



## City of Phoenix

OFFICE OF THE POLICE CHIEF

June 5, 2020

Mr. Zuercher:

As we approach the end of fiscal year 2019-20, I want to look back and reflect on the progress made in the last 12 months by the Phoenix Police Department.

As an agency, we have worked diligently to meet the City's public safety needs while using the National Police Foundation recommendations as a guide to move forward, with a focus on greater transparency, improved training and providing mental health services.

As a Department, we have responded to nearly 900,000 calls for service in our community. With a fast-tracked roll out of more than 2,000 body-worn cameras, most of these interactions are now captured on camera, providing greater transparency and accountability.

In another move toward transparency, we initiated our Critical Incident Briefing videos. We are sharing with the public videos providing factual information, body-worn camera footage and 911 calls for all officer-involved shootings.

Studies prove tracking certain data can help reduce the number of officer-involved shootings. That is why we are now requiring officers to document every time they point their guns at people (PGP). We are analyzing this data to evaluate trends and provide further training.

A new department program supports individual crime victims or residents impacted by violent crime. Our Traumatic Incident Intervention Resources group responds to these crises, providing resources from mental health experts, detectives from our Community Response Squad and trained professionals from the Phoenix Fire Crisis Response Van.

We have taken multiple steps to address not only the mental health of our officers but also provide stronger services to community members in a mental health crisis. Internally, our nationally recognized Employee Assistance Unit is strengthening officer well-being. Externally, we've launched a new program where 911 dispatchers divert calls to the appropriate experts where mental health services would be more appropriate than police services. For the first time, we also have a medically trained behavioral health expert riding with officers from our Crisis Intervention Team.

The Police Academy is modernizing training to best prepare officers for the challenges and rewards of 21st century policing. This more contemporary training model focuses on building communication skills, empathy and stress management. We are confident this will give officers the tools to make well thought-out decisions in highly charged situations.

Phoenix is a fast-growing city, attracting people who want to live, work and play in a safe environment. With the appropriate resources, I am confident our organization can support the safety and security of all residents and visitors.

JERI L. WILLIAMS  
Phoenix Police Chief



## City of Phoenix

**To:** Milton Dohoney Jr.  
Assistant City Manager

**Date:** June 5, 2020

**From:** Jeri L. Williams  
Police Chief

**Subject:** POLICING INITIATIVES TO ENHANCE COMMUNITY TRUST – FY 2019-20

In the past 12 months, the Police Department (PD) has made significant advancements focused on enhancing trust within the community and strengthening police-community relationships. Many of the initiatives undertaken I outlined in my Five Point Plan, which was presented at the July 2, 2019 City Council Policy Session, while others resulted from recommendations contained in the 2019 National Police Foundation study, as well as best practices we've identified from across the country.

### **Modernize Technology and Processes**

**Body-Worn Cameras:** The PD expedited the rollout of body-worn cameras, and had outfitted all patrol first responders, sergeants, and the Crisis Intervention Team by August 2019. In subsequent months, the following specialty units were also outfitted with cameras.

- Drug Enforcement Bureau
- Motorcycle Officers
- Downtown Operations Unit
- Special Assignments Unit
- Canine Unit
- Fugitive Apprehension Squad
- Community Response Squad
- Community Engagement Bureau
- Neighborhood Enforcement Teams

There are currently more than 2,000 body-worn cameras deployed throughout the Department. On average, the PD uploads 5,244 body-worn camera video files per day with a cumulative total of 2,273,647 files (907.34TB) since the inception of the program. Prior to rollout, the PD gathered body-worn camera policy input from the community. The PD also updated the policy to more clearly specify when the camera should be activated, when it may be muted, and where to place the camera for best visibility. This policy (Operations Order 4.49) is posted publicly on the PD's website for review by the community. Of note, from May 28 to June 3, 2020, there have been 3,103 videos uploaded as a direct result of PD's interaction during the demonstrations downtown.

**Early Intervention System (EIS):** A team from PD and Information Technology Services (ITS) has been investigating new technology for an EIS. The PD currently uses an EIS system from CI Technologies. A request for information was published in October 2019 seeking information on new early intervention technologies. Responses were received from several vendors and a gap analysis was performed to assess current versus desired capabilities. Costs for a new system ranged from \$952,000 to \$2.08 million, which does not include personnel or additional hardware costs needed to support a new system.

Staff also reviewed the EIS system utilized by the Maricopa County Sheriff's Office (MCSO) as their system is also from CI Technologies. Unlike the PD system, the MCSO system is more robust and has been enhanced to provide more data elements. Based on the cost of a new EIS and timeline for implementation, a decision was made to work with the vendor of PD's existing system to provide upgrades at a significantly reduced cost, which are expected to be implemented in the coming months. Efforts will then be made to integrate the EIS with other PD

databases to develop a more robust program. The annual cost for all personnel (ITS and PD), hardware, maintenance, and software are anticipated to be about \$2.5 million per year. In the end, this was the least expensive option and the quickest path to implement a more comprehensive EIS system for the PD.

Tracking When Officers Draw their Weapons (PGP): In August 2019, the PD began documenting and tracking every incident involving an officer pointing a gun at a person. A daily internal report is generated documenting specific details associated with each incident and a public facing data dashboard is in development.

### **Traumatic Incident Intervention Resources (TIIR) and Transparency Efforts**

The PD recognizes the impact critical incidents such as officer involved shootings can have on maintaining or building trust within the community. In 2018, the City experienced 44 officer involved shootings (OIS), which was uncharacteristically high. As a result, a number of actions followed, to include an analysis of the 2018 use of deadly force incidents in Phoenix by the National Police Foundation. Among their findings, they identified a number of recommendations, which have either been or are in the process of being implemented. Many of those are highlighted throughout this memo. The City also formed the Traumatic Incident Intervention Resources (TIIR) Ad Hoc Committee in 2018 that resulted in the development of goals to address the needs of those who have been involved in or witnessed a traumatic event. Related initiatives implemented to enhance connectivity to resources and transparency are highlighted below. It should be noted the number of OIS incidents in Phoenix dropped to 15 in 2019, and there have been seven so far in 2020.

Community Assistance Program/ Community Response Units (CR Units): The Phoenix Fire Department and the PD have partnered to meet the needs of the community involved in a traumatic situation. The services consist of on-scene crisis intervention/stabilization, victim advocacy, occupant services, grief support, assessment of safety, assessment of needs, follow-up on high utilizers of the 9-1-1 system and short-term crisis counseling. The CR units have phone numbers for counseling, crisis hotlines, crisis services and other available community resources. A large part of the enhanced services is the CR units response to traumatic events and providing their services to both victims/witnesses in the area of the affected neighborhood as well as family of a community member involved in a PD related critical incident. This service works hand in hand with the PD's Critical Incident Outreach Team program. During FY 2019-20, CR Units have assisted with six OIS incidents.

Citywide Critical Incident Outreach Team: Provides critical incident outreach and information to support neighborhoods and individuals who have been recently impacted by a critical incident, typically an officer involved shooting. The team consists of Community Action Officers assigned to impacted precincts, Community Response Detectives, and a licensed professional counselor from the Fire Department Crisis Response Team. This team initiates contact and connects with the residents and businesses surrounding the critical incident area ensuring information is shared and community concerns and fears are addressed. The team provides connectivity to City resources including referrals to Risk Management and trauma informed care and support. During FY19-20, 160 residences and multiple businesses have been contacted. A procurement process is currently underway to establish a qualified vendor list to provide Critical Incident Stress Management Community Debriefing Services.

Critical Incident Briefing (CIB) Videos: The PD began producing CIB videos for public viewing to highlight known facts of critical incidents following their occurrence. The first of these videos was released in October 2019. The intent is to further enhance transparency between the PD and the public regarding these types of incidents. The CIB videos contain portions of 911 calls, radio transmissions, body-worn camera video, still photographs, narrative as well as other information that helps describe the incident. Because the investigations are in process at the time the videos are produced, they are not intended to draw conclusions concerning the actions of the officers involved in the incidents. Additionally, the videos do not replace the PD's initial briefings provided to the media. Staff will make every effort to have a final video prepared for review by the Police Chief within 45-60 days of the incident. Once approved for release the staff will notify the involved parties to include next of kin at least 24 hours in advance of public release. Related public records are released and made available to next of kin. All released video remains posted on the Department's designated website until 12 months after the Maricopa County Attorney's Office adjudicates the incident.

Police Transparency Webpage: This site was created and intended to inform and educate the public about certain high-profile incidents. Among the resources included is an overview of the Professional Standards Bureau and complaint process.  
<https://www.phoenix.gov/police/transparency>

Officer-Involved Shooting Incident Webpage: This site was created to inform and educate the public about the use of deadly force, specifically Officer-Involved Shootings (OIS), and related topics from the Phoenix Police Department. <https://www.phoenix.gov/police/oisinfo>.

Officer-Involved Shooting Incident Dashboard: Public information regarding officer-involved shooting (OIS) incidents are posted to a digital dashboard on Phoenix's Open Data portal. The public can review data collected on OIS incidents from January 2017 to present via bar graphs that illustrate key data elements. New data is added with regular updates.  
<https://opengov.civicedashboards.com/embed/0e2526>.

Review and Implementation Ad Hoc Committee: The PD has assigned two executive staff members to support this committee. The committee has met monthly since August 2019 to review past and current recommendations made to the Phoenix City Council and the PD related to strengthening the department and the relationship between the community and public safety officers. The committee has been provided information about the following five reports:

1. Chief Williams' 5-Point Plan presented at the July 2, 2019 Policy Session
2. National Police Foundation Report on officer involved shooting incidents
3. Community and Police Trust Initiative Report
4. Community Engagement and Outreach Task Force Report
5. Berkshire Advisors Report

Committee members have been provided with data, policies, training information, hiring packets and other relevant information in response to questions. Committee members were provided an opportunity to attend a Police Academy Experience.

Police Policy Input from Citizens: The PD has sought input from the PD Advisory Boards and other community members.

### **Improved Training**

The PD remains dedicated to providing the best and most advanced training in the country to our recruits and police officers. In 2019, the Phoenix Regional Police Academy transitioned to a new basic training format for recruits. Instead of mixing classes, Phoenix recruits are trained together. The classes allow for a more interactive training structure focused on communication, critical thinking and decision making. Highlights of the new structure include:

- A two-week pre-academy that covers the administrative courses, allowing additional proficiency and scenario-based training to be held in the actual academy.
- Some of the mandatory AZPOST curriculum is being transitioned to the e-Learning platform, which allows the recruit to learn the material at their own pace. This method has proven more effective and allows for an increased emphasis on proficiency and scenario-based training.
- The PD, in partnership with a research psychologist is using Versus headsets to measure the cognitive performance of recruits who undertake brain training exercises aimed at improving their cognitive abilities.
- The report writing curriculum has been modified to provide the recruit with additional training with an emphasis on chronological writing and accuracy. Recruits have exponentially more writing assignments aimed at skill development compared to past practices.
- As part of a recruits overall training, a two-week post academy has been incorporated into the FTO program. After 12 weeks of field training, recruits return to the academy for advanced skill builder training. This includes building searches, active shooter training, advanced high-risk vehicle stops and a defense tactics refresher. Additionally, recruits receive training related to crisis intervention and spend a shift at the CASS shelter learning about the available services to people in need.
- The amount of training from the PD's Employee Assistance Unit (EAU) has been increased to support the employees' health and wellbeing.

Advanced training: The PD implemented the following squad-based training to supplement other training cadres for all sworn personnel. All advanced, scenario-based training includes de-escalation and decision making as a component of the instruction.

- Threat identification scenarios cover defensive tactics to include different types of control techniques while limiting strikes and injury to both officers and subjects. There is a virtual training component that utilizes simulator equipment and scenarios where de-escalation techniques are employed. There is a Use of Force review which covers Operations Order 1.5, Use of Force, and discusses de-escalation and preclusion (considering all options), and shows videos of de-escalation tactics being used.
- Leadership training covers numerous aspects of leadership and focuses on tactical leadership during dynamic situations. It covers Use of Force and de-escalation and includes scenario-based training that employs de-escalation techniques and use of force options and when to use them. The training focus is on making the correct decision along with the use of the correct tools at the right time.
- A scenario-based training is completed in the Tactical Village and employs the use of stun bag shotguns, Tasers, and verbal communication. Generally, scenarios have a type of mental health crisis where negotiations and communication are needed, as well as de-escalation tools that make students decide which tool and best practices to utilize while deploying less lethal options. Scenario-based training is included in individual

squad- based training, individual tactical training assessment and development, and officer in training remedial assessments. The scenario-based training is conducted in the Tactical Village and with the PD's virtual equipment.

- Force options training includes defensive tactics that involve restraining and controlling combative subjects, virtual scenarios, and reality-based training scenarios. These include scenarios with subjects in mental crisis, de-escalation and negotiations, and short but quick drills where officers were required to identify objects/weapons in subjects' hands and make decisions quickly. In 2019 all of Patrol completed this training.

Promotional Training: Recognizing the need for continual training and mentoring the PD, along with the City's Human Resources Department revamped its promotional processes at both the Sergeant and Lieutenant levels to better reflect best practices. This includes providing pre-requisite training to applicants to ensure a basic level of understanding of the job expectations at the next level. This training combines both classroom/eLearning with practical hands-on training and assessment to judge the candidate's skill levels and ability to move forward in the promotional process.

Body-Worn Camera Training: Each sworn officer assigned to wear a body-worn camera completed training at the time they were issued the device.

eLearning Platform: The PD has continued to leverage the eLearning platform to deliver continuing education to Police employees. This allows the PD to push out certain types of training quickly and have staff complete the training quickly. Last July, a mandatory training module, "Communication in Volatile Incidents" was released through eLearning and completed by all sworn.

Taser Upgrade and Virtual Reality Headsets: With Council support, the PD is replacing its outdated Tasers with the latest technology and is using a new type of advanced technology to generate scenario-based training. Tasers provide a non-lethal alternative to police officers in high-risk situations to subdue actively aggressive, non-compliant, dangerous subjects. Deployment of the new technology and the related training has been completed in three precincts and is ongoing in the remaining precincts.

When the officers receive training on the new Taser, a portion of the training includes the use of Oculus Virtual Reality (VR) Headsets that can create life-like, reality-based scenarios. The VR training includes three scenarios with views from the police and subjects' perspectives. Each scenario begins at the perspective of a subject in mental crisis (schizophrenia, Autism and suicidal tendencies), followed by the perspective of the officer responding to the call for service. The scenarios pause for the officers at different points during the contact to allow them to make decisions regarding the interaction. These scenarios allow each officer to see how mental crisis situations appear from the subjects' perspectives, which can be invaluable when they encounter real-life situations on duty.

### **Implementation of Behavioral Health Best Practices**

The PD recognizes the need to improve our response to behavioral health issues within our community. Safety remains our top priority, and we will always respond when called. However, behavioral health issues in our community require a shared approach which includes families, care providers, and emergency services. Formalized Crisis Intervention Training (CIT) has been part of the Department since 2000. Currently, there are over 500 CIT certified officers, and over

300 of them are working in Patrol. A working group was identified and quickly assembled to evaluate our current model to seek solutions. The team is currently working to identify best practices and models from across the nation. The following have been implemented:

CPR Co-Responder Pilot: This PD partnership with Crisis Prevention and Recovery (CPR) began November 2019 to implement a co-responder pilot program. A clinician is assigned to the PD's CIT unit 40-hours per week and rides together in the same vehicle. The unit assists with crisis response and conducts follow up to those in need of resources.

One Mind Campaign: The PD committed to the International Association of Chiefs of Police (IACP) One Mind Campaign, an award winning, evidence-based training program for members of the community and law enforcement with the goal of ensuring successful interactions between police officers and persons affected by mental illness.

Meeting with Community: In September 2019, staff met with the PD Advisory Board members to discuss mental health issues, crisis response and treatment needs in the community along with, progress being made, and planned steps to further improve. Members requested additional mental health training for School Resource Officers (SROs). SRO's attended "Adolescent Mental Health Training" from the National Association of School Resource Officers (NASRO). Additional training opportunities are being considered.

Mobile Team Pilot: This pilot began March 2020 with two squads from Desert Horizon Precinct. The goal is to identify ways to improve the existing co-responder model with crisis mobile teams by collecting data on interactions between crisis teams and patrol officers. Arizona State University is assisting the CIT in evaluating the effectiveness of the program.

Smart Notifications for First Responders: This is a best practices model of an alert system for responding officers related to specific addresses. A resident may request a responding officer to be alerted that a resident at the address experiences cognitive health issues. This program is in the final stages of development and is expected to launch in the near future.

Patrol CIT Referral System: As of November 2019, officers may flag an incident for a CIT referral. CIT detectives are then notified of the need for possible mental health services. Referrals are worked by a contracted behavioral health clinician along with CIT detectives. There have been 167 referrals from patrol since December.

Communications Bureau Co-Location Project: In February 2019, crisis intervention and crisis system overview training was provided to 911 Communications Operators and Dispatchers. Staff can divert appropriate calls for service to the Crisis Response Network (CRN) rather than dispatch a police officer. Future plans will include a CRN Supervisor that will be co-located 20 hours per week in the call center to assist with decision-making and to serve as a liaison when diverting calls to CRN (this has been delayed due to the pandemic). In 2019, 1,648 calls were diverted to CRN.

Bloomberg Harvard City Leadership Initiative: Two PD executive staff members are part of the eight-member multi-agency team working to enhance the City response to people with behavioral health challenges. The team will engage an extended network of stakeholders to:

- Develop a plan to provide universal training to frontline city staff across departments to provide education, resources and response options when they encounter someone who may be in crisis with an emphasis on providing connection to services.
- Find ways to make more information available to community members about available resources and services.

### **Assess and Implement Best Practices**

The Chief and City staff traveled to a number of other cities within the past 12 months to include: Aurora, Denver, San Antonio and Houston to assess best practices in order to develop effective strategies to enhance trust and strengthen police-community relationships. Additional efforts have included:

Community Engagement Through Police Academy Experiences: The PD engages the public with an abbreviated version of the Citizen's Police Academy referred to as a Police Academy Experience. This program provides people from different segments of our community the opportunity to participate in hands-on, physical tactical experiences about split-second decision-making and police enforcement. Participants are educated about the structure and policies of the PD, as well as our community engagement activities and opportunities. There are several different experiences offered to appeal to the diversity of the community we serve. Along with the main Citizen Police Academy, which includes various stakeholders, the following experiences have been provided:

- Cops and Ques/Omega Youth Leadership Academy
- Millennial Police Academy
- Greater Phoenix Chamber Young Professionals
- African American Leadership Institute

Employee Wellness Resources: The PD has contracted with a psychological services provider to provide our employees with access to multiple psychologists, clinicians, and a host of services designed to meet the needs of the PD. By ensuring the health and wellbeing of our employees, we are better able to serve the community.

The PD remains a committed partner with our community. We will continue to seek opportunities for productive dialogue and meaningful changes to policies and practices that promote safety and community trust.