

Examples of Law Enforcement Defunding/Reallocating/Unbundling Across the US

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Prompted by recent events and resulting cries for police reform across the U.S., many jurisdictions have pledged or made significant changes to law enforcement funding, frequently reallocating or allocating additional funding to behavioral health and community services. While the terminology, timelines, and other specifics vary, Policy Research has compiled a list of examples to serve as a resource to other communities, current as of the date listed above. A selection of articles providing background is also included, with an eye toward individuals with behavioral health needs in particular, and with the acknowledgement that there are many other valuable articles and pieces available on the topic. There is also a shorter section at the end listing jurisdictional examples of reform with School Resource Officers (SROs).

Note: If your jurisdiction is making similar reforms, please contact akrider@prainc.com to be added to this list.

A Selection of Background Articles:

- Equal Justice USA: [What does it mean to defund the police, and why should we?](#)
- The Appeal: [Community-based emergency first responders: explained](#)
- Treatment Advocacy Center: [People with untreated mental illness 16 times more likely to be killed by law enforcement](#)
- The Washington Post, via petearley.com: [Mental illness is a health issue, not a police issue](#)
- The Atlantic: [Unbundle the police: American policing is a gnarl of overlapping services that should be demilitarized and disentangled.](#)
- Urban Institute: [What police spending data can \(and cannot\) explain amid calls to defund the police](#)
- NY Times: [How do the police actually spend their time?](#)
 - *A review of data in three areas*
- Treatment Advocacy Center: [Road runners: The role and impact of law enforcement in transporting individuals with severe mental illness, a national survey.](#)
 - *About one-fifth of total law-enforcement staff time and 10% of law-enforcement agencies' total budgets in 2017 went toward responding to and transporting people with mental illness. The study estimated that law enforcement nationwide had spent an estimated \$918 million transporting individuals with severe mental illness that year.*

Jurisdictional Examples of Law Enforcement Reform:

- **Eugene, OR:** For more than three decades, a community-based mobile response program called [Crisis Assistance Helping Out on the Streets](#) (CAHOOTS), has been taking calls for help related to mental illness, homelessness, and addiction. It handles more than 20% of 9-1-1 calls in the area. In 2019, out of a total of roughly 24,000 CAHOOTS calls, police backup was requested only 150 times.

- **Denver, CO:** The city launched a six-month pilot [CAHOOTS-like program](#) on 6/1/20 called Support Team Assisted Response (STAR). Five days a week, a mental health clinician and paramedic respond to mental health crises-related calls. In July 2020, Police Chief Paul Pazen [said he would be open](#) to considering moving STAR out from under the police department entirely.
- **Portland, OR:** In late 2019, the city announced [a similar program](#) to CAHOOTS, Portland Street Response (PSR), which takes police off of low-priority 9-1-1 calls and instead sends a new branch of first responders, trained in behavioral health, to address issues related to people experiencing homelessness or mental health crises. On 6/18/20 the City Council approved \$4.8 million funding for PSR, along with a [3% reduction](#) (about \$15 million) to the Portland Police Bureau budget.
- **Austin, TX:** The [Community Health Paramedic team](#) (CHP) works with Integral Care’s Expanded Mobile Crisis Outreach Team (EMCOT) to dispatch mental health counselors directly to nonviolent, mental health-related 9-1-1 calls. They also use video calls between EMCOT counselors and paramedics/clinicians in the field.
 - Austin City Council members [voted unanimously](#) on 8/13/20 to cut its police budget by \$150 million (about a third of the \$434 million total) and reinvest the money in social services including food access, violence prevention, and abortion access. An additional \$80 million will be cut over the next year and \$50 million will be diverted toward a new “Reimagine Safety Fund.”
- **Olympia, WA:** the city also launched a [CAHOOTS-like program](#), the Crisis Response Unit, in April 2019.
- **New York City, NY:** On 7/1/20, the New York City Council [approved](#) shifting roughly \$1 billion away from the \$6 billion annual Police Department budget, reallocating \$354 million to mental health, homelessness, and education services. The budget also shifts school safety and homeless outreach away from police.
 - NYC’s [Crisis Management System](#) (CMS) program deploys teams of credible messengers who mediate conflicts on the street and connect high-risk individuals to services that can reduce the long-term risk of violence. In the last three years, the Crisis Management System has contributed to a 15% decline in shootings in the 17 highest violence precincts in NYC. In early June, Mayor Bill de Blasio announced that he plans to increase CMS spending by ten million dollars, hire additional workers, and expand programs to Soundview, Jamaica, Crown Heights, Flatbush, and Canarsie.
- **Minneapolis, MN:** On 6/26/20, the Minneapolis City Council [voted](#) unanimously to approve a potential November 2020 ballot measure to change the city charter and dismantle Minneapolis’ police force, calling instead for a department of community safety and violence prevention, with a provision for licensed law enforcement officers. Council members said they wanted to do year-long consultations with residents to identify public-safety strategies that do not involve policing. At the end of that process, they would overhaul the responsibilities of the police, and give many of the duties to community groups and other programs.
- **Seattle, WA:** Funding cuts to the Seattle Police Department budget by up to 50% [were proposed](#) and considered by the City Council in July 2020, with the goal of redirecting much of that

funding into community-led public safety initiatives and affordable housing, such as replacing the current 9-1-1 operations with a civilian-controlled system. On 8/5/20 the City Council [voted](#) to reject the most immediate and substantial proposals, but approved trimming of pay of some high-ranking officers, for a savings of about \$500,000 this year. The Council also [voted unanimously](#) to remove police from the city's Navigation Team, of which duties include removing homeless encampments. On 8/10/20 the Council [approved](#) a budget trimming about \$3 million of the department's \$400 million annual budget.

- **Los Angeles, CA:** On 6/16/20 the City Council [voted](#) to cut \$150 million (of \$1.8 billion total budget) from the Police Department budget, halting a planned increase in funding. The \$150 million will be redirected toward community-building projects and health and education initiatives in minority communities.
 - [Announced on 7/27/20](#), the LAPD will expand a pilot program to create a new police bureau focused on community policing, relying on guidance from community leaders, representatives from city hall, and others.
- **San Francisco, CA:** On 7/31/20 the Mayor [announced](#) a \$120 million cut from the city police and sheriff's departments over the next two years, redirecting funding toward addressing disparities in the Black community including in housing, mental health and wellness, workforce development, economic justice, education, advocacy, and accountability. This plan will also reduce the need for armed police interventions in schools.
- **Berkeley, CA:** On 6/15/20 the City Council [moved forward](#) with a proposal to eliminate police from conducting traffic stops and instead create and use a separate department of unarmed civilian city workers to also handle transportation projects and enforcing of parking. The City Council also set a goal of cutting the police budget by 50%.
- **Salt Lake City, UT:** On 6/16/20 the City Council [unanimously approved](#) a \$5.3 million funding cut to the Police Department. More than \$2 million will be reserved until a [new committee](#) on racial equity and policing can be formed and another \$2.5 million of the budget will be redirected to a social worker program housed within the Police Department.
- **Washington, DC:** On 7/23/20 the D.C. Council [unanimously approved](#) a budget cutting \$15 million from the police department. A large portion of the money would be refunded to public safety efforts outside of D.C.'s law enforcement including gun violence prevention, the Office for Neighborhood Safety and Engagement, and social work programs.
- **Baltimore, MD:** On 6/15/20 the City Council [approved](#) \$22.4 million (less than 5%) cut to the Police Department's \$550 million 2021 budget, including nearly \$7 million from overtime spending.
- **Philadelphia, PA:** On 6/25/20 the City Council [approved](#) a 2021 fiscal year budget that reduced \$33 million in Police Department funding (cancelling the mayor's previously planned \$19 million increase for the department) and allocated \$45 million into affordable housing, arts funding, and social services addressing poverty.
- **Albuquerque, NM:** On 6/15/20 [the Mayor announced](#) the formation of a new public safety department, Albuquerque Community Safety, designed to relieve stress on the city's police. Instead of the police or fire departments responding to 9-1-1 calls related to inebriation, homelessness, addiction and mental health, the new division will deploy unarmed personnel

made up of social workers, housing and homelessness specialists, and violence prevention coordinators. Mayor Keller stated that the department's creation will start with a focus on "[restructuring and reallocating resources](#)" that the city is already investing in different areas, saying he anticipated "tens of millions of dollars that will move" with the department's creation.

- **Newark, NJ:** On 6/24/20 the Mayor [signed an ordinance](#) to redirect \$12 million of the city's \$229 million public safety budget to the Office of Violence Prevention, which was also given a permanent headquarters.
- **Norman, OK:** The city is [deducting \\$865,000](#) from the Police Department by eliminating nine salary positions. The city has not yet determined how the funds will be specifically allocated, other than general "community outreach and social programs."
- **Durham, NC:** In June 2019, the City Council voted against hiring 18 new patrol officers (a \$1.2 million request) after a public campaign led by a group called [Durham Beyond Policing](#). The city is now exploring a new "community safety and wellness task force" instead. While the city's [2021 budget](#) did include an increase of \$1.2 million for the Police Department, \$1 million was also added for a Community Health and Safety Task Force to "potentially take on some of the responsibilities of policing the city over time."
- **Arcata, CA:** The City Council [unanimously voted](#) on 6/16/20 to reduce Police Department funding by nearly \$750,000.
- **Rochester, NY:** The City Council [approved](#) a budget on 6/16/20 to cut \$3 million (nearly 4% of the total \$95 million) in police funding and reduce recruitment by half.
- **Hartford, CT:** On 6/11/20 the City Council [unanimously voted](#) to reduce/reallocate the Police Department's budget by 6%. About \$1.6 million will be cut and \$1 million reallocated within the Department toward social services including domestic violence teams, increased training, and trauma counseling.
- **Prince George's County, MD:** On 6/16/20 County Executive Alsobrooks [announced](#) that officials plan to forgo expanding a police training facility and will instead use county police department funds for a \$20 million public health facility to treat mental health and addiction needs. The County Council needs to add the health facility for voters to decide on in November 2020. A community workgroup will also be formed to provide further recommendations on police reform.

Jurisdictional Examples of School Resource Officer (SRO) Reform:

- **Minneapolis, MN:** The school board voted unanimously on 6/2/20 to cancel its contract with the Minneapolis Police Department to provide SROs. The Park and Recreation Board, University of Minnesota, museums, and other venues have [also chosen to limit](#) or end their collaboration with the Police Department.
- **Denver, CO:** In a unanimous vote on 6/11/20, the Board of Education agreed to remove SROs from school, ending the contract with the Denver Police Department. The existing SROs will be reduced by 25% before the end of 2020 and the rest will be removed no later than 6/4/21.
- **Portland, OR:** On 6/4/20 Superintendent Guerrero [announced](#) that Portland Public Schools will discontinue the regular presence of SROs. New investments in counselors, social workers, and culturally specific partners are also proposed.

- **Oakland, CA:** The school board [voted unanimously](#) on 6/25/20 to eliminate its 67-member internal police force, Oakland Unified, laying off members as of 12/31/20. The about \$4 million cost savings could be used to hire more counselors and social workers and allow for the return of some restorative justice coordinators who were let go in 2019-20 to close budget gaps.
- **Milwaukee, WI:** The Board of School Directors [voted unanimously](#) on 6/18/20 to terminate its contract with the Milwaukee Police Department in its public schools.
- **Madison, WI:** The school board [voted unanimously](#) on 6/29/20 to end its contract with the Madison Police Department for SROs, effective immediately.
- **Portland, ME:** The school board [voted](#) on 7/1/20 to remove SROs from Deering and Portland High School. More than \$150,000 is built into the district’s budget for the officers, which will be diverted toward programs “like supporting security at large events and de-escalation training for staff.”
- **Rochester, NY:** The City Council [voted](#) on 6/16/20 to end the SRO program in the Rochester City School District.
- **Charlottesville, VA:** Charlottesville City Schools, the city, and Charlottesville Police Department [made a joint decision](#) to remove SROs.

For More Information:

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