

Village of Downers Grove Police Department
Transparency FAQ
June 16, 2020

The Village has received many inquiries from the public concerning the policies and practices of the Downers Grove Police Department. This FAQ document is based on those questions in addition to the concepts expressed by the #8CANTWAIT Campaign on police use of force reform and the Ten Shared Principles developed between Illinois Association of Chiefs of Police (ILACP) and the Illinois NAACP State Conference. Links to the Department's Policies, Procedures and Data Reports are available below.

Does the Downers Grove Police Department have formal written policies and procedures?

The Downers Grove Police Department maintains over 400 written directives based on the standards of the Commission on Accreditation for Law Enforcement Agencies (CALEA). CALEA continuously reviews information related to best practices for the delivery of law enforcement services and requires law enforcement agencies to update policies according to its standards. The Police Department undergoes an annual compliance review by CALEA leading up to a comprehensive on-site assessment every four years.

The policies and procedures of the Downers Grove Police Department are available on the Village website [here](#).

Is the Downers Grove Police Department subject to review by an independent third party organization?

The Downers Grove Police Department is nationally accredited by the Commission on Accreditation for Law Enforcement Agencies (CALEA). As an accredited law enforcement agency, the Police Department is required to prove compliance with over 350 professional standards representing industry best practices. In 2018, the Department was awarded CALEA's highest recognition, "Accredited with Excellence," placing the Downers Grove Police Department in the top half of 1% of law enforcement agencies across the country. The Department was also recognized with the meritorious award for achieving 15 straight years of CALEA accreditation.

Is the Downers Grove Police Department aware of the President's Task Force on 21st Century Policing?

In 2014, President Barack Obama signed an executive order establishing the Task Force on 21st Century Policing. The President charged the task force with identifying best practices and offering recommendations on how policing practices can promote effective crime reduction while building public trust. The task force recommendations are organized around six main topic areas or “pillars:” Building Trust and Legitimacy, Policy and Oversight, Technology and Social Media, Community Policing and Crime Reduction, Officer Training and Education, and Officer Safety and Wellness.

In 2015, the State of Illinois utilized the recommendations of the President’s Task Force to sign into law the Illinois Police and Community Relations Improvement Act. The Act included several changes to Illinois law enforcement procedures, effective January 1, 2016, including:

- Established training requirements for use of force, legal updates, constitutional and proper use of law enforcement authority, procedural justice, civil rights, human rights, and cultural competency
- Established the requirement of third-party investigation of officer-involved deaths
- Banned the use of chokeholds except when deadly force is justified
- Established the right of private persons to video-record law enforcement officers performing official duties in a public place or where they have no expectation of privacy
- Expanded the collection and reporting of traffic stop data to pedestrian stops
- Established the requirement to report certain disciplinary measures to the Illinois Law Enforcement Training and Standards Board
- Established the Law Enforcement Officer-Worn Body Camera Act to set the standards, procedures, and regulations for the use of body-worn cameras, as developed by the Illinois Law Enforcement Training Standards Board.

What is the Downers Grove Police Department doing to implement the Ten Shared Principles adopted in 2018?

The Illinois Association of Chiefs of Police (ILACP) and the Illinois NAACP State Conference prepared a joint resolution, adopting ten shared principles that are designed to bridge the gap of mistrust between police and communities of color. The first of its kind in our nation’s history, the agreement between a NAACP state conference and a statewide law enforcement agency identifies the common ground between local law

enforcement and communities of color in their commitment to defending civil rights and keeping communities safe.

The Ten Shared Principles can be found [here](#)

The Downers Grove Police Department demonstrates its commitment to the shared principles in the following ways:

Principle # 1: We value the life of every person and consider life to be the highest value.

The value of human life is explicitly stated in the Police Department's policy on use of force, and demonstrated in our commitment to training all officers in the areas of de-escalation, crisis intervention, and the proper use of force.

Principle # 2: All persons should be treated with dignity and respect. This is another foundational value.

The core value of "respect" is a key component of the mission statement of the Downers Grove Police Department. The principles of respect, fairness, equity, impartiality and courtesy are embedded in our policies, procedures and practices. We maintain high standards for the fair and equitable treatment of all people through ongoing training, supervision, recognition of exceptional customer service practices and the comprehensive review of key policing practices, including use of force and traffic stops.

Principle # 3: We reject discrimination toward any person that is based on race, ethnicity, religion, color, nationality, immigrant status, sexual orientation, gender, disability, or familial status.

All Downers Grove police officers have been trained in the principles of procedural justice, cultural competency, and implicit bias, and receive annual training on policies and procedures prohibiting bias-based policing practices. The Police Department conducts an annual review of traffic and pedestrian stops to identify trends that would indicate bias.

Principle # 4: We endorse the six pillars in the report of the President's Task Force on 21st Century Policing. The first pillar is to build and rebuild trust through procedural justice, transparency, accountability, and honest recognition of past and present obstacles.

The Downers Grove Police Department (DGPD) is accredited with excellence by CALEA, the Commission on Accreditation for Law Enforcement Agencies. To enhance accountability, CALEA provides third party oversight of the Department's policing practices to ensure compliance with over 350 professional standards. The Police Department demonstrates transparency by publishing policies and procedures, department data, and its citizen inquiry procedure online. The data includes comprehensive annual reports analyzing use of force, traffic and pedestrian stops, and internal investigations.

Principle # 5: We endorse the four pillars of procedural justice, which are fairness, voice (i.e., an opportunity for citizens and police to believe they are heard), transparency, and impartiality.

All Downers Grove police officers receive annual training on the prevention of bias-based policing practices. The Department's policies and training reinforce procedures that serve to maintain public confidence and trust by providing police services in a fair and equitable manner for all people.

Principle # 6: We endorse the values inherent in community policing, which includes community partnerships involving law enforcement, engagement of police officers with residents outside of interaction specific to enforcement of laws, and problem-solving that is collaborative, not one-sided.

The Downers Grove Police Department maintains a robust public education program that provides opportunities for police officers and civilian employees to engage with the community outside of traditional law enforcement settings. Our staff partners with schools, businesses, and community organizations to provide outreach on a variety of topics, including child safety, school and workplace violence prevention, elderly abuse, and internet scams.

Principle # 7: We believe that developing strong ongoing relationships between law enforcement and communities of color at the leadership level and street level will be the keys to diminishing and eliminating racial tension.

The Downers Grove Police Department has committed to participate in a youth internship program to provide students of color who are interested in a career in law enforcement the opportunity to learn about policing under the guidance of a mentor officer. The Department also provides tours of the police station to community

organizations and families who are interested in learning more about the Downers Grove Police Department.

Principle # 8: We believe that law enforcement and community leaders have a mutual responsibility to encourage all citizens to gain a better understanding and knowledge of the law to assist them in their interactions with law enforcement officers.

The Downers Grove Police Department has engaged with the Unity Partnership, an organization whose mission is to “increase trust and confidence between law enforcement and the community so that together we can address current issues and face the future challenges as partners.” The Village of Downers Grove is working with the Unity Partnership to host a community gathering to share information and provide the public an opportunity to share feedback and ask questions about policing in Downers Grove.

The Department has also published its policies on the Village website, along with a series of annual reports to help the public gain a better understanding of police practices in the Village.

Principle # 9: We support diversity in police departments and in the law enforcement profession. Law enforcement and communities have a mutual responsibility and should work together to make a concerted effort to recruit diverse police departments.

The Downers Grove Police Department strives to achieve diversity in the hiring of its workforce. The Police Department recruitment team seeks to attend college career fairs at schools with a minority population of 35% or higher. The Police Department does not have a residency requirement and reaches a broad range of applicants through the Village website, law enforcement recruitment websites and social media outlets.

Principle # 10: We believe de-escalation training should be required to ensure the safety of community members and officers. We endorse using de-escalation tactics to reduce the potential for confrontations that endanger law enforcement officers and community members; and the principle that human life should be taken only as a last resort.

All Downers Grove police officers are trained in de-escalation and crisis intervention techniques. Officers attend realistic, scenario-based training to practice de-escalation

techniques to enhance the safety of the public and the safety of officers in a potential use of force situation.

What is the #8CANTWAIT campaign and how does the Downers Grove Police Department apply its principles?

#8CANTWAIT is a campaign calling for policy reform related to police use of force in 8 specific areas:

Ban Chokeholds and Strangleholds

The DGPD does not allow the use of chokeholds, neck restraints, or similar techniques with a potential for serious injury unless deadly force is justified.

Require De-Escalation

All Downers Grove police officers are trained to de-escalate encounters before using force, when reasonable and safe to do so, to respond to resistance or aggression to avoid jeopardizing their own safety or the safety of others. All Downers Grove police officers have received training in crisis intervention.

Require Warning Before Shooting

Officers will announce their presence, provide lawful orders, and give individuals the opportunity to respond before using force, when safe and reasonable to do so.

Require Exhausting All Alternatives Before Shooting

Officers may only use the minimum amount of force necessary. The only time an officer can escalate to a higher level of force is when a lower form of force is ineffective, or the officer reasonably believes a lower form of force will be ineffective.

Duty To Intervene

Any officer present and observing another officer using force that is clearly unreasonable must, when in a position to do so safely, intervene to prevent the use of excessive force. Officers must promptly report any excessive or unreasonable force to a supervisor.

Ban Shooting At Moving Vehicles

Officers should only discharge a firearm at a moving vehicle or its occupants when the officer reasonably believes there are no other means available to avert the threat of the vehicle, or if deadly force other than the vehicle is directed at the officers or others.

Require Use Of Force Continuum

The Police Department's "Resistance Control Continuum," defines reasonable levels of force in response to different levels of resistance or aggression. Officers may only use the minimum amount of force necessary. The only time an officer can escalate to a higher level of force is when the officer finds lower levels of force are ineffective, or the officer reasonably believes a lower form of force will be ineffective.

Require Comprehensive Reporting

Each officer involved in a use of force is required to immediately notify their supervisor and complete a report. These incidents include any physical response beyond that normally used to make an arrest, along with any pointing of firearms or Tasers at a person. All use of force reports are reviewed by a Sergeant, Lieutenant, and Deputy Chief. The Department also conducts a comprehensive annual review of all use of force incidents.

What type of training does Downers Grove provide to its officers regarding topics such as procedural justice, de-escalation, and implicit bias?

All sworn officers have received training in constitutional and proper use of law enforcement authority, procedural justice, civil rights, human rights, cultural competency, and de-escalation. The Department trains and practices de-escalation skills to maintain discipline and composure in a variety of settings, including verbal confrontations.

In 2019, all sworn officers received training in the following areas:

- Use of Force
- Legal Updates
- Constitutional and Proper Use of Authority
- Procedural Justice
- Civil Rights
- Human Rights
- Cultural Competency
- Mental Health Awareness and Response
- Reporting Child Abuse and Neglect
- Trauma Informed Response and Investigation of Sexual Assault/Abuse
- Psychology of Domestic Violence

The Department's Crisis Intervention Team (CIT) consists of 23 sworn officers who have undergone 40-hours of crisis intervention training. In 2019, the Department handled 368 mental health related calls. CIT follow-up or intervention was conducted on 250 of those calls.

Newly hired officers that become certified through the Suburban Law Enforcement Academy complete 580 hours of curriculum, which includes training in crisis intervention, civil rights, de-escalation, communication in the police environment, control and arrest tactics, procedural justice and mental illness behavior.

Are officers trained to perform and seek necessary medical attention after an application of force?

Officers are required to perform first aid and immediately summon medical assistance if an individual is injured, complains of being injured, or the officer believes the person is injured or in need of medical attention.

How does the Downers Grove Police Department utilize cameras?

Each squad car is equipped with an in-car camera, and each patrol officer is equipped with a body mic. The squad car camera automatically activates when the officer initiates a traffic stop or otherwise activates the squad's emergency lights. Supervisors periodically audit a random sample of each officer's traffic stops to ensure compliance with department policies.

The Downers Grove Police Department does not currently utilize body-worn cameras. The Police Department is researching the feasibility of implementing body-worn cameras in the future.

How does the department identify officers who have a history of complaints or misconduct?

The Department tracks all complaints and maintains an early intervention system to identify patterns of behavior that require corrective measures. Corrective measures may include discipline, remedial training, coaching or counseling, and employee assistance.

How does the Downers Grove Police Department solicit feedback from the public?

The Downers Grove Police Department administers a public survey once every two years. The survey provides an opportunity for the public to submit their feedback regarding things the Police Department does well and things community members feel should be improved. The Department reviews the surveys to better understand the concerns of the community and to develop the goals and objectives of the department. The Police Department also publishes the email addresses and direct phone numbers for the Chief of Police and Deputy Chiefs on the Village website.

Members of the public may attend Village Council meetings to make public comments. Members of the public may also send direct inquiries to the Village Council and department directors by submitting a Council & Directors Request on the Village website.

Questions and Comments:

The procedure for making an inquiry or complaint regarding the Downers Grove Police Department can be found [here](#)

Contact information for the Chief of Police and Deputy Chiefs can be found [here](#)

To make an inquiry with the Village Council and Department Directors, click [here](#)

Applicable Policies and Procedures:

[Downers Grove Policies and Procedures](#)

Written Directive 4.1.1 Use of Reasonable Force can be found [here](#)

Written Directive 4.1.2 Use of Deadly Force can be found [here](#)

Written Directive 4.1.5 Rendering Aid can be found [here](#)

Written Directive 4.2.1 Reporting Use of Force can be found [here](#)

Written Directive 4.2.2 Written Use of Force Reports and Administrative Review can be found [here](#)

Written Directive 4.2.4 Analyzing Reports from Use of Force can be found [here](#)

Written Directive 35.1.9 Personnel Early Intervention System can be found [here](#)

Written Directive 1.2.9 Biased Policing can be found [here](#)

Written Directive 26.2.1 Complaint Investigation can be found [here](#)

Written Directive 41.2.2 Pursuit of Motor Vehicles can be found [here](#)

Reports and Information:

The Downers Grove Police Department webpage can be found [here](#)

[The Downers Grove Police Department Annual Report](#)

[The CALEA Final Assessment Report](#)

[The Department's Annual Use of Force Report](#)

[The Department's Personnel Early Intervention System Annual Review](#)

[The Department's Annual Review of Biased-Based Policing Practices](#)

[The Department's Annual Recruitment Plan and Demographic Study](#)

[The Department's Annual Review of Internal Investigations](#)

[The Department's Annual Review of Motor Vehicle Pursuits](#)

[The Department's Annual Review of the Crisis Intervention Team](#)

[The Suburban Law Enforcement Academy curriculum for newly hired police officers](#)

[Public Survey of the Downers Grove Police Department](#)
