



Law Enforcement Officer Near Miss Reporting System *Program Overview*

The Law Enforcement Officer Near Miss Reporting System (LEO Near Miss) is an online platform that enables law enforcement personnel to read about and *anonymously* share near misses, often referred to as “close calls.” The system is modeled after successful near miss reporting systems used in other high-risk industries, particularly the Aviation Safety Reporting System (ASRS) used extensively by the aviation industry. LEO Near Miss was developed through funding from the U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS Office), and it is managed by the National Police Foundation (www.PoliceFoundation.org), an independent, non-profit research and training organization, in partnership with other national law enforcement organizations (listed below).

A near miss is defined as any incident where a law enforcement officer could have been seriously injured or killed, but significant harm or death was averted. Near misses can occur at any time during the performance of law enforcement duties and oftentimes include contributing risk factors like concealed weapons, human error, failed equipment, or lapses in situational awareness. Regardless of the situation, every near miss in law enforcement offers valuable lessons learned and reminders that, if collected and shared with the law enforcement community as a whole, can be incorporated into training and policy development to prevent officer injuries and fatalities. Officers often share their near misses with close friends and colleagues, but rarely are these stories, and the critical lessons learned from them, ever shared with officers across the country. LEO Near Miss provides the national platform for officers to do so.

LEO Near Miss is strictly for promoting peer learning and enhancing officer safety. Law enforcement personnel can visit LEOnearmiss.org or download the free smartphone application (“LEO Near Miss” on the App Store or Google Play), read the lessons learned from near misses submitted by other officers, and *anonymously* share their own near miss experiences. Near misses submitted to LEO Near Miss go directly to the National Police Foundation as the independent administrator of the system. In this way, near miss reporting operates independently of any agency’s chain of command or disciplinary process, ensuring that near miss reporting can never be used by an agency for punitive action against an officer.



The process to submit a near miss is quick and simple. Depending on the complexity of the incident, officers can click “Share Your Story” and submit a near miss report in as little as 5-10 minutes. The report form is streamlined with predominantly multiple choice and dropdown style questions that ask the submitting officer about the circumstances surrounding the near miss incident, including factors like the type of call the officer was responding to, the environmental conditions at the time, the number of officers on scene, and whether officers knew a suspect was armed. As primarily a research organization, the National Police Foundation (NPF) uses the data obtained from submitted near miss reports to analyze and report on current trends in risks to officer safety so they can be mitigated by officers and agencies.

Each near miss submitted to LEO Near Miss undergoes a two-stage review process by current and former law enforcement officers who remove all identifying information from the report (ensuring officer and agency anonymity when the report is published) and highlight important takeaways and lessons learned from the incident. Once a near miss report has cleared the review process, which typically takes 5-10 business days, the story is made available for verified law enforcement personnel to read on the LEO Near Miss website and smartphone application.

To further the adoption of near miss reporting in law enforcement, NPF has partnered, and continues to partner, with local law enforcement agencies from across the country to assist in the integration of near miss reporting into day-to-day police operations. If an agency chooses to participate, NPF works collaboratively with that agency to train agency personnel on near miss reporting and develop internal practices, policies, and procedures to facilitate both the reporting of near misses and the use of near miss data in training, policy, and equipment related decisions. Additionally, through the use of a unique agency identifier during near miss reporting, NPF can provide a participating agency with analyses on the near misses the agency is experiencing, which can provide critical insight into training and/or policy deficiencies jeopardizing officer safety so they can be addressed before an officer is ever injured or killed.

Near miss reporting is widely regarded as a fundamental safety practice that has been successful in preventing workplace injuries and fatalities in other high-risk industries. If this practice can be widely adopted in law enforcement, it could significantly reduce the number of officers injured or killed each year. We hope you will join and support us in this critical initiative.



LEO NEAR MISS

LESSONS LEARNED BECOME LESSONS APPLIED

If you have any questions or concerns about LEO Near Miss, or if your agency is interested in participating in near miss reporting, please contact:

Brett Cowell, *Senior Project Associate*
LEO Near Miss Program Manager
bcowell@policefoundation.org
(202) 833-1471

