

Chief of Police
Adam K. Rucinski

1206 Michigan Ave
La Porte, IN 46350
PHONE 219-362-2446
FAX 219-321-3376



LAPORTE POLICE DEPARTMENT

Assistant Chief of Police
Julie Smith

BACKGROUND:

There has been an increase in heroin and opiate use in recent years in Indiana and the LaPorte County area:

- There has been an uptick in heroin and opiate-related overdoses in the LaPorte County area (to include here in the City of LaPorte).
- Heroin and opiate addiction drives a significant number of the crimes we see (home, vehicle, commercial, and residential burglaries; thefts; shoplifting; robbery etc.);
- We have seen crimes of violence related to the illicit drug trade;
- Law enforcement's traditional and predominant approach focuses on the enforcement piece with little regard for demand reduction;
- We (as police officers) are generally not aware or attuned to what is available in terms of treatment and recovery options so we can make informed recommendations or referrals to people in need.

POLICY:

Effective April 21st, 2016, The LaPorte City Police Department will implement The LaPorte County Angel initiative.

The LaPorte County Angel Initiative will be pursued in concert with our partners at the LaPorte Hospital, The Swanson Center, and Police Assisted Addiction Recover Initiative (PAARI).

Program Philosophy

It is the philosophy of the LaPorte City Police Department that:

- We support a three-prong approach to combatting illegal drugs - Enforcement, Education, and Treatment.
- We recognize that addiction is a disease which can benefit from medical intervention and treatment.
- Officers responding to any call for service or performing any police action will be cognizant for the potential that the involved parties may be suffering from heroin and/or opiate addiction.

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1206 Michigan Ave
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TEL 362-9246
FAX 362-9246



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- Officers interacting with persons suffering from addiction *will be professional, compassionate and understanding at all times*. Often times, people suffering from addiction ask for help only as a “last resort” and may be considering self-harm or suicide. Your interaction with them can help make a difference.
- In all instances, officers will continue to take enforcement action within their discretion and normal scope of duties to address criminal activity. At the same time, officers will recognize the fact that such criminal activity may result from a medical condition (addiction).
- In addition to any police action taken in such circumstances involving known or suspected heroin – opiate addiction (i.e. citizen contacts, warnings, summons, arrest etc.), the officer will provide the involved parties information advising them of the program and related services.
- The LaPorte City Police Department will make use of its social media presence (i.e. Facebook, Twitter etc.) to market The LaPorte County Angel Initiative.
- We will make use of community volunteer “Angels” - - individuals who have been trained about and understand addiction and the Angel Initiative methodology we use to assist people in getting help with addiction - - to provide support to people suffering from addiction and explore treatment option.

General Program Guidelines

It shall be the policy of the LaPorte City Police Department that:

- Any person who enters the police station and requests help with their addiction to heroin or opiates will immediately be screened by a law enforcement officer for potential participation in The LaPorte County Angel Initiative.
- If such a person who has requested help with their addiction is in possession of drugs or their drug equipment (needles, etc.), they will not be criminally charged. The materials will be collected and secured for later destruction.
- No questioning of the person will be undertaken in an effort to collect drug intelligence, determine the origins of any drugs relinquished by the person, or any other effort which may undermine the intended purpose of this program - - namely to encourage persons to seek police assistance in getting help for their addiction without fear of arrest or police action.

Chief of Police
Adam K. Kuczek

Assistant Chief of Police
Julie Smith

1206 Michigan Ave.
La Porte, IN 46350
PHONE 219-362-9446
FAX 219-321-3376



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- The officer or dispatcher having initial contact with the program participant will immediately notify the patrol supervisor that a potential LaPorte County Angel Initiative participant is requesting help with their addiction.

Specific Program Implementation

The patrol supervisor and volunteer “Angel” are responsible for ensuring this policy is followed.

FOLLOWING INITIAL SCREENING BY LaPorte City Police Department PERSONNEL AND CONFIRMATION THAT THE SUBJECT IS ELIGIBLE TO PARTICIPATE IN The LaPorte County Angel Initiative:

- The Supervisor will contact an Angel by phone from the Angel call-out list or via group text page.
- The Angel will be informed that a LaPorte County Angel Initiative intake is occurring and they will be requested to respond to the LaPorte City Police Department. Dispatch will ascertain an approximate estimated time of arrival of the Angel and inform the officer.
- Every effort will be made to ensure the responding Angel is the same gender as the program participant.
- The “Angel” will respond to the LaPorte City Police Department, 1206 Michigan Ave., LaPorte (Phone: 219-362-9446).
- Upon arrival of the Angel at the LaPorte City Police Department, the Angel will meet with the police officer who conducted initial LaPorte County Angel Initiative intake and screening. The officer will provide a brief summary of the circumstances and provide the Angel a copy of the participant’s completed Program Participant Agreement (Form “A”) and LaPorte Police Department Intake Form (Form “B”).
- The Angel should ask the police officer for the “Angel Kit”. This kit book contains guidelines, instructions and resources to assist the Angel in the performance of his/her duties.
- The officer will introduce the Angel to the program participant (by first name only) and transition the program participant to the care of the Angel.
- Angels interacting with persons suffering from addiction *will be professional, compassionate and understanding at all times.*

~~Chief of Police
Adam K. Rucinski~~

~~1206 Michigan Ave
La Porte, IN 46350
708-362-2446
FAX 708-321-3376~~



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~~Assistant Chief of Police
Julie Smith~~

- The Angel will assure the participant that it is our goal to assist them in exploring treatment options and attempt to identify a program or facility which can assist them.
- If at any time the participant is noted to be in medical distress or appear to be physically ill, the Angel should notify a police officer or public safety dispatcher so that EMS personnel can respond.
- The Angel should provide appropriate support and encouragement to the program participant consistent with the recommendations made in the LaPorte County Angel Initiative Volunteer ANGEL “Tips” (Form “G”).
- The Angel should maintain a professional relationship with the program participant in accordance with LaPorte County Angel Initiative Volunteer ANGEL Guidelines (Form “F”).
- Utilizing the participant information contained on the LaPorte City Police Department Intake Form (Form “B”) and soliciting additional information from the program participant as may be required, the “Angel” should:
 - Verify with the program participant that they are willing to accept help from a treatment facility.
 - The Angel should utilize the list of PAARI-cooperating facilities in the Angel Book to contact and explore treatment facilities and options. Priority should be given to utilizing these programs and/or facilities.
 - If a program participant is uninsured the Angel will assist them in trying to sign up for public aid.
 - In interacting with treatment facilities and attempting to assist the program participant in finding a placement, the “Angel” should use the following language in coordinating with treatment facilities. This language will help promote consistency and will let the facilities know we are part of an established and recognized PAARI program:

“Good morning/good afternoon/good evening.

My name is Insert First Name and I’m calling from the City of LaPorte Indiana Police Department.

I’m a volunteer “Angel” with the LaPorte City Police Department’s Heroin – Opiate Prevention Effort.

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Adam K. Kuczek

Assistant Chief of Police
Julie Smith

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This program was established so that the police can assist people suffering from addiction to get help. We're part of the Police Assisted Addiction Recovery Initiative and are an outgrowth of the Gloucester, Massachusetts Angel program

A man/woman came to the police department today seeking help for their addiction. They are here with us now.

We'd like your assistance in finding him/her treatment and help".

Subsequent discussions should then focus on placement of participants at the facility to include inquiries concerning whether the facility assists in providing transportation for the program participant.

NOTES:

If a program participant currently has insurance, be prepared to discuss the details of the insurance to include insurance carrier name and policy number with the treatment facility.

- Upon a facility agreeing to take a LaPorte County Angel Initiative participant, ensure the program participant is aware of what will be required of them to successfully complete the program. This may involve a willingness to go to a facility outside the immediate area; the commitment of a certain number of weeks or months in treatment; mandatory participation in counseling and treatment programs; specific program rules and policies pertaining to phone access, limitations on contacts with outside parties, curfews and other restrictions.

You may want the program participant to speak directly with the facility representative to ensure they understand what will be expected of them and to facilitate treatment facility screening.

Only if the program participant is aware of treatment program expectations and expresses a willingness to comply with them, will they be allowed to enter the program in question.

NOTE: This measure is intended to prevent a program participant from agreeing to participate in a particular program and accept a placement only to opt out of the program after arriving at a facility and learning what is expected of them.

If a successful program/facility placement is made, record the placement information in the Participant Placement Log (Form "J") in the Angel book. This will allow us to track which facilities have been used.

- If the Angel determines that the participant is unable to be placed after exhausting all possible methods, the participant is not to leave without being given a plan to continue with help. The participant shall be afforded every courtesy to find them a safe place upon departure.

Chief of Police
Adam Klimczak

Assistant Chief of Police
Julie Smith



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219-362-2246
FAX 219-321-4376

A valid plan would include the participant being instructed to contact the Swanson Center for support, assistance and guidance until a placement can be arranged. If it is during Swanson Center business hours, consideration should be given to assist the participant by providing transportation.

NOTE: For participant transportation to treatment facilities, the following options should be pursued:

- The participant and/or family should be requested to pay or contribute for transportation costs if possible.
- If the participant and/or their family is unable to pay for transportation costs, we will look for alternative methods of transport.

For Additional Assistance

In the event the Angel(s) have questions or require additional assistance, please request that a police officer or public safety dispatcher contact:

Angel Coordinator: To Be Determined

LaPorte City Police Chief: Adam Klimczak

Chief of Police
William K. Ruczzak

1206 Michigan Ave
Lafayette, IN 46350
TEL 362-2446
FAX 362-2447

City of LaPorte
INDIANA



LAPORTE POLICE DEPARTMENT

Assistant Chief of Police
Jeff Smith

Chief of Police
William K. Fitzgerald

1206 Michigan Ave
Lafayette, IN 46350
TEL 362-2246
FAX 362-22376

City of LaPorte
INDIANA



LAPORTE POLICE DEPARTMENT

Assistant Chief of Police
Jeff Smith