford transit van to collect digital evidence for our officers at stores and residences.



### **Radio Communication**

The West Palm Beach Police Department believes in providing our officers with uninterrupted access to our communications center for their safety. Our agency made it a priority to create radio interoperability amongst some of the first responder agencies in our county. We have a citywide 800 MHz, digital-trunking, interoperable radio system that allows all Palm Beach County emergency responders to seamlessly communicate on the same common talk-groups with us. We also have access to two additional



radio systems, open sky and the county's P25 radio system. In the event our communication center stopped working, we can immediately switch to open sky and still have communications with our officers in the field to ensure their safety. We additionally have a backup communications center, at an undisclosed location. In order to ensure we provide the best communications service to our officers, in February of 2021 we received our Florida Telecommunications Accreditation Certificate for our compliance with our policies and training standards determined by an assessment team sent by the Commission of Florida Telecommunications Accreditation, who conducts a formal review of the agency's policies, procedures and practices every three years.



### **Appropriate Patrol Vehicle Selection**

Because we work in a climate that truly experiences extreme heat and humidity, and slippery and wet conditions, being able to properly respond to calls for service is essential in safely performing our job duties. To assist us in that regard, we outfitted our fleet with multiple manufacturer vehicles (Chevrolet and Ford), in the event of massive recalls. These vehicles consist of all wheel drive and four-wheel drive,

pursuit-rated vehicles featuring stability control, traction control, and larger interior room, for safer operation by our officers during both high speed and inclement weather operation. Officers feel these SUV's provide more space for themselves, their prisoners, and the equipment they are required to carry. The SUVs also provide for increased ground clearance.



### **Patrol Vehicle Equipment and Lighting**

As we phase out our older patrol vehicles, each new vehicle is designed and equipped with officer-safety in mind. For increased officer-safety, all patrol vehicles are minimally equipped with two-way radios, prisoner transportation cage, emergency lighting and siren, PA system, fire extinguisher, first aid kit and ambu bag, CPR mask, spit mask, hobbles, flares, and flex cuffs. These vehicles are equipped with full roll-over rated cages, and a prisoner seat belt system that allows the officer not to have to reach over the prisoner to access and secure their seat belt.

Our new patrol vehicles have been up fitted with the latest in emergency lighting and warning technology. The LED emergency lighting system integrates to the vehicles computer allowing our officers to be hands free. The LED emergency lighting system automatically [and temporarily] shuts off all lights on the driver's and/or passenger side of the vehicle when the doors are opened, so as not to obscure the officer's vision, increasing officer safety.

The 3-position emergency lighting settings flash varying lights on the vehicle at varying speeds. Position 1 flashes only the rear-facing emergency lights in a slow alternating pattern in such a way as to create only minimal distraction to the approaching drivers. Position 2 flashes all front, side, and rear facing red and blue emergency lights at a moderate speed. Position 2 can be utilized when responding to emergency calls for service when visibility may be an issue, such as when driving in heavy rain or fog and the flashback effect of the white lights would impair the officer's ability to safely see the roadway. Position 3 flashes all front, side, and rear facing red, blue, and white emergency lights at a rapid speed to get motorists attention, more clearly signally for them to move out of the way and yield to the emergency vehicle, allowing for safer emergency travel for the officer and the public. Even if responding with emergency warning equipment in positions 2 or 3, the emergency lighting will automatically revert to the position 1 lighting and flash pattern, once the vehicle is placed in park, limiting the distraction to the approaching drivers. This feature can be overridden if emergency vehicle lighting surrounding the vehicle is needed for enhanced scene safety.

When the patrol vehicle is responding to a call with emergency lighting activated, most rear facing emergency lights turn to a braking pattern only when the patrol car brakes are applied so that it becomes obvious that the vehicle is braking. This increases officer-safety by ensuring that other vehicles, including those being operated by other law enforcement officers, are aware that the patrol vehicle is slowing/stopping, thus reducing the chance of a rear-end collision. When operating the emergency lights at night, the lights can be manually switched to half-power once the vehicle has been placed in park, reducing the blinding effect of the LED lighting on other roadway users. The vehicles are also equipped with an intersection clearing mode which is activated with the push of the horn. When engaged, the emergency lights will accelerate the pattern and change the siren tone for eight seconds in order to be more visible when going through intersections. Once the eight seconds expires, the system automatically reverts to the previous mode. The emergency lighting system has multiple modes that are used for officer safety. One mode is called cruise mode, which sets the emergency lights on steady at 30%, so as not to flash and distract other drivers, but still remain visible while parked on the side of the road. Finally, there is wall of white mode, which is activated when the high beams are turned on. The wall of white mode turns all forward-facing lights to white allowing our officers to better see down alleys, poorly lit areas, vehicles, suspects, etc.

All patrol vehicles are also equipped with an automated vehicle locator system or (AVL). In the event, one of our officers is not responding to their radio and our communications center does not have them out at a specific location, our dispatch personnel can pull up their location via the AVL and immediately dispatch personnel to ensure our officers safety. The AVL is also used to better deploy our personnel. Command staff may conduct a real time AVL inquiry on the crime spike locations in our city in order to better deploy our personnel in those locations. To ensure the safety of our officers and the citizens we serve, the AVL system is also set up to send out speeding threshold (90MPH) alerts via email to Lieutenants and command staff. The lieutenant of the personnel operating said vehicle in the alert, will ascertain why that officer was driving 90 MPH, and either validate the reason(s) why they were driving at

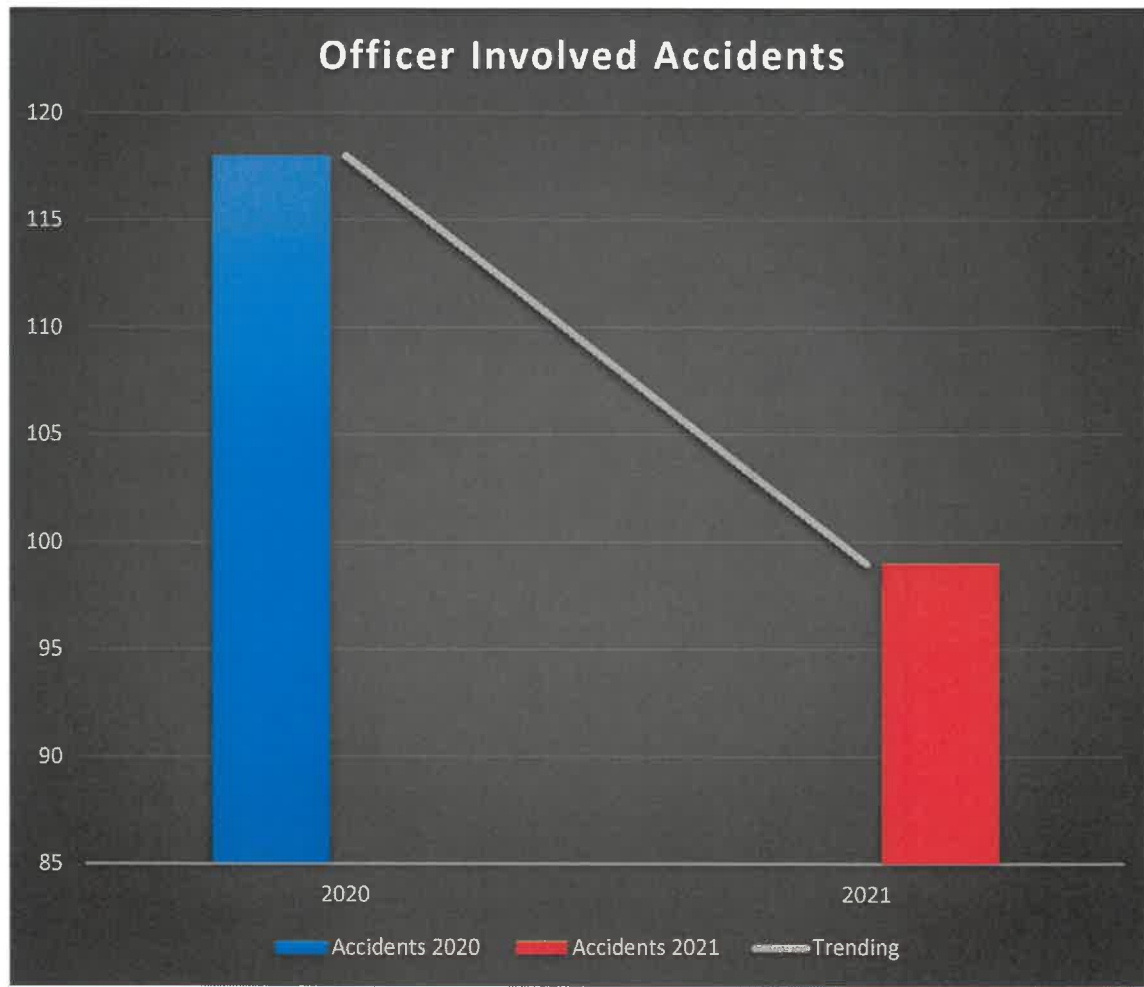


least 90 MPH, or they will correct the speeding with counseling and progressive discipline if warranted.

If you would like to see an example of our lighting system, please click on the link below.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=27KlffOGBU8>

In 2020 our officers were involved in 118 accidents and in 2021 our officers were involved in 99 accidents, which is a decline of almost 20 accidents.



### **Pursuit Termination Devices**

Understanding that public safety is enhanced when vehicle pursuits are ended quickly and safely, patrol cars are equipped with tire deflation devices or stop sticks. Training is initially provided on the proper deployment of tire deflation devices during patrol field training and again annually during our in-service

driving training. Officers not actively engaged in a pursuit are encouraged to get ahead of or parallel the pursuit so that tire deflation devices can be deployed. Officers are trained to stay out of the roadway and stay behind cover during the deployment of tire deflation devices to shield themselves from potential injury from passing vehicles or debris.



### **Patrol Field Training Officer Program**

The West Palm Beach Police Department provides training to newly hired law enforcement officers in areas of Department policies and procedures, officer safety techniques, and proper law enforcement practices through the use of the field training program. The Field Training Program is a nationally accepted training program designed to help new officers make the transition from the classroom environment of the police academy to the application of learned skills in field situations. The field training concept enables the trainee to reach an acceptable level of performance in the given time span provided the trainee and field training officers work together. All new officers are required to successfully complete the eighteen-week Patrol field training officer (FTO) program. Previous law enforcement

officers may complete a ten-week field training officer program depending on their capability. Certified FTO officers and an FTO supervisor provide and oversee the training through a formalized learning process. FTO officers complete daily observation reports on the officer in training. Weekly meetings are held with the new patrol officer and the FTOs and FTO supervisor to discuss program progress and concerns. Remedial training is provided when necessary. Officers who have been unable to successfully complete the program, even after remediation attempts are relieved of duty.

### **Traffic Stops**

For increased officer and public safety, all officers are instructed on the proper way to conduct traffic stops while attending the law enforcement-training academy, with additional focus on traffic stops during the eighteen-week field-training program. Officers are instructed to utilize their two-way radios and inform the Communications Center of their location, the vehicle license plate, the vehicle description, and the number of occupants before exiting their patrol vehicles.

Officers are instructed to utilize a passenger-side approach on all high traffic and/or high-speed roadways to lessen their exposure to the hazards presented by other drivers. Officers are taught to minimize their exposure to vehicle strikes while out of the vehicle by staying away from the traveled portion and away from standing between vehicles while interacting with motorists outside of their vehicles.

If a supervisor observes unsafe traffic stop procedures during the review of an officer's BWC, the supervisor will speak with the officer in-person. At that time, the specific concerning issue(s) will be discussed with focus on the proper way to have handled the traffic stop. If necessary, remedial training can be provided by the training division officers.

### **The Importance of Training and Education**

The West Palm Beach Police Department understands the importance of training and education and encourages all of our personnel to attend advanced training. We encourage on-line courses as well as in person courses, whichever is easier for the officers and their families.

Per the Florida Administrative Code, full-time, part-time, or auxiliary officers are required to complete forty hours of continuing education or training every four years. As an agency, we far exceed the four

year/ forty hour requirement in our yearly in-service training alone. In the previous four years, each officer trained over 158 hours in in-service training. This number does not take into account all of the outside advanced training officers attended as well.

### **College Education Required for Promotion and College Reimbursement Program**

Although a high school graduation or GED are the minimum educational requirements for initial employment, we recognize the value of a formal education, as we feel that a college education and the college experience provide for a more-well-rounded officer. With this understanding, our minimum education requirement for promotion to Sergeant is an Associate Degree or equivalent semester credit hours (at least 60) from an accredited college or university. The minimum education requirement for a promotion to lieutenant is a bachelor's degree from an accredited college or university.

All employees are encouraged to attain higher education. The City of West Palm Beach offers reimbursement for college courses meeting certain criteria. The education reimbursement eligibility is for classes/courses at an accredited junior college, community college, college or university within the State of Florida that are part of a program resulting in a two-year degree, four-year degree, or a master's degree or higher. The classes/courses must be for job-related college course work and is limited to twelve semester hours, which the employee must receive a grade of C or above. Studies have shown that better educated officers are found to provide better law enforcement services and increased positive public relations.

### **Advanced Command-Level Training**

It is understood that in order for the West Palm Beach Police Department's commanders to properly lead and develop their subordinates, they need to be properly trained themselves. To ensure that this training is the most relevant and professional as possible, we have made it a point to send our division commanders to the FBI National Academy (FBINA) and/or the Louisville Southern Police institute (SPI). To date, 92% of our command staff has attended either the FBINA or the SPI academy.



### Accreditation Unit

The West Palm Beach Police Department recognizes accreditation, inspections, internal audits, and inventories are important management quality control tools. These tools assist to determine policies and operational procedures are up to date, adequate and are followed. A law enforcement agency is only as professional and effective as the policies that guide it and the personnel who follow them. We have created comprehensive and defensible policies for our law enforcement personnel. These policies also ensure that our employees are provided guidelines that meet nationally accepted safety standards. We have two-officers assigned to our accreditation unit which oversees all of our policies and adherence to them. These officers attend yearly training on accreditation and receive the latest updates to numerous policies and procedures. In June of 2021, we received our Florida Law Enforcement Re-Accreditation Certificate for our compliance with our policies and training standards determined by an assessment team sent by the Commission of Florida Accreditation, who conducts a formal review of the agency's policies, procedures and practices every three years.



### **On-Going Briefing Training and Legal Eagle Monthly Updates**

Patrol supervisors are encouraged to conduct briefing training sessions on an on-going basis for any subject needing additional discussion and/or training, such as traffic safety, proper vehicle approach, pursuit driving, etc. At times, these briefing training sessions are scripted by the administration and at other times, the supervisor is free to determine appropriate content. The patrol supervisor must run any briefing training by our training sergeant before putting on the training to ensure department wide training consistency.

In order to help our officers be confident in their actions on the street and to serve the public to the best of their ability, our Officers are required to read and digitally sign for monthly legal updates. Every month the Palm Beach County State Attorney's Office publishes legal updates in a publication called "Legal Eagle". The January 2022 publication covered topics such as constitutionally permissible investigative stops, extending traffic stops and Marchman Acts.

### **Tracking of Employees Training and Equipment Issuance**

We use a computerized tracking program that allows us to more efficiently and effectively track employee training and equipment that is issued to employees. The Collective Data system provides for inventory and fleet management, employee training, and personnel. It is utilized to track completed training and the need for printed certificates to be placed in each officer's training file.

### **Vehicle and Personnel Inspections**

The West Palm Beach Police Department recognizes the importance of conducting routine inspections of our personnel, assigned equipment and vehicles, in order to ensure the safety of our officers and the proper functioning of the tools and equipment our officers' use. Our first line supervisors are responsible for inspection of vehicles within his or her area of responsibility or employees under his or her command to be conducted at least once a month for cleanliness, supplies, operation of equipment to include fire extinguishers and recent damage. It is the inspecting supervisor's responsibility to correct any

deficiencies or address any policy violations. First line supervisors are also responsible for conducting daily inspections of their personnel to ensure they are properly uniformed and prepared for duty.

### **Closing**

The West Palm Beach Police Department has made it a priority to ensure that we provide our employees with the safest working environment possible, coupled with a top-of-the-line training unit. We have done so by developing, implementing, and promoting an in-depth comprehensive and strategically implemented officer safety program. These programs are accepted by our employees and are regarded by both the officers and the administration as successful. We believe that the programs and strategies that we have implemented can easily be replicated by other agencies.

At the West Palm Beach Police Department, we firmly believe in our efforts to consistently provide quality policing for the safety of our neighborhoods and for the people who reside in this great city. I want to personally thank the selection Board for taking the time to review our application and for further consideration in awarding the West Palm Beach Police Department this prestigious designation. We triumph not when we receive recognition, but when years of effort and consistent community-led policing produces results. As such, and for the reasons outlined in the previous pages, I passionately believe this agency is worthy of being awarded the Destination Zero General Officer Safety Award.