



## CITY OF PORTLAND, OREGON



### Bureau of Police

Ted Wheeler, Mayor

Charles Lovell, Chief of Police

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June 6, 2022

Mary Hull Caballero  
City Auditor  
1221 SW 4<sup>th</sup> Avenue, Suite 310  
Portland, OR 97204

Dear Auditor Hull Caballero:

My team and I have read the recent Independent Police Review's review of the Portland Police Bureau's response to domestic violence calls. We agree, either fully or in part, with each of the four recommendations. We would like to provide some clarification on our stance regarding each recommendation.

**Recommendation One: Ensure that the benefits of the Special Victims Unit being located with its community partners are assessed appropriately against the costs of moving it.**

We agree that this is always an extremely valid criteria to consider. Co-housing the multidisciplinary teams affords the survivor of abuse a sense of personal safety, helps ease the apprehension of meeting with law enforcement, and makes accessing services easier.

**Recommendation Two: Re-establish and maintain a risk assessment tool to prioritize high risk domestic violence cases for investigative follow-up.**

Your report highlights our current issue: the digital records management system is incompatible with the old assessment tool. We agree having an electronic solution would be better, but the development and selection of this tool needs to be thoughtful and timed with any move to a different records management system.

Even without an automated tool, the supervisors at our Special Victims Unit (SVU) reviewed over 11,400 police reports in 2021 and assigned 9.1% of the cases for follow-up by SVU investigators.

**Recommendation Three: Revise Directive 825.00: Protection Orders and Domestic Violence Cases to provide officers guidance on the reasons behind the actions they are required to take during domestic violence responses.**

We agree officers need guidance on the reasons behind actions they are required to take. We believe the appropriate place to have the "explanations behind the rule" is in the training provided about the rule. We are committing to restoring training on domestic violence response and expanding the scope of training provided in our response to the final recommendation.

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**Recommendation Four: Provide Training at the Bureau's Advanced Academy and in-service sessions to ensure the Bureau can achieve:**

- a. Trauma-informed domestic violence response and investigations with a focus on the neurobiology of trauma and victim behavior;**
- b. Scenario based training in accordance with recommendations from the Special Victims Unit and community partners;**
- c. Trauma-informed interviewing techniques with a focus on victim behavior/safety and lethality indicators for perpetrators; and**
- d. Effective reports with an emphasis on articulating criminal elements and providing thorough and accurate information to ensure appropriate prosecutorial charging decisions.**

We agree all of these training recommendations are appropriate and would improve our response to survivors of domestic abuse. Our Training Division has been made aware of each recommendation and has added this to our Annual Training Assessment for implementation as soon as we can develop curriculum and identify when we have adequate class time at in-service. Adding additional training to the Advanced Academy will also be possible as soon as we can develop curriculum. Effective report writing also includes effective review by supervisors who approve these reports, so we will also develop curriculum for supervisor in-service aimed at improving report review.

Thank you for providing us the opportunity to respond to this review.



Charles Lovell  
Chief of Police