



**New Orleans Police Department (NOPD)
Ethical Policing Is Courageous (EPIC)
Peer Intervention Program**

Welcome and Introductions

New Orleans Police Department



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Agenda

- Program overview—What is EPIC?
- Peer intervention strategies
- Starting your peer intervention program



Peer Intervention Program



What Is EPIC?

EPIC

EPIC is the New Orleans Police Department's groundbreaking Peer Intervention training program designed by the NOPD for the NOPD.

The program is heavily based in the science of active bystandership and peer intervention with built-in procedural incentives for every member of the Department.

EPIC capitalizes on our numbers; all members of the NOPD serve as the first line of defense in preventing mistakes and misconduct, promoting mental health, and fostering a professional work environment.

EPIC

Authorizes and empowers us to intervene in another officer's actions, regardless of his or her rank.

Teaches us how to intervene successfully.

Protects us when we do intervene.

New Orleans Police Department



EPIC brings the science of intervention strategies to the NOPD at every level.

EPIC
IS ABOUT

Officer wellness.

Officer safety and tactics.

Preventing misconduct and complaints.

Relying upon best practices in a demanding profession.

Utilizing our entire force to take an active role in the lives of our coworkers.



EPIC
IS NOT

Internal Affairs program

Discipline program

Mediation program

“Tell on your partner” program

EPIC was designed specifically to avoid these scenarios.



Foundations of EPIC

- EPIC is founded on the principle that good police officers want to do the right thing, but even officers with the best intentions sometimes lack the tools and moral courage to intervene effectively, safely, and without repercussion, when faced with potential police misconduct.
- Most officers, at some point in their career, will find themselves caught between two very unsatisfactory choices, or simply frustrated to the point of making a bad decision.

EPIC is a program for most of us who are neither saints nor villains.



EPIC Is Based on Social Science

- Active bystandership is contagious.
- Once an active bystander steps in, others quickly follow suit.
- Bystanders have enormous potential influence.
- It is hard to resist an outspoken coworker who is intent on doing the right thing.
- Countless international atrocities taught us how passive bystanders can actually empower and encourage wrongdoers.



Passive vs. Active Bystandership

➤ Community Perceptions

- The community understands that we as police officers make mistakes.
- Noncritical loyalty, passive bystandership, and cover-ups shift the public perception from a mistake by one officer into corruption by several officers.

Loyalty and Community Perception



Modern Policing Is a Profession, Not Just a Job



Humans Are Terrible at Estimating Risks ...

- We train relentlessly and appropriately for our personal safety in a dangerous job.
- The nature of police work carries with it substantial legal, psychological, and other systemic risks—do we train appropriately for these risks as well?
- On average, officers are more likely to die by suicide than to be shot by an armed perpetrator.
- All officers will be confronted in policing with significant ethical, emotional, and procedural dilemmas.



Led by Police Officers of All Ranks



EPIC instructors are internal leaders of all ranks.

Support From the Command Staff



Support for peer intervention must come from the top of the organizational structure.

Being an EPIC Leader

- Use our roll calls and staff meetings as opportunities to improve communication among coworkers.
- Explicitly express disapproval of criminal behavior, unethical behavior, and misconduct.
- Leave no room for misunderstandings about what behavior we are willing to tolerate from those around us.
- Actively promote intervention and discourage passivity.



YOUR experience is the most valuable asset to your police department.



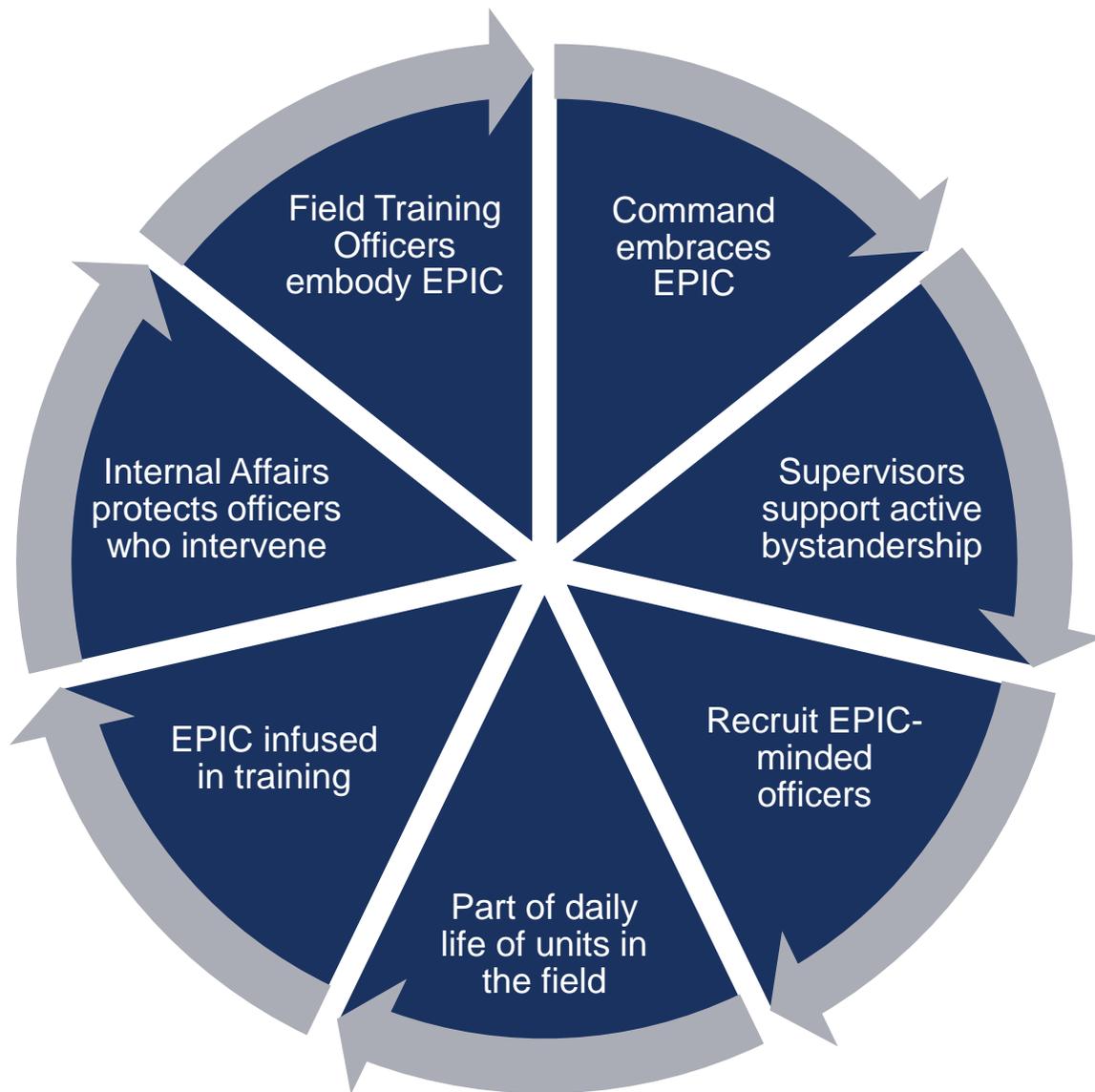
Being an EPIC Leader

- Take advantage of “teachable moments” and the vicarious learning of new officers.
- Rookies should carefully watch and learn from veterans.
- Demonstrate professionalism, safety, and de-escalation to new officers.
- Continually ask ourselves: **IS THIS A JOB OR A PROFESSION?**



YOUR experience is the most valuable asset to your police department.





EPIC Must Be Incorporated Across the Entire Department



Peer Intervention Strategies



We Intervene When ...

- We see an officer violating a policy or about to violate a policy or law.
- We see an officer doing something or about to do something that would discredit himself or herself, the department, or **OUR profession**.
- We see signs/symptoms of job stress or stress at home, depression, or drug/alcohol abuse in a coworker.
- We see an encounter between an officer and a citizen that is likely to end badly (hostile or escalating behavior, unprofessional conduct, etc.).
- We see unsafe behavior and/or bad tactics by an officer (e.g., not waiting for backup).
- We see an officer cutting corners that could jeopardize an investigation, safety, or public confidence.



We Intervene by ...

- Recognizing the need for an intervention and assessing the urgency.
 - Is the issue minor? Serious?
 - Can an intervention wait, or is it an emergency?
- Acting rather than watching; being an active bystander.
 - Do NOT wait for misconduct to occur or get worse.
 - Do NOT ignore the “elephant in the room.”
 - Be vigilant and proactive in our coworkers’ lives and behavior.



Reporting and Mitigation

- NOPD policy has always required officers to report misconduct they observe. EPIC does not change that policy.
- EPIC was designed to help PREVENT incidents that would require reporting and discipline.
- Where an officer encounters misconduct and intervenes, and the violating officer ACCEPTS the intervention (i.e., stops the behavior), the intervention will constitute a formal mitigating factor in any discipline.
- The NOPD supports EPIC and strictly prohibits retaliation, transfers, or other consequences for intervening to protect a coworker.



Starting Your Peer Intervention Program



Components of a Successful Program

- Understand the science of active bystandership.
- Teach strategies for a successful intervention.
- Use role playing.
- Use videos from real experiences—from your agency, if possible.
- Leadership must embrace and support peer intervention.



Building Buy-in

- Involve officers across all ranks who serve as informal leaders/influencers in their units.
- Encourage officers who attend training to be champions for EPIC in their units.
- Infuse EPIC throughout every facet of your Department. Incorporate EPIC into all appropriate training and communications and continuously reinforce EPIC principles.



Only Eight Hours of Training

- Trains officers and supervisors to identify danger signs.
- Equips officers with the skills they need to intervene before problems occur/escalate, and to do so safely.
- Supports and protects officers who do the right thing.
- Provides officers with resources to help them make ethical decisions.

“All that is necessary for evil to prevail is for good men [and women] to do nothing.”

~ Edmund Burke ~

Contact Us



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Facebook/NOPDOfficial

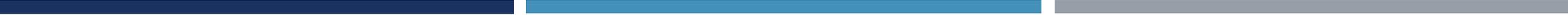


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Visit our website at epic.nola.gov to download all course materials and to access additional resources.

Questions and Discussion

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National **Public Safety**
PARTNERSHIP

Thank You!