Mayor Ballard Announces Internal IMPD Reforms

INDIANAPOLIS – Mayor Greg Ballard today announced reforms aimed at strengthening accountability and restoring public trust in the Indianapolis Metropolitan Police Department.

“When I took the oath of office as your mayor, I pledged to make public safety job one. For public safety to be job one, we must have the confidence of the public,” Mayor Ballard said. “It is clear—loud and clear—this trust has been badly shaken by recent events. I am committed to restoring your trust in IMPD. I do not tolerate police misconduct, the use of excessive force, or corruption. I will dismiss those officers and commanders who do not share my priorities and concerns.”

Mayor Ballard announced the following reforms:

- At the scene of vehicle accidents involving a police officer that result in bodily injury or property damage, breathalyzers will be administered to the officer involved.
- Purchase of alcohol in uniform is prohibited. While officers are prohibited from purchasing alcohol in uniform now, the current policy is being amended to ban them from transporting alcohol in police vehicles, marked or unmarked.
- No alcohol consumption permitted within eight hours of the beginning of a shift. A Department of Public Safety (DPS)-wide zero tolerance policy for alcohol in an officer’s system will be adopted.
- It will be the stated duty of every officer to report suspected substance abuse or other conditions that could endanger the public or impair an officer’s ability to do the job.
- DPS will make a renewed commitment to make every officer aware of help available to them to deal with stress and substance abuse. Should current resources be found inadequate after an internal review process, new programs will be implemented.

Ongoing reforms include establishment of a professional standards division within DPS to aggressively root out misconduct and criminal behavior and to ensure objectivity and fairness in reviews of all criminal or administrative complaints. This division will develop an early warning tool to identify employees who are in need of special attention to prevent misconduct from occurring. Working with the Police Executive Research Forum, DPS will revise IMPD’s general
orders beginning with the most critical and sensitive police practices, such as search and seizure, use of force, pursuits, police-action shootings, and accidents. Additionally, a civilian has been hired to lead IMPD training to ensure the training meets our city’s challenges.

“We are reforming IMPD in a deliberate and thoughtful manner,” Mayor Ballard said. “In addition to the reforms that are currently under way, my administration continues to implement reforms to root out misconduct, excessive use of force and corruption.”

Reforms instituted during the course of this administration include:

- Upgrades to use computerized statistics and crime maps to hold every commander accountable for the crime occurring in their districts.
- Introduction of procedures for collecting and inventorying contraband and money to prevent mishandling of evidence.
- Creation of the career and leadership development program to strengthen IMPD’s recruiting, employee evaluations, supervisory appraisals, and career planning.
- Establishment of the youth-police initiative to improve the relationship between our young people and our police officers.
- Deployment of 135 police officers and detectives to crime hot spots in the east, north and northwest districts.

As a result of these reforms, the uptick in homicides has been reversed and crime reductions have been achieved in each district. Specifically, this June, July, and August, Indianapolis saw the lowest number of homicides in the past 20 years. Rapes, robberies, and residential burglaries are down significantly. Violent crime overall is down more than 13 percent.

Mayor Ballard welcomes input from the public and pledged today to work with anyone offering constructive ideas.

“We are taking decisive action to reform IMPD, to restore public confidence in our police force, and to continue our fight against crime. We cannot have a strong Indianapolis without a strong police force,” Mayor Ballard said. “Protecting you, your neighbors, and your families is the highest responsibility I bear as your mayor. I accept this responsibility, and I am committed to restoring the public’s trust in our officers and reforming this department.”

###