

To: All employees of the University of West Florida Police Department

From: Chief Marc Cossich

Date: June 2, 2020

RE: Incident involving George Floyd

I wanted to address the tragic murder of George Floyd that occurred in Minneapolis Minnesota.

In the video you can hear Mr. Floyd repeatedly calls for help. We hear him say many times that he cannot breathe.

This video is upsetting, disappointing, and infuriating. It does not show the policing we at UWF know. Policing is an honorable profession with honorable public servants. We are committed to protecting life and serving our community.

I have confidence that something like this would not occur at this University; because of the UWF Police Department's high level of training, or commitment to Community Policing and de-escalation. What's just as troubling about the video, was the officers who stood by while Mr. Floyd called for help.

As a police officer, you have a sworn duty to uphold the law and do what is right. We prioritize the sanctity of life in every situation.

If you see a fellow officer doing something that is unsafe, out of policy. Unacceptable, or illegal, you need to act appropriately. This goes beyond reporting. If someone's life is unnecessarily in danger, it is your responsibility to intervene.

We have a right to go home at the end of the day, but we also have a responsibility to ensure others enjoy that same right. We must hold ourselves accountable if we are to maintain the trust of the community who grants us the privilege to serve them. You should all be proud of how we provide police services here at UWF.

I know it can be challenging to see these incidents, even when they do not happen here, however it affects the entire police community.

Thank you for all that you do, every day. Stay safe.

Chief Marc Cossich