

# PREPPING YOUR OFFICER FOR TRIAL POST GEORGE FLOYD



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# Resources

This presentation is based on a collection of interviews with colleagues, defense attorneys, police officers, and a collection of news articles and national surveys.

Preparation strategies

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Practical tips during trial

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Pitfalls to avoid

# What's changed?

Although, majority of Americans do not support defunding the police their confidence in law enforcement is dropping.





# Defund the Police Movement

- 34% of Americans back the movement
- 39% of Americans support reallocating funds to public health and social programs
- Americans overall approval of law enforcement is at 48%; which is a 5% drop from last year

**There is no  
such thing  
as being too  
prepared**

## Read and Review Everything

- Everything is important
- Do not rely on your officer to tell you what happened
- You cannot prepare them for things that you do not know about

**Read the reports  
and watch the  
videos**

**Visit the location**

**Interview other  
Officers mentioned  
in the reports or that  
you can identify from  
the videos**

**Look for any bias  
treatment or  
abnormal activity**

**It's better to  
fall on your  
sword than  
into enemy  
hands**

Take ownership of the "bad stuff"

- Point out things that may come across as negative
- NEVER ask them to apologize
- If possible help them see how their actions were necessary for officer safety or related to the Departments SOGs and/or policies

**Do not allow your  
Officers to sit next  
to you at the  
Prosecution table**

**Encourage your  
Officers to treat  
you and opposing  
counsel the same**

**Teach your Officers the  
art of saying "I don't  
know"**

**Your Officers  
should be providing  
unbiased testimony**



Isn't it weird  
that  
everything  
sounds better  
in English

Code switching is not just for the  
office

- "Cop Jargon" does not translate well to the jury\*
- Sometimes Officers are not aware when they do it
- The goal is for your Officers to sound relaxed and professional

**"I activated my emergency equipment."**

**"I proceeded northbound."**

**"I exited my patrol vehicle."**

**"I identified the suspect, the defendant, by his state issued driver's licenses"**

**Technology is  
your friend,  
and time is  
your enemy.**



**Send an email prior to meeting with your  
Officer**

- Include the case number and summary of the case
- Attach reports and let them know if you plan to use the video
- Give them an overview of what you plan to discuss in your meeting

# Quick Tips

It's always good to send out refreshers and reminders prior to trial.

Speak clearly

Tell the truth

Address your answers to the jury

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Remain professional

Do not argue your point

Do not lose your temper

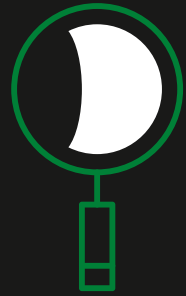
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Listen to the question that is being asked

Do not be in a rush to answer

Do not volunteer additional information

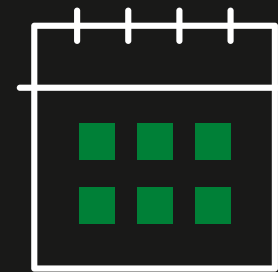
# The Bottomline



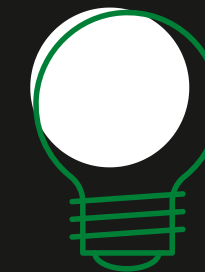
Avoid surprises by reading and reviewing everything relevant to case.



Communicate your concerns with to the officer prior to the meeting so they can be prepared.



Schedule a time to meet with the officer prior to trial.



Make sure the officer is aware of the questions you're going to ask and what to expect from opposing counsel.



End the meeting with a mutual understanding of what you expect to gain from their testimony.

# Thank you for listening!

Feel free to send in any questions  
to [sharae.reed@beaumonttexas.gov](mailto:sharae.reed@beaumonttexas.gov).

I have been a Municipal lawyers for over 10 years with a primary focus on 1983 claims and litigation. This presentation was based largely on my experience and things that have proven to be successful for me.