



SALT LAKE CITY POLICE DEPARTMENT

CHRIS BURBANK *Chief of Police*

PUBLIC INFORMATION FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

October 10, 2014

PRESS RELEASE

1 of 4 national test sites:

SLCPD Signs Agreement for Initiative to Improve Police Response to Sexual Assault

SALT LAKE CITY — The Salt Lake City Police Department (SLCPD) has formalized an agreement to participate in a project to develop and implement comprehensive policies, procedures, practices, and services that will improve the overall handling of sexual assault cases nationwide.

“This is a warts-and-all process to evaluate what we’ve been doing and make systemic changes based on critical analysis and best evidence,” said Chief Chris Burbank, who announced SLCPD’s participation in the project in August during SLUTWALK SLC, an annual event that raises awareness about sexual assaults and inappropriate treatment of victims. “I expect changes as a result of the initiative, not only for this police department but all law enforcement.”

“Defining Success in Responding to Sexual Violence: Establishing Performance Measures and Quality Assurance Standards for Law Enforcement Agencies to Improve the Reporting and Investigation of Sexual Assault” is a multi-year project, and work in Salt Lake City will begin in late 2014. SLCPD will work with the Police Executive Research Forum (PERF) and the Women’s Law Project to:

- Identify challenges in the police response to and handling of sexual assault cases
- Create an action plan to improve police response to sexual assault complaints
- Implement the action plan and any promising practices
- Collect outcome data related to plan implementation.

PERF will work with SLCPD to review its current policies and practices in responding to sexual assault and develop recommendations for improvement, and document the collaboration and implementation process, including obstacles encountered, required changes to policies or practice, improvements in police responses to sexual assault, lessons learned, and overall outcomes.

The project, which will include work in three additional locations, will culminate in a national summit, which in turn will yield a national comprehensive guidebook outlining the issues, outcomes and promising practices identified.

“Defining Success in Responding to Sexual Violence: Establishing Performance Measures and Quality Assurance Standards for Law Enforcement Agencies to Improve the Reporting and Investigation of Sexual Assault” is a partnership of the Police Executive Research Forum and the Women’s Law Project, with funding from the U.S. Department of Justice, Office on Violence Against Women.

PERF is a research organization that develops policies and best practices on the critical issues in law enforcement agencies. In recent years these issues have included strategies for minimizing police use of force, legitimacy and procedural justice in policing, the role of police in preventing cybercrime, the current epidemic of heroin overdoses in many communities, new technologies such as body-worn cameras, and improving the police response to sexual assaults.

The Women’s Law Project (WLP) is a public interest law center which seeks to advance the rights and status of women and girls through high-impact litigation, advocacy, and education. With offices in Philadelphia and Pittsburgh, WLP has for more than a decade played a key role in improving the Philadelphia Police Department’s handling of sexual assaults by conducting reviews of case files and recommending reforms.

Attachment: Memorandum of Agreement

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Memorandum of Agreement

TO: Chief Christopher Burbank, Salt Lake City Police Department (SLCPD)

FROM: Chuck Wexler, Police Executive Research Forum (PERF)

DATE: August 6, 2014

SUBJECT: PERF project funded by the Office on Violence Against Women (OVW) - *Defining Success in Responding to Sexual Violence: Establishing Performance Measures and Quality Assurance Standards for Law Enforcement Agencies to Improve the Reporting and Investigation of Sexual Assault*

Background:

The Police Executive Research Forum (PERF) and the Women's Law Project (WLP) are partnering together on a national, 36-month project to provide technical assistance to Stop Violence Against Women ("STOP") Program grantees and other law enforcement agencies, in developing and implementing comprehensive policies, procedures, practices, and services that will improve their overall handling of sexual assault cases.

Project Overview:

PERF proposes to work closely with the Salt Lake City Police Department (SLCPD) as one of four national test sites on the Office on Violence Against Women (OVW) funded project, *Defining Success in Responding to Sexual Violence: Establishing Performance Measures and Quality Assurance Standards for Law Enforcement Agencies to Improve the Reporting and Investigation of Sexual Assault*. PERF and WLP will work collaboratively with SLCPD to identify challenges in the police response to and handling of sexual assault cases, and to create an action plan to address those issues. PERF and WLP will assist SLCPD in implementing the action plan and any promising practices; and collecting outcome data related to the implementation; while also providing other technical assistance as needed. PERF will work with SLCPD to document the collaboration and implementation process, including obstacles encountered, required changes to policies or practice, improvements in police responses to sexual assault, lessons learned, and overall outcomes.

The project will culminate in a National Summit tentatively scheduled for summer 2015, with participation by all of the involved organizations. During this Summit, stakeholders from SLCPD will share their challenges, the changes they implemented, and the results realized. PERF will facilitate discussion of the lessons learned, key considerations, best practices, and next steps to move the field forward. From the summit, PERF and WLP will produce a national comprehensive guidebook outlining the issues, recommendations, outcomes and any promising practices identified during the project.

In order to address these issues in the most comprehensive manner and to preserve the integrity of the technical assistance, PERF (and its partners) and SLCPD agree to the following:

Overall:

- SLCPD, PERF, and PERF project partners (the Women's Law Project, the Office on Violence Against Women, and consultants from here on are referred to as "PERF Project Team.") agree to work collaboratively for the duration of the project (August 2014 through September 2015)¹;
- SLCPD will assign a specific point of contact to coordinate directly with the PERF Project Team during the course of this project;
- The PERF Project Team and SLCPD will coordinate site visits, conference calls, and other communications to review all aspects of police work related to sexual assault. This may include but is not limited to information regarding dispatch, first responders, investigators, department structure/chain of command, self-audit mechanisms, and any preventative programs;
- The PERF Project Team and SLCPD will coordinate with other Salt Lake City and Salt Lake County justice system players to assess and identify steps for the criminal justice response to be well coordinated, victim centered, and holistic;
- SLCPD and the PERF Project Team will consult with local victims service providers, advocates, and sexual assault nurse examiners to develop or enhance existing partnerships;
- The PERF Project Team will keep all individual case information and other sensitive materials gathered about SLCPD confidential during the course of the technical assistance, and will not share the data without explicit consent from SLCPD;
- The PERF Project Team and SLCPD will collaboratively identify areas for improvement throughout the course of the technical assistance and will continually refine plans to best serve the needs of sexual assault victims in Salt Lake City;
- The PERF Project Team will document the action plan development, implementation process, outcomes, and lessons learned from the technical assistance work in Salt Lake City for use in a national publication (with review and input from SLCPD);
- SLCPD will participate in OVW sponsored trainings and events that are identified and selected collaboratively by the PERF Project Team and the SLCPD;
- SLCPD will participate in a national meeting alongside representatives from the other technical assistance sites to report lessons learned and progress made as a result of the project; and
- The PERF Project Team will notify SLCPD of any changes to the project tasks or timeline.

Assessment:

- SLCPD will provide the PERF Project Team with access to data and files necessary to complete a comprehensive assessment of data and case management related to sexual assault reports;
- The PERF Project Team will keep all data and other information gathered from the assessment private and will not release the information to outside sources without SLCPD's prior knowledge;

¹ Please see the attached Phase Description for a detailed list of the project phases.

- The PERF Project Team will conduct both on and offsite reviews of pertinent qualitative information including interviews and focus groups with staff members (such as command staff, SVU personnel, patrol officers and supervisors, and dispatch employees), case files for sexual assault reports and investigations, training materials for all levels of staff related to sexual assault reports, any policies or procedures related to reports of sexual assault, and interviews with local partners in responding to and preventing sexual assault;
- The PERF Project Team will regularly communicate with SLCPD on project progress and findings during the assessment phase; and
- The PERF Project Team will compile findings and recommendations from the assessment into a document for review by SLCPD.

Implementation and Outcome Measures:

- SLCPD will carefully review PERF's findings and recommendations assessment document;
- SLCPD will work collaboratively with PERF to identify areas for improvement and refinement as well as an action plan for the agency to implement to address these areas;
- The PERF Project Team will deliver ongoing on and off site technical assistance to SLCPD throughout implementation of the action plan for one year;
- The PERF Project Team will identify outside resources (such as trainings, conferences, materials) that may be helpful to SLCPD during the technical assistance process;
- The PERF Project Team will work with SLCPD to establish meaningful, non-burdensome outcome measures to sustain improvements made;
- The PERF Project Team will work closely with SLCPD to document ongoing processes, updates, and lessons learned from the development and implementation of the action plan; and
- SLCPD will work collaboratively with local partners to strengthen the system-wide approach to responding to and preventing sexual assault.

Developing a Publication and National Meeting:

- SLCPD will provide input to the PERF Project Team on a national publication which will detail any recommendations and/or guidelines for improving the police response to sexual assault;
- SLCPD will share details with PERF on the development and implementation process during this technical assistance project, as well as any outcomes or lessons learned to be included in the national publication;
- SLCPD representatives will participate in a national meeting to report lessons learned and progress made as a result of the project; and
- The PERF Project Team will provide SLCPD with a draft of the national report prior to publication for review and feedback.

Confidentiality:

- The PERF Project Team agree to keep individual case information and other sensitive materials gathered during the course of the project confidential unless otherwise specified by SLCPD;

- SLCPD agrees to be identified in the PERF publication and to actively participate in the PERF national meeting with the understanding that SLCPD will be consulted on any material that will be used that concern the department;
- During publication development and national meeting planning, PERF will work directly with SLCPD to develop materials for dissemination;
- The PERF Project Team will provide SLCPD with drafts of any materials for dissemination regarding the technical assistance work in Salt Lake City for review and approval; and
- The PERF Project Team will only reference work with SLCPD to outside parties with the expressed consent of SLCPD.

Salt Lake City Police Department:


Christopher Burbank
Chief of Police

9/24/14
Date

Police Executive Research Forum:


Chuck Wexler
Executive Director

9/24/14
Date