

GEORGIA ASSOCIATION OF CHIEFS OF POLICE

Online Quarterly News

4th Quarter - 2019



Celebrating 57 Years of Commitment to Excellence in Law Enforcement



Message from the President

As I sit here and write this letter I think about all the changes that law enforcement has undergone through the years. I have in some capacity experienced many of these changes during my law enforcement career over the past 30 plus years. But I believe that the most drastic changes have occurred during the last decade. The environment that we now work in has changed the way we will police for years to come. The meaning of protect and serve has evolved through the years. In the past, the majority of an officer's duties involved knowing and applying the mechanics of an arrest, writing a report, and qualifying with a firearm. Today's meaning not only requires these duties of the past, but also the duties of being advisors, therapist, paramedics and counselors. These demands can seem never ending during a 12-hour shift.

Just like our profession, our association has endured changes, but today it is financially stable and has one of the largest memberships in the country. One of the most recent changes is that our Executive Director, after 23 years of service, is retiring at the end of the year. Frank has through his dedication to the association played a significant role in making this association what it is today. Frank leaves behind a legacy. It is now time for him to dedicate the rest of his life to his family and show them the dedication and love that he has shown this association. Frank will be missed but never forgotten.

Another Summer Conference is in the books. The training was on target and the attendance was record setting. This year we tried some new things and brought back some things that have not been done in a long time. I have been told by many that it was one of the best that they have experienced. I hope to use this positive feedback to make more changes in our itinerary in the future. The time we spend together should not only be about training but also about networking with each other and obtaining new ideas from those more seasoned chiefs that have been "around the block" so to speak. A special thanks from the association and myself goes out to all the GACP staff. They always work tirelessly to make sure our conferences and our organization run smoothly. Also, the conferences would never take place without our vendors. They put a lot of time and money into making sure that our conferences are not only educational by also enjoyable. Be sure you let the staff and vendors

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Georgia Association of Chiefs of Police
3500 Duluth Park Lane, Suite 700
Duluth, GA 30096

Phone: 770.495.9650
Fax: 770.495.7872
Toll free: 877.530.4682
outside /770, 404 & 678

Email: gacp@gachiefs.com
Website: www.gachiefs.com

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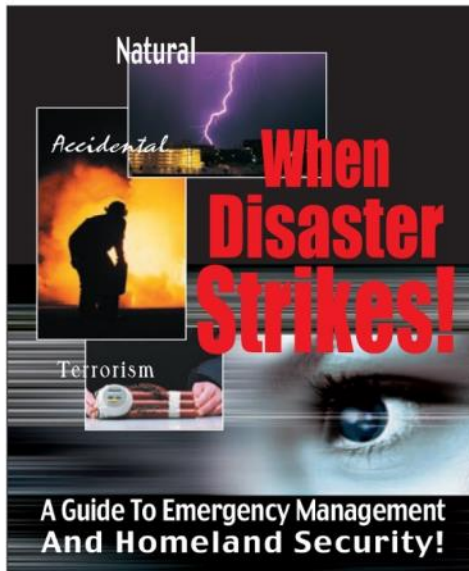
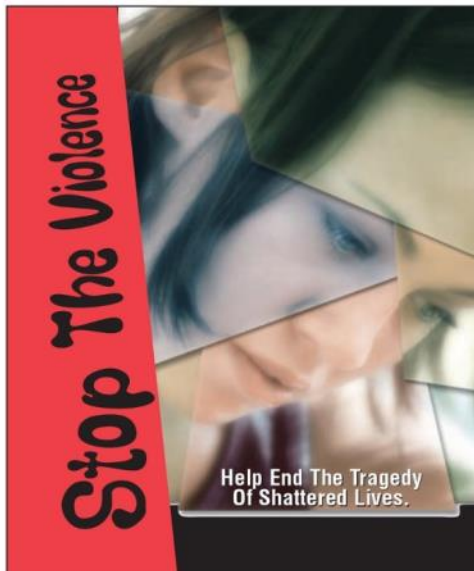
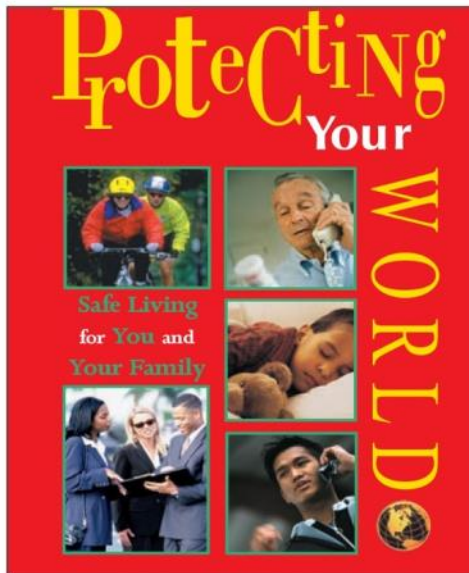
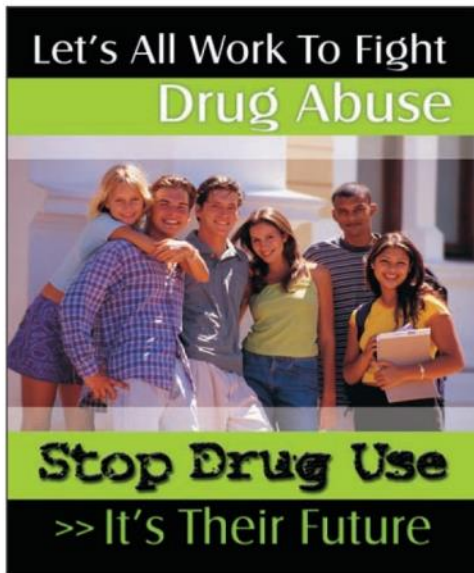
through your words and actions know how much we appreciate them.

I hope the next year brings accomplishments for the betterment of law enforcement. One of my goals is to find ways to increase police officers' paychecks and to create incentives that will attract quality individuals to this profession. We have formed a committee to study the hiring and retention of officers. An additional goal of this committee is to try and identify resources that can be funneled to your local governments to supplement officer salaries. We have recruited individuals from the University of Georgia to assist us with this task, but it will take the participation and assistance of each and every Chief in this association to make this goal a successful reality. I ask you as Chiefs to build relationships with the law makers that can influence these decisions. I know we have members that already have these relationships with the movers and shakers in Atlanta and we need to utilize those resources. In an attempt to increase our voice in Atlanta, I have met with the Executive Director and the President of the Sheriff's Association and they are very willing to partner with us in this endeavor. Together we can have a large influence during our next general assembly. I also believe that this partnership with the Sheriff's Association will build a relationship that can be beneficial to both our associations in the future.

I cannot begin to express how humbled I am that you have elected me to represent this great organization. I am just a small town country boy who has some pretty big shoes to fill from my predecessors. Chief George Turner, Chief Billy Grogan, Warden Dennis Nelson, and Chief Joe Wirthman thank you for the guidance you have given me and the examples of excellent leadership that you have been for not only this association by also myself personally. To the Association, I give you my word that as those before me have done, I will continue to represent and uphold the standards of this organization in the highest regards. I look forward to serving you this next year and ask for you continued prayers and support as we move forward in to 2020.



GACP President &
Chief of Police for Lyons Police Department



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Risk

Risk Reduction Certificate Program

Dennis Nelson, Georgia Association of Chiefs of Police (GACP) President 2017-2018, recognized that many law enforcement agencies, particularly smaller agencies, did not have adequate policies and/or resources in place to sufficiently guide their officers, or mitigate potential liability. Many agencies could not participate in the State Certification Program for a variety of legitimate reasons. To address this need, President Nelson established a goal during his tenure as President to create a program to assist these agencies in addressing contemporary and traditional problems associated with managing police departments. To accomplish this, the GACP entered a cooperative effort with the Georgia Interlocal Risk Management Agency (GIRMA) to create the [GACP Risk Reduction Certificate Program](#).

As work began on the project, Local Government Risk Management Services (LGRMS) identified those areas most likely to result in a liability claim for Georgia agencies and how to lower their liability exposure. Using this information, they acquired as a baseline, 26 policy directives addressing 10 separate areas of State and Federal legal requirements including:

- Human Resources
- Property and Evidence
- Vehicle Operations
- Search and Seizure
- Mental health or Persons with Diminished Capacity
- Arrest
- Off-Duty and Extra-Duty Employment
- Other Equipment
- Use of Force
- Multi-Jurisdictional Task Forces

A second document, [Georgia Law Enforcement Risk Reduction Certificate Resource Guide](#) has been produced to assist law enforcement leaders as they craft the operational procedures for their agencies.

Participating in the Risk Reduction Certificate program offers several benefits for agencies. First, the program is free and participating agencies are eligible for a 5% reduction in their liability insurance premium. Second, it provides the foundation for ensuring proper steps are taken to mitigate potential liability. This includes a policy, training, documentation, and supervision. Third, most of the heavy lifting is already done for agencies with the recently updated model policies and supporting material. Finally, this program will better ensure officers react to situations in a consistent, agency approved manner as well as improve officers' confidence.

Agencies are encouraged to review the Certificate Program Brochure and Resource Guide. If there are any questions, please do not hesitate to call the GACP Office at 770-495-9650 for assistance. In closing, it is GACP's strong belief this innovative accord will both reduce liability and insurance rates, while focusing on the paramount purpose of law enforcement which is and has always been... to protect and serve.

Attachments:

- > [GACP Risk Reduction Certificate Program Brochure](#)
- > [Georgia Law Enforcement Risk Reduction Certificate Resource Guide](#)





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Author: Steve Hayes, Director of Communications, State Board of Pardons and Paroles

Much goes into the parole decision making process by the Georgia Board of Pardons and Paroles. The Board's case file on each offender is comprehensive. Board Members consider the offender's criminal history, sentencing information, social history, prison program completions, prison conduct and application of the Board's guidelines. This is only a sampling of the information of which the Board Members use to make their decisions. As a result, the Board Members routinely render the best possible parole decisions. Again this past fiscal year, more than 70% of the offenders discharged from parole completed their supervision successfully. The percentage annually out paces the national average by 10% or more.

Although the parole success rate remains among the highest in the nation, the members want to further enhance public safety with each decision. To that end, the Board engages stakeholders throughout the parole decision making process to ensure all available information on a case is received before releasing an offender back to the community. This engagement comes in the form of solicitations and notifications to judges, prosecutors and law enforcement, from the time the sentence is announced in court up to the final decision to release or not release.

An initial solicitation is made to the district attorney seeking input and information about the case post sentence. Six months prior to eligibility on the most serious violent and sexual offenders, another notification is sent to the district attorney and the judge asking for input into the case. Ninety days prior to an expected parole release in the most serious violent felony cases another solicitation is made for case information. Additionally, registered crime victims are notified of possible paroles and any information received is added to the case file for the Board Members to consider. Seventy-two hours prior to a pending release in all cases, yet another notification is sent to stakeholders, providing another opportunity for information to be sent to the Parole Board.

Last fiscal year, the Parole Board made more than 30,000 solicitations/notifications to judges, prosecutors, law enforcement and other stakeholders regarding parole cases.



Is that all? No. Most, but not all of the notifications are statutorily mandated. Because the Board's parole decision making process is a public and transparent process, unsolicited input into a case is always welcome and encouraged. The Board is open to receiving correspondence regarding an offender at any time he or she is incarcerated. Information may come from inmate family and friends, members of the community, victims, public servants and yes, even from the law enforcement community. Many contacts are simply made to give the Board information regarding the offender, without supporting or opposing parole. Regardless, the Board wants the information. Simply stated, the Board wants to enhance public safety by making the most informed decision regarding parole for an offender.

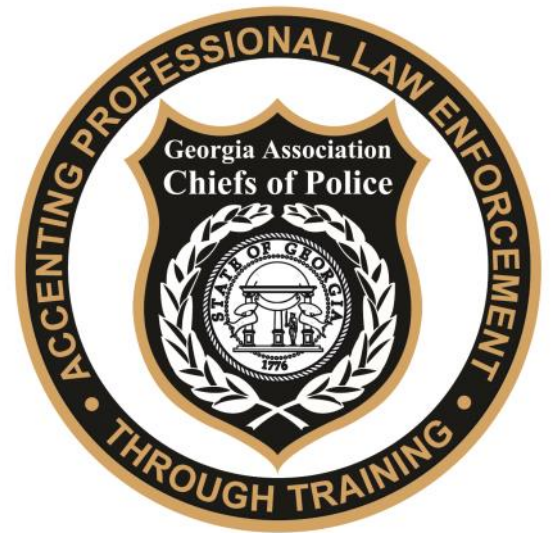
Anyone with information about a parole eligible offender is encouraged to contact us. The most effective method of contacting the Parole Board is through email at webmaster@pap.ga.gov.

Correspondence may be sent to:
State Board of Pardons and Paroles
Attention: Clemency Division
2 Martin Luther King, Jr. Drive SE
Suite 458, Balcony Level, East Tower
Atlanta, Georgia 30334-4909

The Board can be contacted by telephone through the call center at 404-656-4661.
Learn more about Georgia's parole decision making process at www.pap.georgia.gov.

About the author: Steve Hayes is the Director of Communications for the State Board of Pardons and Paroles. The office is responsible for internal and external communications and distribution of public information. You may contact him at steve.hayes@pap.ga.gov.





CONGRATULATIONS

Lavonia Police Chief & Chairman of the District Representatives, Bruce Carlisle, and Covington Police Chief and GACP Past President Stacey Cotton, were recently appointed to the State Board of Public Safety by Governor Brian P. Kemp on August 29th at the Capitol.

The Board of Public Safety provides oversight of the Georgia Department of Public Safety, Georgia Bureau of Investigations, and the Georgia Public Safety Training Center.



Governor's Office of Highway Safety Awards



Governor Brian Kemp presented Snellville Police Department with the Governor's Cup Award at the 2019 Governor's Challenge Awards Wednesday, September 18th in Macon. Snellville Police scored 171.5 out of a possible 200 points to win the award as the Governor's Office of Highway Safety honored 23 law enforcement agencies for their work in promoting traffic safety through outreach and enforcement.

The Snellville Police Department, which has less than 50 officers, also won the Occupant Protection and Distracted Driving awards, as well as winning first place for their overall highway safety efforts in the category for their department size. The Governor's Challenge Awards honor law enforcement agencies for their work to prevent crashes, injuries and deaths in their communities, college campuses and military installations. For only the second time in the history of the Governor's Challenge, the sitting Governor was able to present the Governor's Cup, which the winning agency will keep for the next year.

The table shown is a complete list of all agencies who were honored—



<u>Category 1: 1-10 Officers</u>	
<u>Demorest Police Department</u>	1st Place
<u>Tennille Police Department</u>	2nd Place
<u>Remerton Police Department</u>	3rd Place
<u>Category 2: 11-25 Officers</u>	
<u>Byron Police Department</u>	1st Place
<u>Centerville Police Department</u>	2nd Place
<u>Royston Police Department</u>	3rd Place
<u>Category 3: 26-50 Officers</u>	
<u>Snellville Police Department</u>	1st Place
<u>Calhoun Police Department</u>	2nd Place
<u>Milledgeville Police Department</u>	3rd Place
<u>Category 4: 51-100 Officers</u>	
<u>Dalton Police Department</u>	1st Place
<u>Habersham County Sheriff's Office</u>	2nd Place
<u>Crisp County Sheriff's Office</u>	3rd Place
<u>Category 5: 101-250</u>	
<u>Alpharetta Department of Public Safety</u>	1st Place
<u>Gainesville Police Department</u>	2nd Place
<u>Valdosta Police Department</u>	3rd Place
<u>Category 6: 251-500</u>	
<u>Forsyth County Sheriff's Office</u>	1st Place
<u>Hall County Sheriff's Office</u>	2nd Place
<u>Douglas County Sheriff's Office</u>	3rd Place
<u>Category 7: 501+</u>	
<u>Cobb County Police Department</u>	1st Place
<u>DeKalb County Police Department</u>	2nd Place
<u>Category 8: Campus and University Police</u>	
<u>Georgia Southern Police Department</u>	1st Place
<u>Georgia State University Police Department</u>	2nd Place
<u>Category 9: Military & Federal Police</u>	
<u>Fort Gordon Law Enforcement Center</u>	1st Place
<u>SPECIAL CATEGORY AWARDS</u>	
<u>Byron Police Department</u>	Impaired Driving
<u>Dalton Police Department</u>	Speed Award
<u>Snellville Police Department</u>	Occupant Protection
<u>Snellville Police Department</u>	Distracted Driving
<u>Crisp County Sheriff's Office</u>	Rookie of the Year
<u>Calhoun Police Department</u>	Child Passenger Safety
<u>Crisp County Sheriff's Office</u>	Bike/Pedestrian Safety
<u>Gainesville Police Department</u>	Underage Alcohol Prevention
<u>Forsyth County Sheriff's Office</u>	Technology Award
<u>Coastal Area Traffic Enforcement Network</u>	Traffic Enforcement Network
<u>Snellville Police Department (171.5 Points)</u>	Governor's Cup

MEDICARI


Introducing the Georgia Medicaid Fraud Control Unit

Using the word “introduce” might suggest that the Medicaid Fraud Control Unit is a new thing, but it is not. First organized as a task force effort in 1995, the Medicaid Fraud Control Unit (MFCU) is presently a division of the Georgia Attorney General’s Office located in downtown Atlanta. The MFCU is a multidisciplinary division consisting of attorneys, investigators, auditors, nurses, and analysts with the primary mission of investigating and prosecuting Medicaid Fraud.

Fraud takes many forms. The MFCU focuses on what is known as “provider” fraud meaning that the Unit investigates individuals and entities which submit or cause the submission of false claims for services to the State. The primary enforcement statute is located in the Georgia Medical Assistant Act, O.C.G.A. § 49-4-146.1(b). In contrast to many local agencies and DA’s offices, the MFCU does not investigate those who receive Medicaid, commonly referred to as “recipients,” for fraud in obtaining Medicaid coverage.

As the landscape of white collar schemes becomes increasingly complex, the overlap between the MFCU’s efforts and local law enforcement initiatives has grown substantially. Notably, the nationwide focus on America’s opioid epidemic has raised awareness that in addition to illicit drugs, the diversion of controlled substances for non-approved users or without medical justification provides new opportunities for the MFCU to assist local law enforcement. While MFCU participation in investigations starts with a baseline question of identifying a nexus to the Georgia Medicaid program, investigations focusing on questionable medical practices or dispensing locations may provide a platform for our involvement.

Investigations seeking to separate “pill mill” activity from legitimate medical practices can take advantage of the MFCU’s experience both in evaluating and reviewing medical claims and the extensive resources available for complex investigations that we have at our disposal at both the state level and through our relationships with numerous federal stakeholders including the United States Attorney’s Offices, HHS-OIG, the FBI, and DEA. In addition to the MFCU’s anti-fraud objectives, the Unit also has jurisdiction to investigate and prosecute cases of abuse, neglect, and exploitation of the State’s most vulnerable citizens. As part of the Attorney General’s on-going commitment to protecting Georgia’s elderly and disabled, the Unit has dedicated more resources to these types of investigations. Over the past couple of years, this has led to substantial investigations and prosecutions of multi-person schemes targeting these groups. Abuse, neglect, and exploitation can be physical, financial, or frequently, both.



One area of growing concern are personal care homes run in grossly negligent manners and geared towards benefiting the operator at the expense of its occupants. While unlicensed care homes are still a concern, the number of facilities ostensibly licensed to provide care who ignore their duties can be just as nefarious. The schemes can go beyond physical deprivation, although that still occurs. There are numerous service lines that the elderly and disabled are supposed to have access to through government programs such as Medicaid, Medicare, and Social Security benefits. These citizens often rely upon others to help set up and administer their benefits. When the wrong people are placed in these positions of trust, these same resources can be diverted away from helping those they are designed to benefit.

Resource diversion can be particularly difficult to uncover as many times the individual does not even know it is occurring. Actors with bad intentions believe that a financial power of attorney provides them with a carte blanche to do what they see fit with another person's money. They have Social Security benefits diverted to different accounts or have themselves added as a joint operator to their target's banking accounts. They spend the money for their own benefit and provide the absolute minimum, or sometimes even less, to the person for whom the money is really intended.

Conducting these types of investigations can be time consuming, and particularly, for more rural areas with smaller police forces, the time commitment can understandably be daunting. If this occurs, please consider reaching out to the MFCU to see if we can assist or, in some instances, even take over an investigation that might otherwise overwhelm. The Unit has state-wide jurisdiction to investigate such matters. Since the Unit contains investigative auditors familiar with obtaining and reviewing financial records as well as investigators familiar with making sense of vast amounts of paperwork, we are uniquely situated to assist in document intensive white collar matters.

If there are issues or questions you have, please reach out to the MFCU. Our phone number is (404) 656-5400.

About the Author: Jim Mooney is the Assistant Director for the Georgia Medicaid Fraud Division. He is one of eight attorneys staffed by the Unit and investigates both criminal and civil matters. He may be reached directly at (404) 656-5242 or via e-mail at jmooney@law.ga.gov.



GBI Reaches Final Phase of NIBRS Implementation

Crystal Lockhart | CJIS Analyst Supervisor | CJIS Operations Unit of GCIC

The Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) notified states that they have until January 2021 to transition their Uniform Crime Reporting (UCR) data submissions from summary-based to incident-based reporting. The Georgia Bureau of Investigation (GBI) has been working with an aggressive timeline to fully implement the Georgia National Incident-Based Reporting System (NIBRS) repository that is currently being used by our local agencies to report Family Violence and NIBRS data.

Georgia began accepting manual entry of Family Violence data into the NIBRS Portal in April 2018 and in September 2018, incident-based data could be entered. In addition, Georgia began accepting test data from agencies wishing to upload their Family Violence and/or NIBRS data via a system-to-system interface.

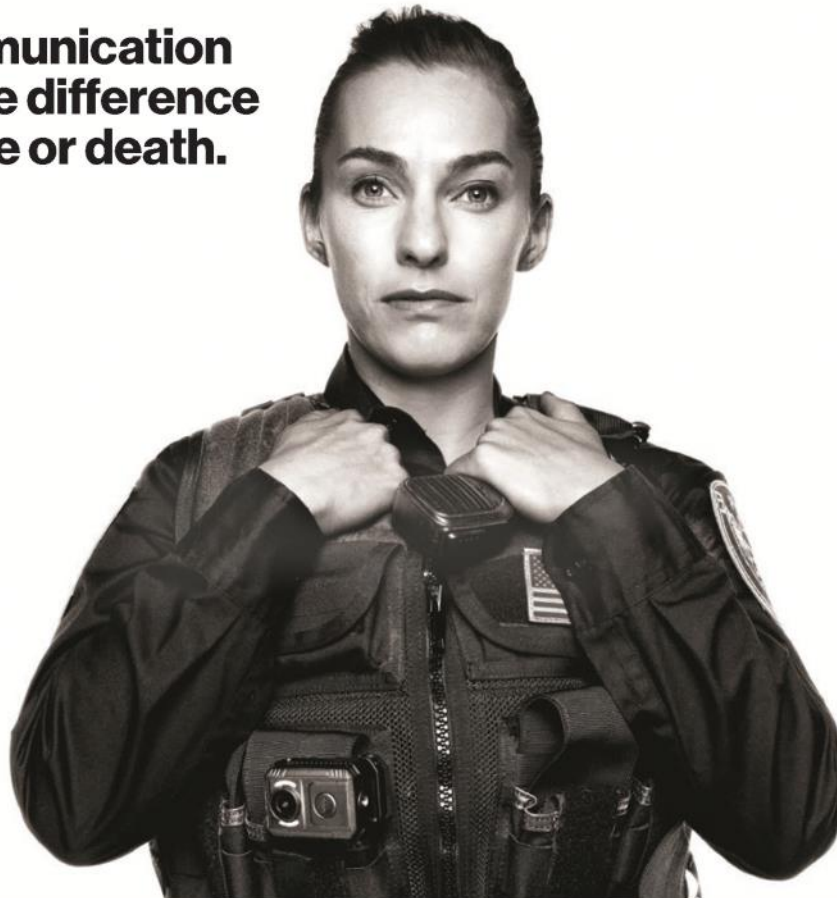
Currently, the GBI is in the final stage of transitioning from summary-based to incident-based submissions. The sunset date for summary-based submissions is October 6, 2019 and on October 7, 2019, agencies will be required to submit NIBRS data via the GBI's NIBRS portal. As noted previously there are two submission methods available – manually enter NIBRS data or system upload. If an agency opts for the system upload, GBI will be able to receive NIBRS data in two formats – flat file or eXtensible Markup Language (XML).



Agencies having questions regarding NIBRS can contact Crystal Lockhart directly at 404-270-8459 or Crystal.Lockhart@gbi.ga.gov

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**Annemarie Ferris
Police Officer**



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ONE MIND CAMPAIGN

Louis M. Dekmar
Immediate Past-President, IACP | Chief of Police, LaGrange, Georgia

Law enforcement works with individuals coming from all walks of life. Many of these community members are affected by substance abuse, homelessness, or mental illness. In fact, ten percent of police calls involve a person with a mental illness and police officers encounter mental health crises on a routine basis. To better understand the toll this takes on both the community and officers, it is important to discuss the history behind this issue.

In 1960, the United States was a country with a population of 150 million and had 600,000 treatment beds for those affected by mental illness. Today, the United States has a population of 330 million, and less than 60,000 beds are available in treatment facilities. This drastic change in availability for mental illness treatment began to occur in 1955 when a massive deinstitutionalization movement began that transferred severely mentally ill people out of large-scale institutions. The belief at the time was that these institutions were inhumane to the mentally ill, and that the use of new antipsychotic drugs would be an effective alternative to hospitals. However, these good intentions contributed to a mental health crisis, since many who were deinstitutionalized were left without access to medication or rehabilitation support services needed to live successfully in the community.

Today, the effects of deinstitutionalization are still with us. The largest providers of mental health services in the United States are our prisons and jails. In fact, the three largest facilities in the United States that treat mental illness are New York City's Ryker's Island Jail, the Cook County Jail in Chicago, and the Los Angeles County Jail.

The lack of mental health treatment options for those effected by mental illness, is a societal failure that impacts us all. We continue to inflict harm on individuals who are affected by mental illness because of lack of community-based services and in-patient resources. The use of force challenges faced by the police in handling those affected by mentally illness is a direct result of this failed public policy.

Approximately 25 percent of persons killed by police in the United States were affected by mental illness, and the situations that confront the police in the United States are repeated throughout the world. To address this crisis, the International Association of Chiefs of Police has taken a stance to promote successful interactions between police officers and persons affected by mental illness through *the One Mind Campaign*.

The One Mind Campaign was designed to be simple and achievable, in order to bring about positive change. To join the campaign, law enforcement agencies must pledge to implement four promising practices over a 12-36-month time frame. To participate, an agency goes online to the website for the One Mind Campaign (iacp.org/onemindcampaign) and fills out a brief application form. Once

submitted, IACP staff reaches out to the agency to offers assistance in locating resources as the agency works toward completing the pledge.

The four components of the pledge include: establishing a clearly defined and sustainable partnership with a community mental health organization, developing a model policy to implement police response to persons affected by mental illness, training and certifying sworn officers and selected non-sworn staff in mental health first aid training or other equivalent mental health awareness course, and providing crisis intervention team training. The first component is to establish a clearly defined and sustainable partnership with one or more community mental health organizations. These organizations provide the invaluable assistance of advocates, as well as insight into the local resources that are available. The next component to the pledge is to develop and implement a model policy addressing police response to persons affected by mental illness. If an agency does not have a model policy in place, the One Mind Campaign website provides a variety of resources and best practices that can assist in this process. The remaining two components of the pledge involve training of the officers, as they are often the first responders to a mental health crisis. The first of these two components includes training and certifying 100% of an agency's sworn officers (and selected non-sworn staff, such as dispatchers) in Mental Health First Aid. Mental Health First Aid classes may not be regionally available to all pledged agencies and the IACP will consider alternatives to this eight-hour class on a case by case basis. Finally, the last component of the pledge is to provide Crisis Intervention Team training to a minimum of 20% of the agency's sworn officers (and selected non-sworn staff, such as dispatchers).

The goal of the pledge is to unite local communities, public safety organizations, and mental health organizations so that the three become "of one mind" and start working together, instead of independently of each other. A long-term goal of the pledge is to have these stakeholders collaborate to reduce incidents of use of force between the police and those affected by mental illness.

50 Georgia agencies are currently participating in the One Mind Campaign, with six departments having successfully completed the pledge. There is also an international presence within the One Mind Campaign, with the Casablanca Police, Morocco; Vancouver PD, Canada; Ontario Provincial Police, Canada; and the Virgin Islands Police having taken the pledge. Currently, a total of 509 agencies are participating in the One Mind Campaign. The involvement of these agencies cumulatively affects the training of approximately 100,000 officers. The campaign continues to grow and continually receives new confirmations of pledge completion. To date, over 60 agencies have been recognized for completing the pledge.

If your agency is not already participating in the One Mind Campaign, I encourage you to sign up. From major cities to small towns and villages around the world, social and public health challenges, by default, have become police matters. A healthy community requires hard work and a concerted effort by all stakeholders—governing bodies; medical partners; faith communities; community and nonprofit groups; and, of course, law enforcement. Without all these parties working together to address homelessness, provide substance abuse treatment, and assist community members with mental illness, the goal of a healthy, flourishing community will not be obtained.

Erica Hoffman, 'Police Need More Mental Health Training', Mental Health First Aid, 22 February 2018, <https://www.mentalhealthfirstaid.org/2018/02/police-need-mental-health-training/>



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Chief Louis Dekmar to represent GACP - Georgia Behavioral Health Reform and Innovation Commission

On September 25, 2019, LaGrange Police Chief Lou Dekmar was sworn in by Governor Brian P. Kemp to represent the Georgia police chiefs on the Georgia Behavioral Health Reform and Innovation Commission. Mental health issues impact persons throughout our State regardless of their age and background. Law enforcement officers are frequently called upon to deal with mental health consumers in crisis. Earlier this year the legislature formed the Commission to study the impact of behavioral health issues, barriers to treatment, need for aftercare for persons exiting the criminal justice system and the availability of behavioral health services and facilities. This commission is composed of 21 individuals representing legislators, subject matter experts, and citizens to examine how the state can improve access and delivery of behavioral health services in Georgia. The Georgia Association of Chiefs of Police strongly support the Governor, Lieutenant Governor, and Legislature's efforts enhance the mental health services to some of our most vulnerable citizens and look forward to the Commission's recommendations.



Chief Louis Dekmar &
Governor Brian Kemp
ATLANTA, GA

HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE



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Swearing In
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SUMMER CONFERENCE



Chief Janet Moon
Peachtree City
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Award of Excellence



HIGHLIGHTS

Chief Calvin Moss of Woodstock Police Department Received the Outstanding Chief of the Year Award.



GACP General Counsel Michael Caldwell awarded Honorary Life Membership



HIGHLIGHTS (CONTINUED)



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Police Chiefs Testify on Gang Violence & Prevention

With more than 70,000 documented gang members, nearly every county in Georgia has issues with gang violence. Governor Brian P. Kemp has made targeting gang activity and violence a priority of his administration. Georgia's gang law is considered one of the best in the nation. To improve law enforcement and prosecutors' ability to successfully arrest and convict offenders GBI Director Vic Reynolds has proposed several initiatives to include: standing up the State's gang database, increasing the GBI's Gang Task Force, and expanding the venue for the street crimes act to be similar to the RICO act.

The House Study Committee on Gang Violence and Prevention has been meeting around the State to learn of the severity of the issue, how best to enforce the state's gang law, and approaches to prevent gang violence. Savannah Police Chief Roy Minter and Albany Police Chief Michael J. Persley testified before the committee at the September 25th meeting in Augusta. Chief Minter provided statistics of the known gang members in the Savannah, related crime rates, and successful prosecutions as well as difficulties they encounter with these investigations. Chief Minter also highlighted their "PIER" (Prevention, Intervention, Enforcement and Re-Entry) Program and other initiatives that are having success in reducing gang activity.





Chief Persley spoke of young children in elementary school being recruited into the gangs. Placing young gang members in Juvenile Justice and Department of Corrections facilities often gives them increased 'status' and rank in the gang. Enforcement is a critical component of this strategy. But, "we cannot arrest our way out of this problem" Persley told the committee. As soon as we arrest one person, another will assume their position.

To build true relationships between the police and the community to resolve these issues, we will need to do more than cook hot dogs, hamburgers and simply get out of cars. Persley went on to describe how law enforcement agencies in Georgia are working to acknowledge and address historical harms that have affected the relationships between law enforcement and minority communities. Only then can we develop the trust that will be the foundation for building relationships with the community and addressing these critical issues.

The next committee meeting will be in LaGrange on Thursday, October 17, 2019.



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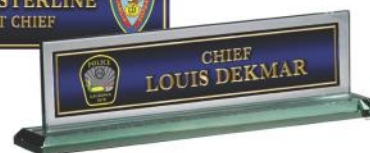
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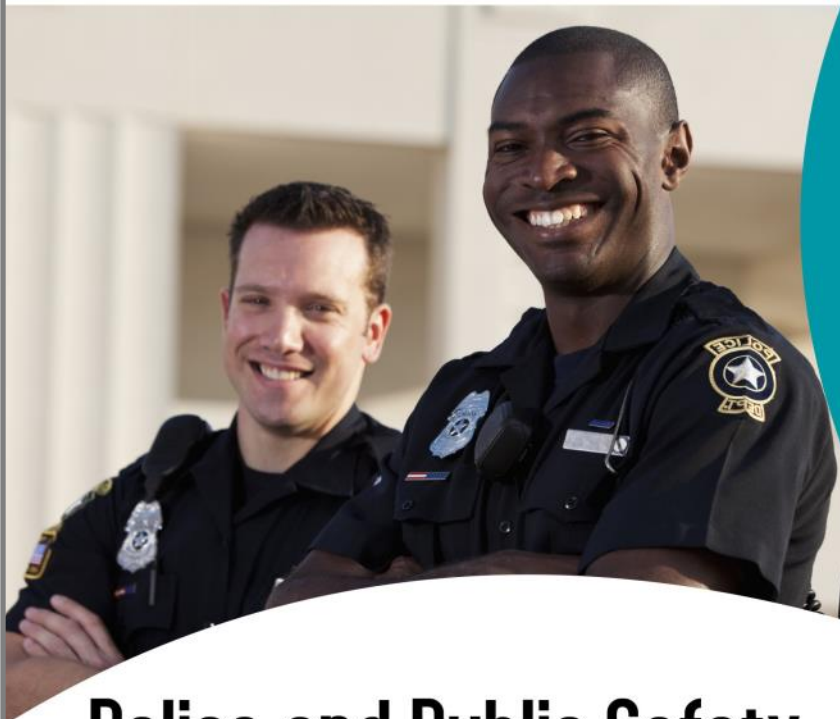


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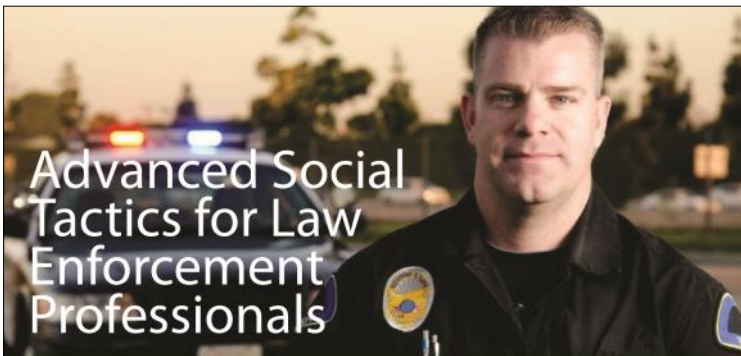
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