

P.R.E.P FOR DUTY

In preparing for duty, every officer should ensure their own safety as well as those around them. Keep these strategies in mind when you PREP for duty to increase readiness and maintain wellness.

PREP for duty before each shift and encourage colleagues to do the same!

P **PRACTICE** empathy and compassion for yourself and those around you. If you feel on edge or stressed, those around you might as well.

R **ROUTINELY** check your equipment to ensure it fits and works properly before each shift.

E **ENGAGE** in healthy activities and practices for your physical and mental readiness and wellness.

P **PROMOTE** and sustain positive relationships both within your agency and throughout your community.



Mental Readiness

- **Prioritize care of your mental and emotional health** to help you think clearly and react to urgent needs in a safe and timely manner.
- Understand your **mental health is just as important as your physical health**. Each impacts the other.
- **Do not allow your mental health to affect your job performance**. Adjust as needed, just as you would for a physical injury.
- **Practice mindfulness** by taking short breaks to reset throughout your day.
- **Speak with peers after traumatic calls**. If something is bothering you seek support from those you trust.
- Review and use your agency's available **Employee Assistance Program, Peer Support Program, and wellness resources**.



Connection Readiness

- **Communicate clearly with community members** and treat individuals in a fair, objective, and respectful manner.
- **Exercise compassion** when engaging with colleagues and community members. Forging positive relationships can build understanding and support and maintain community and officer safety.
- **Practice transparency and accountability** to promote positive community-police engagement.
- **Display empathy** and remember that behaviors resulting from stress or anxiety may be misinterpreted by those around you.
- **Communicate clearly with other officers** to maintain safety and effectively serve the community. Connect with dispatchers and provide as much detail as you can, safely, regarding who you are with, where you are, and what resources you need.



Equipment Readiness

- Before each shift **ensure your equipment fits and works properly**.
- **Start your shift with a full radio battery**. Keep a spare battery where it can be easily accessed.
- **Clean your firearm regularly**. Ensure the elements have not caused rust or buildup that will affect its function.
- Take note of your **OC/pepper spray expiration date** and spark test your electronic control device before every shift.
- **Monitor your body armor's condition**. Ensure it does not become worn down and replace it before the expiration date.
- Prior to each shift, **ensure all of your equipment is duty-ready** and in its appropriate location.
- Do checks throughout your shift to **ensure everything remains intact**.
- Ensure equipment such as **handcuff keys and cruiser keys are secured** on your person and can be accessed easily.
- **Consider the positioning of equipment on your belt**. Know where your tools are placed.
- **Use reflective gear while performing traffic duties**.
- **Take a quick look around your patrol vehicle** before you enter it to look for any noticeable maintenance issues (i.e., low tire pressure).



Physical Readiness

- **Maintain balanced eating habits and choose healthy food options** for clearer thinking, increased energy, and better overall health.
- **Stay hydrated**. Keep water accessible and drink it throughout your shift.
- **Incorporate physical fitness into your daily life** to help reduce stress and promote better sleeping habits.
- **Schedule annual wellness examinations** to allow for early detection and treatment of risk factors of heart attacks and other conditions.

For more information and source material, visit www.theIACP.org/OSW.

The IACP encourages agencies to develop policies that promote officer safety and wellness. For more information, visit the **IACP's Policy Center** for mental health, equipment, and body armor model policies and considerations.

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