

REVISED DRAFT

The Village of Millerton Police Department Reform and Revitalization Plan Millerton, NY 12546

On June 12, 2020, the Governor issued Executive Order No. 203: New York State Police Reform and Reinvention Collaborative mandating a process by which local law enforcement agencies must adopt a plan to develop practices to better address the needs of communities of color, promote public safety, improved community engagement and foster trust.

On June 16, 2020, the Executive Branch of the US Government issued an Executive Order on Safe Policing for Safe Communities.

In response to these Executive Orders and more crucially, the tragedies occurring through-out our nation and to help guide the process, Dutchess County, in conjunction with the Dutchess County Sheriff's Office, brought together groups from across Dutchess County to collaborate on this issue. The Village of Millerton Police Department participated in the collaborative. The Village of Millerton participated in community forums held by the County.

The Village of Millerton held a public listening meeting on Monday, February 8, 2021 to solicit input from the community to assist in the preparation of the reform policy.

Our Community:

The community served by the Village of Millerton Police Department is comprised of the Village of Millerton and the Town of North East located in the northeastern corner of Dutchess County. The combined community covers approximately forty-four (44) square miles of land and includes approximately eighty-five (85) miles of road which includes Village, Town, County and State roads and is home to a combined Village of Millerton and Town of North East population of approximately 3,800 individuals. As of the 2020 census, approximately 75 percent are White, 19 percent are Hispanic and 3 percent are African-American.

Village of Millerton Police Department:

The Village of Millerton Police Department is a small, part time force comprised of nine (9) part time officers. While the force provides year-round service to the residents of the Village of Millerton and the Town of North East, they are not able to provide 24/7 coverage. Anyone in need of emergency assistance should dial 911. The call will be dispatched to the closest available unit whether that be the Millerton Police Department, the Dutchess County Sheriff's Department or the New York State Police force. Since Millerton's Police Department is a part-time force, back-up service is provided by both the Dutchess County Sheriff's Department and the New York State Police for non-covered hours. Generally, there is one officer on at a time doing vehicle, foot and bicycle patrols. The officers are currently equipped with body cameras and the vehicles are equipped with dash cameras.

Mission Statement:

The mission of the Village of Millerton Police Department is to provide professional, pro-active, community-oriented policing with a focus on integrity and service. The Department strives to work hand in hand with the community to enhance trust, promote safety, preserve peace, reduce fear of crime and maintain order while protecting individual rights. A further goal of the Department is to provide for public safety, law and order with fairness and transparency to all citizens and visitors to the community.

Recruiting a Diverse Workforce:

The Village of Millerton Police Department will strive to recruit and hire well-qualified candidates to perform the many tasks associated with community based law enforcement. In doing so all local, state and federal laws and regulations will be complied with fully. The preliminary methods of recruitment for the position of Police Officer within the Village of Millerton Police Department is through the Dutchess County Civil Service Commission and to accept applications for sponsorship from qualified candidates entering the New York State Police Academy. A background investigation is completed on all applicants.

Once hired, all Village of Millerton Officers are informed of and must abide by General Rules of Conduct.

All appointments will be on probation for a five-year period commencing with the date of appointment.

Training:

Officers must complete training through the New York State Police Academy prior to hiring. Annual training is done for Fire Arms, Use of Force, Bias and EMS (first aid).

Officers are schooled in the correct traffic stop procedures and are trained to identify themselves and state the reason for the stop.

Officers are trained to render first aid during traffic accidents before the arrival of Emergency Services.

Annual Officer evaluations will be added to the current policy.

Supporting Officers Wellness and Well-Being:

The Village of Millerton Police Department will investigate and evaluate programs to address the wellness and well-being of officers and consider implementing counseling programs for officers in need.

Use of Force:

It is the mission of the Village of Millerton Police Department to protect the people of the Village of Millerton and the Town of North East.

De-escalation of incidents is always to be the top priority. Force will only be used when the welfare of those involved is at stake and as a last resort.

New York State Law prohibits the use of a technique commonly referred to as the “choke hold.”

The Department is currently analyzing it’s Use of Force policy to update it with all new guidelines and changes to State law.

Accreditation:

The Village of Millerton Police Department is pursuing accreditation through the NY DCJS and began the process in 2020.

New York State Accreditation states a minimum of twenty-one hours of documented annual training per officer not limited to the following: De-escalation, Use of Force, Firearms, EMS, Bias Training, Procedural Justice, Situational Awareness.

The New York State program became operational in 1989 and encompasses four principle Goals:

1. To increase the effectiveness and efficiency of law enforcement agencies utilizing existing personnel, equipment and facilities to the extent possible;
2. To promote increased cooperation and coordination among law enforcement agencies and other agencies of the criminal justice services;
3. To ensure the appropriate training of law enforcement personnel; and
4. To promote public confidence in law enforcement agencies.

The Accreditation Program is a set of standards developed to further enhance the capabilities of an agency, and is divided into three categories:

1. Standards in the Administrative section have provisions for such topics as agency organization, fiscal management, personnel practices, and records management.
2. Training standards encompass basic and in-service instruction, as well as training for supervisors and specialized or technical assignments.
3. Operations standards deal with such critical and litigious topics as high-speed pursuits, roadblocks, patrol, and unusual occurrences.

New York State Accreditation from the NYS Division of Criminal Justice Services (DCJS) states that annually a minimum of twenty-one hours of documented annual training per officer is required annually and is not limited to the list below. Local Millerton Police Department (MPD) policy will follow entirely NYS and Dutchess County guidance regarding:

1. De-escalation of an on-site incident,
2. Potentially excessive Use of Force in an on-site incident,
3. Firearms Training; as to when a firearm should be used,

4. Following directives as to when EMS training should be used to save any life,
5. Fully incorporating NYS and Dutchess County guidance pertaining to Bias Training,
6. Fully incorporating NYS and Dutchess County guidance pertaining to Procedural Justice,
7. Fully incorporating NYS and Dutchess County guidance pertaining to Situational Awareness.

Transparency and Accountability:

The Village of Millerton Police Department provides a summary of all incidents at the end of each month and presents this report to both the Village Board of Trustees and the Town Council. Following presentation, this report is currently posted on the Village website but will now be posted on the Town of North East website as well. It is replaced each month with the most current report.

A joint Village of Millerton/Town of North East “Police Committee” was formed made up of members of the Village Board of Trustees and Town of North East Council. The Committee is charged with serving as a conduit between the community and the Police Department. The Committee will hear issues brought forth from the community as well as serve to assist the Police Department in a review of its policies and practices.

Contact information for the current members of the joint Village of Millerton/Town of North East Police Committee can be found on both the Village of Millerton and Town of North East websites and will be updated as necessary.

Community Outreach:

While the Village of Millerton Police Force is only a part time force, efforts will be made to pursue additional community outreach. The Officers currently spend time on the weekends in the village handing out masks and bike helmets. Additional visits to local merchants will be added to their schedule as well as additional foot and bicycle patrols as weather permits.

Once restrictions due to Covid are lifted, additional community outreach programs will be added such as a child car seat safety check.

Citizen Complaints:

It is the policy of the Village of Millerton Police Department that Officers shall courteously and promptly record in writing any complaint made by a citizen against any Officer or the Agency and forward the complaint to their supervisor.

Citizens may also directly file a complaint in writing by completing a “complaint form.” These forms are available at the office of the Village of Millerton and on the Village of Millerton website.

Written complaints will be acknowledged upon receipt and will be investigated promptly. The joint Village of Millerton/Town of North East Police Committee will be notified of complaints

upon receipt of the formal complaint form by the Village of Millerton Police Department Officer in Charge.

Once the investigation is completed, findings will be presented to the Village Board of Trustees and the joint Village of Millerton and Town of North East Police Committee.

Community Resources Available to the Public:

To aid the community in contacting the appropriate agency for assistance in time of need, a current list of resources with contact information will be made available on the Village of Millerton and Town of North East websites. Resources will be updated and added as they become available.

Future considerations:

Should an analysis be done of the monthly incident reports to ascertain the primary issues at hand?

Should hours be modified to increase police presence during daylight hours?