



NEWS RELEASE

Chicago Police Department

Eddie T. Johnson
Superintendent

Anthony Guglielmi
Chief Communications Officer

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Contact: Office of Communications
312-745-6110

CPD ADOPTS RECOMMENDATIONS BY NATIONAL POLICE RESEARCH EXPERTS AND DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE TO IMPROVE HOMICIDE CLEARANCE RATE

Department creating dedicated team of detectives to implement reforms and recommendations from the Police Executive Research Forum & U.S. Justice Department Bureau of Justice Assistance to better CPD's Homicide Division

CHICAGO – Mayor Lori E. Lightfoot and Chicago Police Superintendent Eddie Johnson today joined Executive Director of the Police Executive Research Forum (PERF), Chuck Wexler, to announce PERF's key findings and recommendations to strengthen the Chicago Police Department's (CPD) processes and practices for detectives and increase the clearance rate for homicides and non-fatal shootings throughout Chicago.

Commissioned at the request of CPD and supported by grant funding from the U.S. Justice Department Bureau of Justice Assistance (BJA), the newly-released report follows a comprehensive assessment of best practices and policies of homicide investigations from police departments across the nation to better guide CPD's Bureau of Detectives as part of a long-term effort solve crimes faster and improve the department's clearance rate.

"The critical findings in this report demonstrate what the Chicago Police Department must do to live up to this City's promise to ensure that those who have lost a loved one to the scourge of violence get the answers they deserve," said Mayor Lightfoot. "With these findings in hand, the City of Chicago is acting today to ensure that police officers and detectives have the systems of support that are required not only for solving crimes – but for preventing them from occurring in the first place."

In response to the report, CPD is establishing a new team of detectives to help manage and implement the recommended reforms, including developing an enhanced case-tracking and data collection system, increasing training and development opportunities for homicide detectives, creating strategies to increase staffing levels in the bureau and publishing a department-wide manual of written policies for all detectives. To ensure the new team is adequately supported throughout this process, the team will utilize the Department's new analytics, auditing and project management teams that were recently established as part of the consent decree.

"I welcome the external perspective and support that will help us continue improving our city's homicide clearance rate," said Chicago Police Superintendent Eddie T. Johnson. "The

recommendations contained in the report will serve as a roadmap taking us closer toward becoming the best police department in the world.”

“With support from BJA, the Police Executive Research Forum is ready to help the Chicago Police Department implement the changes and recommendations identified in the report,” said PERF Executive Director Chuck Wexler.

The observations and recommendations of the report focus on four main categories, including organizational infrastructure, bureau resources, investigation strategies and case management, and the coordination internally with other bureaus as well as externally with county, state and federal law enforcement agencies and Chicago’s communities. Key findings include:

- Update and Codify Best Practices: CPD should develop a Homicide Investigation Manual to document guidance to detectives on their duties and responsibilities. Currently, CPD has a series of individual orders related to different components of homicide investigations.
- Create a Homicide Unit and Expand Detective Areas: Homicide detectives should receive specific training and have consistent operations; CPD should also return to the five Detective Areas that were in place prior to 2013.
- Establish Investigative Caseload Management: CPD should develop detailed guidelines governing case assignments and establish a mechanism to track the number and types of cases assigned to each detective.
- Ensure Detectives Have Essential Tools: CPD should invest in technological tools and resources to expand the field capabilities of homicide detectives.
- Increase Staffing: CPD should increase staffing levels to decrease the average caseload size.

A number of recommendations outlined by the report are already in the works or have been implemented by the Department in recent years, including the planned re-opening of two additional detective areas in the West Side in 2020 and the addition of nearly 300 detectives to help solve homicides. Additionally, CPD continues to invest in new technology to help solve crimes, including the launch of three Area Tech Centers that serve as state-of-the-art video evidence processing hubs throughout Chicago, as well as the fielding of cell phones for all detectives.

“While there is still much work to be done, we have been encouraged by the pace with which senior leadership and the hardworking detectives of the Chicago Police Department have sought to improve operations and increase clearance rates,” said Sean Malinowski, director of Policing Innovation and Reform, University of Chicago Crime Lab, and retired Chief of Detectives for the Los Angeles Police Department. “We are proud to partner with the Bureau of Detectives and Ken Griffin to better support victims and their families.”

The findings released today are the result of on-site interviews conducted by PERF with over 50 CPD personnel of all ranks from across the department; interviews with the Cook County State’s Attorney’s Office, the Chief Medical Examiner and the Chief Administrator of the Civilian Office of Police Accountability (COPA); and a review of the CPD’s written directives, homicide logs, sample intelligence reports, organizational charts, sample crime reports and clearance data.

These recommendations follow significant investments in training, technology and equipment within the Department's Bureau of Patrol, which continue to drive and sustain record-low reductions in shootings and murders. Through adopting reforms presented in this report and ensuring CPD personnel has the resources, guidance, and support they need to prevent and solve a homicide, the Department's Bureau of Detectives will build on these efforts to further reduce crime across all communities in Chicago.

Building on the Department's efforts to foster community trust, the Bureau of Detectives continues to work with the Office of Community Policing on external coordination and communications strategies to better the relationship between its detectives and residents across Chicago. Strengthening the community's trust in police is a key step towards increasing the willingness of community members to cooperate with a police investigation, which is why as part of these recommendations, the Department is working with a number of victim service organizations to improve communication and coordination with victims' families.

"Improving the services we provide for victims and witnesses of violent crime will not only help restore trust between our detectives and the communities we serve, but will also go a long way toward improving how we solve homicide cases throughout Chicago," said Chicago Police Bureau of Detectives Chief Melissa Staples.

Chicago Survivors, a nonprofit crisis response organization that provides free crime victim and survivor services following every Chicago homicide, commended CPD for taking proactive steps to improve relationships within the community.

"Chicago Survivors has provided critical trauma-informed services to more than 4,000 families, but we also train every CPD detective class so they are aware of the services available to homicide victims and their survivors," said Nichole Gladney, Chicago Survivors Executive Director. "We are encouraged by the steps being taken by CPD to not just solve more homicides, but to partner with anti-violence organizations and community members to bring about real change."

The full report can be viewed at <https://home.chicagopolice.org/homicideclearancereport2019/>.