

Professional Bio – Assistant Chief Wendell E. Watts

Wendell E. Watts is a seasoned law enforcement executive with three decades of public-safety leadership experience, currently serving as the Assistant Chief of Patrol Operations for the Jackson Police Department in Jackson, Mississippi. In this role, he oversees citywide patrol operations, criminal investigations, the Crime Gun Intelligence Center (CGIC), NIBIN operations, the Intelligence Unit, Special Operations, Community Engagement, and multiple interagency task forces. His leadership is grounded in accountability, proactive crime reduction, intelligence-driven strategies, and strong community partnership.

Assistant Chief Watts began his career with the Jackson Police Department in the early 1990s, serving in a wide range of assignments including patrol, specialized units, investigative functions, and supervisory roles. His experience spans frontline policing, complex investigations, emergency response, operational command, and strategic planning. His approach emphasizes data-driven deployment, professional standards, officer development, and building community trust through transparency and service.

In 2022, Watts was selected as the inaugural Chief of Police for the City of Gluckstadt, Mississippi, where he built the department from the ground up. He established operational policies, staffing structures, training standards, technology systems, and designed a new police and court facility, while ensuring fiscal responsibility and community-focused policing. His work created a modern, professional agency built on relationships, accountability, and service.

Watts also served as Director of Security, Emergency Manager, Safety Officer, and HazMat Coordinator for Merit Health Central. There he managed hospital security operations, emergency planning, and crisis readiness for a high-risk healthcare environment.

Throughout his career, Assistant Chief Watts has been deeply engaged in modernizing policing systems, intelligence driven policing, technology expansion, real-time crime strategies, fleet restructuring, and evidence-room reform. He has extensive experience collaborating with federal partners including the ATF, FBI, U.S. Attorney's Office, and state public-safety agencies. His leadership style is often described as steady, ethical, mission-driven, and people-focused, with a strong belief in coaching and developing future leaders.

Watts is also actively engaged in higher education, pursuing his master's in criminal justice, leadership, ethics, and organizational management. He has a Bachelor of Science in Criminal Justice, where he graduated Summa Cum Laude. He integrates research-based best practices into real-world policing, especially in areas such as violent-crime reduction, intelligence-driven deployment, and ethical decision-making.

He is driven by a commitment to public service, integrity, and positive social change, believing that effective policing rests on five pillars: community trust, professional excellence, data driven policing, intelligence led policing, and officer wellness. His goal as Chief of Police is to strengthen public safety while elevating professionalism, transparency, and compassion within the department.

Assistant Chief Watts is a lifelong Mississippian, a father, and a proud public servant. He remains passionate about leadership development and building policing systems that protect communities while honoring constitutional rights and human dignity.