



CITY OF CHICAGO • OFFICE OF THE MAYOR



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

September 1, 2020

CONTACT:

Mayor's Press Office

312.744.3334

press@cityofchicago.org

MAYOR LIGHTFOOT AND CPD ANNOUNCE COMPLETION OF 90-DAY REFORMS WITH LAUNCH OF TWO NEW PROGRAMS TO SUPPORT OFFICERS' MENTAL HEALTH AND WELLNESS

New program developed in collaboration with University of Chicago Crime Lab assists supervisors in proactively supporting members of the Chicago Police Department; completes 90-day public safety reform initiatives mandated by Mayor Lightfoot in June 2020

CHICAGO – Mayor Lori E. Lightfoot and the Chicago Police Department (CPD) today marked the completion of the City's 90-day police reforms with the launch of two new pilot programs that are designed to ensure all CPD officers have the mental health and wellness supports they need. With the launch of the new Officer Support System (OSS), a pilot program that will assist supervisors in proactively supporting members of the Chicago Police Department, as well as a new Officer Wellness Telehealth Pilot, the Department is making significant strides to improve and expand support for officers coping with the psychological and emotional consequences that come from performing their duties as police officers.

"Our officers experience a tremendous amount of trauma and stress on the job, and just over the past several years, we've lost far too many to suicide. It's critical every one of our officers have the tools at hand when they need them to help them manage the mental health challenges they face," said Mayor Lightfoot. "While we are immensely proud of the progress we have made in the past 90 days, our work doesn't stop here. These reforms are only the start of our journey for police reform and accountability, and overall, building a more just and equitable Chicago."

Launching this fall, the new OSS is a next-generation, data-driven early intervention system that promotes long-term officer wellness by enabling supervisors to proactively support their officers. Using CPD administrative data to identify officers who may be in need of additional support, the OSS provides a process to intervene with corresponding services. Additionally, the system will add a layer of accountability by ensuring supervisors connect officers with the additional options they need, so that officers are at 100% when they are serving and protecting the community. The goal of this system is to reduce the occurrence of adverse events that may harm officers, Chicagoans, or the public's trust in the Chicago Police Department.

"A major component of our reform efforts is ensuring that our officers' mental health and wellness is supported at every level," said CPD Superintendent David O. Brown. "The Officer Support System will provide our frontline supervisors with the tools and resources they



CITY OF CHICAGO • OFFICE OF THE MAYOR

need to not only identify officers in need of support, but to connect them with the appropriate support and services, as well.”

In early 2016, the Chicago Police Department partnered with the University of Chicago Crime Lab to develop the OSS. Since then, the Crime Lab's team of data scientists has developed statistical models to facilitate the early identification of officers who may be in need of additional support. In turn, CPD developed a computer application to automate the OSS, created policy specific to the system, and began training supervisors in the 5th District in preparation for the pilot.

“It is critical to health and safety of all Chicagoans to ensure that we are proactive in providing police officers the supports and training they need and to not wait until a tragedy occurs and wonder what might have been done to prevent it,” said Roseanna Ander, Executive Director of University of Chicago Crime Lab. “We are grateful to have the chance to work with the Chicago Police Department to help ensure we meet this important obligation in the consent decree but also this important obligation to our residents and our officers.”

The OSS was developed with input from multiple stakeholders. Focus groups, composed of patrol officers, sergeants, lieutenants, and members of specialized units, provided insight into what measures might reflect an officer’s need for additional support, as well as what supports would be most useful. A National Advisory Committee, composed of experts in police accountability and officer mental health and wellness, met on multiple occasions to provide guidance and feedback to CPD as it developed the OSS from the ground-up. Based on recommendations from these groups, the OSS streamlines access to supportive services, is preventive rather than punitive, and is being rolled out in tandem with new training for front line supervisors to ensure they have the skills they need to engage with their officers in a meaningful and productive way. The Department will pilot the OSS throughout fall 2020 in the 5th District, and anticipates a citywide roll out in 2021.

Building on efforts to increase the Department's capacity for mental health treatment, CPD is also launching the Officer Wellness Telehealth Pilot, which will expand free mental health services to all officers by vetted clinicians who specialize in working with law enforcement officers. While CPD Officers have well-established programs to serve and manage the trauma and stress they encounter every day, this new will use an app-based approach to allow convenient 24-hour access for officers. The project seeks to leverage telehealth options that have been evaluated and proven effective.

As part of this effort, the Department is assembling an advisory group that consists of sworn CPD members that will advise the research team on ensuring the pilot best suites Department members at every level. Following the design phase, every member of the Department will be offered the chance to receive these virtual mental health services under the pilot program, which will include a self-guided app, a guided app, group virtual therapy and one-on-one therapy. Following the pilot, the Department plans to utilize officer feedback and recommendations on which interventions should be integrated into their formal mental health offerings.



CITY OF CHICAGO • OFFICE OF THE MAYOR



“Providing our members an opportunity to share their feedback and lived experiences will strengthen and improve our mental health services and officer support systems,” said Deputy Superintendent Barbara West, who oversees CPD’s Office of Constitutional Policing and Reform.

Both launches complete Mayor Lightfoot’s 90-day police reform initiatives announced in early June, which called for implementing a real officer wellness program and completing the Officer Support System/Early Intervention System pilot. Today’s announcement follows additional reform measures launched or completed over the past 90 days, including the expansion of the Neighborhood Policing Initiative to the 9th (Deering), 10th (Ogden) and 11th (Harrison) District. To ensure DCOs are fully integrated into the neighborhoods they serve, the Department also launched a new community-immersion training program for DCOs called the Community Training Academy.

Last week, recruits from the Education & Training Academy completed this summer’s final youth-led neighborhood tour of North Lawndale, led by guides from My Block, My Hood, My City’s (M3) Explorer Program. Launching this fall as part of the three-month field training for probationary police officers (PPOs), a new PPO Immersion Program will ensure new officers not only experience community policing first-hand but also enhance their community engagement skills at the earliest stages of training.

The Department has also made significant strides toward ensuring all officers receive crisis intervention and procedural justice training. The Department achieved a 100% completion rate for the initial procedural justice training course and is continuing to provide training for de-escalation and mental health signs and symptoms, as well as de-escalation scenarios involving persons with intellectual and developmental disabilities. With crisis intervention training mandated for every officer in the Department, CPD has submitted training materials to the International Association of Chiefs of Police (IACP) for review and, upon approval, recognition of CPD being 100% trained and certified in mental health awareness.

###