

Police Chief John Patrick “Murph” Murphy (1949-2026)

Murph was born on April 8, 1949 to John M. Murphy and Anna M. (Craven) Murphy.

After high school, he joined the United States Marine Corps. By June 1968, PFC Murphy was with the 2nd Battalion, 9th Marine Regiment, conducting operations in the northern sector of South Vietnam. He was honorably discharged with several decorations.



Murph joined the Norwood Police Department in 1973. On January 8, 1979, a Wayne Township (north of Dayton) Aggravated Murder suspect was found and arrested in Norwood because Officer Murphy recollected a description of his car from a general broadcast. By September 1983, he was promoted to Sergeant. In July 1984, he served as a spokesman during the serial killer Alton Coleman investigation. In November 1990, Sergeant Murphy began recruiting for a Block Watch Program. On December 4, 1990, he was appointed full-time Community Service Officers and Department spokesman. Sergeant Murphy received Women Helping Women’s Thomas R. Oberschmidt Award on November 12, 1998 for his efforts in helping victims of sexual assault. On June 23, 1999, Mayor Hochbein appointed Sergeant Murphy as Acting Police Chief over the Department’s Captain and three Lieutenants. Chief Murphy was reticent to take the promotional examination for chief, and when Lieutenant William Schlie was appointed Police Chief, he retired with 27 years of service.

Chief Murphy returned to serve as the city’s Safety-Service Director from 2020 to 2021.

He was also a Fourth-Degree member of the Norwood Knights of Columbus.

Chief Murphy died on Sunday, March 4, 2026 at age 76.

He was predeceased by brothers John Hatch and Jason Ott. Chief Murphy is survived by his wife of 51 years, Maryann (Marx) Murphy; children, Heather Bell and Sean Murphy; grandchildren, Abby (Armando) King, Ian Bell, and Aidan Bell; and siblings, Jay Hatch, Robert Hatch, and Terry (Bill) Storey.

Visitation will be held at Vorhis & Ryan Funeral Home at 5501 Montgomery Road in Norwood on Thursday, March 12, 2026 from 5 to 8 p.m. A Fraternal Order of Police Lodge 74 service will be held at 7:15 p.m. followed by Knights of Columbus prayer service at 7:30 p.m. A Mass of Christian Burial will be offered at Holy Trinity Catholic Church at 2420 Drex Avenue on Friday, March 13, 2026 at 11a.m. Burial will follow at Gate of Heaven Cemetery.

Memorials may be made to [St. Rita School for the Deaf](#), 1720 Glendale Milford Rd., Cincinnati, OH 45215.