

WILLOW SPRINGS POLICE DEPARTMENT

VILLAGE OF WILLOW SPRINGS

COOK COUNTY, ILLINOIS

JOHN M. CARPINO
Mayor

JAMES D. RITZ
Chief of Police

To Our Residents and Community Partners:

Current events have placed many challenges all around us as a police department and as a community. Over the past few months we have been faced with protecting our communities from the COVID-19 pandemic, and the civil unrest and protests, and extreme violence which has occurred all around us. Rest assured, the priority of the Willow Springs Police Department is to keep our community and its visitor's safe during these turbulent times.

As a department, which I am very proud to be a part of, we are committed to maintaining the highest levels of policing principles, professionalism, and integrity to each of you. The recent death of George Floyd in Minneapolis has generated outrage and violence throughout many cities and communities.

Unfortunately, the actions of these couple of police officers has demonized police officers and our profession throughout the country along with causing so much senseless violence and political outcry to defund or even disband police departments. The anti-police uproar to defund police departments is one of the most foolish, thoughtless, and shortsighted approaches being promoted which will NEVER properly address and/or work to correct the current issues that this horrible incident has generated – especially in certain high crime areas and socioeconomic neighborhood environments. Ridiculous actions such as this would cause so much harm to so many innocent people and in-turn will have devastating consequences on our public safety mission.

These deplorable actions by the Minneapolis police officers, who were properly charged and held accountable for their actions, in NO way defines the 99 percent of police officers who are truly professional, upstanding and dedicated to serving the law enforcement profession. These are the devoted officers who perform in their positions so honorably every day while serving and protecting all individuals regardless of ones gender or race. Racism or discrimination is an unacceptable practice that has no place in our department, our profession, or in our society.

Back in November of 2018, our department signed on and embraced the 10 Shared Principles adopted by the Illinois Association of Chiefs of Police, which was designed to build trust between law enforcement and communities of color and to replace mistrust with trust. The message of the 10 Shared Principles centers on and includes; We value the life of every person and consider life to be the highest value; All persons are to be treated with dignity and respect as a foundational value; and also Rejecting discrimination towards any person based on age, race, ethnicity, religion, or color.

We are all facing some very critical and challenging times ahead of us. As these challenges present themselves, the Willow Springs Police Department will continue to exemplify the highest standards of ethical policing. We will continue to focus on and be totally committed to providing our police officers with the most updated policies and protocols, the highest levels of training, and supplying the necessary operational resources in order to deliver the best of services. Most importantly, we will continue to build on our strong community partnerships and being a trusted presence to everyone in the Willow Springs community.

With our support,

Jim Ritz

Chief of Police