



Nationally publicized incidents and problems for law enforcement affect us all. Our goal here in Liberty, Missouri is to resolve situations peacefully using communication skills as our most effective tool. We do our best to focus our efforts and resources here through community outreach efforts and rigorous hiring and training standards.

With a lean and very efficient level of police staffing for a City of our size, we work to build relationships throughout the Liberty community. At the most basic level, we conduct station tours for scouts and other youth groups, and support Neighborhood Watch Programs. We are involved in community activities such as Liberty 4th Fest, Fall Festival, Halloween on the Square and Clay County African American Legacy Consortium events. We interact daily with residents, visitors, business owners and community partners. We are very active with our community outreach programs.

One way we are very connected to the community is through the School Resource Officer (SRO) program. We have two SROs assigned to Liberty Middle Schools. The SROs are positive role models and are available to assist school personnel, parents and students with issues and concerns. In addition to developing relationships, our SROs present the Liberty Intervention Focusing on Education curriculum to middle school students, which includes a Science Based Drug Education program, along with an internet safety program, and a program which covers sexual harassment in the school setting.

Our SROs also administer a popular Junior Police Academy (JPA). The program is designed to motivate young people to be outstanding citizens and to empower them to act as a positive influence in our community. The JPA also helps to bridge the gaps between law enforcement and youth while exposing the Junior Cadets to future public service careers. Each summer, the Liberty Police Department invites 7th and 8th graders within the Liberty School District to apply. While this program is open to all students, the SROs specifically encourage at-risk students who may benefit the most from the program and by developing relationships with the academy staff and their peers.

In another community outreach effort, the Liberty Police Department hosts a Shop With A Cop program that assists local families over the Christmas holiday. Funds are raised through donations, the sale of baked goods, and raffles. The funds are used to help children in need shop for presents for themselves and their family members. Every year on one day in December, Liberty Police Officers volunteer their time to go shopping with specially selected area children, and then return to the police station for a pizza and gift wrapping party.

Another popular community program involves Liberty police officers partnering with a local business or organization to host Coffee With A Cop events several times throughout each year. During these events, area residents are encouraged to stop by for a free cup of coffee and meet

the front-line police officers who patrol our streets and neighborhoods. It opens the door for interactions outside of crisis situations to bring officers and community members together. The events provide opportunities for citizens to ask questions, voice concerns, build trust, and develop relationships, while enjoying a cup of coffee with our officers.

We also are involved in other programs with the community, such as Special Olympics where officers volunteer their time to help young athletes with intellectual disabilities build confidence and achieve success through sports. These are just a few of the numerous programs and events we take part in throughout each year. Unfortunately, some of our community outreach programs and efforts have been hindered these past few months by COVID-19, but we will renew them as circumstances permit.

Our efforts to build positive community relationships actually begin with the hiring process. We have a stringent hiring process, with high education and experience standards, and an extensive training process. To be considered in the application process, applicants must meet minimum eligibility requirements. They must have 60-hours of college credits, three years of experience as a full-time Class A sworn police officer; or three years of active service in a branch of the US military. Applicants who have passed a rigorous testing and interview process will undergo a comprehensive background investigation and a psychiatric evaluation. If hired, recruits who have not graduated from an accredited police academy will spend approximately six months at a professional police academy. While there, they will learn the fundamentals of police service along with practices, skills and techniques from experienced and well-versed officers. Training for police never ends, and once they successfully complete the police academy, new recruits spend a minimum of three months working with very experienced and specially trained field training officers within our department. This expands and further develops on their police academy training, and helps new officers learn about our community, policies, and procedures. During this training, recruit officers are evaluated constantly, advancing or re-training as needed, or released from duty if they are unable to meet our high standards of performance.

As part of their training, recruits also learn how to use the dashboard cameras in every patrol vehicle as well as their individually issued body camera. Liberty Police have used dashboard cameras for over 20 years and body cameras since last year. These cameras are used daily by officers to document field contacts involving actual or potential criminal conduct, calls for service, and other situations.

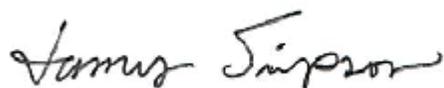
Beyond basic recruit training, we have a Crisis Intervention Team (CIT) program designed to improve the way law enforcement and the community respond to people experiencing mental health crises. This program is built on strong partnerships between law enforcement, hospital emergency services, mental health service providers, and individuals and families affected by mental illness. It is intended to improve the outcomes of mental health related police encounters. CIT improves communication, identifies mental health resources for those in crisis, and promotes officer and community safety. For more than a decade, our department has been sending officers to a 40-hour comprehensive basic CIT training. We also have several officers who have also completed advanced classes that focus on specific mental health areas, including youth, veterans, Alzheimer's, and autism. The team effort is rounded out with 911 dispatchers who have each received 24 hours of CIT training.

All officers complete annual required racial profiling training for peace officers. This training promotes understanding and respect for racial and cultural differences and the use of effective, non-combative methods for carrying out law enforcement duties in a racially and culturally diverse environment. Officers have also attended "Impartial Policing" training. Such training covers both "implicit" and "explicit" bias, and strategies officers can use to help ensure policing is bias free, fair and impartial.

Policy and procedures are updated regularly with integration through the City insurance carrier (Midwest Public Risk) and Lexipol. Lexipol is a leading provider of risk management resources for public safety organizations and is recognized for a proactive approach in decreasing liability exposure through technical and legal expertise.

The mission of the Liberty Police Department is to preserve public safety and enforce the law while maintaining community values and a mutual respect between the Police, and those we serve. We shall be fair but firm, while meeting the challenges of a changing community. Our goal remains to resolve situations peacefully using communication skills as our most effective tool. With our mission in mind, our policy for the use of force is a matter of critical concern, both to the public and to the law enforcement community. Officers are involved on a daily basis in numerous and varied interactions and, when warranted, may use reasonable force in carrying out their duties. Officers must have an understanding of, and true appreciation for, their authority and limitations. This is especially true with respect to overcoming resistance while engaged in the performance of law enforcement duties. The Department recognizes and respects the value of all human life and dignity without prejudice to anyone. Vesting officers with the authority to use reasonable force and to protect the public welfare requires monitoring, evaluation and a careful balancing of all interests. Our officers have a duty to intercede, in that any officer present and observing another officer using force that is clearly beyond that which is objectively reasonable under the circumstances shall, when in a position to do so, intercede to prevent the use of unreasonable force. An officer who observes another employee using force that exceeds the degree of force permitted by law should promptly report these observations to a supervisor. Officers shall use only that amount of force that reasonably appears necessary given the facts and circumstances perceived by the officer at the time of the event to accomplish a legitimate law enforcement purpose.

If you have questions or would like to further discuss our department programs or practices, or our relationship with the community, please call Liberty Police Department Administration at 816-439-4710.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "James Simpson". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

James Simpson  
Chief of Police