PREVENTING
LINE-OF-DUTY
DEATHS:
A CHIEF’S DUTY

Key Considerations to Improve
Officer Safety & Prevent
Line-of-Duty Deaths
This agency self-assessment tool is designed to help law enforcement leaders evaluate their agency’s efforts to fully address the safety needs of their officers. This list covers both internal and external considerations—from policies, procedures, and training to interactions with the public, offenders, and community partners.

Use this tool to proactively examine the range of critical officer safety strategies and determine areas where your agency can improve. Reports and resources identified under each topic provide additional information to assist agencies, along with key statistics and figures illustrating various threats against law enforcement. When taken together, the improvements, strategies, and considerations covered here will enhance officer safety and potentially prevent or reduce acts of violence against law enforcement.

For more information on these strategies and additional resources, statistics, and facts, visit the IACP Center for Officer Safety and Wellness: www.theIACP.org/cosw

PREVENTING LINE-OF-DUTY DEATHS:
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For all law enforcement leaders, ensuring officers return home safely at the end of each shift is of paramount concern.

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EQUIPMENT

Inventory the safety equipment provided to your officers, the required training, and the associated maintenance of that equipment. Consider the extent to which decision makers are aware of any gaps in resource needs.

**BODY ARMOR**
- Are your officers provided with properly fitting body armor and are they mandated to wear it?
- If so, how is the mandatory wear policy for body armor enforced, and who is responsible for enforcement?
- Do your officers have access to ballistic shields or level IIIA body armor as additional protection in high-risk scenarios?

**SEAT BELTS**
- Are your officers mandated to wear seat belts?
- If so, how is the mandatory seat belt policy enforced, and who is responsible for enforcement?

**REFLECTIVE VESTS**
- Are your officers provided with high-visibility vests or other reflective clothing and mandated to use it during traffic enforcement activity?

**VEHICLES**
- Are your officers operating safe, well-maintained vehicles with properly installed in-car technology and equipment?
- How does your agency strive to minimize in-car distractions (e.g., limits on cell phone use, MDTs that shut down over a certain speed)?

**WEAPONRY**
- Have you evaluated the breadth of weapons available to your officers, from less-lethal options to long guns, filling gaps and providing training where appropriate?

**TACTICAL FIRST AID**
- Are your officers provided with individual tactical first aid kits and trained in their use?
- Are tactical first aid kits kept in an easily accessible location?
- Do your officers carry a tourniquet on their person while on duty?

**EMERGING TECHNOLOGIES**
- Are you staying abreast of new safety technologies, including but not limited to body-worn cameras, and considering adoption where appropriate and feasible?

**RESOURCES**
- IACP Police Physicians Section Emergency Trauma Care
- IACP Resolution: Tactical Emergency Medical Training
- IACP Model Policy: Body-Worn Cameras
- IACP Model Policy: Body Armor

Find additional resources at [www.theIACP.org/COSW-Tactical](http://www.theIACP.org/COSW-Tactical).
HEALTH & WELLNESS
Evaluate your agency’s commitment to health and wellness by looking at the programs and policies currently in place.

PHYSICAL HEALTH & FITNESS
☐ Does your agency offer a wellness program to promote or otherwise subsidize physical fitness?
☐ Does your agency mandate an annual physical health check-up?
☐ Does your agency track patterns and trends in officer injuries and “near misses,” including those resulting from assaults on officers?
☐ Does your training staff review injury reports, adjusting and updating officer training where appropriate?

MENTAL WELLNESS
☐ Does your agency have referral resources for officers with mental health concerns (e.g., employee assistance program or mental health professionals or both)?
☐ Does your agency have an active suicide prevention and awareness program, including peer counselors?
☐ Does your agency have policies addressing officers working consecutive shifts and limitations on overtime hours?

CULTURE OF SAFETY
☐ How does your agency strive to promote a culture of safety and wellness?
☐ Do supervisors reiterate officer safety considerations during roll calls?
☐ Are safety reminders (e.g., be alert, slow down) omnipresent in your agency?
☐ Does your agency have nonpunitive peer review of critical incidents?

RESOURCES
- IACP Healthy Eating Resources for Officers and Supervisors
- Office for Victims of Crime Vicarious Trauma Toolkit
- IACP Center for Officer Safety & Wellness Doctor’s Visit Checklist
- IACP Reducing Officer Injuries Study
- LEO Near Miss Reporting System
- IACP Model Policies: Employee Mental Health and Critical Incident Stress Management
- IACP Police Psychological Services Section Peer Support Guidelines
- IACP Training Keys: Fatigue, Health & Fitness, and Exercise & Nutrition
- IACP Suicide Prevention Resources
- IACP High Visibility Education and Enforcement campaign

Find additional resources at www.theIACP.org/COSW-Mental-Health.
OFFENDER MANAGEMENT

Knowing who is committing violent crime—or has the potential to commit violent crime—in your community and the sources of crime guns are key elements of violent crime prevention.

CRIME GUNS

□ Do you know where crime guns come from in your community?
□ Does your agency have a standard protocol to follow for handling recovered firearms?
□ Does your agency trace every recovered firearm?
□ Are crime gun suspects debriefed concerning their knowledge and the sources of guns in the community?

RISK AND THREAT ASSESSMENT

□ Does the pretrial release process in your jurisdiction include a risk assessment of the dangerousness of the arrestee?
□ Do you maintain actionable intelligence on violent offenders in your community?
□ Does your agency conduct a threat assessment or risk analysis of subjects and situations that pose a potential risk to officer safety (e.g., arrest or search warrants, disruptive individuals)?

OFFENDER REENTRY

□ Does your agency take a leadership role in local offender reentry programs to enhance public and officer safety and reduce crime and recidivism?

RESOURCES

- Crime Gun Information Sharing: The ATF i-Trafficking Project Report
- ATF eTrace
- Partnerships in Pretrial Justice: A Law Enforcement Leader’s Guide
- IACP Online Course: Pretrial Justice and Law Enforcement for Chiefs and Officers
- Building an Offender Reentry Program: A Guide for Law Enforcement

Find additional resources at www.theIACP.org/Offender-Reentry and www.theiacp.org/ReducingIncarceration.
TRAINING & TACTICS

High-risk call types include foot pursuits, domestic violence calls, in progress calls, arrest warrants, shots fired, and calls involving persons with mental illness. Consider how your officers are prepared to respond to varying situations from an officer safety perspective.

TACTICAL
- Does your agency have policies and training that address officer safety considerations for high-risk call types?
- Do your officers undergo periodic tactical training, including arrest and control tactics and deployment of firearms and less-lethal devices?
- Does your agency provide scenario-based situational awareness training?
- Do your officers receive training to conduct a rescue under threat and provide initial medical care?

COMMUNICATION
- Do your officers receive training in social and communication skills to defuse and de-escalate tense encounters?

RESPONDING TO PERSONS WITH MENTAL ILLNESS
- Do your officers receive specialized training on responding to persons with mental illness, such as Crisis Intervention Team training and Mental Health First Aid?

USE OF FORCE
- Does your agency require officers to document and report all use-of-force incidents?
- Does your training staff review use-of-force incident reports, adjusting and updating officer training as appropriate?
- Does your agency have an officer-involved post-shooting incident protocol?

RESOURCES
- National Consensus Policy on Use of Force
- IACP Model Policies: Foot Pursuit, Executing Search Warrants, Motor Vehicle Stops, Responding to Persons with Mental Illness, Domestic Violence
- IACP's One Mind Campaign
- Building Safer Communities: Improving Police Response to Persons with Mental Illness IACP Summit Report

Find additional resources at www.theIACP.org/MentalHealth and www.theIACP.org/useofforce.
COMMUNITY TRUST & ENGAGEMENT

- Does your agency promote public trust by initiating positive non-enforcement actions, particularly in high crime areas?
- Does your agency track community trust and satisfaction through surveys, looking for variations by neighborhood and geographic areas?
- How does your agency embody professionalism?

JUSTICE SYSTEM PARTNERSHIPS

- Do you partner with correctional institutions to share intelligence about violent offenders released to your community?
- Do you have an active probation or parole partnership or both?
- Do your officers conduct offender visits with local probation officers to monitor offenders in your community?
- Do your officers work with multi-agency task forces and local, state, and federal prosecutors to track and build cases against the most violent offenders?

RESOURCES

- IACP Institute for Community-Police Relations
- Police-Corrections Partnerships: Collaborating for Strategic Crime Control (IACP Report)
- FBI National Data Exchange (N-DEx) Program

Find additional resources at www.theIACP.org/CommunityPolice and www.theIACP.org/Police-Corrections-Partnerships.
Stats & Facts

While line-of-duty deaths and violence against the police are concerns for law enforcement leaders globally, these figures from the United States illustrate the problem.

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<tr>
<th>LINE-OF-DUTY DEATHS BY CAUSE</th>
<th>2010</th>
<th>2011</th>
<th>2012</th>
<th>2013</th>
<th>2014</th>
<th>2015</th>
<th>2016</th>
<th>Total</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>GUNFIRE</strong></td>
<td>61</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>43</td>
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<td><strong>CRASH</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Heart Attack or Duty-Related Illness</strong></td>
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<td>25</td>
<td>30</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Assault</strong></td>
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<td>13</td>
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<td><strong>Grand Total</strong></td>
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<td>127</td>
<td>151</td>
<td>141</td>
<td>145</td>
<td>1065</td>
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Sources: Federal Bureau of Investigation Law Enforcement Officers Killed and Assaulted (FBI LEOKA); National Law Enforcement Officer Memorial Fund (NLEOMF); National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA); Officer Down Memorial Page (ODMP).