



North Carolina Association of Chiefs of Police

Law enforcement excellence for tomorrow . . . *today.*

Workforce on Police Professionalism

Recommendations on the Evolution of 21st Century Policing

September 1, 2020

Preface

Police Chiefs in North Carolina have pursued improvements in policing for years, including a forum of 60 chiefs in 2015 that produced a report and recommendations addressing specific actions in the broad areas of Community Relations, Non-Biased policing, and Training. We continue to pursue these objectives. We believe that the *sanctity of human life* should be at the heart of everything an agency does. Many of the reform requests, such as “Eight Can’t Wait”, have been operational policy for a long time.

Since then, the NCACP successfully implemented numerous strategies spearheading legislative changes, advocating grant funding, overseeing strategic changes in law enforcement training, and providing 21st Century Policing training for police chiefs. Some of those initiatives included: statewide non-biased based policing training; revisions to the state’s Basic Law Enforcement Training program to include scenario-based reality training; working with legislators to enact law enforcement video laws; promoting best practice policies for Body-Worn Camera Implementation; reengineering use of force tactics, and supporting Raise the Age legislation.

These initiatives enhanced the professionalism of law enforcement resulting in comprehensive cultural changes in the profession. To build upon these initiatives, the NCACP recently formed the Police Professionalism Working Group to make recommendations to police chiefs, legislators, and communities to address concerns after the tragic death of George Floyd in Minneapolis that sparked a national debate about police reform. An immediate response from the NCACP included a unanimous statement condemning the officer’s actions in the Floyd encounter and publishing a [NCACP Police Reform Public Safety Announcement](#) detailing the Associations initiatives and stakeholder roles on police accountability. The video received over 30,000 views.

In addition, many agencies are accredited by the Commission on Accreditation for Law Enforcement Agencies (CALEA) that demonstrates police agencies’ commitment to excellence in law enforcement. The NCACP has been at the forefront of developing a statewide accreditation process in order to be more cost effective and serve many additional agencies.

In preparing this report, the work group reviewed information from the International Association of Chiefs of Police (IACP), the National Organization of Black Law Enforcement Executives (NOBLE) and the Police Executive Research Forum (PERF). This report is intended as a guide for law enforcement executives and public stakeholders on attainable and appropriate recommendations to enhance existing 21st Century Policing principles and to address policing culture in North Carolina. NCACP has a new initiative to build on previous steps to improve police professionalism.



Members of the Workforce Group



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Executive Summary



September 1, 2020

The NCACP has led efforts to improve policing and alleviate tensions between law enforcement and the public. To continue work on these objectives, the Working Group presents this report and recommendations.

The North Carolina Association of Chiefs of Police adopts the following Foundation Principles and will pursue the described goals to achieve them.

Foundation Principle One

Preservation of life is central to everything we do and the NCACP will reinforce this philosophy in police culture and training as a foundational principle.

Goals:

- A. Create a culture of trust and racial equity in our community.
 - 1. The concept and methods of fair and impartial policing should be mandated in Basic Law Enforcement Training (BLET) and in-service training.
 - 2. Policies and training should incorporate the duty to intervene and report misconduct or misuse of force by another officer without fear of retribution to aid in the prevention of police misconduct.
- B. Preserve life in all use of force incidents.
 - 1. Use of force training should be comprehensively reformed to incorporate preservation of life in every aspect of use of force, and to integrate the existing fragmented use of force techniques and tools into a comprehensive approach.
 - 2. Training in the preservation of life in crisis situations requires more than classroom instruction. De-escalation and use of force training should emphasize active scenario-based reality training that inculcates the objective of preservation of life and assesses an officer's skills and decision-making. De-escalation, use of force, and Crisis Intervention (CIT) training should be mandated in BLET and in-service training.



Foundation Principle Two

Professionalism, ethics, integrity, and accountability will be instilled and reinforced as foundational principles.

Goals:

- A. Create a culture of excellence in every police agency by improving required policies and procedures.
 - 1. The newly created North Carolina Law Enforcement Agency Accreditation Program within the Criminal Justice Education and Training Standards Commission (CJETSC) should receive adequate state financial support. The Accreditation Program establishes voluntary comprehensive agency standards and oversight to ensure implementation of recommended policies and best practices to enhance professionalism.
 - 2. A resource professional should be funded by the state to assist law enforcement agencies in developing policies, procedures, and best practices to enhance professionalism. This is most needed for smaller departments with limited resources.
 - 3. Professionalism involves building trust and legitimacy in the served community, and many existing local community engagement programs are successful. These efforts should be enhanced and expanded through a state grant program to fund robust and more numerous community engagement initiatives.
- B. Improve the quality and professionalism of our workforce.
 - 1. The Criminal Justice Fellows Program provides a pipeline for highly qualified college educated and diverse law enforcement recruits, and should be expanded in eligibility and funding.
 - 2. A police chief sets the culture and professionalism of the agency. The newly created New Chiefs Training course developed by NCACP in conjunction with the N.C. Justice Academy fills the existing void in credentialing new police chiefs. It provides essential training to new and aspiring chiefs in executive leadership and various subject areas necessary to be a successful professional chief, and should be mandatory.
 - 3. Poorly performing officers (“bad cops”) exist, and they must be identified and eliminated from law enforcement. An agency considering an applicant should be required to consult CJESTC information concerning officer disciplinary actions.



Explanation of Recommendations

Foundation Principle 1 Preservation of Life

Preservation of life must be at the heart of everything a law enforcement agency does. Law enforcement must reinforce this principle in everything we do including training philosophies, policies, and application of policing. To reinforce this principle, NCACP recommends fundamental changes in policing culture and training.

Preserving Life

The **sanctity of human life** should be at the heart of everything that our Police Departments do. We are committed to constantly reinforcing that goal and philosophy. Law enforcement agencies extensively trains (and re-trains) officers in use of force and escalation techniques. We need to encourage agencies to no longer utilize the historic standard actions based on the decision-making continuum of “shoot/don’t shoot”. That was the conventional wisdom for decades resulting in officers frequently make split-second decisions that had life or death consequences. The re-engineered Use of Force principles includes Police Tactics Training, Response to Resistance and Scenario Training, Crisis Intervention Training, making an assessment of the situation and slowing the situation down before acting, utilizing verbal de-escalation strategies and communicating with the subject to seek a resolution.

NCACP encourages a critical decision-making model for all of our agencies.

Scenario Base Reality Training

Law enforcement can no longer accept the independent silo training of various techniques and tools. Rather, training must incorporate decision making under stress to properly predict and evaluate how an officer will likely respond to a given situation.

Training involving use of force must be comprehensively revised. Relevant training must transition into more scenario-based reality training that duplicates real encounters a law enforcement officer will likely experience. Assessing an officer’s knowledge, skills, ability, and decision making are vital to reinforcing preservation of life. Vital to this concept, is the instructor’s role to reinforce preservation of life decisions to the extent feasible when actual life is in imminent danger.

NCACP supports the current NCJA Job Task Analysis with additional emphasis to create introductory BLET courses for CIT, biased policing, and verbal de-escalation.

NCACP recommends BLET, in-service and instructor training programs incorporate reality-based role play training that evaluates comprehension and decision making to preserve life.



De-escalation Training

De-escalation training is more than a buzz term. It must become a meaningful policing approach with proven effectiveness. In North Carolina, de-escalation training is fractured into several sub-set training course such as Crisis Intervention Team (CIT), Verbal de-escalation/tactics, fair and impartial policing, and constitutional policing.

Combined, these courses equip officers to make sound legal decisions while incorporating appropriate methods to divert certain events from criminal justice system. By de-escalating situations, law enforcement is able to predictively reduce use of force encounters which could ultimately preserve life.

NCACP recommends the development a comprehensive de-escalation training for law enforcement.

Duty to Render Aid

Preservation of life must also include policies, training or applicable certifications for rendering aid. In addition to requesting medical care, officers must receive training to render lifesaving aid until advanced medical care arrives on scene.



NCACP recommends all North Carolina law enforcement officers obtain training in Basic First Aid & CPR.

**PRESERVATION OF LIFE MUST BE AT THE HEART OF
EVERYTHING A LAW ENFORCEMENT AGENCY DOES.**

Foundation Principle 2

Enhancing Professionalism

Professionalism is the cornerstone of the law enforcement profession. Professionalism embeds ethics, integrity, accountability, and respect for others. [The International Association of Chiefs of Police](#) (IACP) Oath of Honor teaches officers these foundational principles.

IACP Oath of Honor

**On my honor,
I will never betray my badge,
my integrity, my character,
or the public trust.
I will always have
the courage to hold myself
and others accountable for our actions.
I will always uphold the constitution
my community and the agency I serve**

Within the culture of 21st Century Policing, North Carolina law enforcement has several existing methods of accountability to uphold ethics, integrity and professionalism.

North Carolina Criminal Justice Education and Training Standards Commission

[The Commission](#) plays a vital role in enhancing North Carolina law enforcement professionalism. The Commission is comprised of 32 appointees representing diverse perspectives and has the responsibility to approve training, certify law enforcement professionals, and hold officers accountable. In 2019, the Commission investigated 129 allegations of officer misconduct.

The Commission decertifies law enforcement officers who violate established standards, including lack of good moral character.

NCACP supports the Commission having a public database of decertified officers, and mandating that agencies consult Commission information concerning an applicant's disciplinary history.



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State Accreditation of Law Enforcement Agencies

Accreditation standards for law enforcement are critical to maintaining accountability of a law enforcement agency practices and policies. The [Commission on Accreditation for Law Enforcement Agencies](#) (CALEA), is an international accreditation that agencies can voluntarily seek. CALEA accreditation reduces liability to agencies and ensures oversight of proper policies and practices. For small law enforcement agencies, the cost of CALEA accreditation exceeds fiscal capabilities.

North Carolina law enforcement agencies who are insured by the North Carolina League of Municipalities may seek the [Risk Management accreditation](#), at no cost. This accreditation ensures participating agencies implement best practice policies that provide oversight, accountability, and reduce liability.

What is lacking in North Carolina is a comprehensive state wide Accreditation Program for all local law enforcement agencies. While groundwork to develop such a program exists, funding for administrative staffing and implementation costs have not been provided. Now is a critical time for adequate funding to support a state accreditation for law local enforcement agencies

NCACP recommends the State of North Carolina provide funding and authority for the Commission of a State Accreditation for Law Enforcement.

Criminal Justice Fellows Program

Implemented in 2018, the CJ Fellows program mirrors the Teaching Fellows program allowing applicants to attend obtain a field related college degree with loan forgiveness. Currently, the CJ Fellows program is only eligible to communities with less than 75,000 population. The CJ Fellows program provides opportunity to recruit and retain highly trained criminal justice employees.

The CJ Fellows program is an opportunity to develop a well-trained law enforcement workforce that reflects the diversity of the communities they serve.

Other ways to develop a diverse work force is for agencies to develop programs such as police explorers, cadets and internships.

NCACP recommends the State establish a grants fund for police cadet programs.

NCACP recommends expansion and increased funding for the CJ Fellows program.



2019 CJ Fellows recipients and CJETSC Commissioners on the CJ Fellows Committee

Mandatory New Chiefs Training

Currently, there here is no specific training or credentialing of persons serving as a Chief of Police. NCACP piloted a New Chiefs Training Course in 2019 in partnership with the North Carolina Justice Academy. The pilot program developed 21 hours of executive level training including aspects of professionalism, leadership, and various subject areas necessary to be an effective chief. The New Chiefs Training Course certified 50 new or aspiring Chiefs of Police in its first program.

Similar to the North Carolina Sheriffs Association’s Sheriff’s Institute, the New Chiefs Training Course is foundational training for a law enforcement agency head.

NCACP recommends completion of the New Chiefs course should be required soon after or prior to appointment as a police chief.

Require membership in NCACP

The mission of the North Carolina Association of Chiefs of Police is committed to enhancing the professionalism of policing in North Carolina. The Association provides multifaceted avenues to inform members on important legislation, training, emerging trends, and guidance. Currently, approximately 220 of the 500 chiefs of police are members. It is imperative that all chiefs of police be active members of the Association. All 100 North Carolina Sheriffs are statutorily mandated to be members of the North Carolina Sheriff’s Association. Police chiefs in North Carolina need the services provided by the Association to ensure professionalism, ethics, legitimacy, provides best practice policies, and public trust is maintained in our profession.

NCACP recommends that NCACP membership be mandated for Chiefs of Police in North Carolina



Professional Law Enforcement Liaison

A qualified resource person should be funded by the State to assist local police departments in identifying and implementing policies, best practices, and training. Thirty percent of law enforcement agencies in the state have less than 11 sworn law enforcement officers and do not have the resources to identify and implement desirable policies and procedures. The resource person could be a consultant under the management of the NCACP, or attached to the North Carolina Justice Academy or UNC School of Government.

NCACP recommends that the state fund a Law Enforcement Liaison Consultant.

Identifying and Elimination of Problem Officers

Law enforcement officers who demonstrate lack of adherence to established standards of conduct must be eliminated from the profession. Sometimes these officers are terminated from an agency and try to migrate to another law enforcement agency.

NCACP recommends that consideration of any applicant include mandatory review of CJEST Commission disciplinary information as a part of background investigations for employment.



Community Relations

The basic mission of law enforcement is to protect and serve the public. Law enforcement is only as effective as relationships within the community. Those relationships must include all segments of the community.

Intentional Engagement with Communities of Color

Recognizing that communities of color often distrust law enforcement, agencies must be committed to building relationships within the community. Innovative approaches to building trust and legitimacy may require law enforcement to get out of their comfort zone. Law enforcement must find meaningful opportunities to build sustainable relationships of trust, legitimacy and empathy as guardians of our communities.

Agencies in the Triangle and Fayetteville, for example, are hosting [Barbershop Rap Sessions](#) in Black-owned barbershops where conversations between the police and communities of color are hosted to build bridges of trust and legitimacy. This example of innovative community policing changes the culture of policing by building mutual respect for each other.

Agencies should also ensure that community policing programs such as Citizen Police Academies include diversity of citizens. Citizen Police Academies should be educational, informative, and share information that helps dispel myths, rumors, and false perceptions of law enforcement.

NCACP recommends that every police agency pursue initiatives to build levels of understanding and mutual trust with individuals and groups such as the NAACP, religious leaders, community activists, and local business owners and nonprofits to foster engagement in communities of color.



Barbershop Rap Session. Headliners, Cary, NC

Photo credit: WUNC 91.5 radio

Engage Youth & Special Populations

Law enforcement should build community policing programs involving youth, including special populations. Building relationships of trust and legitimacy earlier in the lives of young people helps to break down systemic barriers of distrust.

Programs such as Police Athletic Leagues, Police Explorers, Youth Citizen Police Academies, coaching youth sports and engagement with SROs provide non-enforcement opportunities to build relationships.

Engaging special populations of youth is vital in engaging all segments of the community. Events such as Cops CARE (Cops Autism Recreation Event) or innovative approaches such as the Winston Salem Police Bomb Squad “beeping egg” hunt for blind children, are examples of how departments can engage special populations.

NCACP recommends that the State provide a grant program for agencies to develop and host community engagement initiatives.



Winston Salem Police Bomb Squad Commander uses beeping Easter eggs for visually impaired children.

Photo credit: Winston Salem Journal



Roxboro Police Department Cops CARE event hosting a respite for families with autistic children.



Haw River Police Department National Night Out 2019

Conclusion

The North Carolina Association of Chiefs of Police continues its efforts to improve law enforcement in North Carolina, and presents this *Principles and Recommendations on the Evolution of 21st Century Policing* information and recommendations in furtherance of this objective. To meet the challenges facing policing today and into the future, the NCACP wants to be clear that our goal is to **preserve life** and improve the quality of life in the communities in which we work and police. In addition, the NCACP is committed to provide the elements of procedural fairness to foster trust in the authorities' motives. This involves treating citizens with dignity and respect, a sense of decision-maker neutrality and providing citizens with an opportunity to participate in the decision.

More than 160 attendees received Constitutional Policing training from the Police Executive Research Forum. Annually, the Association trains hundreds of police chiefs and their command staff on a variety of legal, community policing, and executive level training needs.



North Carolina Association of Chiefs of Police Training Conference 2018.