



CITY OF LONDON
MAYOR TRACIE A. HANDLEY
501 SOUTH MAIN STREET
LONDON, KENTUCKY
606.864.4169

JOINT STATEMENT

Office of the Mayor of London & the London City Police Department

The Mayor of London, Tracie A Handley, and the Acting Chief of the London City Police Department, Gary Mehler, are issuing this joint statement following the conclusion of a review into an incident in which a police officer allowed an individual to leave the scene of a road traffic collision without conducting an adequate sobriety assessment in late July, 2026.

We have taken this matter with the utmost seriousness. The Police Department thoroughly investigated the incident through its professional standards process, including reviewing body-worn camera footage, incident logs, and interviews with responding officers. That investigation has now concluded.

Outcome of the Investigation

The review found that established procedures for assessing impairment at the scene of a collision were not properly followed. As a result, appropriate disciplinary action has been taken, including a three-day suspension without pay, a demotion from Corporal to Patrolperson, and mandatory retraining for the officer involved on roadside sobriety assessment protocols and the proper exercise of professional judgment in collision response. Our hope is that these measures will send a message to the public and our Police Department that we intend to uphold standards, particularly those that are geared towards protecting the public. This outcome reflects both the seriousness of the lapse and a constructive path toward preventing recurrence, and we are confident that, as a consequence of these measures, the officer has learned a valuable lesson.

On Officer Discretion

Operational discretion is, and must remain, a core feature of effective policing. Officers are regularly required to make rapid judgments in dynamic, high-pressure situations, and no rulebook can anticipate every circumstance they encounter. The Mayor and the Acting Chief of Police fully support the principle that officers need latitude to exercise professional judgment.

However, discretion is not a license to bypass mandatory safety procedures, particularly where public safety is at direct risk — as is the case with suspected impaired driving. Sobriety testing at the scene of a collision exists precisely because the risks of getting it wrong, in either direction, are severe. Discretion in how an officer approaches a situation is not the same as

discretion in whether a statutory duty is carried out. This case has reinforced that distinction, and the retraining now in place is designed to make it unambiguous going forward.

On Accountability

Mayor Handley and Acting Chief of Police Mehler are in alignment that the City must take steps to restore full public faith and trust in the London City Police Department. Holding officers accountable for lapses is part of that. So is transparency. The video and related items for this incident are being publicly released pursuant to Open Records Requests, now that the investigation is complete. Accountability is a crucial element of a world-class police department. Trust between the public and the police is not abstract — it is built through consistent, transparent adherence to procedure, and it is damaged every time that adherence falters. This investigation, and the corrective action that followed it, reflects our commitment to addressing failures openly rather than allowing them to go unexamined.

We recognize that incidents like this can understandably shake public confidence. We do not take that lightly. The London City Police Department is only as strong as the public's trust in it, and restoring that trust requires holding ourselves to the same standard we ask Londoners to trust us to uphold. We believe the thoroughness of this review, and the action taken as a result, demonstrates that standard in practice.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Tracie A. Handley", is written over a horizontal line.

Tracie A Handley

Mayor

thandley@londonky.gov

501 South Main Street

London, KY 40741