



September 23, 2020

The Honorable Kirk H. Nakamura  
Presiding Judge  
Superior Court of California, Orange County  
700 Civic Center Drive West  
Santa Ana, CA 92701

RE: Response of City of Buena Park and Buena Park Police Department to 2019-2020 Orange County Grand Jury Report, "*Protecting Those Who Protect and Serve.*"

Dear Honorable Judge Nakamura:

On behalf of the City of Buena Park, thank you for the opportunity to respond to the 2019-2020 Orange County Grand Jury Report, "*Protecting Those Who Protect and Serve.*" The responses contained in this letter are in accordance with California Penal Code Sections 933 and 933.05. They were approved by the Buena Park City Council during regular session on September 22, 2020.

#### FINDINGS

F.1. *Peer Support Programs are effective in helping Peace Officers develop healthy coping techniques for themselves and their families.*

Response: The City of Buena Park agrees with this finding.

F.3. *The benefits in the peer support statute, effective January 1, 2020, are important to Peace Officers and Peer Support Team members.*

Response: The City of Buena Park agrees with this finding.

F.4. *It is important that Peer Support Team members receive periodic training.*

Response: The City of Buena Park agrees with this finding.

F.5. *Allocating a specific budget line item for Peer Support Programs help ensure adequate training and continuation of the programs.*

Response: The City of Buena Park agrees with this finding.

F.6. *Continuous communication to Peace Officers about the Peer Support Programs is important to increase awareness and use of the Peer Support Programs.*

Response: The City of Buena Park agrees with this finding.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

*R.2. The 2019-2020 Orange County Grand Jury recommends that all Peer Support Programs be in compliance with the peer support statute.*

Response: The City of Buena Park has implemented this recommendation. Buena Park Police Department established its first peer support team, Trauma Support, in July of 1998. Trauma Support's primary purpose is to provide all police department employees with access to peer support through times of crisis. Over the subsequent years, Trauma Support underwent a name change (Peer Support), but its purpose remained unchanged. BPPD recognizes and values the importance of peer support for the mental well-being of its employees, and its peer support program is in full compliance with the statute.

*R.3. The 2019-2020 Orange County Grand Jury recommends that Peer Support Team members receive periodic training and that completion of training is documented.*

Response: The City of Buena Park has implemented this recommendation. All current Peer Support Team members have attended the basic peer support training class and completion of this training is documented. Due to COVID-19, BPPD is having ongoing discussions about adapting training methods to reflect the current challenges. Implementing virtual training classes in order to meet the ongoing training recommendation is one possible solution. Ultimately, the police department's goal is to require quarterly documented training for Team members. This training might consist of going to a class, meeting and reviewing a case study, or having in-house personnel conducting training on a relevant topic. BPPD is committed to providing Peer Support Team members with access to the best possible training and resources irrespective of unexpected circumstances such as COVID-19.

*R.4. The 2019-2020 Orange County Grand Jury recommends that all law enforcement agencies allocate a specific budget line item for their Peer Support Program.*

Response: The City of Buena Park has not implemented this recommendation, but will implement it in the future. Currently, the Peer Support program is primarily funded by patrol budget 650402, used for call-ins or training that requires overtime. A specific budget line item for peer support will be added in next year's budget. The City will allocate a specific budget line item for the police department's Peer Support program by FY 21-22 budget adoption.

The City is deeply appreciative of the efforts of the Orange County Grand Jury, and hopes that this response is helpful. Should you have any questions or need additional information, please contact City Manager, Aaron France at (714) 562-3555 or at [afrance@buenapark.com](mailto:afrance@buenapark.com).

Sincerely,



Fred R. Smith  
Mayor

cc: Orange County Grand Jury  
The Honorable City Council, City of Buena Park  
Aaron France, City Manager, City of Buena Park  
Corey Sianez, Police Chief, City of Buena Park