



Grand Jury <grandjury@scgrandjury.org>

City of Scotts Valley Chief of Police Response Packet

1 message

Stephen D. Walpole <swalpole@scottsvalley.org>
To: "grandjury@scgrandjury.org" <grandjury@scgrandjury.org>

Mon, Jul 2, 2018 at 11:38 AM

Ms. Tobin

I have attached my response as a Word Document. I want to thank you and all the members of the grand jury who put in so much time to look into this issue.

Chief Steve Walpole
Scotts Valley Police Department
831-440-5670

 **MentalHealthCrisis_SVCoP_ResponsePacket.docx**
98K



**The 2017–2018 Santa Cruz County Civil Grand Jury
Requests that the
City of Scotts Valley Chief of Police
Respond to the Findings and Recommendations
Specified in the Report Titled
Mental Health Crisis
Seeking An Integrated Response
by July 16, 2018**

When the response is complete, please

1. Email the completed Response Packet as a file attachment to grandjury@scgrandjury.org, and
2. Print and send a hard copy of the completed Response Packet to

The Honorable Judge John Gallagher
Santa Cruz Courthouse
701 Ocean St.
Santa Cruz, CA 95060

Instructions for Respondents

California law PC §933.05 (included [below](#)) requires the respondent to a Grand Jury report to comment on each finding and recommendation within a report. Explanations for disagreements and timeframes for further implementation or analysis must be provided. Please follow the format below when preparing the responses.

Response Format

1. For the Findings included in this Response Packet, select one of the following responses and provide the required additional information:
 - a. **AGREE** with the Finding, or
 - b. **PARTIALLY DISAGREE** with the Finding and specify the portion of the Finding that is disputed and include an explanation of the reasons therefor, or
 - c. **DISAGREE** with the Finding and provide an explanation of the reasons therefor.
2. For the Recommendations included in this Response Packet, select one of the following actions and provide the required additional information:
 - a. **HAS BEEN IMPLEMENTED**, with a summary regarding the implemented action, or
 - b. **HAS NOT YET BEEN IMPLEMENTED BUT WILL BE IMPLEMENTED IN THE FUTURE**, with a timeframe or expected date for implementation, or
 - c. **REQUIRES FURTHER ANALYSIS**, with an explanation and the scope and parameters of an analysis or study, and a timeframe for that analysis or study; this timeframe shall not exceed six months from the date of publication of the grand jury report, or
 - d. **WILL NOT BE IMPLEMENTED** because it is not warranted or is not reasonable, with an explanation therefor.

If you have questions about this response form, please contact the Grand Jury by calling 831-454-2099 or by sending an email to grandjury@scgrandjury.org.

Findings

F1. The 24-hour Crisis Intervention Training course has given law enforcement responders additional tools for dealing with people in crisis, resulting in less use of force.

AGREE

PARTIALLY DISAGREE – explain the disputed portion

DISAGREE – explain why

Response explanation (required for a response other than **Agree**):

Initiated in 2017, Crisis Intervention Training (CIT) is a joint project of Santa Cruz County, the Santa Cruz County Health Services Agency and the National Alliance on Mental Illness. Modeled on successful systems used throughout the United States, CIT offers local law enforcement officers a multidisciplinary approach to addressing mental health-related encounters in the field approved by the California Commission on Peace Officer Standards and Training. We regard CIT as an important component of all law enforcement officers' training regimens. While the goal of CIT is to increase safety of encounters for the public and law enforcement officers, we do not yet have sufficient data to make conclusions about whether the training has yet resulted in less use of force.

F2. Adding more mental health liaisons and increasing their hours of availability would increase the benefit of this program to law enforcement and people in crisis.

AGREE

PARTIALLY DISAGREE – explain the disputed portion

DISAGREE – explain why

Response explanation (required for a response other than **Agree**):

F3. Having law enforcement be the primary responder to non-threatening 9-1-1 EDP calls reduces the overall availability of law enforcement to the community.

AGREE

PARTIALLY DISAGREE – explain the disputed portion

DISAGREE – explain why

Response explanation (required for a response other than **Agree**):

F4. The Mobile Emergency Response Team (MERT) is not accessible through 9-1-1, resulting in overuse of law enforcement.

AGREE

PARTIALLY DISAGREE – explain the disputed portion

DISAGREE – explain why

Response explanation (required for a response other than **Agree**):

While we agree that the MERT is not accessible through 9-1-1, we do not consider dispatching public safety officers to any 9-1-1 mental health crisis call to be "overuse." We encourage residents to call 9-1-1 in many instances even if they are unsure whether an emergency situation exists. Police Officers frequently respond to calls for service that turn out to not pose imminent threats to life, safety or property, or even require any law enforcement attention. Even so, we do not consider these calls to be "overuse" of public safety resources.

Determining potential threats based on a mental health-related 9-1-1 call, particularly one from family or loved ones in obvious distress, can be difficult in even the best of circumstances. In these cases, we would not consider dispatching a police officer to these incidents to be an "overuse" of resources should the call turn out to require a strictly clinical response.

Recommendations

R1. The County Health Services Agency and the County’s five law enforcement agencies should create a plan to make mental health liaisons available to respond to 9-1-1 EDP calls at all hours in all jurisdictions. (F2)

- HAS BEEN IMPLEMENTED** – summarize what has been done
- HAS NOT BEEN IMPLEMENTED BUT WILL BE IMPLEMENTED IN THE FUTURE** – summarize what will be done and the timeframe
- REQUIRES FURTHER ANALYSIS** – explain scope and timeframe (not to exceed six months)
- WILL NOT BE IMPLEMENTED** – explain why

Response explanation, summary, and timeframe:

While having a team of round-the-clock mental health liaisons operating in all jurisdictions within Santa Cruz County is an admirable goal, we believe the skillful application of existing resources to their best possible use is sufficient to address the mental health and public safety needs of our community.

We value our partnerships with our local law enforcement agencies, and we have worked closely together to address the very significant and difficult issues raised by the Grand Jury. Based on the Sheriff’s Office data supplied to the Health Services Agency, very few EDP calls are currently received overnight. We will continue to make data-driven staffing decisions in conjunction with our partners, and should the need for reevaluation occur, we will do so.

R2. The County Health Services Agency and the County’s five law enforcement agencies should create a plan to make MERT available to respond to 9-1-1 EDP calls at all hours in all jurisdictions. (F3-F5)

- HAS BEEN IMPLEMENTED** – summarize what has been done
- HAS NOT BEEN IMPLEMENTED BUT WILL BE IMPLEMENTED IN THE FUTURE** – summarize what will be done and the timeframe
- REQUIRES FURTHER ANALYSIS** – explain scope and timeframe (not to exceed six months)
- WILL NOT BE IMPLEMENTED** – explain why

Response explanation, summary, and timeframe:

The County has in place existing agreements allowing MERT units to co-respond to calls alongside our officers in Scotts Valley once a scene has been secured. However, there no plans to increase staffing or implement policy changes allowing MERT teams to respond to calls in our jurisdiction at all hours.

Due to the costs associated with MERT it has not proven to be a perfect fit for our agency due our limited resources and the small number of EDP 9-1-1 calls in our jurisdiction. The Scotts Valley Police Department does not plan to expand the MERT program nor implement changes allowing them to serve as primary responders to EDP 9-1-1 calls.

R3. The County Health Services Agency, the County’s five law enforcement agencies, and Santa Cruz Regional 9-1-1 should develop a dispatch plan that classifies 9-1-1 EDP calls as threatening (the subject presents a danger to others) or nonthreatening (the subject does not present a danger to others). (F5)

- HAS BEEN IMPLEMENTED** – summarize what has been done
- HAS NOT BEEN IMPLEMENTED BUT WILL BE IMPLEMENTED IN THE FUTURE** – summarize what will be done and the timeframe
- REQUIRES FURTHER ANALYSIS** – explain scope and timeframe (not to exceed six months)
- WILL NOT BE IMPLEMENTED** – explain why

Response explanation, summary, and timeframe:

While it is possible to identify EDP 9-1-1 calls as threatening based on caller information, we would be reluctant to classify calls as non-threatening based on information provided by callers involved in these highly emotional situations. At this time, we are unwilling to substitute a dispatch plan for the judgments and expertise of police officers in the field.

The Scotts Valley Police Department feels that if a situation has escalated to a point that a member of the public feels the need to call 9-1-1, the initial responders in all situations should be our police officers. Following an on-scene assessment, the Scotts Valley Police Department can make the full range of County mental health services available to the parties involved.

R4. Santa Cruz Regional 9-1-1 should dispatch MERT with a law enforcement liaison in response to non-threatening 9-1-1 EDP calls. (F5)

HAS BEEN IMPLEMENTED – summarize what has been done

HAS NOT BEEN IMPLEMENTED BUT WILL BE IMPLEMENTED IN THE FUTURE – summarize what will be done and the timeframe

REQUIRES FURTHER ANALYSIS – explain scope and timeframe (not to exceed six months)

WILL NOT BE IMPLEMENTED – explain why

Response explanation, summary, and timeframe:

Following initial on-scene assessments by police officers the MERT teams are available to respond. The Scotts Valley Police Department does not believe those teams should be co-dispatched, particularly when a mental health liaison is available, due to previously documented concerns outlined in R3.