

## Eugene Police Department: Accountability in 2020

### **Message from Chief Chris Skinner:**

The community is fully engaged in the events we've been going through since the last week of May 2020. In our profession, which we have chosen to serve our community, we are aware of a longstanding nationwide incidence of injustice to community members and communities of color. I want to emphasize the first pillar of 21<sup>st</sup> Century Policing, which is Trust and Legitimacy, and part of building that trust and legitimacy is recognizing injustices at the hands of police and policing in this community and this nation.

I'm encouraged in the direction we're going, and the leadership role we have taken in our industry, not only in our state but on a national level. While we still have work to do, we remain committed to the highest levels of accountability, training and collaboration with other resources in the community. Efforts geared toward accountability include continued dialogue with the police auditor, Civilian Review Board, and our police commission. We continue to improve our practices in disciplines such as our Crisis Negotiation Team, Crisis Intervention Team, de-escalation tactics, bias training and reporting. We continue to collaborate through other resources such as CAHOOTS for behavioral health calls.

We recognize occurrences of injustice and want to do better. We have a deep desire to engage in reform. Moving forward it is important the community knows the foundation upon which we have been building for the past 15 years and will continue to build, while working on areas where we can improve and be better.

**21<sup>ST</sup> Century Policing** - In 2014, President Barack Obama appointed a task force to develop recommendations on how policing practices can promote effective crime reduction while building public trust. This report, The Final Report of the President's Task Force on 21st Century Policing, serves as a reference for numerous Eugene efforts, including a systematic review of the municipal justice system and the recruitment efforts made for the hiring of Chief Chris Skinner.

**Policies** - EPD's policies and procedures are open for viewing by the public online at EugenePolice.com <https://www.eugene-or.gov/3439/Policies-and-Procedures>

**EPD, 911, and Forensics Accreditation** - Eugene Police Department was first accredited in 2015, by Oregon Accreditation Alliance. Central Lane 911 is also accredited by OAA. EPD Forensic Evidence Unit is accredited by ANSI National Accreditation Board. FEU was the state's first local lab awarded accreditation in 2013.

**Police Commission Provides Policy Review/Recommendation** - The commission was created in 1998 and charged by city ordinance to facilitate communication between the community and police, increase public understanding of police policies and practices, and provide input on police policies and procedures that reflect community values and resource priorities. <https://www.eugene-or.gov/664/Police-Commission>

**Independent Oversight: Police Auditor** - The Police Auditor's Office was established in 2005 and reports directly to mayor and city council to provide an external mechanism for the independent receipt, classification, and routing of complaints against sworn and non-sworn EPD

employees; contract for outside investigations when necessary; and provide monitoring of EPD internal investigations of allegations of misconduct and supervisors' investigations of service complaints. <https://www.eugene-or.gov/1039/Police-Auditor>

**Civilian Review Board** - Ultimately, the goal of the Civilian Review Board is to make the system of police accountability more transparent and increase public confidence in the manner that police conduct their work. <https://www.eugene-or.gov/88/Civilian-Review-Board>

**Eugene Police Internal Affairs Unit** - The Internal Affairs Unit processes and tracks all complaints, inquiries and commendations involving Eugene Police Department personnel. <https://www.eugene-or.gov/577/Internal-Affairs>

**All Use of Force Is Reported and Reviewed** - Any use of force is documented and a report must be written and turned into the employee's supervisor within 24 hours of the incident, even if the incident occurred outside the city.

**Procedural Justice** - Police legitimacy and procedural justice encompasses four core principles: voice, trustworthiness, neutrality, and respect. It is applied during interaction with the public, and the manner, principles and fairness in how the officer addresses the situation.

**Bias Crime Reporting** - In alignment with the City Council goal of creating a Safe Community, the City and its police department is committed to working with community partners to reach the vision of promoting a community where every person, regardless of their identity, is safe, valued, and welcome. EPD takes an active role to protect all citizens against intimidation and harassment based upon bias and prejudice; and works in tandem with the City's Office of Human **Rights and Neighborhood Involvement, which collects** statistical information on both criminal and non-criminal hate and bias activity and provides victim support and community response to hate and bias activity in Eugene. Each works collaboratively together in a responsive system. <https://www.eugene-or.gov/529/Hate-and-Bias>

**EPD Will Not Engage In Immigration Matters** - Oregon police agencies have no legal authority to enforce federal immigration laws.

**Body Worn Cameras** - In 2013, Eugene Police began early to experiment with body worn video and in 2015, was one of 73 agencies that received a Department of Justice grant for body worn cameras. As of 2017, all patrol officers began wearing body-worn cameras.

**Hiring** - In addition to a character-based hiring strategy, we have a robust background investigation that takes several weeks and a strong commitment by the organization. Part of hiring is also a thorough psychological screening for each applicant. This includes an assessment of their stability and suitability for work as an officer. We utilize a psychologist, board certified in police and public psychology, who uses gold-standard evidence based practices which, includes a discussion of cultural competency.

**De-escalation: The EPD Crisis Negotiations Team** - CNT works closely with Patrol and SWAT on demanding and dangerous calls, such as barricaded subjects, armed suicidal subjects and hostage situations, and high risk search warrants. CNT can/will respond independently of SWAT to assist on incidents that are deemed to be beyond the scope of patrol officers because of limitations in their equipment or expertise.

**De-escalation Training** – Officers all receive de-escalation training designed to reduce the need to use force, recognize the sanctity of life, protect officers from harm, reduce injuries to subjects and build community trust. **Eugene Police De-escalation Policy:** <https://www.eugene-or.gov/ArchiveCenter/ViewFile/Item/5165>

**Crisis Intervention Team (CIT)** – Officers receive 40-hours of training to increase the ability to resolve police encounters with people who have mental illnesses safely and when appropriate, link them to mental health support and services that reduce the chances for future interactions with the criminal justice system. Officers work in conjunction with trained dispatchers, CAHOOTS and mental health providers.

**CAHOOTS - CAHOOTS (Crisis Assistance Helping Out On The Streets)** is a mobile crisis intervention program staffed by White Bird Clinic personnel using City of Eugene vehicles. This relationship has been in place for nearly 30 years and is well embedded in the community. CAHOOTS provides support for EPD personnel by taking on many of the social service style calls for service to include crisis counseling. They often provide initial contact and transport for intoxicated persons, mentally ill, or disoriented persons as well as transport for necessary non-emergency medical care. CAHOOTS is dispatched on EPD's service channel and calls are triaged through the Central Lane Communication Center. Each van is staffed with a medic (nurse or EMT) and an experienced crisis worker.

**STOPS/Profiling** - In 2006 EPD became the first police agency in Oregon to train its entire police force in the topic of biased based policing using the nationally-recognized curriculum known as Perspectives in Profiling. The Oregon Criminal Justice Commission reviewed EPD's data in 2019 and found EPD Equity During Traffic and Pedestrian Stops. Oregon Criminal Justice Commission has found no evidence Eugene Police Department conducts traffic or pedestrian stops, enforcement actions, searches, or arrests in disparate proportions for black or Hispanic populations. <https://www.oregon.gov/cjc/Pages/default.aspx> The CJC report on our STOPS data confirms that our goals are being met and our community is experiencing professional service without discrimination toward any individual or group."

**Perspectives in Racial Profiling** - In 2012, EPD began as a regular course to provide all its officers with Perspectives in Profiling and started working on adding a module for gathering data on stops for the new records management system. This system enables EPD to collect demographic data related to police contacts. Perspectives on Profiling recognizes we need to think differently about our role in society; to see ourselves less as warriors who are occupying our communities to make them safe and more as guardians who are present to help serve. That change in posture, along with developments in new training that emphasizes empathy in every contact and is reflected in our policies and practices, will help to improve relations in our community.

**Implicit Bias Training** - In 2015, the Eugene Police Department's on-going commitment to ensuring professional contacts with the public, led to a new partnership with the University of Oregon. In November of 2015, Professor Erik Grivan from the School of Law provided implicit bias training to all sworn officers and several support staff to include community service officers, crime prevention specialists and volunteers.