



**BURLINGTON TOWNSHIP POLICE DEPARTMENT**  
851 Old York Rd.  
Burlington, New Jersey 08016



To: Citizens of Burlington Township  
From: Public Safety Director Bruce Painter  
Date: September 10, 2020  
Re: Questions Pending from August 27, 2020 Social Justice Town Hall

I would like to thank everyone who took part in the Burlington Township Police Department's August 27, 2020 Social Justice Town Hall. During the event, we were able to answer a large majority of the questions posed to the committee. However, due to time constraints, there were several questions left unanswered. Those questions and answers are as follows:

**1. Are Burlington Township Police Department officers required to identify themselves when they interact with citizens?**

Yes, all members of the Burlington Township Police Department are required to identify themselves when interacting with citizens. Additionally, all department employees are issued a Burlington Township Police Department identification card displaying their photograph, name, and rank/job title, and they are required to display that card and/or department issued badge to any citizen requesting identification. Officers working in an undercover capacity, or those performing covert duties that may be compromised if their identities were revealed, are exempt from this provision.

**2. Does the Burlington Township Police Department have body worn cameras?**

The Burlington Township Police Department has been using body worn cameras since 2016. Additionally, our marked patrol vehicles have been equipped with vehicle cameras for more than twenty years. Department policy mandates that officers activate those cameras while performing official police duties such as pedestrian stops, motor vehicle stops, investigative inquiries, responding to calls for service, arrests, searches, and transports.

**3. Are Burlington Township Police Department officers required to report every time they use force? What type of review occurs when force is used?**

Whenever a Burlington Township Police Department officer uses physical force, mechanical force, enhanced mechanical force, or deadly force, that officer is required to immediately notify the duty supervisor and complete a use of force report.

All use of force incidents involving physical force, mechanical force, and enhanced mechanical force are investigated and reviewed by the duty supervisor, the Internal Affairs Commander, and ultimately the Public Safety Director to determine their appropriateness and conformance with policy and training. Conducted energy device deployments undergo further review by the Burlington County Prosecutor's Office as well as the NJ Attorney General's Office.

All use of force incidents that involve deadly force, all use of force incidents that result in serious bodily injury or death, and all incidents involving in-custody death require immediate notification to the Burlington County Prosecutor's Office and the NJ Attorney General's Office. In each of these incidents, an independent investigator will be appointed to conduct the investigation.

**4. Are Burlington Township Police Department officers trained to perform and seek necessary medical attention after they use force on someone?**

All Burlington Township Police Department officers are trained in first aid/CPR and are equipped with basic medical supplies. Whenever there is visible injury, complaint of pain, signs of medical distress, or when medical attention is requested, officers are required to immediately render medical aid consistent with their training, notify the duty supervisor, and request emergency medical services.

Officers are also trained to be alert for positional asphyxia and other circumstances that may result in compromised breathing. When situations result in a person being placed in a face-down position, or when body weight is being placed on top of that person, officers are trained to release the person from this position as soon as it is safe to do so, monitor them for any respiratory or breathing problems, adjust body positioning so as not to reduce airflow or diaphragm function, and request emergency medical services if necessary.

**5. Under what circumstances may Burlington Township Police Department officers use deadly force?**

A Burlington Township Police Department officer may use deadly force only when he/she reasonably believes such action is immediately necessary to protect the officer or another person from imminent danger of death or serious bodily harm. Additionally, our officers are not permitted to perform chokeholds, carotid artery neck restraints, or similar tactics unless deadly force is necessary to address an imminent threat to life.

**6. Are Burlington Township Police Department officers required to intervene if they witness another officer using excessive force?**

Every Burlington Township Police Department officer has a duty to immediately attempt to intervene to prevent any law enforcement officer from using force or any other action that is illegal, excessive, or otherwise inconsistent with our use of force policy. Additionally, every officer has a responsibility to immediately contact the on-duty supervisor and report any act which he/she believe involves the use of excessive force.

**7. Are Burlington Township Police Department officers trained on how to de-escalate situations rather than use force?**

Burlington Township Police Department officers are trained twice annually in use of force. That training emphasizes, and policy mandates, that officers shall attempt, when feasible, to de-escalate a situation prior to using force. While officer safety is a primary concern, we encourage officers to use their words to diffuse volatile situations before resulting to some type of force whenever appropriate. Additionally, officers are taught to consider possibilities such as creating distance, seeking cover, and tactically repositioning in order to avoid the need to use force.

Sometimes, simply giving people the opportunity to be heard can make them feel validated and respected. We train officers to consider whether a person's lack of compliance is a deliberate attempt to resist or an inability to comply based on factors including medical condition, mental impairment, physical limitation, developmental disability, language barrier, drug interaction, behavioral crisis, or other factors beyond the individual's control.

**8. When called to a scene, are your officers trained to handle people with mental health issues without arresting anyone?**

Every Burlington Township Police Department officer undergoes Crisis Intervention Team (CIT) training. One of the core principles of CIT is jail diversion. When handling situations in the community, our officers attempt to figure out the root cause of the issue and then come up with a resolution based on the facts presented. We recognize that mental illness is a medical condition and we never seek to criminalize these illnesses. However, if the person's actions rise to the level of a criminal offense, we cannot allow their mental illness to be an excuse for criminal behavior. CIT provides our officers with a list of the dozens of resources available to assist them with mental health emergencies. Occasionally, a person might be arrested and referred to a mental health agency for assistance if the situation dictates.

**9. What training does the Burlington Township Police Department offer its officers relating to race relations?**

The Burlington Township Police Department provides our officers in-house training on bias-based policing every year, and each officer has received training through the NJ Attorney General's Community-Law Enforcement Affirmative Relations Continuing Education Institute entitled Cultural Diversity, De-Escalation and Bias Crime Reporting. Additionally, beginning this month, the Burlington Township Police Department is embarking on a novel training program in which two psychologists will conduct workshops with every officer to explore the impact of race and mental health as they relate to police and community relations. Lastly, one member of the department is scheduled to attend the Burlington County train-the-trainer session for implicit bias training later this month. That officer will then train all other agency members throughout the rest of the year.

**10. How does the Burlington Township Police Department safeguard against employing officers that may be abusive, racist, or otherwise discriminatory toward certain members of the community?**

The Burlington Township Police Department goes to great lengths to embed and reinforce the culture of our agency into our members. From the moment our members walk in the door, to the moment they walk out, they are expected to always demonstrate our core values of integrity, service, and respect...to ALL members of the community. We believe in employing sound recruitment and hiring practices, offering our members top-notch training, providing them access to comprehensive policies, and exposing them to quality supervisors from whom they can learn and seek guidance, all in the interest of forging employees who make fair and just decisions. Additionally, we have mechanisms in place to monitor the actions and behaviors of our officers, and, when we observe conduct that diverges from our standards and expectations, that conduct is addressed. Lastly, the Burlington Township Police Department absolutely does not tolerate abusive, racist, or discriminatory behavior by any of our members, and any member found exercising such behavior will face extreme consequences to include termination.

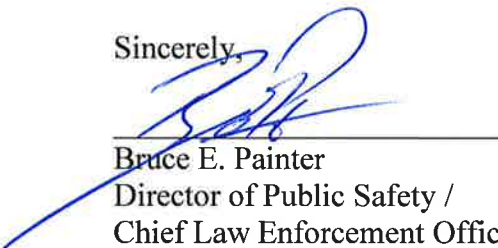
**11. Does the Burlington Township Police Department value diversity in its workforce, and, if so, what does it do to recruit a workforce that is representative of the community? What are the demographics of Burlington Township Police Department officers?**

The Burlington Township Police Department most certainly values diversity in its workforce, both in the context of race/ethnicity and gender. As a civil service jurisdiction, Burlington Township is subject to the testing and hiring protocols administered by the New Jersey Civil Service Commission. Therefore, the Burlington Township Police Department's recruitment efforts focus on encouraging a diverse and representative candidate pool to participate in the civil service testing process. We solicit the help of current minority and female employees to recruit viable candidates within the community. The department also makes a point to attend local job fairs and other community events in order to promote the department and generate interest in joining our ranks. We also collaborate with community partners, e.g. the school district via the School Resource Officers and local churches via our chaplain program. Lastly, the department maintains a robust internship program that allows college level students to intern with the department in the hopes that they will then pursue a career with the Burlington Township Police Department.

Below is the demographic breakdown of our full-time sworn officers as of January 2020:

White	39
Black	7
Hispanic	2
Other	1
Male	45
Female	4

Sincerely,



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Bruce E. Painter  
Director of Public Safety /  
Chief Law Enforcement Officer  
Burlington Twp. Police Department