



**MEMORANDUM**

To: Councilmember Lorena González, Chair  
Gender Equity, Safe Communities, New Americans and Education Committee  
Kirstan Arestad, Council Central Staff Director

From: Assistant Chief Adrian Diaz  
Seattle Police Department

Date: April 17, 2019

Subject: SPD Report on CSO Program Development and Implementation (GS 38-5-A-2)

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Pursuant to Green Sheet 38-5-A-2, adopted with the 2019-20 Adopted Budget, the Seattle Police Department (SPD) has developed the attached report for review by the Gender Equity, Safe Communities, New Americans and Education Committee and the Council Central Staff Director.

This report describes the day-to-day operations of a reinstated Community Service Officer (CSO) program and reflects on the following considerations (from the Green Sheet):

- A strategy for proactive, neighborhood engagement, particularly in neighborhoods that have a high representation of people of color or high concentration of unsheltered individuals (who are disproportionately people of color); including whether there will be a target for proactive work and whether proactive work will be tracked in the CAD/RMS as it is with SPD officers.
- A commitment to serving unsheltered populations as a specific duty that would supplement the work of officers that come into contact with unsheltered persons (not necessarily as dedicated programmatic staff to the broader homelessness issue).
- A commitment to serving communities of color and immigrant and refugee populations with a culturally competent approach.
- Clear criteria for when CSOs will be deployed to respond to an officer's request; including some indication of when CSOs will be logged into the CAD as a resource available to Patrol.

In addition, the department has included its final report on the community engagement and racial equity toolkit that was conducted in partnership with the Seattle Office for Civil Rights in 2017. The community and stakeholder feedback collected at over 30 meetings has been woven into all aspects of the CSO program design.

We look forward to realizing the benefit of many months of work to implement this community-centric program in a way that promotes community collaboration for the purpose of improving public safety and wellness.

cc: City Councilmembers  
Mike Fong, Deputy Mayor  
Ben Noble, Budget Director  
Angela Socci, Interim Chief Financial Officer  
Mark Baird, Interim Chief Operating Officer  
Jennifer Devore, City Budget Office  
Kara Main-Hester, City Budget Office

## **Response to GS 38-5-A-2, SPD Report on the Community Service Officer Program**

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The Seattle Police Department's (SPD) Community Service Officer (CSO) program operated for thirty-three years until its discontinuation in 2004 due to budget cuts. Prompted by considerable community interest in the program's revival, SPD requested funding to reinstate the program during 2017-18 Biennial Budget process. Shortly thereafter, the Chinatown-International District Public Safety Task Force issued a formal recommendation for the reinstatement of the CSO program in their June 2016 report.

In the 2017-18 Biennial Budget, the Seattle City Council set aside funding for CSO program development in 2017 and initial implementation in the second quarter of 2018. Pursuant to Council Green Sheet No. 405-1-A-1, in 2017 Mayor Ed Murray established an IDT to be chaired by Chief Kathleen O'Toole and comprised of representatives from various City departments, including the Mayor's Office (MO), Seattle City Council (LEG), Seattle Police Department (SPD), Seattle Department of Neighborhoods (DON), Seattle Office for Civil Rights (SOCR), Seattle Human Services Department (HSD), Office of Immigrant and Refugee Affairs (OIRA), and City Budget Office (CBO).

In 2017, SPD signed an Interagency Agreement with SOCR to conduct a racial equity analysis and assist with community engagement. Per the agreement, SOCR contributed staff to support the community engagement effort and implementation of a Racial Equity Toolkit; designed and led focus group sessions and stakeholder interviews; administered an online community survey; and prepared a draft report. Together, SPD and SOCR presented and solicited community input from over four hundred community members at thirty meetings.

The department has prepared a Community Engagement Report, attached as Appendix A, that describes the collaborative community engagement process and documents the community input that contributed to every aspect of the CSO program development.

### **1. CSO Program Design Summary**

The SPD CSO Unit will be staffed by non-commissioned officers who are trained and work as liaison personnel between the community and the Police Department. CSOs will not carry weapons nor enforce criminal laws. Instead, they will serve to bridge the service gap on non-criminal calls for service and perform a variety of public safety-related community service and outreach work.

The CSO Unit will be a unique community resource that can respond to and address public safety concerns that do not immediately require a police officer or other agency response. The CSOs will provide information and service referrals to individuals who have been contacted by the police. They will maintain an excellent working knowledge of available services and resources, which make them ideal "system navigators." They will receive training in police operations, social work, de-escalation, conflict resolution and mediation, crisis intervention, institutional racism and cultural competency, using internal and external training channels. They will develop community partnerships to support increased collaboration between SPD and the community for the purpose of leveraging community strengths and identifying alternative strategies to various law enforcement and social issues.

CSOs will work assigned areas of the city on foot or in marked CSO vehicles, responding to radio dispatched calls for service. CSOs may assist with mediating non-violent disputes (e.g., family, neighborhood and landlord/tenant) and provide follow-up on calls for non-criminal emergency services (e.g., food, housing, transportation and social services). CSOs will work closely with dispatchers, police officers, parking

enforcement officers, crime prevention personnel and various social service agencies to coordinate police and social services and exchange information.

At full implementation, SPD plans to deploy 10 CSOs and 2 CSO Supervisors across two shifts, up to six days a week, Monday through Saturday, excluding Sundays and holidays. Calls for service will be received and dispatched through the CSO office or by police officer referral through the Communications Center. CSOs will be easily identified by a clearly marked “soft” uniform (e.g., collared shirt with “Community Service Officer” in bold letters on back). They will drive vehicles marked with SPD CSO emblems.

The CSOs will report to a central command and location to encourage collaboration amongst the unit personnel and ensure consistent training, supervision, and oversight. They will be housed in the Community Outreach section, collocated with the department’s civilian Crime Prevention Coordinators, who work closely with the community to develop and implement crime prevention strategies and promote community safety through public education, community organizing, and information sharing.

Given the expertise that this group will surely develop on the job, there is an opportunity for CSOs to be deployed on a short-term basis to assist or advise on specific projects. However, the department believes that the scope of the program should not be exclusively limited to a single issue-area (e.g., homeless outreach). As stated above, the CSOs will work closely with dispatchers, police officers, parking enforcement officers, crime prevention personnel, and various social service agencies to coordinate police and social services and exchange information – including, but not limited to the Navigation Team and the Crisis Response Unit.

The CSO program will be rolled out over several months, with full implementation scheduled for the fourth quarter of 2019.

## **2. CSO Program Implementation**

Since the Council passed the subject Green Sheet, SPD has continued to refine the CSO program details in preparation for program implementation in 2019. The department identified the Police Sergeant who will oversee the CSO Unit. Since January, the Sergeant has initiated the development of the job announcement, recruitment and hiring strategies, unit policies, training curricula and onboarding materials. These additional program details are discussed below.

### Recruitment / Hiring:

The SPD is working with Seattle Department of Neighborhoods (DON) to develop a comprehensive outreach strategy to recruit a diverse applicant pool that is representative of the communities the CSO Unit will serve. The department plans to post the job announcement on May 1, 2019. Prior to that date, the department will contact the various community groups that provided input during the above-referenced engagement process, either directly or through SOCR, to request assistance with the wide distribution of the job advertisement. A complete list of the community groups is included in *Appendix A – Community Engagement Report*. In addition, SPD recruiters will be provided materials related to the CSO recruitment effort for distribution at planned recruiting events. In 2018, SPD recruiters participated in over 100 community outreach / recruiting events.

Deployment:

CSOs will work staggered shifts for evening and weekend coverage. The department plans to deploy two squads Monday through Friday (1030-1900) and Tuesday through Saturday (1200-2030).

Both squads will be stationed at the Seattle Justice Center (610 5th Ave), a central location conducive to efficient and effective deployment of a city-wide resource, like the CSO Unit. CSOs will have assigned tasks and duties throughout their work shift. Their time will be split between three categories of work: 1) community engagement and education, 2) system navigation, and 3) youth services and diversion. CSOs will be dispatched by radio through the SPD's Computer Aided Dispatch (CAD) system.

Training:

To ensure CSOs have the skills necessary to provide these services, they will receive comprehensive training in police operations, social issues, de-escalation, conflict resolution and mediation, crisis intervention, institutional racism and cultural competency. The list below represents a sample of known courses available to new CSOs during their onboarding.

- CSO Academy
- Radio Procedures
- Geography
- Bias-Free Policing
- De-escalation
- SMCs / RCWs
- Crisis Intervention
- Domestic Violence
- Traffic Assistance (e.g., Flagging)
- Emergency Vehicle Operation Course (EVOC)
- Computer Aided Dispatch (CAD)
- Records Management System (Mark 43)
- Defensive Tactics
- Wellness (For contact with homeless/elderly/vulnerable members of the community)
- Community Policing (For interactions at events and members of the public)
- First Aid (CSOs represent SPD and should have basic CPR/First aid to assist the public)

In the future, SPD will implement a field training model to train new CSOs. At the program's inception, the department will rely on internal and external training to prepare the first batch of CSOs to execute their job duties in a competent and professional manner. In the early stages of the program, the CSO Supervisors will be tasked with developing a field training program and corresponding curriculum. It will be modeled after the field training model used by the former CSO Unit as well as the existing field training program for new officers. In the meantime, the CSO Supervisors will create and maintain a professional and constructive atmosphere for daily on-the-job training. They will also be responsible for providing consistent, honest, objective assessments of individual CSO performance.

Vehicles:

SPD is currently working with Fleets to identify existing vehicles for use by the CSO Unit, consistent with the Executive Order related to fleet reduction. CSOs will need transportation to deploy to all areas of the city. The department plans to deploy CSOs in clearly marked vehicles that distinguish them from sworn patrol officers.

### Uniforms:

CSO uniforms shall undergo a comprehensive analysis before final selection. The CSO uniform will be clearly distinguished from sworn patrol officers. CSOs will be outfitted in a polo shirt, tactical pant and appropriate footwear. CSOs will be in the public representing the SPD. Personal protective equipment, if any, will be thoroughly evaluated prior to final selection.

### **3. SPD Response to Required Green Sheet Elements**

The Council Green Sheet required consideration of four program elements. The department has contemplated each and has provided a response below.

*A strategy for proactive, neighborhood engagement, particularly in neighborhoods that have a high representation of people of color or high concentration of unsheltered individuals (who are disproportionately people of color); including whether there will be a target for proactive work and whether proactive work will be tracked in the CAD/RMS as it is with SPD officers.*

#### SPD Response:

- The CSO unit will be deployed citywide.
- The unit will build on engagement strategies that are already in effect in neighborhoods with a high representation of people of color or unsheltered individuals. They may augment, but will not duplicate existing efforts.
- The CSO unit's activities may be tracked and measured using new and/or existing department information management systems, such as Mark 43 and CAD.
- CSOs will record citizen contacts and events not logged to CAD.
- The work of the CSOs will be divided between community education and education (proactive), system navigation (reactive), and youth services (proactive/reactive).
- It will be difficult to track CSO work in the same way we track Police Officer proactive time because it is unlikely the CSOs will be logged into CAD for the duration of every shift, especially when they are focused on community outreach and engagement.
- The department has other methods for tracking time dedicated to specific activities, if needed.

*A commitment to serving unsheltered populations as a specific duty that would supplement the work of officers that come into contact with unsheltered persons (not necessarily as dedicated programmatic staff to the broader homelessness issue).*

#### SPD Response:

- CSOs are a community resource. Housing status will not disqualify an individual from working with the CSO unit.
- CSOs will serve unsheltered populations as a support to primary resources, such as the Navigation Team.
- At the request of a Patrol Officer, a CSO may respond to evaluate the needs of a community member, including unsheltered individuals, and connect them with relevant services and programs, such as emergency housing services.
- CSOs will not be direct service providers.

*A commitment to serving communities of color and immigrant and refugee populations with a culturally competent approach.*

SPD Response:

- The candidates for the position shall demonstrate cultural competency and a commitment to race and social justice.
- This will be accomplished through vetting in the hiring process and reinforced with cultural competency training.
- Cultural competence will be a point of emphasis during the selection process, in training and in the daily supervision of CSO unit staff.

*Clear criteria for when CSOs will be deployed to respond to an officer's request; including some indication of when CSOs will be logged into the CAD as a resource available to Patrol.*

SPD Response:

- Safety and accountability are a priority for the CSO officer, just as with all police and fire personnel.
- CSOs will be logged to CAD when they are in service.
- The CSO officer will use standard SPD radio procedures and systems. CSOs requested by patrol officers will be logged to the call and identified by a unique call sign.
- CSOs will respond to requests by patrol only after crime scenes are declared safe.
- Police Officers will be trained to identify opportunities for CSO unit follow-up, in the same manner they have been instructed to route follow-up requests to the Navigation Team, Crisis Response Unit, and the Domestic Violence Victim Support Team.