



MEMORANDUM

DATE: July 27, 2020
TO: Blaine City Council
FROM: Donnell Tanksley, Chief of Police
RE: Blaine Police Department: Operational Snapshot

The intent of this memorandum is to provide you with a high-level operational view of the Blaine Police Department. The memorandum certainly does not encapsulate the entire operation(s) of the police department but does deliver more than baseline information.

The police department consists of sixteen team members—fourteen are commissioned police officers that have been certified by the Washington State Criminal Justice Commission. The two other members are civilian team members with certifications in Records Management and Evidence and Property Management. Collectively, Blaine Police Department members have over one hundred forty-two (142) years of serving the community.

SOCIAL MEDIA

We have (3) social media platforms: Facebook, Twitter and Instagram. The Blaine Police Department Facebook page was launched in July of 2019. We began using it as a platform to connect with the community. It quickly gained attention and a robust community following began. Currently, we have 3,556 people who follow our page. Compared to other local police departments in Whatcom County, we have the third largest following with consistently high engagement numbers. Ahead of us are Bellingham PD and Whatcom County 911.

Based on Engagement statistics, there have been three types of posts that have seen the most acknowledgment. First, are posts which directly involve our officers such as The Salute to Medical First Responders and the arrest of a person that stole a classic car. These posts independent of each other have received over 500,000 acknowledgments.

Secondly, are our posts which bring humor. These too are seeing clicks in the 147,000+ range with engagement numbers of 26,000+. Finally, the most consistent and actively engaging are the posts regarding property or pets which are found and turned into the police department. These posts garner an incredible community response which oftentimes leads to the property being returned to its rightful owner. In essence, we have an additional 3,500 plus community members helping to support a safe community.



We also use our platform to post DID YOU KNOW about things that are often confusing; how to use a roundabout, when to use your vehicle headlights in various conditions and how to replace a Social Security card.

THROWBACK THURSDAY photos also very popular. Our followers eagerly post comments about their memories of our great city.

Additionally, followers are able to post reviews. Here are some examples:

“I have always had deep respect and gratitude for our police department. They have helped our family many times. Always polite respectful and genuinely concerned for the safety of the community. I applaud them for a job well done.”

“They are efficient and seem to be everywhere: I like that!”

“I like hearing about my local community, not just national news and events”

“They are kind, generous and fun! A friend to the community! An asset!”

HIRING AND SELECTION PROCESS

The hiring and selection process in Washington State is one of the most stringent and thorough processes in the nation. [RCW 43.101.095](#) mandates the police certification process which includes a rigorous background investigation, psychological screening and polygraph assessment.

The hiring and qualification process is very complex. Due to the complexity, length of the process and requirements—the majority of applicants do not perform well enough to be considered for a position. Below are the steps we use to hire and select a police officer.

Selection and Hiring

1. Application and testing through Public Safety Testing
2. Physical fitness agility assessment.
3. Selection and Panel Interview
4. Top Three Candidates – Chief interview
5. Recruit Selection

Background Investigation (Complete History & Resume Packet)

1. Interview with Candidate
2. Education Verification
3. Employment History Review
4. Public Safety Experience and Work Performance Review
 - a. Interviews with past supervisors



- b. Interviews with past work peers
- c. Review of past employee files/evaluations/complaints
- 5. Financial History/Credit Review
- 6. Driving Records Review
- 7. Criminal History Review
- 8. Law Enforcement Records Checks from past lived areas
- 9. Civil Court Records Review
- 10. Military History Review
- 11. Drug and Alcohol History
- 12. Domestic Relationship Review
- 13. Internet/Social Media Checks
- 14. References Interviewed/Questionnaire Reviews

Polygraph Investigation/Interview

- 1. General Questionnaire
- 2. Driving Record Review
- 3. Employment Review
- 4. Personal Behavior Questions
- 5. Military Service Review
- 6. Criminal Activity Review
- 7. Education Review
- 8. Use of Force Review
- 9. Employee Theft
- 10. Controlled Substances
- 11. Personal Habits
- 12. Use of Alcohol
- 13. Illegal Sexual Activity
- 14. Honesty Questions
- 15. Financial History Review

Conditional Job Offer

- 1. Psychological Test
- 2. Medical Screening (Health and Physical)
- 3. Drug Screen

Final Job Offer

- 1. Notice of Hire
- 2. Current Peace Officer Commission
 - a. Lateral – Equivalency Academy (CJTC)
 - b. Recruit- Basic Law Enforcement Academy (CJTC)
- 5. Oath of Office – Sworn In
- 6. Code of Ethics given



Basic Law Enforcement Academy (720 Hours)

1. Blue Courage (Positive Psychology, Resilience & Hope, Police Culture, Respect, Nobility of Policing)
2. Criminal Law and Procedures (Vulnerable Adults, Domestic Violence, Crimes Against Children, Sex Offenses, Police Liability, Rights of Citizens, Rules of Law Enforcement Actions, Understanding Perceptions and Bias, Implicit Bias & it's role in every interaction, Cultural Intelligence, Civil Rights & Color of Law Matters, Misconduct Investigations, Complaint Process)
3. Traffic
4. Cultural Awareness
5. Communication Skills
6. Firearms
7. Crisis (Critical Thinking, Problem Solving, Communication Skills, De-Escalation Techniques, Crisis Management, Self-Control, Intervention Strategies, Sources & Effects of stress and stress management and emotional intelligence)
8. Patrol Tactics (Life Saving Skills, Use of Force, Behavioral Health/Crisis)
9. Criminal Investigation
10. Defensive and Control Tactics
11. Mock Scenes

ONGOING TRAINING & PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS

It is the policy of this department to administer a training program that will provide for the professional growth and continued development of its personnel. By doing so, the Department will ensure its personnel possess the knowledge and skills necessary to provide a professional level of service that meets the needs of the community. The Department seeks to provide ongoing training and encourages all personnel to participate in advanced training and formal education on a continual basis. Training is provided within the confines of funding, requirements of a given assignment, staffing levels, and legal mandates. Whenever possible, the Department will use courses certified by the Washington State Criminal Justice Training Commission (WSCJTC).

1. Legislative Changes
2. Use of Force Policy Review/Training
3. Use of Deadly Force Policy Review/Training
4. Less than Lethal Weapons Policy Review and Training
5. Arrest Procedures



6. Firearms Proficiency Training
7. Vehicle Pursuit Policy Review and Training
8. Crisis Intervention Training
9. Biased Based Policing/ Fair and Impartial Policing
10. Sexual Harassment Policy Review and Training
11. Communicable Diseases
12. First Aid – self, public, In-custody Care
13. Administration of Narcan
14. Impaired Driving
15. Emergent Detentions – mental health & involuntary commitment
16. Extreme Risk Protection Orders
17. Preparing Search Warrants
18. Active Shooter and Tactical Medical Response
19. Employee Speech and Social Networking
20. Duty to Intercede

CALLS FOR SERVICE

On October 8, 2018, WhatComm began dispatching calls to the Blaine Police Department. Prior to that, calls were dispatched from Border Patrol. WhatComm is a department within the Bellingham Police Department which operates the 911 emergency telephone system for police related calls in Whatcom County.

From October 8, 2018 to the end of that year, the Blaine Police Department fielded (1868) calls for service.

January 1, 2019 to December 31, 2019, the Blaine Police Department fielded (8299) calls for service.

January 1, 2020 to July 12, 2020, the Blaine Police Department has fielded (3827) calls for service.

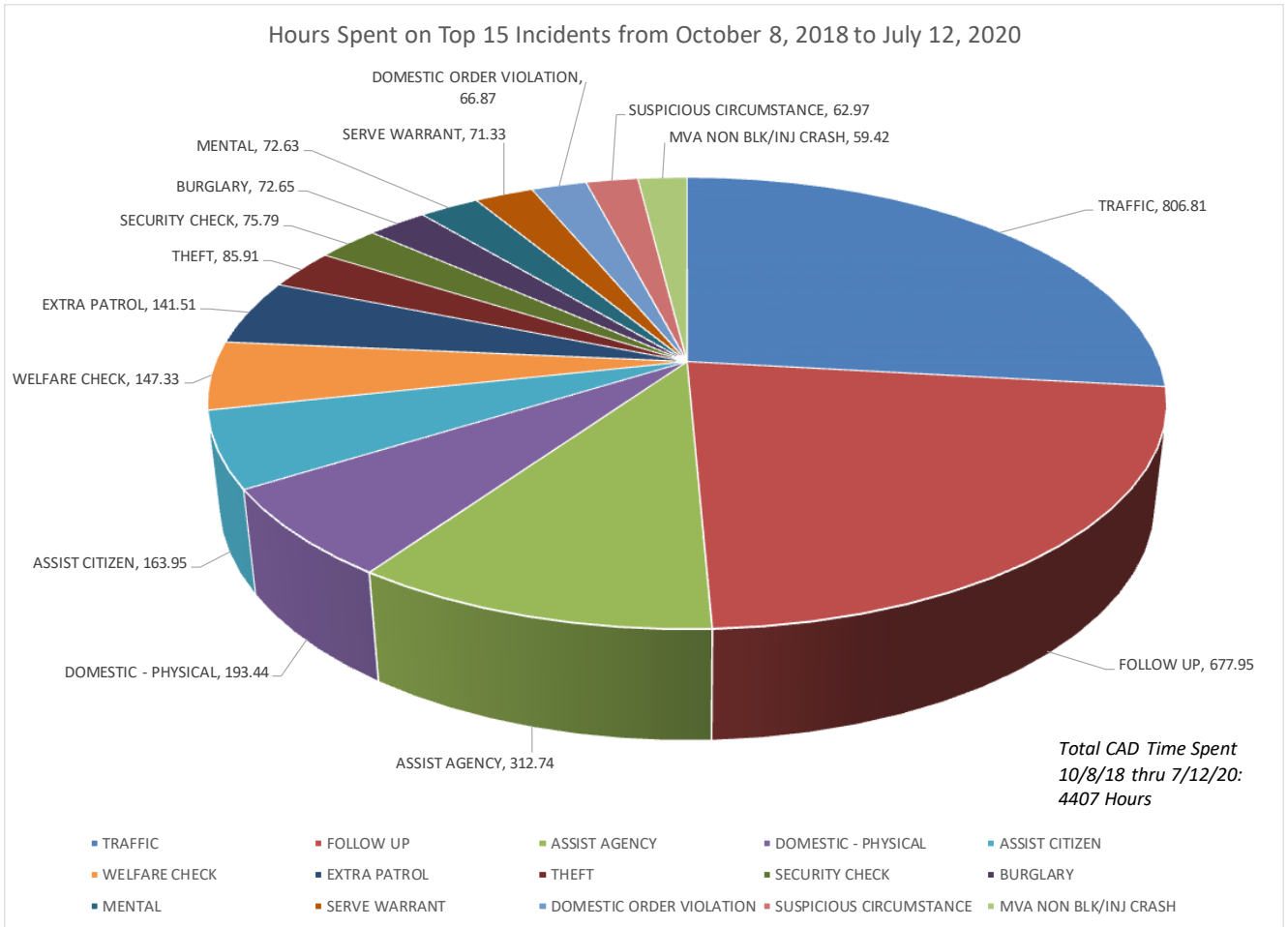
From October 8, 2018 to July 12, 2020, during period of (642) days, Blaine Police Officer spent **(4407) hours** on answering calls for service. This time does not include patrolling our community, report preparation, research, and utilizing other investigative tools, etc.

Below are two graphs which depict how many hours were spent on the top (15) types of incidents and how many incidents there were per hour of the day between October 8, 2018 to July 12, 2020.



BLAINE POLICE DEPARTMENT

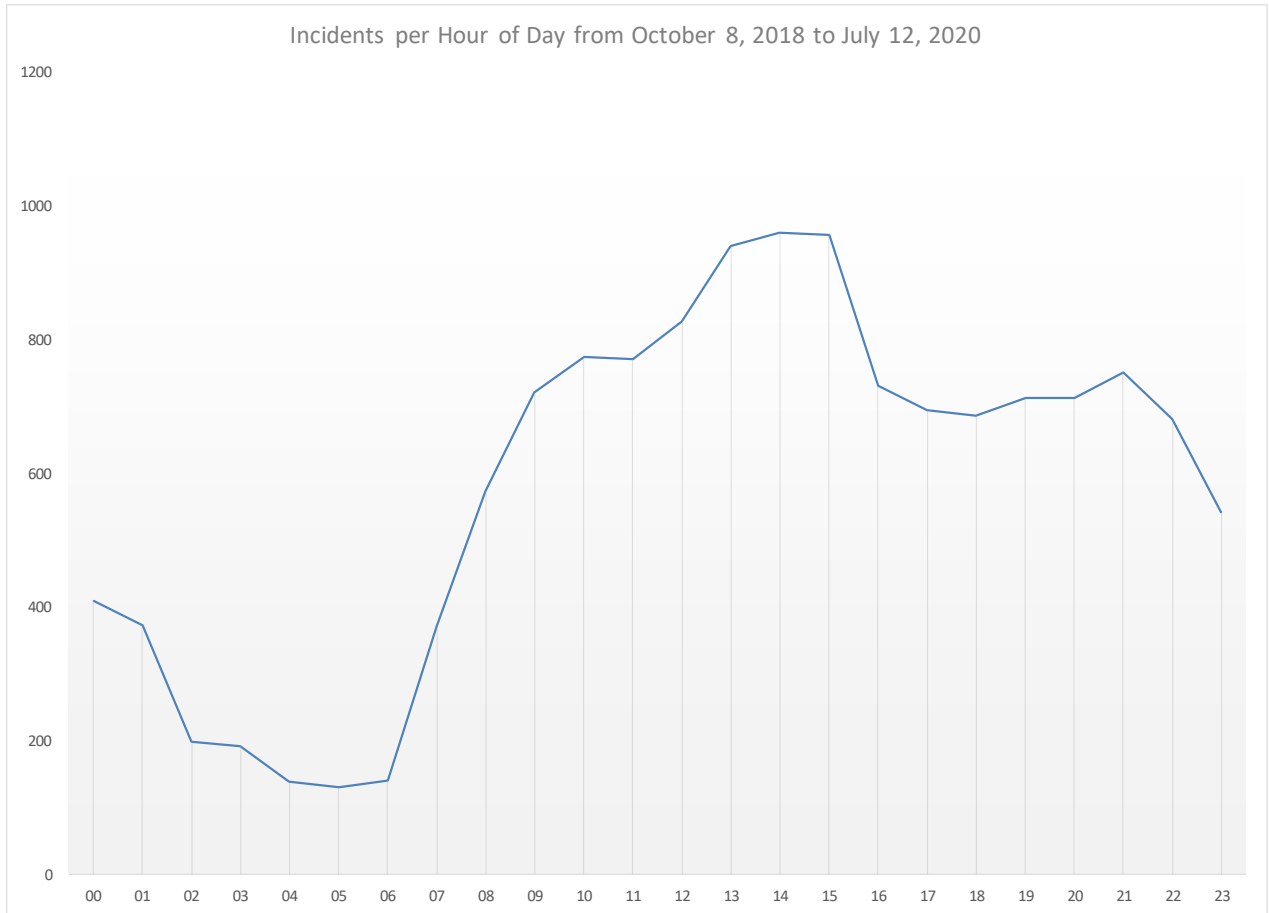
Duty – Integrity - Accountability





BLAINE POLICE DEPARTMENT

Duty – Integrity - Accountability



Policies

The Blaine Police Department policy manual is a very detailed living document of policies that align with city, state and federal laws. The policies are frequently updated and team members are tested on the content of the policies through a Daily Training Bulletin program.

Chapter 1 - Law Enforcement Role and Authority

- 100 - Law Enforcement Authority
- 101 - Law Enforcement Certification
- 102 - Oath of Office
- 103 - Policy Manual

Chapter 2 - Organization and Administration

- 200 - Organizational Structure and Responsibility
- 201 - Special Order
- 203 - Training Policy



- 204 - Electronic Mail
- 205 - Administrative Communications
- 206 - Concealed Pistol License
- 207 - Retiree Concealed Firearms

Chapter 3 - General Operations

- 300 - Use of Force
- 301 - Use of Force Review Boards
- 302 - Handcuffing and Restraints
- 303 - Control Devices and Techniques
- 304 - Conducted Energy Device
- 305 - Officer-Involved Shootings and Deaths
- 306 - Firearms
- 307 - Vehicle Pursuits
- 308 - Officer Response to Calls
- 310 - Domestic Violence
- 311 - Search and Seizure
- 312 - Temporary Custody of Juveniles
- 313 - Adult Abuse
- 314 - Discriminatory Harassment
- 315 - Child Abuse
- 316 - Missing Persons
- 317 - Public Alerts
- 318 - Victim Witness Assistance
- 319 - Hate Crimes
- 320 - Standards of Conduct
- 321 - Information Technology Use
- 322 - Report Preparation
- 323 - Media Relations
- 324 - Subpoenas and Court Appearances
- 325 - Outside Agency Assistance
- 326 - Registered Offender Information
- 327 - Major Incident Notification
- 328 - Death Investigation
- 329 - Identity Theft
- 330 - Limited English Proficiency Services
- 331 - Communications with Persons with Disabilities
- 332 - Child and Dependent Adult Safety
- 333 - Service Animals
- 335 - Off-Duty Law Enforcement Actions
- 336 - Department Use of Social Media
- 337 - Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation
- 338 - Extreme Risk Protection Orders



339 - Community Relations

Chapter 4 - Patrol Operations

- 401 - Bias-Based Policing
- 402 - Pass-down Training
- 403 - Crime and Disaster Scene Integrity
- 405 - Ride-Along Policy
- 406 - Hazardous Material Response
- 407 - Hostage and Barricade Incidents
- 408 - Response to Bomb Calls
- 409 - Emergency Detentions
- 410 - Citation Releases
- 411 - Arrest or Detention of Foreign Nationals
- 412 - Rapid Response and Deployment Policy
- 413 - Immigration Violations
- 414 - Emergency Utility Service
- 415 - Field Training Officer Program
- 416 - Aircraft Accidents
- 417 - Obtaining Air Support
- 418 – Contacts and Temporary Detentions
- 420 - Shift Sergeants
- 421 - Mobile Data Terminal Use
- 424 - Public Recording of Law Enforcement Activity
- 426 - Bicycle Patrol
- 427 - Foot Pursuits
- 428 - Houseless Persons
- 429 - Civil Disputes
- 430 - First Amendment Assemblies
- 432 - Medical Aid and Response
- 433 - Crisis Intervention Incidents

Chapter 5 - Traffic Operations

- 500 - Traffic Function and Responsibility
- 501 - Traffic Collision Reporting
- 502 - Vehicle Towing and Release
- 504 - Impaired Driving
- 506 - Disabled Vehicles

Chapter 6 - Investigation Operations

- 603 - Eyewitness Identification
- 604 - Brady Material Disclosure
- 608 – Interrogations and Confessions



Chapter 7 - Equipment

700 - Department Owned and Personal Property

701 - Personal Communication Devices

705 - Personal Protective Equipment

706 - CAD Assisted GPS Tracking

Chapter 8 - Support Services

800 - Property and Evidence

802 - Records Maintenance and Release

803 - Protected Information

805 - Physical Protection

806 - Criminal History Use and Dissemination

Chapter 9 - Custody

900 - Temporary Custody of Adults

901 - Custodial Searches

902 - Biological Samples

Chapter 10 - Personnel

1001 - Evaluation of Employees

1003 - Grievance Procedure

1004 - Anti-Retaliation

1005 - Reporting of Employee Convictions

1006 - Drug- and Alcohol-Free Workplace

1007 - Sick Leave

1008 - Communicable Diseases

1009 - Smoking and Tobacco Use

1010 - Personnel Complaints

1011 - Seat Belts

1012 - Body Armor

1017 - Meal Periods and Breaks

1021 - Outside Overtime and Employment

1023 - Personal Appearance Standards

1025 - Nepotism and Conflicting Relationships

1026 - Domestic Violence Involving Law Enforcement Employees

1027 - Department Badges

1030 - Employee Speech, Expression and Social Networking

1032 - Line-of-Duty Deaths

USE OF FORCE

The Blaine Police Department is committed to providing law enforcement services to the community with due regard for the racial, cultural or other differences of those served. It is the policy of this department to provide law enforcement services and to enforce the



law equally, fairly, objectively and without discrimination toward any individual or group. Every member of the department is responsible for promptly reporting any suspected or known instances of bias-based policing to a supervisor. Members should, when reasonable to do so, intervene to prevent any biased-based actions by another member. Members have received training on both biased-based policing and fair and impartial policing.

This department recognizes and places a high priority on the rights of all individuals guaranteed under the Constitution and the laws of this state.

The policy provides guidelines on the reasonable use of force. While there is no way to specify the exact amount or type of reasonable force to be applied in any situation, every member of this department is expected to use these guidelines to make such decisions in a professional, impartial and reasonable manner.

Officers must have an understanding of, and true appreciation for, their authority and limitations. This is especially true with respect to overcoming resistance while engaged in the performance of law enforcement duties.

The Department recognizes and respects the value of all human life and dignity without prejudice to anyone. Vesting officers with the authority to use reasonable force and to protect the public welfare requires monitoring, evaluation and a careful balancing of all interests.

The Use of Force policy does include the “duty to intercede”. The policy states, “Any officer present and observing another officer using force that is clearly beyond that which is objectively reasonable under the circumstances shall, when in a position to do so, intercede to prevent the use of unreasonable force. An officer who observes another employee use force that exceeds the degree of force permitted by law should promptly report these observations to a supervisor.”

Officers shall use only that amount of force that reasonably appears necessary given the facts and circumstances perceived by the officer at the time of the event to accomplish a legitimate law enforcement purpose.

The "reasonableness" of force will be judged from the perspective of a reasonable officer on the scene at the time of the incident. Any evaluation of reasonableness must allow for the fact that officers are often forced to make split-second decisions about the amount of force that reasonably appears necessary in a particular situation, with limited information and in circumstances that are tense, uncertain and rapidly evolving.



Given that no policy can realistically predict every possible situation an officer might encounter, officers are entrusted to use well-reasoned discretion in determining the appropriate use of force in each incident.

It is also recognized that circumstances may arise in which officers reasonably believe that it would be impractical or ineffective to use any of the tools, weapons or methods provided by the Department. Officers may find it more effective or reasonable to improvise their response to rapidly unfolding conditions that they are confronting. In such circumstances, the use of any improvised device or method must nonetheless be reasonable and utilized only to the degree that reasonably appears necessary to accomplish a legitimate law enforcement purpose.

While the ultimate objective of every law enforcement encounter is to avoid or minimize injury, nothing in the policy requires an officer to retreat or be exposed to possible physical injury before applying reasonable force.

In 2019, the police department responded to (8299) calls for service. Of those (8299) calls for service, and based on our strict Use of Force reporting, we documented (17) instances of Use of Force.

The majority of the instances involved someone tensing up and refusing to be arrested. Of those (17) instances, there was (1) instance wherein the officer had to strike the person with their elbow to fend off a violent attack. There were (0) instances where a Taser was used on a person. Lastly, one instance involved an officer drawing their firearm for a legitimate law enforcement purpose. The weapon was not discharged.