



CITY OF BUENA PARK

Police Department

Corey S. Sianez, Chief of Police

August 8, 2013

Honorable Thomas J. Borris, Presiding Judge
Orange County Superior Court
700 Civic Center Drive
Santa Ana, CA 92701

Re: 2012-2013 Orange County Grand Jury report, "To Protect and To Serve: A Look at Tools to Assist Law Enforcement in Achieving Positive Outcomes with the Homeless Mentally Ill"

Your Honor:

In accordance with California Penal Code Sections 933 and 933.05, the Buena Park Police Department responds to each of the findings and recommendations in the 2012-2013 Orange County Grand Jury report as follows:

Response to Findings

F1. Although POST requires continuing education in the area of dealing with individuals who are mentally ill, it does not specify the number of hours or frequency of officer training; nor does it require that such training be documented.

The Buena Park Police Department agrees with this finding, based on the Grand Jury's report.

F2. Field officers desire more in-depth training in dealing with the mentally ill on the street. (Interviews)

The Buena Park Police Department partially agrees with this finding.

The Buena Park Police Department sends all of its officers to interview and interrogation training and performs ongoing training on dealing with the homeless and/or mentally ill. As indicated in F6, there is a broad spectrum of ongoing training provided to patrol officers in order to develop their abilities and strategies in dealing with the mentally ill. For example, since 2008, 1,487 law enforcement officers throughout Orange County, *including* Buena Park, have attended a 16-hour POST and STC approved Crisis Intervention Training session. The goal of this training is to provide a basic understanding of mental health issues, to examine how they intersect with law enforcement, and to provide alternative ideas for responding to the mentally ill.

There are probably some field officers who desire more training in this specific area, but there are probably more that do not. Providing additional training to our officers would be a burden on staffing and our budget at a time when our overtime and staffing have been reduced.

F3. There is one officer – in a very few instances two officers – for every one-thousand (1,000) citizens in a given city within the County who are expected to deal with the full range of law enforcement issues of that city.

The Buena Park Police Department agrees with this finding, based on the Grand Jury's report.

F4. Nationally accredited police departments police less than 10% of Orange County cities.

The Buena Park Police Department agrees with this finding, based on the Grand Jury's report.

F5. Not all Orange County cities have at least one officer trained in Crisis Intervention.

The Buena Park Police Department agrees with this finding, based on the Grand Jury's report.

F6. There is a broad spectrum of ongoing training provided to patrol officers in order to develop their abilities and strategies in dealing with the mentally ill. Some departments provide minimal training; others have comprehensive programs in place.

The Buena Park Police Department agrees with this finding, based on the Grand Jury's report.

F7. Five departments have their patrol officers ride periodically with the homeless liaison officer. Seventeen do not.

The Buena Park Police Department agrees with this finding, based on the Grand Jury's report.

F8. Departments are reaching out – or beginning to reach out – to neighboring departments and to other skilled professionals, both in dialogue about the mentally ill and homeless issues in their cities, and to learn more effective strategies in dealing with these individuals.

The Buena Park Police Department agrees with this finding.

F9. All police departments believe that ongoing training should be supported by Mental Health Services Act funding.

The Buena Park Police Department agrees with this finding.

F10. All police departments adhere to written policy, procedure and/or protocol regarding contact with mentally ill persons.

The Buena Park Police Department partially agrees with this finding, and can only attest on its own behalf.

F11. Policy and lawmakers in the County of Orange continue to examine Laura's Law in light of its potential impact on the mentally ill and all citizens for positive outcomes.

The Buena Park Police Department agrees with this finding, based on the Grand Jury's report.

Response to Recommendations

R1. Require specific continuing education for all police officers and sheriff's deputies in interacting with the mentally ill and homeless population:


- Orange County City Police Chiefs and the Sheriff-Coroner shall corroborate with the Orange County Chiefs and Sheriff's Association to set the type, hours and frequency of this supplemental training:
 - Include Crisis Intervention Training (perhaps the Memphis model);
 - Training is to be documented. (F1, F2, F3, F4, F5, F6, F7, F8, F10)

This recommendation is currently being discussed by the Orange County Chiefs of Police & Sheriff's Association. As for documentation, all of the Buena Park Police Department's training is documented and any and all future training that personnel receive will continue to be documented.

R2. All Orange County City Police Departments and the Sheriff's Department shall be accredited with a national accreditation agency within five (5) years. (F4)

This recommendation should be an individual decision for each department; however, the Buena Park Police Department is already in the process of CALEA Accreditation.

Sincerely,



Corey S. Sianez
Chief of Police

CSS:cm

cc: Orange County Grand Jury
700 Civic Center Drive West
Santa Ana, CA 92701