

For Immediate Release
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Public Safety Women from Around Oklahoma to Gather

On February 28, 2024, female first responders and other local, state and federal public safety professional women from across Oklahoma will gather for a symposium in south Oklahoma City. It is believed this is the first such statewide gathering in the history of the state.

Women police, firefighters, deputies, troopers, marshals, investigators, dispatchers, prosecutors, corrections officers, probation/parole officers, emergency medical personnel, and military and tribal public safety personnel are all encouraged to attend.

Called “Oklahoma Women in Public Safety,” the symposium will feature lunch, networking and speakers on “Public Safety & Shift Worker Strategies for Coping with ‘Mom Guilt’” as well as “Recognizing and Responding to Domestic Abuse in Coworkers and the Community You Serve.” It is estimated that less than ten percent of the sworn public safety personnel in Oklahoma are women.

“We know that women in public safety face unique challenges. As the number of women in law enforcement continues to grow, it is important to recognize and address those challenges,” said Oklahoma County Sheriff Tommie Johnson III. “I support their efforts to gather for continuing education, camaraderie, cooperation and support.”

“Several other states to include Texas have active and growing Women in Law Enforcement organizations,” added Edmond Police Chief J.D. Younger. “I believe this initiative will add value to the quality of law enforcement in the State of Oklahoma.”

“I fully support this endeavor and believe it is a worthwhile cause. Anything bringing together women in law enforcement from across the state benefits all agencies in Oklahoma,” said Oklahoma City Police Chief Wade Gourley.

“Despite our recruiting efforts, women continue to represent a very small percentage of Oklahoma’s public safety personnel, especially in the fire service,” said Tulsa Fire Deputy Chief Julie Lynn. “Some of our Tulsa metro women firefighters have been gathering for mutual support and to build collegiality for a few years now. It would be great for women firefighters statewide to have a similar opportunity.”

“Many of the attendees may be ‘firsts’ in their department,” said Choctaw Police Chief Kelly Marshall. “Women in our smaller and more rural departments can feel especially isolated. This event should be especially beneficial to them. It is exciting to participate in an event that focuses on women’s well-being as well as networking with other professionals across the state.”

“Social science research regularly shows that departments with more women are subject to fewer complaints and lawsuits and have better relationships with the communities they serve,” said Oklahoma Secretary of Public Safety Tricia Everest. “We not only need to recruit more women

into these professions, we need to ensure our policies support those who have already chosen to make public safety their career. Listening is an important first step.”

The Oklahoma Women in Public Safety symposium is for women age 18+ only. Full details are available at OKWIPS.org. The deadline to register is Wednesday, February 21.

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