

**City of Oswego Police Department's
NYS Executive Order #7:
“Reimagining Policing”**



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Overview of Change

“The New York State Police Reform and Reinvention Collaborative” requires local police agencies to develop a plan based on community input. Per the governor’s report, “This executive order is intended to help rebuild the confidence and restore trust between police and the communities they serve by requiring localities to develop a new plan for policing in the community based on fact-finding and meaningful community input.” The Oswego Police Department is going to identify the programming and directives that address the issues outlined in the governor’s order. We will do so by identifying our current policies and procedures which help achieve these missions as well as identifying new programming and directives that have been developed or are in the process of being developed. These will be described and highlighted in each section as we progress through this plan.

Note: The dates were attached to a general order document when the policy or procedure was upgraded or developed.

As we begin to address these topics/issues, it is important to know that the Oswego Police Department bases all of its policies and procedures on a mission and vision statement that is outlined in General Order 101: dated 9/26/19:

“The Oswego Police Department pledges to protect, serve, educate, and enhance the quality of life for the citizens of our city by providing the highest level of professional police service. We will fulfill our mission in partnership with the community we serve while respecting the rights and diversity of all people. We shall always adhere to our core values of **integrity, dedication, and accountability** to the people we serve.

The Oswego Police Department’s Vision Statement is to deliver unparalleled police service to our community through employee development, community involvement, and professional leadership.”

The Oswego Police Department’s policies and procedures, are evaluated and updated on a regular basis. From the “New York State Law Enforcement Accreditation Program and 21st Century Policing” we use guidelines and best practices of procedural justice with a focus on health and wellness. Many of these guidelines are outlined in a May 2015 report from President Obama’s Task Force on 21st Century Policing.

Multiple needs and concerns will also be addressed in this plan to include, but not limited to:

- Policy and Procedures,
- Departmental Training,

- Subject Management Policy and Review,
- Community-Oriented Policing and Neighborhood Engagement,
- Collaborations With Local Service Providers,
- Dealing with Mental Hygiene Situations,
- Citizen and Internal Complaints, and
- Statistical Data Collection and Sharing.

Policy and Procedures

Currently, the Oswego Police Department is a New York State Law Enforcement Accreditation Program (L.E.A.P.) certified agency (originally accredited in 2003). According to the New York State Department of Criminal Justice Services, “the accreditation program provides structure, guidance, and oversight for agencies to evaluate and improve their overall performance. These programs encompass four principle goals:

1. To increase the effectiveness and efficiency of law enforcement agencies utilizing existing personnel, equipment, and facilities to the extent possible;
2. To promote increased cooperation and coordination among law enforcement agencies and other agencies that provide criminal justice services;
3. To ensure the appropriate training of law enforcement personnel;
4. To promote public confidence in law enforcement agencies.”

Source: www.criminaljustice.ny.gov/ops/accred

To compliment the principles above, 21st Century Policing cite, “The Six Pillars of Community Policing” to help strengthen departments:

1. Building Trust and Legitimacy,
2. Policy and Oversight,
3. Technology and Social Media,
4. Community Policing and Crime Reduction,
5. Training and Education,
6. Officer Wellness and Safety.

Source: eji.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/06/taskforce_finalreport.pdf

All of the principles and pillars above are used as guidelines when policies are developed. The principles and ideas that they encompass are molded into the inner workings of the Oswego Police Department. As we review the needs of the community, we constantly evaluate our policies and procedures to be able to effectively and safely respond to and satisfy these needs.

According to the Governor’s report, “Accredited agencies must meet minimum standards considered ‘best practices’ in the field, which promote a high degree of professionalism and public confidence.” The Oswego Police Department currently

has over 120 distinct policies as part of its' operation manual. The policy manual is consistently reviewed, evaluated, and updated as part of the ever-changing environment of policing.

Going forward in 2021, the Oswego Police Department will begin the process of becoming CALEA Certified. CALEA is the Commission on Accreditation for Law Enforcement Agencies. Their program is a management model that presents the department with a blueprint that promotes the efficient use of resources and improves service delivery. It is considered by some to be "The Gold Standard in Public Safety."

According to their website, the Commission on Accreditation for Law Enforcement Agencies, Inc. (CALEA®), was created in 1979 as a credentialing authority through the joint efforts of law enforcement's major executive associations:

- International Association of Chiefs of Police (IACP)
- National Organization of Black Law Enforcement Executives (NOBLE)
- National Sheriffs' Association (NSA)
- Police Executive Research Forum (PERF)"

Just as NYS accreditation, CALEA programs provide public safety agencies with an opportunity to voluntarily meet an established set of professional standards which require:

- Comprehensive and uniform written directives that clearly define authority, performance, and responsibilities;
- Reports and analyses to make fact-based and informed management decisions;
- Preparedness to address natural or man-made critical incidents;
- Community relationship-building and maintenance;
- Independent review by subject matter experts;
- Continuous pursuit of excellence through annual reviews and other assessment measures.

Source: www.calea.org

Many of the Oswego Police Department's policies address specific issues outlined in the Governor's report. Policies that were updated after the Governor's order included, but are not limited to, the following:

- **Internal Investigations (General Order 210: 8/25/20)**

- Updates include forms, clear lines of authority, and types of investigations.
- **Patrol and Supervisory Response (General Order 401: 10/26/20)**
 - Updates include supervisory responses and quality assurance surveys.
- **Subject Management (General Order 215: new order drafted on 10/28/20)**
 - Addition of chokeholds restriction and updated reporting requirements.
- **Annual Training (General Order 303: 10/21/20)**
 - Addition of De-escalation and Minimizing use of Force and Anti-Bias Training
- **Hate Crime (General Order 447: 10/05/20)**
 - Addition of “NYS Best Practices” in community relations and crime prevention.
- **Body worn cameras (General Order 438.1: 05/18/20)**
 - Overall update for efficiency.

Other current and recently developed policies that help to achieve goals addressed in the Governor’s order include:

- **Homeless Outreach and Program Education (H.O.P.E.) (General Order 454: 09/28/20)**
 - Created in 2020 to address specific problem in our community.
- **Rapid Evaluation for Appropriate Placement (R.E.A.P.) (General Order 452: 03/11/19)**
- **Performance Evaluations (General Order 203: 1/10/19)**
- **Code of Conduct (General Order 204: 3/10/17)**
- **Police Pursuits (General Order 412: 04/24/19)**
- **Community Relations (General Order 218: 03/25/19)**

Departmental Training

It is the policy of the Oswego Police Department that all sworn officers in accordance with DCJS will receive at least twenty-one (21) hours of in-service training annually. This is guided by the NYS Accreditation Program. Part of the twenty-one (21) hours **must be** devoted to the following areas:

- Firearms Training / Range
- Subject Management / Use of Force Review
- Use of Deadly Force Review
- Legal Updates
- Bloodborne Pathogen / Hepatitis Awareness Review / Radiological
- Taser Training
- Workplace Violence Prevention
- Collapsible Baton
- Oleoresin Capsicum Aerosol Training
- Emergency Restraint Chair Review
- Stop Stick Review
- Cell Extraction / Tactical Shield Review

We currently average approximately 135 hours of training per officer to include pre-shift roll call trainings which help disseminate information on current trends and address concerns as they come up.

In 2018 the Oswego Police Department had a combined total of 2,811 hours of in-service training and 6,092.6 hours in 2019.

In 2020, the Oswego Police Department conducted multiple trainings to begin the year. A few of these trainings included de-escalation and minimizing use of force, and anti-bias training for law enforcement. These were assigned and completed before the Governor's order; yet, they fully encompass the principles outlined in it. De-escalation and minimizing use of force is a 2 hr, 8 video course, developed by PoliceOne, which "identifies techniques for de-escalation, plans for minimizing use of force, explaining the importance of training officers for these encounters and, lastly, applying these strategies to de-escalate volatile situations. This will help officers be better equipped mentally to make the critical decisions under stress necessary to de-escalate crisis situations and to minimize the force used when use of force becomes necessary." The anti-bias training, also created by PoliceOne, is a 2 hr, 7 video course which explains to officers that, "The face of America continues to evolve, and our nation is more diverse than ever before. People in cities, suburbs, and towns served by law enforcement are a rich tapestry

of races, ethnicities, religions, and cultures. This diverse group of individuals deserves to be treated with kindness, compassion, and respect ... Recognizing the diversity and types of bias when serving the community will reduce misunderstandings, confusion, and stereotypes while promoting knowledge and awareness for the officer. This course, helps explore many effective strategies to help officers connect with the community along with recommendations that officers can use immediately.”

Source: policeoneacademy.com

In 2020, The department reviewed, updated, and disseminated a new body worn camera policy and taser policy. Both of these policy updates added supervisory review and documentation procedures. These trainings have been addressed and acknowledged through all sworn police employees. We are currently in the process of updating our firearms policy and training as well as subject management and the use of force. In 2021, it is the Oswego Police Departments intent to update and enter into a long term contract to keep our BWC program outfitted with the newest and advance technologies available.

The Oswego Police Department continues to emphasize training and determined that “Anti-bias” training and “De-escalation and Minimizing Use of Force training,” shall be added to the departments mandatory annual in-service training. This was completed and acknowledged on 10/21/20. The intent is to increase the frequency of this training and act as a constant refresher for officers.

Furthermore, the department has re-allocated additional money in the 2021 budget to increase a focus on education and training capabilities. The 2021 budget allocated approximately \$40,500.00 for training (including in-service, specialty, refresher, and academy training). The Oswego Police Department is also testing and evaluating new “smart technologies” to enhance firearm use and decision-making abilities while developing situational awareness and situations when not to use force. We will be also be developing and adding more reality-based scenario training on a yearly basis.

Subject Management and the Use of Force

The Governor's report address issues relating to the use of force. This is a heavily reviewed and altered policy. Currently, it is the policy of the Oswego Police Department that members, in compliance with Article 35 of the New York State Penal Law and other applicable case law & federal statutes, use only the force that reasonably appears necessary to effectively bring an incident under control, while protecting the lives of the member and others. The department policy outlines officer's ability to (includes, but not limited to):

- Use of force;
- Duty to intervene (which states: Any officer present and observing another officer using force that he/she reasonably believes to be clearly beyond that which is objectively reasonable under the circumstances shall intercede to prevent the use of unreasonable force, if and when the officer has a realistic opportunity to prevent harm);
- Prohibited uses of forces;
- Less lethal procedures;
- Training requirements; and
- Reporting and documenting procedures.

All subject management incidents must be documented by the officers at the Oswego Police Department. The reports then go through a review process consisting of multiple steps. First, the report is reviewed by a first line supervisor. It is then submitted to a defensive tactics' instructor for a secondary review. The report is then logged for statistical recording and overall review purposes. It is then reported to the state per NYS Executive Law 837-t. The following Use of Force incidents must be reported per NYS:

- Display a chemical agent - To point a chemical agent at a person or persons.
- Use/Deploy a chemical agent - The operation of the chemical agent against a person or persons in a manner capable of causing physical injury as defined in Penal Law Article 10.
- Brandishes a firearm - To point a firearm at a person or persons.
- Uses/Discharges a firearm - To discharge a firearm at or in the direction of a person or persons.
- Brandishes an electronic control weapon - To point an electronic control weapon at a person or persons.
- Uses/Deploys electronic control weapon - The operation of an electronic control weapon against a person or persons in a manner capable of causing physical injury as defined in Penal Law Article 10.
- Brandishes an impact weapon - To point an impact weapon at a person or persons.

- Uses/deploys an impact weapon - The operation of an impact weapon against a person or persons in a manner capable of causing physical injury as defined in Penal Law Article 10.
- Uses a chokehold or other similar restraint - Any application of sustained pressure to the throat or windpipe of a person in a manner that may hinder breathing or reduce intake of air.
- Conduct which results in the death or serious bodily injury of another person - Serious bodily injury includes bodily injury that creates or causes:
 - ✓ a substantial risk of death; or
 - ✓ unconsciousness; or
 - ✓ serious and protracted disfigurement; or
 - ✓ protracted loss or impairment of the function of any bodily member, organ or mental faculty.

Source: NYS Executive Law 837-t

The reporting process at the Oswego Police Department is more restrictive than the state of NY. We require that all use of forces is documented and reviewed. If at any time in the review process deficiencies are identified, they are addressed appropriately. This can be in the form of training, counseling, discipline or even termination. The statistical data recorded includes but is not limited to: date, time, race, gender, ethnicity, age, tool/technique, application/display, reason for contact, whether there was an injury, if the person was treated by emergency medical services, and if resisting arrest was charged. As stated, the subject management (Use of Force) policy is consistently reviewed and updated to stay current with applicable laws and best practices.

In 2020, subject management (Use of Force) training was also updated. The main update of this training was regarding chokeholds. Chokeholds, obstructing breathing and/or carotid restraints are considered deadly physical force. This applies to any application of pressure to the throat, windpipe, neck, or blocking the mouth or nose of a person in a manner that may hinder breathing, reduce the intake of air or obstruct blood circulation. **This is not a trained technique at the Oswego Police Department and has further been outlawed by NYS.** This training also addressed excited delirium, positional asphyxia, the duty to intervene, and proper documentation of a Use of Force incident.

Community Oriented Policing and Neighborhood Engagement

This section of our department has seen the most adjustment in 2020. The Oswego Police Department recognizes the need for community-oriented policing strategies. We try to foster an atmosphere of openness and transparency throughout the department, engage the community in true partnerships to address crime and disorder, quality of life, education of the law enforcement system and our services to the public, while trying to make every police contact an opportunity to engage positively with the community.

“Police, at all times, should maintain a relationship with the public that gives reality to the historic tradition that the police are the public and the public are the police; the police being only members of the public who are paid to give full-time attention to duties which are incumbent on every citizen in the interests of community welfare and existence.” – Sir Robert Peel

The Oswego Police Department further recognizes that Community Policing is comprised of three key components:

Community Partnerships

Collaborative partnerships between the law enforcement agency and the individuals and organizations they serve to develop solutions to problems and increase trust in police.

Organizational Transformation

The alignment of organizational management, structure, personnel, and information systems to support community partnerships and proactive problem solving.

Problem Solving

The process of engaging in the proactive and systematic examination of identified problems to develop and rigorously evaluate effective responses.

Source: ncjtc-static.fvtc.edu/Resources/RSoooo2720.pdf

The Oswego City Police Department has recently developed multiple units to address and work with members of the public in community partnerships and to

develop and implement problem-solving strategies. Although these ideas and principles are communicated and shared throughout the entire department, two specific units were created for, “hot spot” policing, extended efforts, investigations, and monitoring of issues. The two units formed in 2020 were: Community-Oriented Policing and Neighborhood Outreach Officers and a Neighborhood Engagement Team. We recognize that each neighborhood and every resident has their own unique set of circumstances that should be fully examined and analyzed when determining what unit to use.

Many strategies have been identified to help build the appropriate relationships in our community. These approaches use technology and social media communication as well as direct community policing and crime reduction strategies to help build trust, communication, and bring legitimacy to our policing processes. Some of these strategies for the specific units include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Community-Oriented Policing and Neighborhood Outreach Officers
 - ✓ Neighborhood Foot and Bicycle Patrols,
 - ✓ Community Event Attendance,
 - ✓ Neighborhood/Group Meetings,
 - ✓ Community Programming (Rapid Evaluation for Appropriate Placement, Homeless Outreach and Program Education),
 - ✓ Department Tours/School Appearances,
 - ✓ Department Internships and Civilian Riders to include the New Visions Program,
 - ✓ Coordinate / Assist with McGruff Appearances,
 - ✓ Child ID Printing,
 - ✓ Media Relations / Assist Public Information Officer / Social Media Liaison,
 - ✓ Recruitment Activities (to include job fairs in diverse locations for the inclusion of all represented demographics in our community).
- Neighborhood Engagement Team Officers
 - ✓ Neighborhood Concerns/Complaints response,
 - ✓ Quality of Life Complaint Remediation,
 - ✓ Street Level Drug Complaints and Proactive Illegal Drug Interdiction,
 - ✓ Neighborhood Outreach and Proactive Encounters,
 - ✓ Development of Traffic Safety Plans to include education and enforcement of violations of Vehicle and Traffic Law
 - ✓ Enforcement of Local Ordinances, NYS Penal Law and other problem specific violations,
 - ✓ Special Attention Details as directed by the Command Staff.

By utilizing the outreach and community oriented policing approach, we can build relationships, understanding of policing practices, and share in the responsibility of strengthening our neighborhoods. The development of these units allows the Department to direct resources to a specific problem, issue, "hot spots" or neighborhood concerns without diverting Patrol Officers from responding to calls for service. Our Command Staff provides these teams with daily criminal and statistical information that can be used to effectively and efficiently develop policing strategies to target points of concern. These multifaceted units may use traditional law enforcement methods or a combination of strategies in meeting community and neighborhood needs. Many times, they must coordinate efforts with direct community members as well as other city departments, county, state, federal government agencies, private businesses and charities to create non-law enforcement solutions.

One of our focused strategies that put these principles into play revolve around neighborhood disturbance follow-ups. This can be anything from nuisance style calls and garbage issues, to loud social gatherings and fights; these do not have to necessarily be criminal offenses. We have started reaching out to people at neutral times, typically a day or two after an incident, to discuss the issue. The principle of these follow ups is to take an educational focus to address the issue when the environment and people are not "heightened." The approach involves Code Enforcement, Housing and Urban Development, and the Neighborhood Engagement Team. It attempts to stop recidivism with education about the laws and expectations of the community, solutions for remedy/compliance (which are established between the parties), and information of what continual non-compliance could result in.

In the recent years, we have started other programs to help us work better in the community. With changing demographics, the Oswego Police Department recognized the importance of being able to communicate with all people in our community. The Oswego Police Department began using Languageline Solutions. This is an over-the-phone interpreter service that can be used 24 hours a day. It provides the ability to assist communicating in 240 different languages.

The Oswego Police Department has partnered with the Oswego City School District. We have dedicated officers to serve as a School Resource Officer and as a Drug Abuse Resistance Education (D.A.R.E.) Program Instructor. The purpose of these programs is to establish and foster a collaborative relationship between the Oswego City School District and the Oswego Police Department and to promote

positive interactions between these entities in regard to safety, security, and the welfare of the population served, to include but not necessarily limited to:

- ✓ Promoting a safe environment conducive to learning.
- ✓ Reducing incidents of crime.
- ✓ Promoting awareness of the law through educational presentations.
- ✓ Serve as a resource and problem-solver for law enforcement related areas and make appropriate referrals.
- ✓ Bridging the gap between students and law enforcement.

The City has also developed other community-oriented programs like a “Safe Internet Exchange,” and mandated foot and bicycle details. “Internet Safe Exchange Locations” have risen in popularity around the country as a tool to help facilitate face to face internet purchases between private individuals after incidents occurred nation-wide with internet transactions being linked to acts of violence. The areas are intended to provide a reliable, safe location for the public to conduct interactions and exchanges in a safe environment after purchasing an item from another individual using the internet.

The Oswego Police Department will be required to conduct a minimum of 80 hours of foot or bicycle patrols each month in an effort to bring more police officers into city neighborhoods and parks, to further engage in, and to enhance community policing efforts in Oswego. This initiative will give the officers an opportunity for the department to partner with residents in neighborhoods, understand the issues most important to them and to act on their priorities. Bike and foot patrols allow officers to be more approachable for city residents and also allows us to patrol areas that are otherwise inaccessible by car.

Through our community outreach efforts, we have identified many “at risk” elements that could use resources and attention:

- ✓ Drug addiction,
- ✓ Homelessness
- ✓ Mental Health
- ✓ Domestic Violence

We have, and continue, to partner with non-law enforcement agencies to provide needed services outside of the criminal justice system.

Drug Addiction - We developed the **REAP Program** (Rapid Evaluation for Appropriate Placement) in March 2019, so people suffering from addiction can, and do get, instantly evaluated for drug treatment services and appropriate

placement into needed services or placement. This partnership was formed with Farnum Family Services who provide many in-house services. We currently provide a 24 hr access to needle a drop box (needle exchange canisters) and drug disposal bins with a “no cost, no questions asked” policy. All of our officers have also been trained and issued Naloxone for carry and implementation when needed. Naloxone blocks or reverses the effects of opioid effects, including extreme drowsiness, slowed breathing, or loss of consciousness.

Source: www.drugs.com/naloxone.html

Mental Health - We have an active partnership with **Oswego Health and Liberty Resources**, specifically the Mobile Crisis Units, to help people suffering with mental health issues in an attempt to avoid the custodial interactions with police for mental health services. This is an “on call,” on site program, to bring mental health services to, non-violent, non-dangerous (not suicidal or homicidal at time) people. This brings the social workers/mental health professionals to the subject in need at non-threatening locations and avoids the feelings of “being arrested” for a mental/medical crisis. This program is currently available on “off hours” but Liberty Resources is working to make it available 24/7 as of 01/01/2021.

Homelessness - In September 2020, we developed a **HOPE initiative** (Homeless Outreach and Program Education). This gives officers information and guidance that can be disseminated to people in need. It speaks about homeless services from emergency shelter to food availability. This is in partnership with Oswego County Opportunities, Department of Social Services, Victory Transformation, and the Salvation Army. This reminds officers that homelessness is not a crime and should not be handled as such. When officers identify an individual that may be homeless or in need of services, that officer has the ability to advise and educate the individual on services available in and around the City of Oswego. This will also be tracked to ensure follow-ups between the subject and service provider.

Domestic Violence - In April 2019, a greater effort to combat domestic violence began. The Oswego Police Department partnered with the Oswego County District Attorney’s Office to develop and launch the Oswego County **Handle with Care** Program. This program attempts to promote safe and supportive schools by helping children heal and cope from traumatic events while allowing them to thrive in their educational environment. Under the Handle with Care Program, when the police department responds to an incident in which a child is the victim of abuse or has experienced a traumatic event, officers send written notification to the District Attorney’s Office. Without disclosing confidential information, the District Attorney’s Office alerts the school district and provides the child’s name,

age, and building assignment so that the school district may provide in-school support resources as needed. We are also actively working with SAF (Services to Aid Families) for domestic violence outreach. The purpose of this program will be to follow up police interactions with victim services in an effort to reduce recidivism and the need for police for interventions.

Recruitment and Retention of a diverse workforce- The Oswego Police Department also took an active role in trying to recruit a diverse workforce as recommended by the Governor's report on Police Reform and Reinvention Collaborative. Although we are governed by Civil Service rules, we participated in job fairs in diverse locations for the inclusion of all represented demographics of our community. We also created recruitment videos and strengthened our community communication and social media outreach.

Dealing with Mental Hygiene Situations

The Oswego Police Department recognizes the importance of mental health and wellness. This includes mental health for not only members of the public but members of the department as well.

Public:

It is the policy of the Oswego Police Department to take appropriate action when a person appears to be mentally ill and is conducting himself / herself in a manner which is likely to result in serious harm to himself / herself or others. This may include taking custody of an individual to prevent harm. Officers should always use the least amount of force necessary to safely take people into custody (following all policies and procedures) when this must be done. We further recognize that mental health is not in and of itself a crime, and should not be handled in the same way. The Oswego Police Department has partnered with Oswego Health (Behavioral Services Division), and Liberty Resources (Mobile Crisis Support) to help provide crisis stabilization to individuals experiencing emotional distress. All efforts should be made to connect people in crisis with the appropriate services to avoid the need for police custodial interventions. The Oswego Police Department participates in a quarterly, "Police Mental Hygiene" meeting. This is made up of department heads from all of the local police departments as well as mental health service providers in the area. It evaluates each agencies interactions and capabilities in an effort to help make the process as efficient as possible and provide the best services to the community.

Department Personnel:

The Oswego Police Department recognizes that Law Enforcement is one of the most stressful occupations with higher than average rates of alcohol abuse, divorce and other stress related issues. There have been efforts to develop and maintain initiatives that improve health and wellness. We have "re-instituted" foot patrols as well as bicycle patrols. Not only do they enhance community-oriented policing approaches, but they contribute to healthy lifestyle practices. We have developed

a physical training program that allows officers to participate in voluntary exercise with the purpose of promoting physical, mental and emotional health, and wellness through exercise. The City also provides any officer (or city employee) the ability to contact Employee Assistance Programs if needed. These services are available 24/7, 365 days, to any employee or family member in crisis. Multiple services can be used to include, but not limited to: helppeople-eap.org and NYS EAP. Both services keep individual's information anonymous, and assist in stress management and help keep officers emotionally and psychologically stable. In 2020, the Oswego Police Department partnered with NYS EAP to deploy a rapid response to members that may be in crisis or experiencing symptoms.

The Oswego Police Department is also in the infancy stages of developing a peer counseling program and a process for critical incident debriefs. The idea would be to "triage" critical incidents, give officers an internal, open line of communication, and facilitate the use of above-mentioned partners, if needs can be met by one of the EAP's.

Citizen and Internal Complaints

It is the policy of the Oswego City Police Department to establish policies and procedures for accepting civilian complaints and standards that define the authority, policy and procedures for receiving, accepting, reporting, and conducting internal investigations within the Oswego Police Department as well as define the authority and responsibility delegated to departmental supervisors for the maintenance of discipline.

With a new command staff in place, this policy was examined and updated accordingly. We believe the image of the Oswego Police Department depends upon the personal integrity and discipline of all members. To a large degree, the public image of this Department is determined by the professional response of The Department to allegations of misconduct by members.

The Oswego Police Department shall:

1. Promptly, competently, professionally and impartially investigate all complaints relative to The Department or its members' responses to community needs.
2. Take appropriate corrective action, to include disciplinary action in all cases where an investigation substantiates a violation of law, orders, rules, regulations, policies or procedures of the Oswego Police Department.

The Department encourages citizens to bring forward legitimate complaints regarding misconduct by department members. Department members shall receive complaints courteously and shall handle them efficiently. Complaints, regardless of their nature, can be received in person, by mail, by email, or by phone at any time.

Procedural Justice / Quality Assurance Surveys

The National Initiative for Building Community Trust and Justice describes Procedural Justice as a “focus on the way police and other legal authorities interact with the public, and how the characteristics of those interactions shape the public’s views of the police, their willingness to obey the law, and actual crime

rates. Mounting evidence shows that community perceptions of procedural justice can have a significant impact on public safety.”

Procedural Justice is based on four central principles:

1. Treating people with dignity and respect,
2. Giving citizens “voice” during encounters,
3. Being neutral in decision-making, and
4. Conveying trustworthy motives.

These are principles that we share at the Oswego Police Department. We have created a Quality Assurance Survey (QAS) to start identifying the public perception of how these Procedural Justice Principles are being applied. Beginning in January 2021, QAS reports will be completed.

A quality assurance survey will be conducted twice a year on each officer. When completed and compiled it will be used to identify:

- a. overall agency performance;
- b. overall competency of agency employees;
- c. citizens' perception of officers' attitudes and behavior;
- d. community concern over safety and security within our service area;
- e. citizens' recommendations and suggestions for improvements.

The survey will be used as a platform for organizational learning and should answer questions about the image and perceived quality of policing in our community. We believe that the image and perceived quality of policing affects public trust. The surveys will address all sections of the community, permanent and non-permanent (example, SUNY students).

Statistical Data Collection

Data is an important tool for improving accountability. The Oswego Police Department currently collects data and monitors situations in a multitude of categories. At this current time specialty data is collected on:

- **Calls for service** (to include locations for hot spot problem addressing)
- **Arrests** (to include but not limited to: Race, Sex, Ethnicity, Age, Class of Main Offense, and Nature of Main Offense)
- **Subject management reports** (to include but not limited to: Race, Sex, Ethnicity, Age, Tool/Technique, Reason for Interaction, and injuries to any subjects)
- **Drug related cases** (to include Overdose investigations and the types of drugs involved)
- **Community Oriented Policing / Neighborhood Engagement Activities**
- **Training** (to include courses and topics completed)
- **Homeless contacts**