



CITY OF
FORT LAUDERDALE
POLICE DEPARTMENT

July 4, 2020

INDEPENDENCE DAY
MESSAGE FROM
CHIEF RICK MAGLIONE

The events of the past month have been damaging to the relationships between law enforcement and the community and there is no better day to address it than today. Law enforcement as a whole has been unfairly vilified and it is putting your police officers in harm's way unjustly. There has been irresponsible reporting with haste being the priority, while accuracy and objectivity have taken a backseat. Police officers have become the victims of politics and on occasion, the victims of unprovoked violent attacks. These attacks, for some unknown reason, receive little attention. Police officers should be held accountable for their individual actions when due process has concluded we are at fault. However, we all need to understand the difference between mistakes and misconduct because they are nothing alike. Misconduct involves intent and requires discipline, and on occasion prosecution; the same as it applies to everyone in society. Mistakes require understanding, leniency, training, and an apology with an effort to do better moving forward.

The police are summoned when the problem is anticipated to escalate, or has already escalated, to the point that police involvement is necessary. Too often, the first matter law enforcement professionals must attend to is ensuring any violence or potential violence is addressed. On occasion, we are forced to meet violence with a slightly greater level of violence to restore order. When force is used it is never fun or pretty to witness, but it is sometimes necessary. It is a significant part of what we were trained to do. It is part of this profession that none of us enjoy, but we understand and accept that without the police, there would be lawlessness, pandemic victimization of the innocent and societal chaos.

To the Fort Lauderdale community and beyond, we thank you for your continued support. We try every day to be the heroes you expect us to be. Thank you for understanding that sometimes we use humor to cope with the stressors of the profession. Thank you for understanding we are human and inappropriate language is occasionally exchanged between colleagues just as it is in the meeting room, at the job site or around the water cooler at your places of employment. Police officers see things daily throughout their careers that no human being should have to see. It affects us, but we are committed to working through it. We also understand you are always looking for us to improve and we are.

As a resident of Broward County, I need the police and want to thank every law enforcement officer from my agency and every other agency for the sacrifices they make every day to keep us safe. Thank you for committing your life to a profession that has an average life expectancy of approximately 20 years less than the people you are sworn to protect. This includes people who attacked you as you were in your vehicles while you were trying to maintain a safe area for peaceful protestors who had an important message to be heard; a message we as law enforcement officers support wholeheartedly. This includes people who threw bricks and rocks at you. People who threw explosives at you. People who threw bottles of unidentified liquids at you. People who damaged and defaced property. People who tried their best to overshadow the spirit of that day with violence and anarchy.

You are my heroes and I will always stand proudly with you.

Yours in service,

Chief Rick Maglione

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