

City of Lake Winnebago Officially Receives Missouri Blue Shield Designation

Lake Winnebago, MO – Today, the City of Lake Winnebago received received official word from the Missouri Department of Public Safety that we have earned the Missouri Blue Shield designation for 2026. This honor recognizes Missouri communities that demonstrate their commitment to enhancing public safety, investing in and supporting law enforcement, and building partnerships between law enforcement and our community.

The Missouri Blue Shield Program was created by Governor Kehoe in January 2025 through Executive Order 25-03. In 2025, 201 Missouri communities earned the Blue Shield designation, recognizing local governments' significant efforts to reduce crime and foster law enforcement – community partnerships to strengthen public safety. The opportunity to earn the Blue Shield designation for 2026 opened on February 4, 2026. Communities that earned the Blue Shield designation in 2025 had to reapply this year to be approved once again.

“The Blue Shield program has shown what’s possible when communities commit to prioritizing law enforcement and public safety,” **Governor Kehoe** said. “After awarding \$50,000 grants to more than 200 communities last year, we’re continuing that work by welcoming new communities and renewing Blue Shield designations for counties, towns, and cities that remain committed to the program.”

“Strengthening public safety and committing to joint law enforcement community – citizen safety efforts is what the Blue Shield Program is all about and the Department of Public Safety is honored to work with communities like the City of Lake Winnebago, that have answered the Blue Shield challenge,” said **Mark James, Director of the Missouri Department of Public Safety (DPS)**. “Last year, the essential equipment provided by Blue Shield grants included 388 mobile data terminals, 351 body cameras, 151 license plate readers (LPR), 102 ballistic vests, 91 interoperable radios and 56 vehicles. We look forward to getting additional important equipment and training to our partners in local law enforcement.”

“This designation demonstrates the City of Lake Winnebago’s public safety commitment to both the Police Department and our residents,” said Mayor Mike Collar.

“The Lake Winneabgo Police Department is honored to receive this designation from Governor Kehoe and greatly appreciative of the support we enjoy from the Lake Winnebago community,” Police Chief Michael G. Mrachek said.

Eligibility and Program Details

Communities are eligible for a Missouri Blue Shield designation based on their dedication to reducing crime, making substantial investments in public safety, and developing strong collaboration with law enforcement agencies and community stakeholders. Each participating community's commitment is reviewed annually to ensure continued alignment with the program's goals.

Participation Incentives

Communities that earn a Missouri Blue Shield designation will receive grant funding for law enforcement training and equipment as part of Governor Kehoe's Recommended Budget for the State Fiscal Year 2027, provided the General Assembly approves the funding. The Governor's FY 2027 budget appropriated \$10 million to the program for equipment and training grants. Communities will also be featured on Governor Kehoe's social media pages as well as the DPS website to highlight their participation in the program. A map of 2025 Blue Shield communities is available [here](#).

About the City of Lake Winnebago

The City of Lake Winnebago earned a Missouri Blue Shield designation because of its exceptional commitment to public safety through officer recruitment efforts, major law enforcement funding, partnerships with community stakeholders, law enforcement partners, and community policing initiatives, all to reduce crime. The community has demonstrated a strong and ongoing commitment to protecting its residents. This designation affirms the City of Lake Winnebago's effort to create a safer, more secure environment for all who live and work here.

