



CITY OF LA HABRA

POLICE DEPARTMENT

July 21, 2020

The Honorable Kirk H. Nakamura
Presiding Judge of the Superior Court
700 Civic Center Drive West
Santa Ana, Ca 92701

Dear Judge Nakamura :

The La Habra Police Department received the Orange County Grand Jury Report, "Protecting Those Who Protect and Serve," on June 25, 2020. The Department is an advocate for Peer Support and are pleased that the Grand Jury values the mental and emotional health of law enforcement personnel. The Department is honored to provide the following responses to the Grand Jury's findings and recommendations.

The La Habra Police Department was requested to respond to the following Grand Jury Findings:

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

The La Habra Police Department **agrees** with the finding. The department has supported a robust Peer Support program for several years, including continuous training and access to Peer Support Professionals. The Department recognizes the importance of having an active and well-trained Peer Support team.

F3. The benefits in the peer support statute, effective January 1, 2020, are important to Peace Officers and Peer Support Team members.

The La Habra Police Department **agrees** with the finding. The Department understands the vital need for Peer Support Team members to have the ability to keep conversations confidential, thus building trust and legitimacy in the program.

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

The La Habra Police Department **agrees** with the finding. The Department provides training to all peer support personnel along with the ability to attend local and regional symposiums. Our Peer Support team members are also granted direct access to professionals for advice and growth in peer counseling.

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

The La Habra Police Department **agrees** with the finding. The Department has been allocating funds for Peer Support in its general training line item. The department understands how important contemporary training is to our Peer Support program. Our intent is to add a specific Peer Support budget line item in our next fiscal year.

F6. Continuous communication to Peace Officers about the Peer Support Program is important to increase awareness and use of the Peer Support Programs.

The La Habra Police Department **agrees** with the finding. The Department takes pride in openly supporting and discussing the value of Peer Support especially after critical incidents. Open dialog takes the stigma away from Peer Support and allows peace officers the comfort of being supported during critical times.

The La Habra Police Department was requested to provide a response to the following Grand Jury recommendations.

R2. The 2019-2020 Orange County Grand Jury recommends that all Peer Support Programs be in compliance with the peer support statute.

The Grand Jury Recommendation **has been implemented**. The La Habra Police Department provides specific policy and guidelines to ensure that our Peer Support team is in full compliance with statute. With the assistance of Peer Support experts such as Heather Williams, the department ensures its team members attend certified training and are educated in state requirements.

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

The Grand Jury Recommendation **has been implemented**. The La Habra Police Department has maintained a policy of sending all Peer Support Team members to certified training and that it be documented. The department understands the value and the need to be in compliance with peer support statute and best practices.

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.

The Grand Jury Recommendation **has not been implemented**. The La Habra Police Department fully supports its Peer Support team and its training needs. The program is accounted for in our training and auxiliary budget line items. However, we have not allocated a specific budget line item titled "Peer Support." We intend on adding a new budget line item for Peer Support in the next fiscal year.

In closing, the La Habra Police Department would like to express our sincere gratitude to the Grand Jury for its investigation and research into the emotional and mental wellness of peace officers. During these challenging times, community members deserve the highest level of service from its peace officers. Having the opportunity to provide a highly trained Peer Support team to our officers is an invaluable resource and ensures that our officers are fully engaged in the community.

Sincerely,

Jerry Price
Chief of Police