



# NEWS RELEASE

## Chicago Police Department

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Superintendent

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### **CPD ANNOUNCES LAUNCH OF TWO NEW CITYWIDE TEAMS WITH FOCUS ON STRENGTHENING COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS**

*New community policing team to partner with community-based organizations, faith leaders and residents on neighborhood projects and events*

**CHICAGO** – Chicago Police Department (CPD) Superintendent David O. Brown today announced the launch of two new citywide teams that focus on combating violent crime, strengthening community relationships and ensuring the safety of residents during large-scale events, marches and demonstrations. The launch of the citywide units builds on the Department's efforts to move more officers back into the communities they serve as part of a comprehensive reorganization that began earlier this year.

The Community Safety Team (CST) and the Critical Incident Response Team (CIRT) will work to improve public safety throughout Chicago, with CST focusing on strengthening community partnerships and CIRT concentrating on large, public events. Officers working on the teams come from Area Gang, Gun, Saturation and Community Area Response teams.

"This is a critical step forward in our efforts to problem-solve with community members and directly address their specific concerns," said Superintendent Brown. "The only way to create safer communities is one neighborhood at a time."

As part of a first-of-its-kind effort to build relationships and trust between officers and the communities they serve, the new CST is designed to partner with Chicago's communities to address violence, neighborhood concerns and ongoing conflicts. Led by Commander Michael Barz, the CST consists of nearly 300 officers who will not only be deployed to hot spot areas in the city, but also work with community-based organizations, faith leaders and residents to address the violence.

"Aside from just showing up to neighborhoods when there is violence, we want to partner with residents to help bring positive change into these communities," said Commander Barz.

Building on this year's community initiative with the Summer Mobile Patrol Unit, this new team is heavily involved in the neighborhoods where its officers are deployed.

Every week, CST officers will participate in community events and projects throughout Chicago, including neighborhood peace marches, prayer circles, Operation Clean missions, food drives, COVID-19 resource distributions and more. Engaging directly with residents in neighborhoods that frequently experience violence empowers these officers to address their needs head-on with the goal of preventing future upticks in crime.

The team works closely with District Commanders to deploy to areas that may need additional support or to specific locations based on crime trends and historical data. In partnership with the Office of Community Policing, the CST works hand-in-hand with Community Policing officers on the District-level to connect with residents through events and activities like Operation Wake-Up, pop-up food pantries and youth programming initiatives. Additionally, each of the CST officers will also receive specialized training in crisis intervention, community policing, First and Fourth Amendment rights and control tactics.

The new CIRT consists of approximately 250 officers and is responsible for ensuring the safety of residents and visitors at special events, marches and large gatherings. Led by Deputy Chief Michael Pigott, the CIRT improves communication and coordination among those involved in critical response situations as well as the safe execution of large events. As part of the new citywide team, the Department's bike teams and the detail unit now fall under CIRT.

"Our officers are specially trained to coordinate and protect large-scale City-organized events and also ensure the safety of residents participating in marches and demonstrations across Chicago," said Deputy Chief Pigott.

Officers that are part of this team will have special training to identify potential issues in a crowd including, First Amendment training, mobile field force training and crowd control maneuvers.

These new citywide teams are part of the Department's efforts to address violent crime across the most vulnerable neighborhoods and prevent criminal activity before it begins.

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