



***Irondequoit Police Department
Executive order #203
Police Reform and Reinvention
Executive Summary***



February 16, 2021

Honorable Board Members,

The Irondequoit Police Department is an agency that has defined itself as being dedicated to service. This dedication is evident in how we police our community and that we adopt community policing as a philosophy, not a program. We have worked tirelessly to provide a professional and legitimate level of policing to our residents, businesses, and community at large.

In June 2020, when Executive Order #203 was signed The Irondequoit Police Department immediately began soliciting our community and our neighboring communities for feedback on the level of police service provided by the agency. We identified stakeholders in our community through neighborhood forums, meetings with our faith-based community leaders, education professionals, online surveys, and social media outreach to determine the effectiveness of the Irondequoit Police Department and our provided services. What we learned from all these stakeholders is that our department must continue to work hard at improving our relationships. We must continue to adapt to the needs of our community, the wants of our community, and the expectations of our community to build trust, legitimacy, and confidence with our constituents.

The Irondequoit Police Department is focused on rebuilding the trust and confidence of the community through the efforts that will be outlined in our Police Reform and Reinvention Plan. We are reviewing and analyzing all our policies, procedures, and training efforts to be transparent in each of these areas. It is our goal that the community we serve and the Officers that serve the community will have a shared vision of policing in our great community and a level of mutual respect will be attained by the efforts of all.

The Irondequoit Police Department is committed to providing the level of policing that is expected from our community, and we will do it with professionalism, empathy, and dedication. We will continue to reflect on these values as we move forward with our philosophy of community policing. We are committed to this transparency with our residents.

Your Chief of Police,

Alan J Laird

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In May of 2015 the “*Six Pillars of 21st Century Policing*” were presented to President Obama, which in turn served as the foundation for Executive Order #203 New York State’s Police Reform and Reinvention Order. Executive Order #203 requires municipalities that have their own police agencies to self-evaluate their services but also have input from the community they serve on the level of service that is provided by the police agency. The Irondequoit Police Department did both and identified several areas that we are committed to bettering to provide the most professional police service to the Irondequoit community. Many of these areas overlapped the 21st Century Policing model as well, but we have specifically identified the following areas as our objectives.

This report, submitted pursuant to Executive Order 203, works off a foundation that has already been put in place by the Irondequoit Police Department to live up to its mission to the protect and serve the community of Irondequoit. This has included:

- Being the first town in Monroe County in 2018 to hold a forum on police-community relations that assessed the Irondequoit Police Department’s adoption of the six pillars and identified strategies for growth in that regard. IPD issued a [Report to the Community](#) after compiling community feedback from a broad spectrum of stakeholders
- Deployment of Body Worn Cameras in 2019
- Adoption of a [Use-of-Force continuum](#) in the Department’s general orders
- Active participation in the newly formed [Irondequoit Commission Advancing Racial Equity \(ICARE\)](#). At the Town Board’s charge, the Chief of Police is an active member on the commission.
- Training opportunities for officers, including implicit bias training and crisis intervention training (CIT)
- The Irondequoit Police have met and worked with Eliminating Racism and Seeking Equality in Irondequoit (E.R.A.S.E.), Diversity and Equity Committee for East Irondequoit Schools, Bishop Kearney Campus Climate Committee, United Christian Leadership Ministry (UCLM), Monroe County Transformation of Community and Police (MCATCP), Minister and Police Alliance for Community Transformation (MPACT), and the Irondequoit Police Department Community Focus Group.
- Hosted the first community forum in the summer of 2020, where all local Police Chiefs attended, and participated in six (6) community forum discussions across Monroe County.

COMMUNITY TRUST, TRANSPARENCY, and ENGAGEMENT

Local and national events have sparked conversations around the trust and transparency of police agencies. While the Irondequoit Police Department have not had any of these specific incidents occur within our community or agency, we have heard the concerns from those we serve and are committed to being transparent and having the trust of our community at large. The Irondequoit Police Department has been an Accredited Agency since 1991, which means we meet or exceed the New York State’s requirements in policy, procedures, and training. We have been successfully

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reaccredited every five years since that initial accreditation. In 2021 we will be seeking another successful accreditation.

- **Communication Paths**---The Irondequoit Police will make information available on numerous outlets for our constituents. We will make available information on mental health services, hiring opportunities, victim's assistance programs, and our policies and procedures. The information will be provided on the Town's website www.irondequoit.org. The IPD will continue to utilize social media outlets to notify the community of events that are occurring.
- **Citizen Interactions**--- The Irondequoit Police will develop a survey to be provided randomly to the citizens we serve based upon a call for service. This survey will allow for the citizens to provide feedback in a timely manner to the Command Staff of the Irondequoit Police Department. In addition to this the IPD will provide a well-publicized survey that will be made available annually to all. This survey will be available on the Town's website. The Chief of Police will host events throughout the year that will allow the residents to provide feedback and ask general questions in an open and inviting climate.
- **Citizen Police Academy**--- The Irondequoit Police Department will host civilian police academies that will provide an opportunity for the community to learn more about law enforcement and participate in portions of the training the Officers receive. In addition to the having the opportunity to see firsthand the training provided, the community will have the opportunity to evaluate this training and have open and frank conversations about their experiences in the training. This will work to provide a foundation for future conversations surrounding law enforcement incidents with factual support on training.
- **Participation in Community Initiatives such as ICARE.** The Chief of Police will continue to be an active member in the Irondequoit Commission Advancing Racial Equity (ICARE), which was formed in 2020 to drive Irondequoit Town government and the Irondequoit community to be more diverse, equitable and inclusive.

HIRING AND DIVERSIFICATION OF THE IPD

The Town of Irondequoit serves a community that is very diverse. This diversity is found in the those that are residents, business owners in the Town, and members of the community at large that come to our town for their needs. To better serve the community, the Irondequoit Police must represent the community that we serve. This is not, at present, the case- a problem that this report recognizes must be remedied.

- **Recruitment**--- The Irondequoit Police Department is committed to recruit the best candidates for the position of an Officer with the agency. We will work with the civil service commission to better advertise the exams for police officers. As previously mention in our communication path, we will utilize all available opportunities to publicize

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these positions. The IPD will forge and maintain efforts with our local schools and different work force companies to engage with members who are interested in a career working for a law enforcement agency.

- **Internships---** A partnership that has been established with the local high schools will be expanded to include high schools from bordering districts. This will be a two-fold approach. It will not only focus on those interested in becoming Police Officers, but also to provide opportunities for the civilian staff personnel that are essential for the function of the IPD.
- **Changes in civil service---** The Irondequoit Police will continue to work with other police agencies from across the state of New York, our community voices, and elected officials to make the civil service process more equitable for all candidates. Expansion of the home rule civil service list to include all portions of a zip code that are a part of the Town of Irondequoit.
- **Test preparation---** The Irondequoit Police will work with our school districts to provide opportunities for students who wish to prepare for the civil service examination. Members of the IPD will provide their success stories and tools they used to prepare for and score on the test to make themselves reachable on the civil service examination list. Providing not only support for the written examination, but also for the physical agility portion of the examination process.
- **Civil service lists---** The Irondequoit Police Department will explore both the general civil service list as well as the home rule list to find the best candidates for positions within the agency. While it is recognized that we wish to have officers and employees of the police department that have a long-term connection to the Town, with the transient nature of residents moving in and out of town by expanding our hiring opportunities we will still be able to reach those prospective candidates that have a strong connection to the Town of Irondequoit.

TRAINING AND EVALUATION

Members of the Irondequoit Police Department are provided the most up to date and essential training throughout their career. Officers with the Irondequoit Police go through extensive training during the academy phase of their employment, but furthermore members of the Irondequoit Police are provided with exceptional professional development training opportunities throughout their career. Better trained Officers will become better Officers, better Officers will be better public servants to their communities. Training objectives listed below are another pillar to our success as an agency.

- **Annual training---** Members of the Irondequoit Police Department will continue to participate in the required annual training set forth by New York State Division of Criminal Justice Services (DCJS) in the areas of Use of force, Penal Law Article 35, and firearms

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training. We will increase training opportunities in the areas of implicit bias, cultural awareness, mental health, and marginalized communities.

- **Guardian Mindset---** Through personal community engagement, public forums, and input during community surveys it was overwhelming cited that citizens want a guardian mindset for the Officers that serve them. The IPD has identified this as a priority for the agency. Command Officers have already attended DCJS provided training in the area of “Principled Policing” and they will be tasked with preparing the program for the members of the IPD to be trained in and adoption of the program. While it is important for the members of the IPD to maintain a warrior mode in their toolbox for those potential life threatening critical incidents, we must be able to identify the essential need for the guardian mindset also.
- **Outside agency opportunities---** The Irondequoit Police Department will look to vendors from across the area to provide training in areas that are not police specific. As the scope of law enforcement changes so does the need for our training opportunities. Training opportunities from faith-based communities, advocacy groups, and culturally specific groups will be explored.
- **Evaluation process---** The performance appraisal and evaluation of the members of the Irondequoit Police Department will be reviewed and redeveloped. The process will include a self-evaluation, more in-depth employee development, and analysis of performance-based incidents.
- **Senior Officer Program---** Those Officers who show a desire to coach and mentor younger Officers will be identified. If these Officers wish to participate, they will be utilized as coaches and mentors for younger Officers to instill the adopted values of the Irondequoit Police Department for that younger Officers professional development. This will also prepare the designated Senior Officers for their role as a Supervisor should they desire to and attain leadership roles within the Irondequoit Police Department. This would be a collaborative effort between the Irondequoit Police Department and the Nightstick Club PBA, if so desired.

Community Engagement

For decades the Irondequoit Police have had a strong community engagement program. These programs have focused on building trust with those we serve for all walks of life. As we move forward the IPD is committed to maintaining those relationships but to also look at ways to expand our relationships with those communities that border ours. We find that our neighboring community members are often traveling into Irondequoit for their daily activities such as shopping, professional appointments, and banking. It is just as important to us a public servant to be aware of these communities and cognizant of our responsibility to serve everyone equally, professionally, with empathy, and with dedication. From our surveys and community events we learned that our community desires the opportunity to meet with our members outside of the normal course of

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police related calls for service. The community needs and wants personal relationships with our Officers, and we hope to reach that goal with the following objectives:

- **Policy group discussions---** The Irondequoit Police Department will host events to discuss our policies and procedures with the public. These discussions will explain why certain steps are taken due to laws, collective bargaining agreements, and due process for all involved. The hope is to have the conversations prior to any type of incident occurring, where detailed and informative discussions can be had. An opportunity for the members of the group to provide feedback will be allotted as well.
- **Increased participation in outside agency community events---** The IPD will collaborate with groups outside of law enforcement to participate in their community events, open houses, and job fairs. Members from all different ranks and job responsibilities of the Irondequoit Police will be asked to participate in these events to provide a full spectrum of availability of our members.
- **Adopt a school---** The adopt a school program will be expanded to include after school events such as sports and clubs. The Officers assigned to the schools will walk the schools or attend the events after school hours to build personnel relationships with the youth of the Town of Irondequoit.
- **More visible patrol options---** The Irondequoit Police Department will research and determine the best options for patrol divisions within the Town. This will be done to ensure that each area of the town is receiving the utmost service from the IPD.
- **Irondequoit Community Center---** Space that has been dedicated at the new Irondequoit Community Center to the IPD will be utilized for a variety of services offered by the agency. These services will include, but not limited to, ability to take reports, community outreach, and planned community meetings.

CRISIS INTERVENTION/OFFICER WELLNESS

The Irondequoit Police Department has joined every law enforcement agency in Monroe County to advocate for changes in the mental health support system. These changes have to be a multi-faceted approach. There needs to be collaboration between the law enforcement community, the mental health community, and government programs at all levels to help with this initiative. Numerous comments have been made to the IPD through surveys, emails, public social media statements, and community forums that this area is of the greatest importance to all. There is an exceptional relationship between the Irondequoit Police Department and the Monroe County Forensic Intervention Team, and we are committed to maintaining the partnership.

- **Crisis Intervention Training---** Currently approximately twenty (20%) percent of the members of the Irondequoit Police Department are trained in crisis intervention. We have committed to having all of our members received this valuable training. This will start

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with those Officers assigned to our road patrol division and will ultimately include all of our members.

- **Officer Wellness---** The Irondequoit Police will review and revamp its current Employee Assistance general order. This will include a complete overhaul of the policy and creation of an officer wellness program. We will work with outside resources to provide the critical services to our employees. The role of law enforcement requires our members to be exposed to very stressful and sometimes very difficult calls for service that can affect them in very profound ways. The IPD is dedicated to being there for the Officers and staff of the Irondequoit Police Department and will spare no expense for their well-being.
- **Critical Incident review---** Command staff members will be required to do not only a tactical debrief of any critical incident, but a mental well-being check in on the Officers involved in these incidents. Command staff members will be provided with the resources to give the to the Officers should they determine it is needed, or if the Officer asks for it.
- **Training---** Training opportunities will be researched for all staff members to attend in officer wellness. These trainings will be vetted to be specific to those that are law enforcement specific.

CONCLUSION

When the report from the President's task force on 21st Century Policing came out it was immediately adopted by the Irondequoit Police Department. While we have taken great strides over the years to maintain our professional service, we would be remiss if we did not constantly self-evaluate our performance. The objectives set forth in this plan are a start and the Irondequoit Police Department is committed to continue the self-assessment and listening to our community to better serve those who rely on us for service and protection. As objectives are met, we will come up with new and better ways to serve with distinction.