Police Safety

[Name of the Writer]

[Name of the Institution]

Police Safety

**Introduction**

The police department has experienced several economic challenges which resulted in a major transformation in the way they deliver services. Reduction of the budget for the police department has resulted in a decrease in resources required for police safety. Focusing on police officer's wellness, safety, and health. Fostering an environment of safe working and protecting police officer's safety can be described into four categories which include management and leadership, emergency and operational responses, training, physical and mental health wellness. This report focuses on the strategies to support and preserve the safety of police officers.

**Discussion**

**Leadership and Management**

Leadership and Management are considered to be the most significant element for ensuring police health, safety, and wellness as an organizational practice and values.

Management should ensure that officers are provided with excellent procedures, policies, and opportunities for training, or polishing their abilities and skills. Resources should also be provided to make safety a priority for any organization. As, agencies do not send a cruiser out with inoperable lights, sirens, or low tire pressure for any mission similarly, they should not send their police officer into the field who is not fit, overly stressed or tired. Maintaining optimum wellbeing and health for police officers is critical for enabling them to perform and think in a way that safeguards their fellow officers with them also. Numerous training and services should be available which encourage mental, nutritional and physical health. The support and accessibility without shame or retribution will optimize the well-being of officers and also help for ensuring peak performance (Cordner, 2016).

Accountability is one of the most critical factors in upholding the best wellness and safety practices. Constant compliance of the equipment should check deployment of proper weapons which can help in minimizing the fatalities and injuries of police officers. Similarly, enforcing and monitoring compliance can set the tone for meeting high, expectations, standards, and practices which also help in ensuring the police officer safety.

Some effective examples of tangible strategies for management and leadership in police safety are as follow:

• Utilizing state-of-the-art and real-time communication for field officers.

• Implementing and Reviewing deployment strategies which minimize the risks of safety.

• Enforcing the protective body gear and armor.

While implementing and developing schedules of development, many factors should be considered including many officers allocated in a high crime rate area, the physical distance between different units for providing timely backup, and avoidance of conditions which contribute to the deprivation of sleep. Sleep deprivation is considered to be a major concern, and its effects from secondary and overtime employment must also be considered in schedules of deployment. According to recent research, the deprivation of the sleep contributes to the irritability of the police officers with the public and also become incapable of maintaining calm in situations due to lack of attentiveness. Sleep deprivation can cause fatigue which can reduce the ability to deal with stress.

There are some other factors which can contribute to the causes of fatigue including shifts length more than twelve hours, shift assignment policies, and long commuting distances.

Utilization of modern technology and effective safety gear such as advanced weaponry and body armor should be implemented as it can enhance the safety of the street. Hence it is worth budgeting for advanced technology which can increase the capacity of the officer to remain safe like access to data of real-time, criminal records of multi-jurisdiction while in the field. Moreover, the police department can enhance their safety by capitalizing on modern technology through improving cruiser's reflective markings and installing more effective and new mechanisms of seatbelt which can clear the belt of officer and gun hostler as a result of which safety of driver can be improved. Some other technological advancement such as attachment of cameras on the body should also be implemented which can record every incident and can help in providing appropriate measures of safety for handling any type of situations. Implementation of Electronic Control Weapons is also necessary for controlling the situations which need less than lethal force. Guidelines for using these weapons should also be conveyed to the police officers which suggests training procedures and policies for improving the civilian and officer safety (Flynn & Herrington, 2015).

**Emergency and Operational Responses**

Mostly bad incidents do happen when a police officer might least expect it, and this unpredictability highlights the safety risk of a police officer. So, it is also necessary to implement some proactive measures which are worthy of its resources and time. For developing and implementing these risk mitigation procedures, plans and policies the only cost which would be required is considered to be time.

In order to review the vehicle pursuits, several areas should be considered including reporting procedures, types of pursuits, injuries, deaths, policies, litigations, and procedures.

Some alternative methods should also be kept in mind while slowing down the vehicle of the suspect which should be evaluated for procedures of safety development.

Foot pursuits have become the cause of several injuries of police officers so, understanding the foot pursuits risks are imperative for the public and backup officer and also for pursuing officer safety (Mumfor, Taylor, & Kubu, 2015).

**Training**

Training is much important for in order to make sure that police officers understand the contributing risk factors which can lead to a severe injury or even loss of life due to a foot pursuit. Some risk factors include chasing criminals in unfamiliar areas, acting alone, pursuing multiple suspects, and compelling actions without any sufficient backup, physical unfitness of the officers, lack of communication, and running in the darkness of poor weather should be prevented. Vehicle and foot procedures and policies should also be reviewed for making it up-to-date to mitigate the risk factors. Another critical area which should be considered in police safety is court security. The understanding of vulnerabilities in prisoner transportation and court security is crucial for ensuring deputy safety of court security officer and civil courts. This can help in enhancing the court security for mitigating bomb threats, terrorist threat, attack in courtrooms, and high-risk trials.

Task force operations could also be used for addressing high incident based activity of criminal such as sex or weapons trafficking and drugs. It is not possible to completely prevent the outcomes of such situations, but the further analysis can assist the field determining the circumstances and understand what can be learned from such tactical operations. Training is another important fundamental factor for the safety of police officers and should be the primary investment developed by an organization. The police department should have dedicated hours for advanced or additional training which can help them in enhancing their knowledge, mitigating mistakes or risk and also help in polishing abilities, knowledge, and duty-specific skills. Tactical training can also help the police officers for keeping honing skills like operating lethal weapons, handling violent encounters and driving.

Training of the driving keeps the police officers well informed of efficient practices and also executing such techniques in separate scenarios of training through learning classroom by using computer-based simulators, simulators, and range driving. Violent encounters are another threat for the police officers but the implementation of practicing technique and constant training which prepares police officers for emergency conditions. Another benefit of training is that it can reduce the number of injuries which can help in decreasing the cost. The increasing number of injuries can also result in the downtown of officer due to strains and sprains. The training program should be implemented for addressing injuries which are caused by stooping, bending, twisting, pulling, and pushing. Ensure that all the officers are physically fit and know each and every safety precaution whenever they are engaged in any training session (Smykla, et, al., 2016).

**Physical and Mental Health Wellness**

Maintaining physical and mental health, encouraging healthy sleeping patterns or healthy eating habits, and supporting mental and physical well-being are significant for the wellness of police officer. Physical and mental health incorporates proper nutrition and regular exercise. So, the fitness level of a police officer should be maintained which can help them to protect not only themselves but also their fellow police officers while working. Adverse conditions of physical health due to non-maintenance which can cause obesity, gastrointestinal disorders, type 2 diabetes, cardiovascular disease, sleep apnea, and other disorders of sleep. So, it is essential to establish a standard, and accountability of police officer for the wellness of the police department. Proper diet and exercise can play an important role in maintaining the high-performance of police officers and can also increase the efficiency of mental alertness. Each officer should spend at least two thousand calories per week through any physical activity which can reduce the risk of an individual for suffering from any harmful disease.

Mental well-being of a police officer is also significant to consider, particularly when he suffers from a disorder of post-traumatic stress or severe depression which can even result in suicide. So, recognizing the events, signs, and triggers which cause disorder of post-traumatic stress can assist the police department to support and guide police officers in seeking the essential assistance. Another treatment which can be highly effective is Eye Movement Desensitization, and Reprocessing should be considered. Moreover, psychological services should also be made available for the police officers by encouraging them to access such services (Ma, et, al., 2015).

Emotional Intelligence can also be used for making the police officer be aware of self-confidence, and self-emotions. It can assist a person not only in his personal competencies like self-control and self-awareness but also teach them how to manage situations and interpret through them effectively. As EI is not only about becoming detached emotionally but also to become emotionally confident and mature. So every officer should be aware of emotional triggers which can instigate a harsh response. They should learn learning tactics for managing their mental state during any critical situation like a dangerous police chase. Hence maintaining the health of police officer is the primary target for enhancing the safety of police (Watson, et, al., 2014).

**Conclusion**

So, it is concluded that senior management of the police department should refocus their attention on the safety, wellness, and health of police officer and also to identify best practices for their protection. In the period of economic uncertainty, police have more demand than ever for performing in such a complex environment where the society expects a high level of services despite the reducing number of police officers and funds for operation. In order to maintain the safety of the police, every police officer should be able to perform and think with accuracy and ease. So, it is also necessary to find ways of gaining ongoing development for the preservation of officer wellness. The starting point for describing the best practices, available resources, and complexities in police safety can be accomplished by management and leadership, procedures and policies, healthy lifestyles and training. In order to adopt the changes suggested in this report, the attitude of the community policing will also have to change. However, such transformation will have to get from both outsides and within of police force which will not be an easy task.

**References**

Cordner, G. W. (2016). *Police administration*. Routledge.

Flynn, E. A., & Herrington, V. (2015). *Toward a profession of police leadership* (pp. 1-18). Laurel, MD: US Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs, National Institute of Justice.

Ma, C. C., Andrew, M. E., Fekedulegn, D., Gu, J. K., Hartley, T. A., Charles, L. E., ... & Burchfiel, C. M. (2015). Shift work and occupational stress in police officers. *Safety and health at work*, *6*(1), 25-29.

Mumford, E. A., Taylor, B. G., & Kubu, B. (2015). Law enforcement officer safety and wellness. *Police Quarterly*, *18*(2), 111-133.

Smykla, J. O., Crow, M. S., Crichlow, V. J., & Snyder, J. A. (2016). Police body-worn cameras: Perceptions of law enforcement leadership. *American journal of criminal justice*, *41*(3), 424-443.

Watson, A. C., Swartz, J., Bohrman, C., Kriegel, L. S., & Draine, J. (2014). Understanding how police officers think about mental/emotional disturbance calls. *International journal of law and psychiatry*, *37*(4), 351-358.