



City of Salinas

OFFICE OF THE MAYOR • 200 Lincoln Ave • Salinas, California 93901 (831) 758-7201 •

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November 12, 2024

Monterey County Civil Grand Jury
Attention: Doug Smith, Foreperson
P.O. Box 414
Salinas, CA 93902

Re: Updated Responses of the City of Salinas to the 2023-2024 Monterey County Civil Grand Jury Final Report – “Monterey County’s Response to Community Members Experiencing a Mental Health Crisis”

Dear Mr. Doug Smith:

I am responding to your inquiry dated October 3, 2024, regarding updates to the City’s response to the Findings and Recommendations of the 2023-2024 Monterey County Civil Grand Jury Final Report.

As requested by the Civil Grand Jury, the City of Salinas respectfully submits the following updated responses to Recommendations Four and Five identified in the Final Report.

Recommendation 4. The Salinas Police Chief and the Monterey County Sheriff prioritize the completion of an annual training needs assessment and plan by no later than July 31, 2024, and by the end of each fiscal year thereafter.

Response:

The City agrees with this recommendation, and as of July 31, 2024, an annual training needs assessment and plan will be implemented and posted on the Salinas Police Department website.

Further Response:

The recommendation has been implemented. Training documents are consistently uploaded and posted on the Salinas Police Department’s website. The process is continuous and streamlined, with documents uploaded and posted once a staff member completes the training. The enclosed Salinas Police Department Training Plan is posted on the Department’s public website.

Recommendation 5. The Salinas Police Department and Monterey County Sheriff’s Office conspicuously post all current standards, policies, practices, operating procedures, and education and training materials to their websites by June 30, 2024.

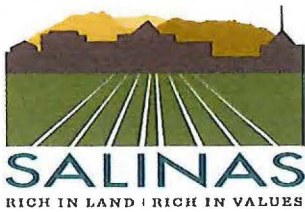
Response:

The City agrees with this recommendation and as of June 30, 2024, such record will be posted conspicuously on

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Re: City of Salinas’s Updated Responses to Monterey County Civil Grand Jury

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the Salinas Police Department website.

Further Response:

The recommendation has been implemented. All current standards, policies, practices, operating procedures, and education and training materials have been conspicuously posted on the Salinas Police Department's website. This is a continual process as new legislation and case law frequently change, leading to regular modifications to these policies and procedures.

The current Salinas Police Department Policy Manual, revised March 18, 2024, is posted on the Department's public website, and includes the enclosed policy on Crisis Intervention Incidents.

Salinas Police Officers are currently participating in a mandatory two-hour Critical Incident Training (CIT) updated course that began on September 19, 2024. Upon completion, all Salinas Police Officers will receive updated CIT training taught by experts from Monterey County Behavioral Health.

The training provides officers with strategic communications skills required in the Peace Officer Standards and Training (POST) Perishable Skills Training Program. The intent of the training is to improve officers' ability to generate voluntary compliance through the art of persuasion and utilizing the tools of interpersonal and tactical communication. The training covers practical strategic communications skills for in-service personnel. It also includes additional information, skills and tactics related to Crisis Intervention, Community Resources, and the application of Critical Decision-Making elements.

This updated training ensures that critical incident training is not only a part of the overall training plan but is also deeply embedded in daily operations, through policy updates and practical, scenario-based learning.

Respectfully submitted,

Kimbley Craig
Mayor

Enclosures:

Salinas Police Department Training Plan

Salinas Police Department Policy 465 (Crisis Intervention Incidents)

Cc: City Manager
City Attorney
Police Chief

Doug Smith, Foreperson

Re: City of Salinas's Updated Responses to Monterey County Civil Grand Jury

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Salinas Police Department Training Plan

Purpose

The Salinas Police Department administers a training program that provides for the professional growth and continued development of its personnel in compliance with the Training Policy.

Philosophy

In addition to the philosophy described in the Training Policy, the Salinas Police Department recognizes police training is an ever-evolving topic. The need for an adaptable plan that pivots with regular legislative changes and available resources is paramount to a contemporary program. The Salinas Police Department strives for a 100% completion rate of mandatory training and encourages department members to participate in additional training that enhances performance and service delivery.

Definitions

CPT – Continuing Professional Training (Prescribed by POST) that occurs during a biennial cycle.

Critical Issues Training – Training that is not required but could have a significant impact to police service quality and/or delivery.

In-House Training– Training that is conducted by Salinas Police Personnel either at the Salinas Police Department or other sanctioned training site.

Legislative Changes – New or changing laws that affect police training requirements.

POST – California Commission on Peace Officer Standards and Training

PSP – Perishable Skills Program (prescribed by POST) that occurs during a biennial cycle.

State Mandated Training – Training required by the California State Assembly or State Senate that is incorporated into law.

Training Plan

Training needs are assessed by content that is required and/or recommended for each member based on rank and assignment. Additionally, the Training Sergeant should:

- a) Review legislative changes taking effect during the calendar year and ensure appropriate training is disseminated through an appropriate means such as:
 1. Training Bulletin
 2. Advising SME or certified trainer for the subject area to add the content to training materials.
 3. Coordinate other appropriate means of meeting the training requirements.

Salinas Police Department Training Plan

- b) Monitor state mandated training such as CPT and PSP topics and ensure they are scheduled throughout the biennial training period, taking into consideration available shift schedule structure to maximize opportunities with minimal impact to staffing levels.
- c) Critical Issues Training
 - 1. Incorporate Critical Issues Training into the biennial training cycle as the schedule allows.
 - 2. Identify external instructors and host critical training at the Salinas Police Department to reduce training costs.
 - 3. Monitor and disseminate external critical training opportunities through the training request process.

Training Sergeant Responsibilities

In addition to the provisions of the Training Policy, the Training Sergeant should on an annual basis:

- a) Facilitate an annual internal training needs assessment by:
 - 1. Soliciting input from Executive Staff, Command Staff, and Supervisors.
 - 2. Evaluate current events and agency trends to identify training-based solutions.
- b) Review POST guidelines for mandated training changes and additions, ensuring compliance with requirements contained in the Training Policy.
- c) Update this document annually with the date of:
 - 1. Needs assessment completion
 - 2. Training plan review completion
- d) Within the constraints of scheduling and available training opportunities, plan and schedule all mandatory in-house training to ensure all members of the department are afforded the opportunity to complete POST mandated PSP and CPT training.

The training Sergeant regular and ongoing duties include:

- a) Monitor and adjust ongoing CPT and PSP training progress to facilitate successful delivery of training in conjunction with operational needs of the department.
- b) Monitor promotions that impact mandatory training requirements.
- c) Review and assess all individual training requests submitted by department members, forwarding those recommendations to the Chief of Police or designee through the Chain of Command, with the following considerations:
 - 1. Impact to minimum staffing requirements and associated backfill costs.
 - 2. Training budget status.
 - 3. An evaluation of whether the training is:
 - i. Statutorily mandatory
 - ii. Recommended and would greatly enhance performance
 - iii. Optional; career or operational enhancing training

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Supervisor and Administrator Responsibilities

All personnel in a promoted rank have the responsibility to ensure subordinates under their command adhere to the training policy and attend scheduled training. Additionally, supervisors and administrators should:

- a) Monitor subordinate promotions and operational assignment changes that affect mandatory training requirements.
- b) Facilitate training requests to the Training Unit.
- c) Regularly evaluate community needs and agency trends to identify content for the annual needs assessment.

Resources

The Salinas Police Department partners with the South Bay Regional Training Consortium to supply and track POST approved training and lesson plans.

The following resources should be reviewed annually as part of the Training Needs Assessment and Training Plan review:

<https://post.ca.gov/Training>

<https://post.ca.gov/Training-by-Occupation>

<https://post.ca.gov/Publication-List>

<https://post.ca.gov/Laws-Policies>

<https://post.ca.gov/Bulletins>

<https://post.ca.gov/POST-Regulations>

<https://post.ca.gov/Regulatory-Actions>

<https://post.ca.gov/Status-of-Current-Legislation>

Crisis Intervention Incidents

465.1 PURPOSE AND SCOPE

This policy provides guidelines for interacting with those who may be experiencing a mental health or emotional crisis. Interaction with such individuals has the potential for miscommunication and violence. It often requires an officer to make difficult judgments about a person's mental state and intent in order to effectively and legally interact with the individual.

465.1.1 DEFINITIONS

Definitions related to this policy include:

Person in crisis - A person whose level of distress or mental health symptoms have exceeded the person's internal ability to manage his/her behavior or emotions. A crisis can be precipitated by any number of things, including an increase in the symptoms of mental illness despite treatment compliance; non-compliance with treatment, including a failure to take prescribed medications appropriately; or any other circumstance or event that causes the person to engage in erratic, disruptive or dangerous behavior that may be accompanied by impaired judgment.

465.2 POLICY

The Salinas Police Department is committed to providing a consistently high level of service to all members of the community and recognizes that persons in crisis may benefit from intervention. The Department will collaborate, where feasible, with mental health professionals to develop an overall intervention strategy to guide its members' interactions with those experiencing a mental health crisis. This is to ensure equitable and safe treatment of all involved.

465.3 SIGNS

Members should be alert to any of the following possible signs of mental health issues or crises:

- (a) A known history of mental illness
- (b) Threats of or attempted suicide
- (c) Loss of memory
- (d) Incoherence, disorientation or slow response
- (e) Delusions, hallucinations, perceptions unrelated to reality or grandiose ideas
- (f) Depression, pronounced feelings of hopelessness or uselessness, extreme sadness or guilt
- (g) Social withdrawal
- (h) Manic or impulsive behavior, extreme agitation, lack of control
- (i) Lack of fear
- (j) Anxiety, aggression, rigidity, inflexibility or paranoia

Members should be aware that this list is not exhaustive. The presence or absence of any of these should not be treated as proof of the presence or absence of a mental health issue or crisis.

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Crisis Intervention Incidents

465.4 COORDINATION WITH MENTAL HEALTH PROFESSIONALS

The Chief of Police should designate an appropriate Division Chief to collaborate with mental health professionals to develop an education and response protocol. It should include a list of community resources, to guide department interaction with those who may be suffering from mental illness or who appear to be in a mental health crisis.

465.5 FIRST RESPONDERS

Safety is a priority for first responders. It is important to recognize that individuals under the influence of alcohol, drugs or both may exhibit symptoms that are similar to those of a person in a mental health crisis. These individuals may still present a serious threat to officers; such a threat should be addressed with reasonable tactics. Nothing in this policy shall be construed to limit an officer's authority to use reasonable force when interacting with a person in crisis.

Officers are reminded that mental health issues, mental health crises and unusual behavior alone are not criminal offenses. Individuals may benefit from treatment as opposed to incarceration.

An officer responding to a call involving a person in crisis should:

- (a) Promptly assess the situation independent of reported information and make a preliminary determination regarding whether a mental health crisis may be a factor.
- (b) Request available backup officers and specialized resources as deemed necessary and, if it is reasonably believed that the person is in a crisis situation, use conflict resolution and de-escalation techniques to stabilize the incident as appropriate.
- (c) If feasible, and without compromising safety, turn off flashing lights, bright lights or sirens.
- (d) Attempt to determine if weapons are present or available.
 - 1. Prior to making contact, and whenever possible and reasonable, conduct a search of the Department of Justice Automated Firearms System via the California Law Enforcement Telecommunications System (CLETS) to determine whether the person is the registered owner of a firearm (Penal Code § 11106.4).
- (e) Take into account the person's mental and emotional state and potential inability to understand commands or to appreciate the consequences of his/her action or inaction, as perceived by the officer.
- (f) Secure the scene and clear the immediate area as necessary.
- (g) Employ tactics to preserve the safety of all participants.
- (h) Determine the nature of any crime.
- (i) Request a supervisor, as warranted.
- (j) Evaluate any available information that might assist in determining cause or motivation for the person's actions or stated intentions.
- (k) If circumstances reasonably permit, consider and employ alternatives to force.

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465.6 DE-ESCALATION

Officers should consider that taking no action or passively monitoring the situation may be the most reasonable response to a mental health crisis.

Once it is determined that a situation is a mental health crisis and immediate safety concerns have been addressed, responding members should be aware of the following considerations and should generally:

- Evaluate safety conditions.
- Introduce themselves and attempt to obtain the person's name.
- Be patient, polite, calm, courteous and avoid overreacting.
- Speak and move slowly and in a non-threatening manner.
- Moderate the level of direct eye contact.
- Remove distractions or disruptive people from the area.
- Demonstrate active listening skills (e.g., summarize the person's verbal communication).
- Provide for sufficient avenues of retreat or escape should the situation become volatile.

Responding officers generally should not:

- Use stances or tactics that can be interpreted as aggressive.
- Allow others to interrupt or engage the person.
- Corner a person who is not believed to be armed, violent or suicidal.
- Argue, speak with a raised voice or use threats to obtain compliance.

465.7 INCIDENT ORIENTATION

When responding to an incident that may involve mental illness or a mental health crisis, the officer should request that the dispatcher provide critical information as it becomes available. This includes:

- (a) Whether the person relies on drugs or medication, or may have failed to take his/her medication.
- (b) Whether there have been prior incidents, suicide threats/attempts, and whether there has been previous police response.
- (c) Contact information for a treating physician or mental health professional.

Additional resources and a supervisor should be requested as warranted.

465.8 SUPERVISOR RESPONSIBILITIES

A supervisor should respond to the scene of any interaction with a person in crisis if needed. Responding supervisors should:

- (a) Attempt to secure appropriate and sufficient resources.

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- (b) Closely monitor any use of force, including the use of restraints, and ensure that those subjected to the use of force are provided with timely access to medical care (see the Handcuffing and Restraints Policy).
- (c) Consider strategic disengagement. Absent an imminent threat to the public and, as circumstances dictate, this may include removing or reducing law enforcement resources or engaging in passive monitoring.
- (d) Ensure that all reports are completed and that incident documentation uses appropriate terminology and language.
- (e)

Evaluate whether a critical incident stress management debriefing for involved members is warranted.

465.9 INCIDENT REPORTING

Members engaging in any oral or written communication associated with a mental health crisis should be mindful of the sensitive nature of such communications and should exercise appropriate discretion when referring to or describing persons and circumstances.

Members having contact with a person in crisis should keep related information confidential, except to the extent that revealing information is necessary to conform to department reporting procedures or other official mental health or medical proceedings.

465.9.1 DIVERSION

Individuals who are not being arrested should be processed in accordance with the Mental Illness Commitments Policy.

465.10 CIVILIAN INTERACTION WITH PEOPLE IN CRISIS

Civilian members may be required to interact with persons in crisis in an administrative capacity, such as dispatching, records request, and animal control issues.

- (a) Members should treat all individuals equally and with dignity and respect.
- (b) If a member believes that he/she is interacting with a person in crisis, he/she should proceed patiently and in a calm manner.
- (c) Members should be aware and understand that the person may make unusual or bizarre claims or requests.

If a person's behavior makes the member feel unsafe, if the person is or becomes disruptive or violent, or if the person acts in such a manner as to cause the member to believe that the person may be harmful to him/herself or others, an officer should be promptly summoned to provide assistance.

465.11 EVALUATION

The Division Chief designated to coordinate the crisis intervention strategy for this department should ensure that a thorough review and analysis of the department response to these incidents is conducted annually. The report will not include identifying information pertaining to any involved

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individuals, officers or incidents and will be submitted to the Chief of Police through the chain of command.

465.12 TRAINING

In coordination with the mental health community and appropriate stakeholders, the Department will develop and provide comprehensive education and training to all department members to enable them to effectively interact with persons in crisis.

This department will endeavor to provide Peace Officer Standards and Training (POST)-approved advanced officer training on interaction with persons with mental disabilities, welfare checks and crisis intervention (Penal Code § 11106.4; Penal Code § 13515.25; Penal Code § 13515.27; Penal Code § 13515.30).