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Public Service Announcement June 1, 2020



Bishop Police Department

207 West Line Street
Bishop, California 93514

For Emergencies Dial 9-1-1

PSA:

In response to the tragic death of George Floyd in Minneapolis recently, a concerned Bishop community member has reached out asking about what equipment and policies we might have. We at the Bishop Police Department (BPD) take pride in our jobs and in serving you with respect and transparency. As such, it is my pleasure to answer these and future questions.

With regards to body-worn cameras (BWC), BPD officers have been using them for many years now. We follow policy and the law on release and retention. The District Attorney's Office frequently receives our footage. The footage would also be shared with any authorized government agency wishing to review for compliance.

The State of California has been regarded for many years as having led the way on training for peace officers, both in quantity and quality of trainings. BPD officers receive more training than what is required by the state. We receive training on various topics that include use of force, bias-based policing, and community relations. Training is done in different ways including in-house, via an on-line portal, and at various Regional Training Centers in our state. Debriefs are routine, which include calls for service in other areas. Our officers have been using de-escalation techniques for decades. There is emphasis on maintaining perishable skills. We adjust and re-train when something is not working well or the law changes.

On the topic of excessive force, let me first say that we strive to never use excessive force: not only does it place our officers at risk, but it also places the community we serve at risk. BPD has a number of different less-lethal alternatives we deploy and train with. Further, all of our use of force cases undergo an internal review regardless of whether a complaint was received. This ensures our current policy is followed while at the same time informs us of potential policy and training needs.

If someone alleges one of our officers used excessive force, we investigate internally but would also defer to an outside law enforcement agency should the allegation tend to show criminal behavior.

Staff at BPD are proud members of this community and have given an oath to serve and protect honorably. Members consist of sons, daughters, fathers, mothers, husbands, wives, and friends of many. Our officers and support staffers frequently pivot from primary duties to teaching in the schools and participating in a number of wonderful community outreach events.

Our primary goal at BPD is to keep our whole community safe, and as a result of that we must hold criminals accountable. At times this involves arrest and control of individuals, actions which understandably can be seen as shocking, but regrettably are necessary for the safety of our whole community and for the functioning of an orderly society. BPD supports legal, respectful, and honest demonstrations. However, should violence erupt, we will make every attempt to legally quash it and arrest those who choose to hurt others or cause property damage.

I write this to let our community members know that we are here to serve our community, and do so with pride, confidence, transparency, and accountability. I trust this PSA will ensure the confidence this area has in the men and women who work for BPD.

Rest assured, BPD is responsive and eager to help. Stay safe and strong Bishop!

-Ted (Chief Ted Stec)