

# **CALIFORNIA RACIAL AND IDENTITY PROFILING ADVISORY BOARD**

## **CALLS FOR SERVICE SUBCOMMITTEE** **MEETING MINUTES**

**August 15, 2018 10:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.**

**Board Members in Attendance:** Angela Sierra, Sandra Brown, Alice Lytle, Sahar Durali

**Board Members Absent:** Sheriff Robinson

### **1. Call to Order**

The first meeting of the Calls for Service Subcommittee was called to order at 10:05 a.m. by Kelsey Geiser from the California Department of Justice (DOJ). The Meeting was held by teleconference with a quorum of members present.

### **2. Update from Department of Justice**

Ms. Geiser provided an overview of the Board's timeline for the rest of the year as well as a review of the letter by Senators Lara and Mitchell received by the Board and the origins of this new subcommittee. Ms. Geiser stated that this subcommittee was created to discuss issues surrounding potential bias, policies, and best practices, and best practices with respect to law enforcement calls for service for inclusion in future Board reports.

### **3. Selection of Subcommittee Co-Chairs**

Member Sierra nominated herself for the position of subcommittee co-chair. Member Brown nominated herself for the position of subcommittee co-chair.

**MOTION:** Member Durali made a motion to appoint Member Sierra and Member Brown as subcommittee co-chairs. Member Sierra seconded the motion.

**APPROVAL:** All subcommittee members in attendance voted "yes," no "no" notes, and no abstentions. Member Robinson and Member Lytle were not present for the vote.

### **4. Overview of Proposed Report Content**

Ms. Geiser provided the subcommittee with an overview of the report outline and highlighted the proposed work of the calls for service subcommittee specifically. Ms. Geiser commented that the outline distributed was intended for consideration and to encourage discussion of items to be considered for inclusion in the upcoming report. Ms. Geiser stated that one approach to the report would be to include a set of best practice guides in this report that would cover the topics discussed in each subcommittee. These guides would provide an overview of the governing state and federal law on the topic as well as a best of best practice recommendations accumulated from top research on the subject or existing model policies or trainings. Ms. Geiser commented that since the calls for service subcommittee is new and the subcommittee is not as steeped in the literature

on the topic, a best practice guide may not be appropriate for this year's report. Ms. Geiser commented that this topic may fit well in conjunction with the work of another subcommittee such as the POST training and recruitment or stop data subcommittees.

## **5. Discussion of Report Contents on Calls for Service and Tactical Communications**

Co-Chair Brown commented that bias by proxy is not a new issue but is becoming increasingly publicized due to social media. Co-Chair Brown suggested that the topic of calls for service be separated into its own section of the report rather than as an addition to the work of another subcommittee. Co-Chair Brown commented that the section should discuss how to approach biased calls for service once they have clearly been identified to make a negative contact into a positive contact. This section could be seen as a learning opportunity for all parties involved.

Co-Chair Sierra agreed with treating this topic as a stand alone topic. Co-Chair Sierra commented that, because this is a new topic for the Board, that the subcommittee will likely not be in a position to produce a set of best practices for this year's report. Co-Chair Sierra suggested using this opportunity to provide a baseline introduction to the topic and lay the groundwork for work in future reports as the other subcommittees did with their subjects in last year's report.

Member Durali suggested that the subcommittee survey law enforcement agencies similar to last year to gain a better understanding of the policies covering calls for service that are already in use. Member Durali suggested looking at model policies or various ways in which agencies are currently dealing with the issue. Member Durali suggested inviting a content matter expert to speak with the subcommittee during the next subcommittee meeting.

Co-Chair Brown commented that there is training on how to handle bias by proxy through procedural justice training. Co-Chair Brown commented that there are also situations in which a community member calls and says they do not want direct contact with an officer. Co-Chair Brown commented that it is important to contact that caller and provide necessary education on the issues with these kinds of calls. Co-Chair Brown commented that officers must also be training on how to have empathy for the caller and empathy for the person being contacted. Co-Chair Brown commented that calls for service policies are integrated into broad bias-free policing policies or trainings.

Co-Chair Brown suggested conducting a literature review on the trainings around how calls are received, how they are responded to, and how to de-escalate potentially dangerous situations that can arise from these calls.

Co-Chair Sierra commented that certain neighborhoods include online neighborhood watch bulletin boards that should be considered in the review of this topic.

Co-Chair Brown commented on the importance of not de-valuing the person who has a bias because the existence of these biases is a common reality. Co-Chair Brown

commented that failing to respond to calls for service because one has deemed it biased or not worthy of a response initially can be a form of bias in itself. Co-Chair Brown suggested education community members and law enforcement agents on the topic instead.

Member Lytle commented that the subcommittee should also consider calls for service from families or individuals who know one another who are requesting assistance.

Co-Chair Sierra commented that this raises issues surrounding training on responding to calls for mental health issues. Co-Chair Sierra commented that members of the community have voiced their reluctance to call police in serious situations because they are afraid.

Member Lytle suggested a social worker or another mental health worker be deployed with an officer in response to a call for service involving a mental health issue.

Co-Chair Brown commented that many agencies in California have critical incident teams that are trained specifically on how to handle these difficult situations. Co-Chair Brown suggested surveying agencies in California to gauge how many have these teams.

Co-Chair Sierra suggested including in this year's report an overview of the types of biased calls for service and situations that may occur, providing a literature review on the topic, and then a plan for what the subcommittee wants to cover more deeply in future reports. Co-Chair Sierra suggested handling the topic of mental health separately in a future report but including it as a part of the plan for future reports in this year's report. Co-Chair Sierra commented that it is important to provide context to the stop data.

Member Lytle commented that it is important to cover an issue in the report that does not focus directly on law enforcement. Member Lytle commented that society often calls upon police to do things they are not able to do such as take care of people with serious mental illnesses and this is not only unfair to police but is also dangerous.

Co-Chair Brown commented that POST has a training on how to respond to individuals with mental health needs as well as training that is independent of health.

Member Lytle suggested the creation of mental health and youth assistance the community can call on that is independent of the police, such as a statewide mental health system.

## **6. Public Comment**

A member of the public commented that there would need to be a policy change to ensure that the officer contacts a health professional first or brings them along.

A member of the public suggested reaching out to Lexipol regarding policy recommendations and changes to reach a large number of agencies in the State. He

commented that often these calls are anonymous and take some time to sort out what is happening when the officer arrives at the scene.

**7. Approval of Next Steps**

DOJ staff will conduct a literature review on potentially biased calls for service and bias by proxy. The DOJ staff will work with the subcommittee co-chairs on reviewing this literature and drafting a portion of the report on the topic which will then be reviewed by the full subcommittee and subsequently the Board.

**8. Adjourn**

The meeting was adjourned at 11:23 a.m.