



# COMMUNIQUE

*Celebrating 99 Years*

*1922-2021*

*JANUARY – FEBRUARY 2021*

## Bessemer Chamber's 2021 Bessemer Magazine

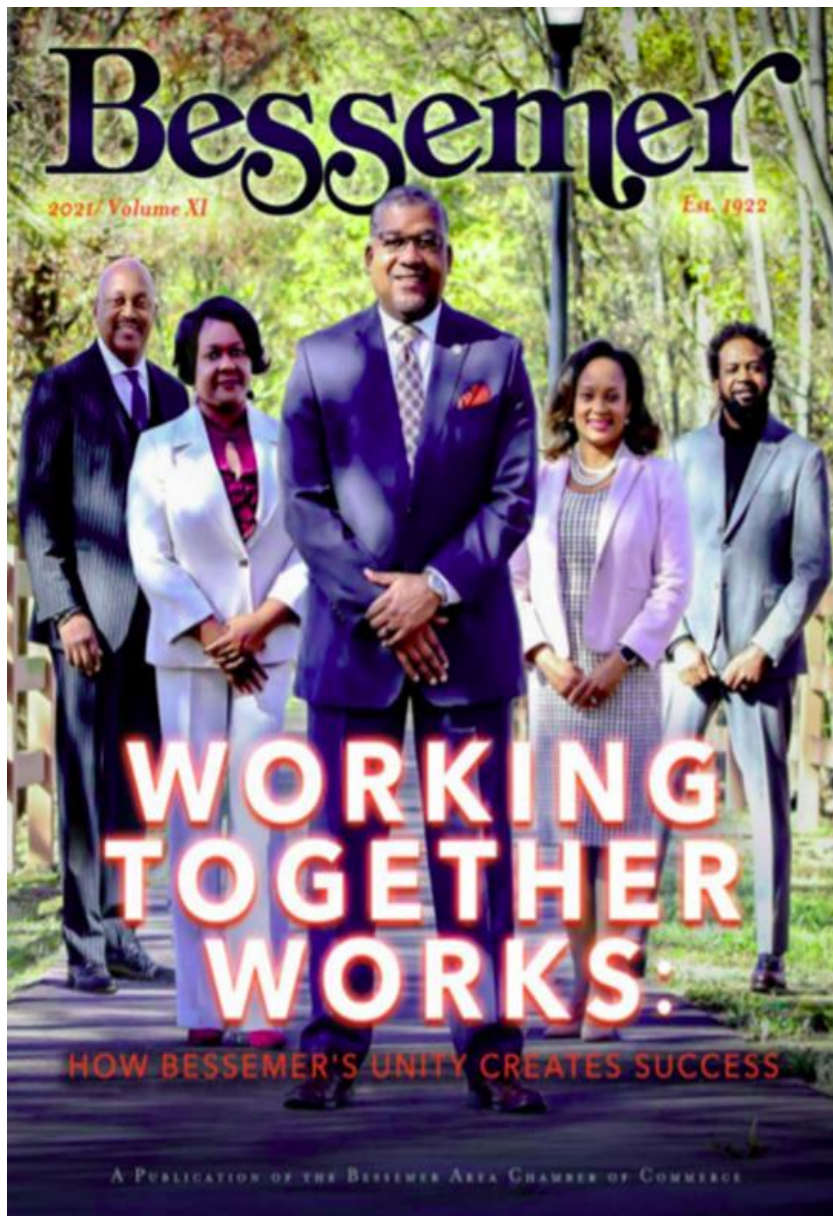
We are immensely proud of the hard work that has been put into making this year's magazine, one that will fully and positively represent the Bessemer Area.

The Bessemer Chamber of Commerce theme is "Working Together Works". This message is displayed on the front copy of this year's magazine. Unity is important when you have multiple leaders involved in a community. WE MUST ALL work together for the common goal which is to ensure that Bessemer will reach her full potential. Pictured on the cover is the head of the Marvel City, the honorable Mayor Kenneth Gulley; the business community representative, Bessemer Area Chamber of Commerce President, LaTasha Williams; the Bessemer education representative, Superintendent Dr. Autumn Jeter; and our faith-based community leaders, Dr. Reginald W. Calvert, pastor of New Jerusalem Missionary Baptist Church and Reverend George Matthews II, pastor of New Life Interfaith Ministries.

The Bessemer Magazine is filled with the chamber membership directory and interesting articles that highlight our area as an attractive and progressive place to live, work, shop and visit. These articles and ads unite, inform, and promote the Bessemer area and welcome newcomers to the area.

This magazine is a great marketing tool for your business and the entire Bessemer area!

The Bessemer Magazine is the only magazine in the area. Over 2,000 copies of the magazine are distributed to all area hotels, churches, various business locations, area conferences, and family/class reunions. The magazine is mailed to all tourist and newcomers seeking information on our area.



Go to [www.bessemerchamber.com](http://www.bessemerchamber.com) to view the new magazine. Share the pdf file with your office staff, customers, etc.

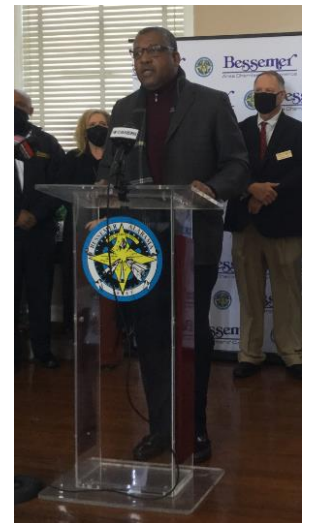
We are already working on the 2022 Magazine that will honor the Bessemer Chamber's centennial celebration. Make sure you plan to advertise in Bessemer's only marketing tool - The Bessemer Magazine.



# CHAMBER NEWS

## Bessemer Came Together to Support Neighboring City

The Bessemer Area Chamber of Commerce partnered with the City of Bessemer, the Jefferson County Sheriff's Office, and District Attorney Lynnece Washington to organize a donation drive for the individuals and families in Fultondale affected by tornadoes in late January. Between February 1<sup>st</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup>, city entities, local businesses, churches, and Bessemer residents dropped off their donations, that included personal hygiene items, gift cards and food at the Bessemer Chamber. The following week the chamber delivered three full truckloads to Fultondale residents! Thank you to those who took the time to bring in donations and assist with transport and delivery of all donations; working together truly does work!





# CHAMBER NEWS

## PPP Loan Information



WASHINGTON – The U.S. Small Business Administration, in consultation with the U.S. Treasury Department, will re-open the Paycheck Protection Program (PPP) loan portal to PPP-eligible lenders with \$1 billion or less in assets for First and Second Draw applications on Friday, January 15, 2021 at 9 am ET. **The portal will fully open on Tuesday, January 19, 2021 to all participating PPP lenders to submit First and Second Draw loan applications to SBA.**

Earlier in the week, SBA granted dedicated PPP access to Community Financial Institutions (CFIs) which include

Community Development Financial Institutions (CDFIs), Minority Depository Institutions (MDIs), Certified Development Companies (CDCs), and Microloan Intermediaries as part of the agency's ongoing efforts to reach underserved and minority small businesses. The SBA will continue its emphasis on reaching smaller lenders and businesses by opening to approximately 5,000 more lenders, including community banks, credit unions, and farm credit institutions. Moreover, the agency also plans to have dedicated service hours for these smaller lenders after the portal fully re-opens next week.

"A second round of PPP could not have come at a better time, and the SBA is making every effort to ensure small businesses have the emergency financial support they need to continuing weathering this time of uncertainty," said SBA Administrator Jovita Carranza. "SBA has worked expeditiously to ensure our policies and systems are re-launched so that this vital small business aid helps communities hardest hit by the pandemic. I strongly encourage America's entrepreneurs needing financial assistance to apply for a First or Second Draw PPP loan."

"We are pleased to have opened PPP loans to CDFIs, MDIs, CDCs, and Microloan Intermediaries. The PPP is already providing America's small businesses hardest hit by the pandemic with vital economic relief," said Secretary of the Treasury Steven T. Mnuchin. "As the Program re-opens for all First and Second Draw borrowers next week, the PPP will allow small businesses to keep workers on payroll and connected to their health insurance." First Draw PPP Loans are for those borrowers who have not received a PPP loan before August 8, 2020. The first round of the PPP, which ran from March to August 2020, was a historic success helping 5.2 million small businesses keep 51 million American workers employed.

Second Draw PPP Loans are for eligible small businesses with 300 employees or less, that previously received a First Draw PPP Loan and will use or have used the full amount only for authorized uses, and that can demonstrate at least a 25% reduction in gross receipts between comparable quarters in 2019 and 2020. The maximum amount of a Second Draw PPP loan is \$2 million. **Updated PPP Lender forms, guidance, and resources are available at [www.sba.gov/ppp](http://www.sba.gov/ppp) and [www.treasury.gov/cares](http://www.treasury.gov/cares).**

About the U.S. Small Business Administration:

The U.S. Small Business Administration makes the American dream of business ownership a reality. As the only go-to resource and voice for small businesses backed by the strength of the federal government, the SBA empowers entrepreneurs and small business owners with the resources and support they need to start, grow or expand their businesses, or recover from a declared disaster. It delivers services through an extensive network of SBA field offices and partnerships with public and private organizations. To learn more, visit [www.sba.gov](http://www.sba.gov).

# BOARD OF DIRECTORS

## Your Chamber Leadership Team



**Carlton Jackson**  
Bessemer Fire Dept.  
Chairman



**Mitch Avery**  
Spire  
Chairman Elect



**Charles King**  
Regional Paramedical Services  
Past Chairman



**Antoinette Madison**  
Alabama Power  
Treasurer



**Dr. Cynthia Anthony**  
Lawson State Community College  
Finance Chairman



**Dr. Reginald Calvert**  
New Jerusalem Baptist Church



**Cortney Coleman**  
Bess. Housing Authority



**Bryonda Collins**  
Chambers Funeral Home



**Katie Dugas-Truss**  
Legacy YMCA



**Dr. Autumm Jeter**  
Bessemer City Schools



**Deaunka LeBeauf-Webster**



**Kem L. Marks**  
Just In Time Legal Solutions



**Maj. Cleveland Moore**  
Jeff. Co. Sheriff's Office



**Sheriff Mark Pettway**  
Jeff. Co. Sheriff's Office



**Robert Pollard**  
Premiere Chevy



**William Smith**  
Marco's Pizza – Bessemer



**Paul Teasley**  
Buffalo Rock



**LaVada Varner**  
Alabama Technology Center



**Devron Veasley**  
Bessemer Development Board



**Pete Winslett**  
The File Depot

# AMBASSADORS



### *Standing – Left to Right*

Daryl Owens (New Jerusalem Baptist Church), Danielle Matthews (Matthews & Associates), Minnie Roper (Retired), Tamala Briggs (Oak Trace Care & Rehabilitation), Donna King (D & K Lawncare), Cathy Ackerman (First Financial Bank)

### *Sitting – Left to Right*

Sarah Belcher (Retired), Claire Mitchell (Retired), Sarah Beasley (Joe Beasley Memorial Foundation, Inc)

### *Not pictured*

Denise Jackson (New Jerusalem Baptist Church), Anna Wooten (First Financial Bank), Sebrana Davis (Salvation Army), Lori Chisem (Lawson State Community College), Dorian Waluyn (Lawson State Community College), Akiliah Haley (Lawson State Community College)

Ambassadors are the key resource in extending hospitality in the Bessemer area and are experienced in business, community, and promotional arenas.

An Ambassador must serve as an active public relations arm of the Chamber and be prepared to meet visitors, local businesses, and various forms of the media.

We encourage you join the ambassador program. The ambassadors meet on the 1st Tuesday of each month at 8:30am at the Bessemer Area Chamber of Commerce.



# BUSINESS NEWS



## WELCOME TO BESSEMER

The Bessemer Area Chamber of Commerce would like to welcome the following businesses to the city of Bessemer:



**Chamber Member Tuff Shed's ribbon cutting was held on February 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2021.  
Tuff Shed is located at 3649 Pine Lane SE, Bessemer, AL 35022**



**Taco Bell's ribbon cutting was held on February 24<sup>th</sup>, 2021.  
Taco Bell is located at 1004 Academy Lane, Bessemer, AL 35022**



**Empowered to Conquer's ribbon cutting was held on February 26<sup>th</sup>, 2021.  
3054 Morgan Road, Ste C-3, Bessemer, AL 35022**

## BUSINESS NEWS

### Auto Parts Supplier Valeo Expanding to Bessemer with \$5 Million Facility, Creating 70 Jobs

Valeo North America, a top-10 auto parts supplier in the world, announced plans Monday to expand into Bessemer with a \$5 million facility that is expected to create 70 jobs, according to the Birmingham Business Alliance. Valeo will be occupying an existing facility on Perimeter Way in Bessemer early this year and is expected to be at full production by June, the alliance said. “Valeo is world-class auto supplier and a superb addition to the auto industry supply chain network spreading across the state,” said Greg Canfield, secretary of the Alabama Department of Commerce. “Valeo’s decision to locate a facility in Bessemer positions the company for long-term growth, and we are committed to helping them build a future there.” An enticing incentives package created by the Birmingham Business Alliance, the Alabama Department of Commerce, Jefferson County and the City of Bessemer led Valeo to expand into Bessemer, the alliance said. “Valeo North America is pleased to announce the opening a new facility in Bessemer,” the company said. “The City of Bessemer, the Birmingham Business Alliance and the state of Alabama demonstrated an attractive business friendly, pro-jobs attitude. This project, in this location, is a win-win for Valeo and for the community.” Jefferson County Commissioner Steve Ammons noted that automotive manufacturing “is a vital part of Jefferson County’s economy that continues to see immense growth annually.” Bessemer Mayor Kenneth Gulley said he was excited for Valeo to set up a facility in his city. “Valeo North America is expanding our city’s growing industrial roster and bringing expanded opportunity for residents of Bessemer and surrounding areas,” he said. “We thank Valeo North America for its investment in our city and we look forward to working with the company for years to come.” “The attraction of this investment from Valeo North America is testament of the favorable business environment in Bessemer and the partnership that exists between our local and state governments to bring quality jobs and capital investment to the region,” added Jeff Traywick, vice president of economic development at the BBA. . “This project will allow Valeo to support its customers’ needs in a location that is cost-competitive and provides the company access to a skilled labor force.



### Jeremy Arthur, President and CEO of the Chamber of Commerce Association of Alabama Accepts New Position as Director of the Governmental and Economic Development Institute at Auburn University



For nine years Jeremy Arthur has served as President and CEO of the Chamber of Commerce Association of Alabama. He is respected and admired by his peers nationwide. His dedication and leadership have made a lasting impact on CCAA and the CCAA/BCA Partnership. Jeremy has done amazing work for CCAA and we are grateful for his contributions to chambers of commerce and chamber professionals in Alabama. While we are sad to see Jeremy leave CCAA, we know he will continue to achieve great things as he moves into his new position as director of the Governmental and Economic Development Institute at Auburn University.

Congratulations Jeremy! The board of directors of CCAA will miss you, but we wish you much success in this new chapter of your life!



**Red Roof Plus Inn & Suites/  
Baron Hospitality**

**Dianah Putman**

4985 Academy Court, Bessemer, AL 35022  
PH1: 205-771-9071 PH2: 270-366-3626  
Website: redroof.com \*Hotel

**Tuff Shed**

**Ron Adams**

3649 Pine Lane SE, Bessemer, AL 35022  
PH: 205-536-9430 Email: ronadams@tuffshed.com  
\*Manufacturer – Modular Buildings

**Amazon Fulfillment Center**

**Ryan Wilson  
CJ Mitchell**

975 Powder Plant Road, Bessemer, AL 35022  
PH: 205-761-5215 \*Distribution Center  
Email: wilsonrl@amazon.com; jrcdre@amazon.com



# COMMUNITY NEWS

## Smart Way to Grow Your Business During a Pandemic

With the business and the economy changed by COVID-19, there are still ways for you to grow your business during the pandemic. From pivoting sales and events virtually to ensuring your marketing efforts are carefully curated, there are several strategic ways to grow your business during a pandemic. At a time when many companies are working remotely, operating at limited capacity or shut down completely, it may seem like there are few, if any, opportunities to achieve business growth. Despite these setbacks, there are ways to make the most of the current circumstances and continue growing your business during the COVID-19 pandemic. Here are some things you can do to keep sales coming in and your customers and employees engaged, no matter where you (or they) are.

### Be Strategic About Your Digital Marketing Efforts

Although many digital marketing channels like blogs, email newsletters and social media are free or low-cost, businesses trying to grow right now must be strategic about the time and resources they dedicate to their marketing efforts.

"We have to be careful and resourceful with every dollar we invest in marketing. We do not have the luxury of trial and error; we have to execute every single time. Achieving awareness for a new non-essential brand in the middle of a pandemic is extremely challenging. We have to work harder ... to ramp up quickly." Keith Phillips, CEO of realLINGUA, agreed that carefully planned marketing campaigns are essential to business growth, especially in the current climate. More importantly, companies need to measure results to understand what is working and what is not. "The key for us has been ... tracking the effects of our marketing efforts and making constant adjustments according to what the data and customers are telling us," Phillips told CO—. "Of course, this is really marketing 101, but as a startup faced with unprecedented resource constraints due to the pandemic, we've had to get laser-focused more quickly than normal."

### Consider Your Customers' Perspective When Interacting With Them

Social media channels like Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, and LinkedIn have become even more important for brands that want to stay connected to their customer in the age of remote work and store closures.

To make the most of social media right now, identify your target customers and pay close attention to what they're saying and doing online. At a time when everyone is feeling uncertain about their health and the economy, you can stand out by responding to your customers' current needs and concerns and addressing things from their perspective.

"Look at your brand from the vantage point of the consumer," said Kohlenberg. "Are you different? Are you affordable? Does the market really need you? There is always opportunity for uniqueness and compelling products regardless of the economy, but in these times, it requires a careful and well-executed approach."

### Brush Up On Your Virtual Selling Skills

Most companies have shifted their sales processes into the virtual realm, but just because you are pitching over a Zoom call doesn't mean it's any less professional. Treat your virtual sales calls like in-person meetings and prioritize first impressions. Dress professionally, optimize your background and home office environment, and make sure your audio and video are clear for seamless communication.

When selling virtually, it helps to provide value up front. Be proactive and offer relevant, useful resources like tools, guides and workbooks to your prospects. This will keep you top of mind for your target customers, even if you do not close the sale right away — a challenge many startups are facing during the pandemic. "Our target markets became a bit slower in their purchase decisions, which then lengthened the sales cycles within ... our [business development] strategies," said Phillips. There is always opportunity for uniqueness and compelling products regardless of the economy, but in these times, it requires a careful and well-executed approach.

### Host Virtual Events That Will Interest And Educate Your Audience

Planning and hosting virtual events that are relevant to your target customers' needs is a great way to provide value while reaching people in the comfort of their homes. Of course, because these events are becoming commonplace, you will need to find ways to make your webinar stand out from the crowd. Create an interactive experience and, if budget allows, provide incentives such as giveaways and expert speakers to entice people to join. End your event with a clear call to action that will leave your audience feeling connected to your brand and willing to continue a relationship with you.

### Let Your Network Know What You're Doing

Business growth opportunities often present themselves when you know the right people. This is especially true during a global pandemic, when entrepreneurs are all trying to connect and help each other stay afloat. That's why Phillips recommends focusing on networking right now — not only in terms of building new, valuable connections, but keeping your existing contacts apprised of your current goals and progress. "We have [been] keeping all of our supporters, stakeholders and our angel investor updated ... on what we've been doing, the milestones we've been hitting, and our successes," he said. "The people 'in our corner,' so to speak, want to know about all of these things because they support us and believe in what we're trying to accomplish." The key, Phillips added, is to update but not inundate your network. Share your progress every once in a while, but do it "with a lot of tact and empathy that recognizes that things have been really, really difficult for everyone all around the globe," he said.

# CITY/COMMUNITY NEWS

## Bessemer Mayor Kenneth Gulley Delivers 2021 State of the City Address

By: Donald Jay Howton, *The Western Star*

"I report that the state of the city of Bessemer is strong and we thank God Almighty for His continued hand upon our city," so stated Bessemer Mayor Kenneth Gulley in his annual State of the City Address. This impressive virtual State of the City Address was given on Monday, February 22 at the Bessemer Recreation Center. With regard to industrial recruitment and job creation, Bessemer has become a leader in this region and state. Job growth has increased steadily since 2010. Mayor Gulley highlighted several new corporations that have located in Bessemer including Dollar General, Amazon, Blox, Milo's Tea, and FLEX-N-Gate. Today, Carvana, Lowe's, Amazon and Fed-Ex are constructing new facilities on Lakeshore Parkway and Morgan Road. To view the entire 2021 State of the City Address, visit the "City of Bessemer, Alabama" YouTube channel.



## Bessemer Police Department Welcomes New Supervisors!

Sgt. Ward, Sgt. Alford, Lt. Walls and Lt. Carmichael received their ranks in a promotional ceremony held at the Bessemer Recreation Center. Chief Michael Roper charged each one with being leaders within the department and the community. Each have been productive for the department and the community, serving in multiple assignments in their careers at the Bessemer Police Department.

## Need Rent or Mortgage Assistance?

If you or someone you know has lost income due to the COVID-19 pandemic - you or they may be eligible to receive financial assistance in paying your rent or mortgage. This assistance is available for families or individuals residing in Bessemer and surrounding areas.

The following information is required for financial assistance:

1. Proof of loss of wages due to COVID-19 (Letter proving layoff, furlough, or loss of job due to closure)
2. Photo ID
3. Copy of rent or mortgage agreement with late payment notice or eviction notice
4. Reside in 35020, 35021, 35022, 35023, 35006, 35111 or 35228.

Please contact Sebrina Davis at 205.425.4303, Monday - Friday between 9am -2pm for more information.



BESSEMER  
POLICE DEPARTMENT

IS NOW

# RECRUITING

NEW  
POLICE  
OFFICERS

BECOME A  
BESSEMER  
POLICE  
OFFICER  
TODAY!

- Pay incentives for Education and Experience
- Health, Dental, and Vision Plan
- Paid Vacation, Holiday, Personal, and Sick leave
- RSA State Retirement
- Opportunity for Overtime and Comp-Time
- Department issued Equipment, Duty Gear, Uniforms, and Patrol Vehicle
- Specialized unit opportunities to include Criminal Investigation Division, Vice/Narcotics Investigation, Interstate Criminal Enforcement, K9 Handler, Traffic Motorscouts, Special Response Team, and more!

**APPLY NOW AT:**  
<https://www.pbjcal.org/jobsquest/>



# 2021 CORPORATE SPONSORS

## PLATINUM SPONSOR



## GOLD SPONSORS



## SILVER SPONSORS



District Attorney  
Lynneice Washington

## SMALL BUSINESS PARTNERS

AMERICA'S FIRST FEDERAL CREDIT UNION

CHAMBERS FUNERAL HOME

COMFORT CARE HOME HEALTH AND HOSPICE

LEGACY YMCA

MARCO'S PIZZA

REGIONAL PARAMEDICAL SERVICES

STATE FARM INSURANCE, JULIE BELL, AGENT

WILLIAM PARSONS, CPA

# Bessemer

Area Chamber of Commerce

## 99<sup>TH</sup> Annual Meeting

### VIRTUAL PREMIERE

#### AGENDA

Mistress of Ceremony – Nicole Dudley

Invocation..... Reverend Reginald Calvert  
New Jerusalem Missionary Baptist Church

Welcome and Recognition of sponsors  
LATasha Cook-Williams IOM, President  
Bessemer Area Chamber of Commerce

Remarks.....Charles King, 2020 Chairman  
Regional Paramedical Services

2021 Plan of Action.....Carlton Jackson, Captain  
City of Bessemer Fire Department

Closing Remarks.....Mayor Kenneth Gulley  
City of Bessemer

Enjoy 2020 Year in Review Video

**Date: Thursday, March 4, 2021**

**Time: 12 PM**

**facebook  
Event**

Order lunch for you and/or your staff from one of our chamber members (*Bessemer Magazine / Website*) and enjoy the meeting.

Please share with your Facebook friends.





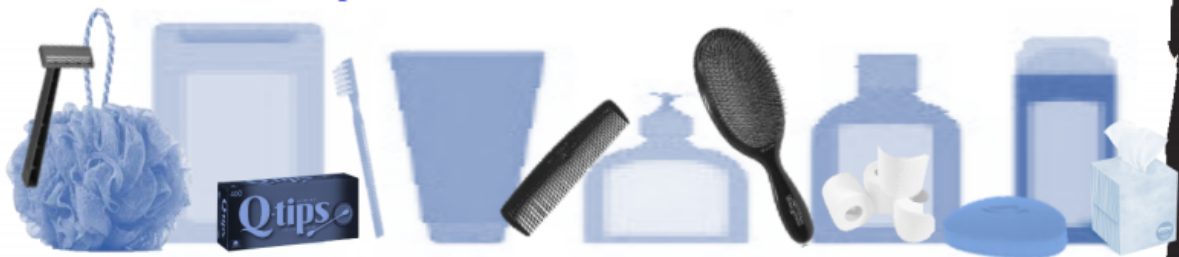
**Birmingham Police Department  
Community Outreach and Public Education Division  
In partnership with  
Bessemer Police Department, Bessemer District Attorney's Office, and  
Fraternal Order of Police Lodge #1  
Presents**

**Personal Hygiene Drive  
In honor of  
National Women's History Month**

**Collection Dates: March 1, 2021 through March 29, 2021**

**Tampons/Pads  
Gift cards  
Tissue  
Soap/body wash  
Liquid hand soap  
Washcloths  
Deodorant  
Comb/brush  
Toothbrush/toothpaste**

**Lotion  
Socks  
Razors  
Shampoo/conditioner  
Hand sanitizers  
Q-tips  
Laundry supplies  
Paper products**



**Drop-off Locations:**

**Police Headquarters: 1710 1<sup>st</sup> Avenue North, Birmingham, AL 35203  
North Precinct: 2600 31<sup>st</sup> Avenue North, Birmingham, AL 35207  
South Precinct: 1320 19<sup>th</sup> Street South, Birmingham, AL 35205  
East Precinct: 600 Red Lane Road, Birmingham, AL 35215  
West Precinct: 2236 47<sup>th</sup> Street Ensley, Birmingham, AL 35208  
City Jail: 425 6<sup>th</sup> Avenue South, Birmingham, AL 35205  
Bre's Restaurant: 5402 Bessemer Super Hwy, Brighton, AL 35020  
Bistro on 19<sup>th</sup>: 109 19<sup>th</sup> Street North, Bessemer, AL 35020  
Bessemer Police Department (Downtown location):  
23 15<sup>th</sup> Street North, Bessemer, AL 35020  
Bessemer Emergency Operation Center:  
651 9<sup>th</sup> Avenue Southwest, Bessemer, AL 35020**

