Village of Andover Police Department

NEW YORK STATE
POLICE REFORM
AND REINVENTION
COLLABORATIVE

Police Reform and Reinvention Plan

Adopted March 9 2021

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS IS A
TRUE COPY OF CERTIFICATE ON FILE.
Maureen E Wood
VILLAGE CLERK

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I. Summary

The Formation of the Andover Police Reform and Reinvention Collaborative was in part to meet the requirements and aid our municipality in meeting the requirements of Executive Order No. 203 issued by Governor Andrew Cuomo on June 12' 2020 The order required local governments with police agencies to engage the community in a reform effort to "Eliminate racial inequalities" by reforming and modernizing police procedures, strategies, and tactics to meet those ends. At the end of this process, the pertinent local governments would be required to submit a plan to New York State or risk losing State funding. The Andover Police Reform and Reinvention reflects our commitment to comply with the executive order and improve of efforts to practice reform in the Andover

Police Department. The Collaborative was comprised of two groups: the Community Stakeholder Workgroup, made up of representatives of the community, ethnic and religious groups and the Municipal Workgroup comprised of elected officials, police chief, Village officials and legal representatives as well as the Andover PBA Union. In addition to bringing together a diverse group an online public comment forum and survey was created to solicit input from Andover residents regarding their ideas for reform. Over the past several months, the collaborative met to discuss needs, priorities, and various topics related to police reform. Throughout that discussion a number of themes became evident.

- Building a law enforcement workforce that is representative of the community it serves.
- Connecting law enforcement to the community.
- Creating better mechanisms for addressing mental health and substance use/abuse issues in the community.
- Increasing lines of communication between the police and the community.
- Ensuring law enforcement officers are held accountable for their actions.

Most Common Recommendations from Public Forums and Online Survey Comments Forum

- Make data available regarding police interactions with the public to identify if they are engaging in discriminatory practices (improve transparency).
- Invest in mental health resources and training for officers.
- Provide additional information to the public about how to file a complaint in a confidential manner against the police (Improve communication).
- Have more diversity, sensitivity, and implicit bias awareness training.
- Have the police more visible in the downtown areas.
- Add policies and procedures to department website.

II. Mandated Reforms

Civil penalties for filing false reports on a member of a protected class

Establish penalties and consequences for falsely summoning a police officer when there is no reason to believe a crime, offense or threat has been committed involving a member of a protected class.

Andover Police Department Actions- Completed in- Service Training.

Require the reporting of police acts or omissions resulting in a person's death to the office of special investigation.

Establishes an Office of Special Investigations within the office of the Attorney General which will have investigative authority and criminal jurisdiction for any incident involving the death of a person caused by an act or omission by a police officer or a peace officer employed as a correction officer or contracted by an education, public health, social service, parks, or housing agency. Where an investigation concluded that the death or matters relating to the death or investigation of the death involved criminal conduct, the Office will be empowered to prosecute any such alleged offense.

Andover Police Department Actions- Waiting for additional guidance from New York State. Will conduct In-Service Training.

Require police officers to report the discharge of weapons

Requires a police officer or peace officer, whether on or off duty, who discharges his or her weapon under circumstances where a person could be struck by a bullet to verbally report the incident within six hours and file a written report with in forty-eight hours.

Andover Police Department Action-Our agency has already had this practice for several years and we are currently in compliance.

Banning of choke holds

The Eric Gardner Anti-Choke Hold Act creates the crime of aggravated strangulation (a Class C Felony) and establishes criminal penalties for police officers or peace officers who use chokeholds that cause serious physical injury or death.

Andover Police Department Action- The Andover Police Department already has incorporated this into our policy and procedure and APD is in full compliance. Annual in-service training will be conducted in conjunction with use of force to reinforce this mandate.

Require policing statistics to be reported to the division of criminal justice services in Albany

Requires courts to compile and publish data concerning arrests and court proceedings involving low-level offenses such as violations and traffic offenses. Such reports will include aggregate and anonymized demographic information such as race, ethnicity and sex. This bill requires police departments to submit annual reports on arrest related deaths to the Division of Criminal Justice Services, as well as the Legislature and Governor.

Andover Police Department Action- This practice is already in place via the E-Justice portal through uniform Crime Reporting. Our agency will provide this data to the Andover Village Court as required.

Recording of law enforcement activity

Allows for a person not under arrest or in the custody of a law enforcement official to have the right to record police activity and to maintain custody and control of that recording and of any property or instruments used by that person to record such activities. A person in custody or under arrest does not, by that status alone, forfeit such a right to record.

Andover Police Department Action-Provide annual in-service training to all staff.

Provide Access to the public of police personnel records

Repeal of Civil Rights Law 50-a, which made all personnel records used to evaluate the performance for continued employment or promotion of police officers, firefighters, paramedics, correction officers or peace officers confidential and not subject to inspection or review without the individual's

express written consent or court order. The New York State F.O.I.L. (freedom of information law) is also amended thus subjecting any record created in furtherance of a law enforcement disciplinary proceeding to disclosure. Under the amendment this law allows for specific, sensitive personal information, including medical history, to be redacted from such records prior to being disclosed.

Andover Police Department Action-Law has been shared with the Mayor and Clerk as well as conferenced with the Village Attorney.

III. Training

Updated use of force training

New Guidelines for use of force training to include topics such as banning of choke holds and other means of use of force.

Andover Police Department Action- Expand use of force training to include de-escalation in-service training and improve upon our use of force tactics. APD has posted our use of force policy on our website and we have implemented crowd control training tactics, taser units, oc spray, batons, and pepper ball launchers as an alternative to hands on use of force.

Updated de-escalation training

New Guidelines for de-escalation tactics and training.

Andover Police Department Action-Instructors of APD will be certified in de-escalation training and tactics in August of 2021. Following this certification, a yearly in-service will be conducted in de-escalation for all officers.

IV. Social Justice and Equality

Diversify our police force

Having a diverse agency is not bound to only race and gender. Diversity entails other characteristics as well including religion, language, life experience, sexual orientation, and cultural background. Increasing diversity efforts may attract more people from different cultural backgrounds, and life experiences to apply.

Andover Police Department Action- Our agency will be taking steps to attend job fairs and conduct public relations" Meet and greet" recruitment events. APD will also increase our advertisement on social media.

Increase APD Implicit bias and diversity training

Require implicit bias awareness training for all Andover Police Department Officers.

Andover Police Department Action- Mandated implicit bias training for all staff. Instructors from APD will begin implicit bias and cultural diversity train the trainer certification courses in August of 2021 at Alfred State College.

V. Transparency and Accountability

Police activities

To ensure that citizens have access to police data and arrest activities.

Andover Police Department Action- All police reports are submitted to the Village Mayor on a monthly basis as well as emailed to all local media outlets.

Police personnel complaint process

Establish a process so that members of the public have an outlet to officially file justified police complaints with the department.

Andover Police Department Action- Our agency has already updated and placed the official from on our website for easy access to the public.

Use of force incident reports

Show transparency on use of force incidents with the Village of Andover.

Andover Police Department Action- Updated use of force forms and reports will be made available through the normal F.O.I.L. Process.

VI. Public/ Community Relations

Neighborhood network meetings

Increase our transparency and community relations by having neighborhood network meetings quarterly in an effort to reach our community members in person and share concerns about their community and police force.

Andover Police Department Action- Hold meetings focusing on different topics conveyed from our public throughout the year.

Electronic outreach

Increase outreach via multiple channels.

Andover Police Department Actions- Provide additional information on the Village website.

Traditional Methods

Use of Traditional "Old School" Programs to reach the public.

Andover Police Department Action- Utilize more foot patrol as well as establish a community message board program allowing for the public to give input without having to be present at the police station.

Additional Community Programs

Establish and/ or continue community programs.

Andover Police Department Actions- Continue free programs such as drug take back initiatives as well as trainings for citizens and how, what and why the Department responds the way we do.

VII. Policies and Procedures

Background investigations

To enhance and improve the process in which the Andover Police Department selects and hires new employees.

Andover Police Department Action- Our agency has updated our methods and requirements for selection of new hires as well as supervisory promotions to fall in line with the New York State Law Enforcement Accreditation Standards. These updates also include more in-depth background checks.

Mental health and crisis intervention training and procedures

Expand and improve our collaboration with subject matter experts in these fields and build strong working relationship between our agencies.

Andover Police Department Action- Our agency has always partnered with Allegany County Mental Health Services as well as crisis intervention services and Partners for Prevention (PPAC). We will continue to build on these relationships.

Body camera program

Ensure our agency has adequate funding for body camera equipment.

Andover Police Department Action- Our agency has had a police body camera program in place for the past 5 years and every officer has been issued a body camera during this time frame.