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**Mayor Fulop Opens Jersey City Advanced Public Safety Training Facility; Emphasis on Police De-escalation Training to Prevent Violence, Minimize Use of Force, and Strengthen Police-Community Relations**

*Real-time Simulations to Equip Law Enforcement with Alternative Tactics Proven to Defuse Tense Public Interactions*

**JERSEY CITY, NJ – Mayor Steven M. Fulop, City Council members, and the Department of Public Safety** officially opened the doors to Jersey City’s new **Public Safety De-Escalation and Training Center**. Equipped with cutting-edge simulation technology and immersive scenarios, emergency responders from Jersey City and other police and fire departments throughout New Jersey will receive comprehensive instruction on conflict resolution, crisis intervention, and de-escalation techniques using real-time simulations based on the participants’ reactions.

Emergency response situations are often complex and unpredictable, and cannot be adequately simulated using predefined, static targets. Through scenario-based training exercises, real-time feedback sessions, and interactive workshops, participants at the new training center will develop the practical tools and mindset needed to produce outcomes that minimize harm.

“In just the past five years alone, we have implemented significant policies and police reforms to address de-escalation and expand public safety training,” **Mayor Fulop** said. “Our strategic public safety approaches have led to historic decreases in crime over several consecutive years while significantly expanding police/community relations to further build upon de-escalation efforts.”

To ensure maximum safety for police officers and the people they encounter in complex situations, Jersey City’s training curriculum prioritizes communication skills and cultural competency, empowering officers to effectively navigate complex situations with sensitivity and compassion. The new Public Safety De-Escalation and Training Center features several training stations, including:

- 360-degree Training Simulator - Fully immerses law enforcement officers in real-world scenarios using real-time simulations based on the participants' reactions.
- Tactical Training Room - Multipurpose modular sets for tactical training such as a car stop or clearing a classroom.
- 2 Firearm Qualification Ranges - Moving targets train law enforcement to make quick decisions when every second counts.
- 5 Classrooms - Allows for a range of training programs ranging from rendering first aid to adhering to state mandates.

“Of the more than 267,000 calls for service our police officers responded to last year, one-tenth involved any kind of use of force. While we won’t rest until that number is zero, our efforts to address de-escalation and crime over the past decade are clearly working as crime reaches historic lows. In fact, we are on track to beat last year’s lowest homicide rate in Jersey City history,” said **James Shea, Director of the Department of Public Safety**.

Community partners and residents will be invited to partake in the training at the new building to help the public better understand emergency response.

“Academies don’t get into this type of extensive training and the state keeps mandating more and more training for police departments, but no one has had the capacity to keep up. Now we do. Plus, we are saving money by providing all mandated training in-house, while also renting out unused space to other departments,” added **Greg Kierce, Director of the Office of Emergency Management**.

From revising Jersey City’s Use of Force guidelines to expanding de-escalation training requirements in 2020 amid nationwide protests for police reforms, Mayor Fulop has been one of the most vocal and effective leaders in New Jersey pushing for meaningful public safety reforms. As part of Jersey City’s multi-pronged efforts to address de-escalation and improve police/community relations, the Fulop Administration has worked to implement community-driven structural changes.

“Despite the many challenges that come with policing in cities today, our police officers are dedicated to upholding public safety while respecting the dignity and rights of every individual,” said **Police Director Tawana Moody**. “With this De-Escalation Center, we can provide our emergency responders with the resources and expertise needed to effectively navigate the most challenging situations.”

"In today's rapidly evolving policing landscape, effective de-escalation techniques are more crucial than ever," concluded **Acting Police Chief Robert Kearns**. “By investing in advanced training, we are cultivating a culture of mutual respect and cooperation between law enforcement and residents to ultimately benefit all involved.”

During today’s event, Mayor Fulop re-dedicated the new Firearms Ranges in honor of JCPD Captain James Weatherall, who mentored hundreds of police officers during his long and distinguished career.

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