

**Draft Findings and Recommendations
of the Lakewood City Council
in its Review of the Use of Force Policy
of the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department**

November 15, 2021

Introduction

As part of the City of Lakewood's ongoing Community Dialogue on race, equity, diversity and inclusion, the city has been conducting a review of the Use of Force Policy of the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department, which is the law enforcement agency for the City of Lakewood. Cities around the nation have been conducting such a community review as part of a best-practice recommended by the U.S. Department of Justice's 21st Century Policing Task Force. The Use of Force Policy is utilized county-wide by the Sheriff's Department in all of its service areas. It is not a policy of the City of Lakewood.

The City of Lakewood posted the Sheriff's Department Use of Force Policy and asked for resident input late last year. Sixty residents provided comments. A committee of the Lakewood City Council carefully reviewed the comments, studied the Use of Force policy, and requested additional information from the Sheriff's Department.

Based on its analysis and review, the Lakewood City Council is considering the draft findings and recommendations, shown below, that it plans to communicate to the Sheriff's Department.

The City Council is seeking feedback from residents on these draft findings and recommendations by Dec. 8, 2021.

Residents can provide their feedback in three ways:

- 1. Online at www.lakewoodcity.org/CommunityReview*
- 2. By emailing CommunityDialogue@lakewoodcity.org*
- 3. By mail to: Community Relations Office, Lakewood City Hall, 5050 Clark Ave., Lakewood, CA 90712.*

Draft Findings and Recommendations

The Lakewood City Council finds that:

1. Of the 60 responses received from Lakewood residents in the review of the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department's Use of Force Policy, 12 responses (20% of the total) expressed some type of concern or needed improvement with the Sheriff's Department's policy, actions or training. Those areas of concern or needed improvements focused primarily on topics such as: there not being enough emphasis or training on de-escalation techniques, implicit bias, and approaches for safely interacting with people with mental illness or in a mental health crisis.
2. Forty-three residents (72% of the total) expressed strong support for the existing Use of Force policy, Lakewood deputy sheriffs, the Lakewood Sheriff's Station, and the Sheriff's Department as a whole. Five residents (8% of the total) provided comments that were more neutral in character.
3. The Public Safety Committee of the Lakewood City Council has communicated the full range of these community views to the captain of the Lakewood Sheriff's Station, and has asked him for details on the concerns and training needs expressed by Lakewood residents.
4. The Lakewood Sheriff's Station captain has provided details on the training that deputy sheriffs receive in the areas of de-escalation, implicit bias, and interacting with people with mental health problems.
5. The City Council will communicate to the Sheriff's Department top leadership a recommendation that the Department should continue to look for ways to enhance the training provided to deputy sheriffs in the important areas of de-escalation, implicit bias, and safe interactions with those suffering from mental illness or mental crisis. Continually improving training and performance in these key areas is vital for maintaining and enhancing the community-wide public trust that is so essential for effective public safety.
6. The City Council will communicate to the Sheriff's Department top leadership on the high level of positive feedback from a large percentage of Lakewood residents about the performance of the Lakewood Sheriff's Station and its deputy sheriff personnel. The Council is not surprised by that positive feedback and is very supportive of the Lakewood Station personnel's continued efforts to make Lakewood a safe community for all. The Council will also commend the Sheriff's Department for posting its Use of Force Policy and related materials

as well as a host of other policies, reports and documents on their website at <https://lasd.org/transparency/>.

7. The City Council also takes positive note of the fact that the Lakewood Sheriff's Station was in the first wave of Sheriff's Stations to receive body-worn video cameras for its deputies. The Council is impressed with the reports from the Lakewood Sheriff's Station's captain that the cameras have led to improved feedback to deputies on performance, with resulting improved training, and that the implementation of the cameras has correlated with a reduction in complaints from the public. The Council recommends that the Sheriff's Department and the Lakewood Sheriff's Station continue to look for ways to positively utilize the body-worn cameras and improve the feedback that deputies receive on their performance from the cameras.
8. Within the limits of their scope, the Council and its Public Safety Committee performed their own review of the Sheriff's Department's Use of Force Policy and find that the policy appears to be very reasonable and very professionally based. The Council and Committee also find that Sheriff's Department personnel receive an extensive amount of training, including training above and beyond the national average.

The City Council recommends that:

1. These draft findings and recommendations be shared with the Lakewood community for their feedback, and that after that feedback is received and reviewed by the Public Safety Committee, that the Committee should reach final findings, share those with the full City Council for review and approval, and then communicate those findings and recommendations to the leadership of the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department.