



City of Brea

November 12, 2020

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

RE: City of Brea Response to 2019 – 2020 Grand Jury Report: “Protecting Those Who Protect and Serve”

Dear Judge Nakamura:

On behalf of the City of Brea, thank you for the opportunity to respond to the Orange County Grand Jury Report entitled, “Protecting Those Who Protect and Serve”. In compliance with California Penal Code sections 933 and 933.05, the City has responded to each of the findings and recommendations included in the report. Each finding and recommendation are listed below, followed by the City’s response.

FINDINGS

F1. *Peer Support Programs are effective in helping Peace Officers develop healthy coping techniques for themselves and their families.*

Response: The City of Brea agrees with this finding. Approximately 15 years ago, the Brea Police Department began a Peer Support program. At that time, Police Management saw a disturbing national trend in law enforcement: a sharp increase in police officer suicides. This trend, coupled with the desire to provide employees with an outlet for crises, gave birth to our Peer Support Program. The Program continues today with approximately 10 members, including sworn officers, dispatchers, evidence personnel, and chaplains.

In addition to the Peer Support Program, the City of Brea participates in the Employee Assistance Program. Every city employee, including those in the police department, have access to mental health professionals and other professional resources (e.g., legal assistance, parenting advice, eldercare, and financial counseling).

City Council

Marty Simonoff
Mayor

Steven Vargas
Mayor Pro Tem

Cecilia Hupp
Council Member

Christine Marick
Council Member

Glenn Parker
Council Member

- F2. *A written policy documenting each agency's Peer Support Program helps ensure the program's continuation after changes in staff.***

Response: The City of Brea agrees with this finding. Brea Police Department Lieutenant Phil Rodriguez, Professional Standards, is currently working on the implementation of a Peer Support Policy, which has a target completion date of January 1, 2021.

- F3. *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 Brea agrees with this finding.

- F4. *It is important that Peer Support Team members receive periodic training.***

Response: The City of Brea agrees with this finding. Once the Brea Police Department selects a new member of the Peer Support Team, the Department makes every effort to send new members to Basic Peer Support Training. Over the last four years, the Brea Police Department has sent five new members to Basic Peer Support Training.

- F5. *Allocating a specific budget line item for Peer Support Programs help ensure adequate training and continuation of the programs.***

Response: The City of Brea agrees with this finding. Currently, the City of Brea does not have a line item budget devoted solely to Peer Support; however, we agree this would help to ensure members attend the required classes, ongoing training, and conferences. Budget constraints have had an adverse effect on this goal for the past couple of years.

- F6. *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 Brea agrees with this finding. Every new officer hired participates in a "Phase 1" training program. During that time, members of our Peer Support Team present an overview of the services provided by Peer Support. This is a new hire's first exposure to Peer Support. The Brea Police Department also participates in a Family Support Program run by the spouses of our officers. We use the Phase 1 training process to connect the families of new hires with the families of veteran police officers. It is

important that all members of the organization, and their families, know that there are resources available to support them.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- R1. *The 2019-2020 Orange County Grand Jury recommends that the four law enforcement agencies without a written policy on their Peer Support Program institute a policy.***

Response: As stated in our F2 response, the police department is currently working on the implementation of this policy, which has a target completion date of January 1, 2021.

- R2. *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 Brea has implemented this recommendation. Fifteen years ago, the Brea Police Department saw the need to have an internal group who could assist members through times of crisis. This work continues today.

- R3. *The 2019-2020 Orange County Grand Jury recommends that Peer Support Team members receive periodic training and that completion of training is documented.***

Response: This recommendation has been implemented. All members of Peer Support are encouraged to attend the Basic Peer Support Training shortly after becoming a member of the Peer Support Team.

- R4. *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: This recommendation has not yet been implemented. Budgetary constraints have made this challenging; however, the City recognizes the value of this program and the corresponding training. Currently, monies spent on Peer Support come from our training budget. A budget line item will be explored for next budget year.

The City of Brea thanks the Orange County Grand Jury for recognizing the importance of supporting all of those involved in Public Safety and appreciates this opportunity to respond to the

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report, "Protecting Those Who Protect and Serve". Should you have any further questions about the information provided herein, please do not hesitate to contact me at (714) 990-7711, or by e-mail at billga@cityofbrea.net.

Respectfully submitted,



Bill Gallardo
City Manager

cc: Orange County Grand Jury
Brea City Council
Acting Police Chief Adam Hawley
Lieutenant Phil Rodriguez, Professional Standards