

Durham County : \$

Virtual reality (VR) training technology represents a transformative advancement in law enforcement education, offering immersive, scenario-based experiences that enhance both skill development and decision-making. The proposed VR system includes head-mounted displays, software with a wide range of law enforcement training modules, and instructor controls that allow scenarios to be customized, paused, and reviewed in real time. These systems can replicate high-risk, low-frequency incidents as well as routine interactions, enabling trainees to practice communication, de-escalation, use-of-force judgment, and critical thinking in a safe and controlled environment. Unlike traditional training methods, VR provides immediate feedback and performance analytics, allowing instructors to tailor instruction to individual needs while reinforcing best practices. This technology is adaptable for multiple audiences, including community academy participants, basic law enforcement trainees, and certified officers requiring ongoing professional development.

The implementation of VR training directly aligns with the goals of the Durham County Sheriff's Office's newly approved training facility, which is designed to serve as a centralized, modern training hub for the agency. As the primary location for firearms and public safety training, the new facility presents a unique opportunity to integrate cutting-edge technology that enhances readiness while promoting safety and accountability. VR training complements live-fire exercises by allowing officers to develop judgment and decision-making skills before engaging in real-world applications. This layered approach improves training outcomes by reducing risk, conserving ammunition and resources, and ensuring that officers are better prepared for complex, dynamic situations.

Additionally, VR supports the agency's commitment to community-oriented policing by offering scenarios that emphasize communication, cultural awareness, and crisis intervention. Community academy participants can gain a deeper understanding of the challenges officers face, fostering transparency and trust between law enforcement and the public. For sworn personnel, VR provides a consistent and repeatable platform to reinforce policies, adapt to emerging best practices, and meet evolving training standards. The flexibility of VR technology also allows the Sheriff's Office to quickly update or expand training content in response to new legal requirements, community concerns, or identified gaps in performance.

By incorporating VR into the new training facility, the Durham County Sheriff's Office will position itself at the forefront of modern law enforcement training, regardless of the seasons, conditions, or time of day. This investment not only enhances the effectiveness and efficiency of training programs but also demonstrates a proactive commitment to innovation, officer safety, and community engagement. Ultimately, VR technology will serve as a force multiplier—maximizing training opportunities, improving

decision-making under stress, and ensuring that personnel are equipped with the skills necessary to serve the residents of Durham County with professionalism and integrity.