



## **LMPD realigning staff; creating full-time SWAT and Community Policing divisions**

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### **Changes meant to enhance public safety, boost community relations**

In an effort to strengthen efforts to reduce violent crime, Mayor Greg Fischer and Louisville Metro Police Chief Steve Conrad today announced a realignment of LMPD personnel, including the creation of two new police divisions.

“The desire to live in a safe and peaceful community is universal, and the increase in crime that we and cities across the country are seeing is unacceptable,” said Mayor Fischer. “We’re taking short- and long-term steps to reduce violent crime, and these changes are part of that.”

Specifically, LMPD is:

- Creating a full-time SWAT Division, which will consist of approximately 20 officers trained as SWAT operators. Previously, the department relied on a part-time team consisting of officers, detectives and commanding officers who were also assigned to other duties in the department. With an uptick in the number of SWAT calls that was becoming increasingly inefficient, Chief Conrad said, noting that team members were frequently pulled from their normal duties, creating more work for other officers and detectives in the units where they were assigned and making it difficult to properly serve citizens. Establishing a full-time division also “allows us to more quickly deploy the officers who are most highly trained at handling the most volatile situations,” he said.
- Using a federal Community Oriented Policing (COPS) grant to hire 10 new officers and create a separate Community Services Division, which will be focused on building relationships with citizens, particularly in the highest crime communities. This division will include the existing School Resource Officer Program, Special Event Unit and Traffic Unit, as well as a new Community Policing Unit – which will focus efforts in building trust and legitimacy in the city’s most troubled neighborhoods. The new Community Services Division will be led by Major Curtis Flaherty, who for the past three years has served as the 7th Division commander.
- “I see these officers as allowing us to be more proactive about problems,” the Chief said. “I want these officers to truly be a resource for the community, and through partnerships with other service organizations in our community, I am looking to them to become a conduit of information for community resources.”
- Adding approximately 16 officers to create two new squads of detectives in the Narcotics Division. “We believe narcotics’ trafficking is connected to a significant part of the violent crime we have experienced this year, which warrants the additional personnel,” the Chief said.

Beyond the hires covered by the federal COPS grant, the staffing realignment announced today will not require additional funding.

## **Training Advisory Board**

Also on Friday, the Chief outlined details about formation of a Training Advisory Board for LMPD's Training Division. He said the board will consist of 12 civilian volunteers and four members from the LMPD, who will be invited to offer recommendations regarding various aspects of the LMPD training provided to recruits and sworn members.

"This board is another effort by LMPD to let citizens have a role in determining how they are policed and to build trust," the Chief said.

Anyone interested in joining this board should go to the LMPD website to review the application and qualifications: <http://www.LouisvilleKy.Gov/Government/Police>.

## **21st Century Policing Community Forums**

Chief Conrad also announced plans for several community forums designed to fully explain the six pillars of President Obama's 21st Century Policing Guidelines, from which LMPD plans to build its community policing efforts. The first forum will be at 6 p.m. Thursday, Sept. 22, 6 p.m. at the Louisville Urban League. It is open to the public, and the Mayor and Chief encouraged anyone interested to join in.

Mayor Fischer said today's announcement is the first in a series that community leaders will be making over the coming weeks about steps being taken to make Louisville's streets safer.

"While LMPD is very much focused on the challenges on our streets today, we have many people and partner agencies focused on helping us prevent the crimes of tomorrow by providing opportunities and hope where it sometimes seems lost," the Mayor said.

## **Public Safety Website**

Citing the administration's commitment to transparency, the Mayor also reminded the community of a new web page that offers a comprehensive listing of the city's public safety programs and updates. It can be found at [louisvilleky.gov/government/public-safety-holistic-approach](http://louisvilleky.gov/government/public-safety-holistic-approach).

"We'll be adding to it and updating it as needed," he said. "Our goal is to make it as easy as possible for citizens to access and understand all the work that our police officers and Metro Government are doing to make our streets safe."