



Maple Grove Police Department

June 11, 2020

A message from Chief of Police Eric Werner

I was deeply saddened to watch the horrific and tragic death of George Floyd while in the custody of the Minneapolis Police Department. The officers involved violated the respect for human life and dishonored their oath of office to protect the life of those in their care. The officers' actions were grossly inconsistent with the foundational values and tenants of the policing profession. I, along with our entire agency, extend our deepest condolences to the family and loved ones of Mr. George Floyd.

These recent events have strained the trust and relationship between the police and the public. Many community members have contacted me with questions and concerns to ensure we prevent this from happening again. Our agency is highly engaged with the community and has built trust and relationships, which has provided the ability for me to hear from our citizens to seek understanding. I have received questions about our department's training and policies, particularly in preparing our officers to work with diverse members of the community. Below, I hope to address those questions and concerns by providing some key information about our agency's work and policies.

The Maple Grove Police Department is committed to providing the highest levels of service that respects and guards the dignity and constitutional rights of all people. Our work is guided by the values within our mission statement, *honorably serving our community to enhance the quality of life by dedicating ourselves to compassionate, excellent, and professional policing*. We deliver this important service by providing the highest levels of training based on comprehensive policies for our personnel to meet our agency's values.

Department Policy

Our agency has implemented and continues to review policies based on the nationally recognized Lexipol model that has been adopted by police agencies across the country. Key policy areas include:

- Standards of Professional Conduct of Peace Officers
- Impartial policing
- Use of force
- Critical Incident Response and Investigation
- Crisis Intervention
- Internal Affairs Complaint Process

Training and Development

In 2017, the Minnesota legislature enacted a state statute requiring law enforcement to provide officers with 16 hours of continuing education during an officer's three-year licensing cycle in:

- Crisis intervention and mental illness crises
- Conflict management and mediation
- Recognizing and valuing community diversity and cultural differences to include implicit bias training.

The Maple Grove Police Department started training in these new continuing education mandates even before they took effect on July 1, 2018, and continues that training today. During the reporting period of July 1, 2018 through June 30, 2019, the department spent an estimated 2,050 hours of training on the new POST mandates. The training focused on ensuring all our officers receive the 40-hour basic crisis intervention training. Additionally, agency members received training from Marie Ridgeway, LICSW on "Crisis Intervention and Mental Illness" and "Conflict Management and Mediation", Dr. Dan Nystrom on "Officer Wellness," and Andre Koen on "Recognizing and valuing community diversity and cultural differences to include implicit bias."

Maple Grove also has three officers who are trained instructors in the nationally recognized Fair and Impartial Policing model. These officers provide training to our leadership team and a one-day course to all of our officers.

The City of Maple Grove is a leader in providing comprehensive police training through its North Metro Range Regional Public Safety Training Facility. The facility provides a modern training environment to include classroom, defensive tactics room, virtual simulation lab, and firearms range which is managed by experienced police professionals. Instructors integrate the concepts of de-escalation and crisis intervention with use of force training and policy requirements in a scenario-based learning environment. Officers return to the community prepared to face real-life situations in the 21st Century policing environment.

Police Officer Selection

All of our police officers, as required by Minnesota state statute and rules, must have earned a college degree and have completed the requisite skills training from a POST Board approved Professional Peace Officer Education institution. These programs are based on board-approved [*Learning Objectives for Professional Peace Officer Education*](#). The goal of the PPOE program is to produce candidates for peace officer license eligibility who have the basic knowledge, skills, and abilities necessary for entry into a peace officer career. The minimum requirement is a two-year degree. Nearly all of the officers hired by Maple Grove possess a four-year degree. In 1979 the Minnesota Legislature created the POST Board to license police officers, regulate training, and provide oversight in policy, training, and officer conduct.

Officer candidates are selected following an intensive process to include multiple oral interviews, an exhaustive background investigation, and a psychological and medical examination. Upon hire, officers spend the next 16 weeks in their initial in-service and field

training program taught by highly trained and experienced officers. The field training process provides intensive daily training following a department approved training manual that includes daily evaluation reports, end of phase reports, and final recommendation for solo patrol. Newly hired officers serve a one-year probationary period. We do not hesitate to terminate employment if an officer does not meet our agency's standards. Field training consists of 55 10-hour shifts for a total of 550 hours of training.

Following the field training program, officers are assigned an experienced mentor officer to assist them in completing their probationary period. Mentors are available for individual coaching time and/or ride-a-longs with probationary officers.

Community Outreach and Transparency

A key principle in keeping our community safe is for the police must maintain a relationship with the public at all times. Our Neighborhood Watch programs, Citizens' Police Academy, and nationally recognized National Night Out events provide an inclusive place for citizens of all backgrounds to learn about our agency, develop a relationship with our officers and staff, and provide the forums to be involved with our agency. Through these relationships we are able to know and understand each other to work together in keeping our community a safe.

Our community outreach work extends to the youth in the community through our Police Explorers and the D.A.R.E. and School Resource Officer programs. The police department and Independent School District 279 collaborate to provide specific services and establish a mutually beneficial framework. The partnership is intended to facilitate effective, timely communication and coordination of effort for both the schools and the city to promote a safe and positive work and learning environment and to decrease the number of youth formally referred to the juvenile justice system. School and police staff receive advanced training through state and national associations that focus on school based topics to include racial equity, mental health, threat assessment, and building relationships with staff and students.

Finally, I respectfully refer you to our police department's annual reports that can be found at our website (<https://www.maplegrovern.gov/departments/police>) that will provide an in-depth look at our agency, which demonstrate the values I mentioned above and the work of our entire agency.

Many important questions have been raised at this time of tragedy. The concerns are very meaningful to me and our agency. I want to re-assure you we strive to maintain the highest level of service for you and our community that is inclusive of all residents of Maple Grove.

Eric T. Werner
Chief of Police