COMMUNITY GUIDE

for Working with Law Enforcement

A key component of a successful safety and security strategy within any community, and the Jewish community in particular, involves establishing strong cooperation with law enforcement. This set of guidelines and recommendations is provided to assist Jewish organizations and institutions with both security planning for the High Holidays, as well as with ongoing efforts to create strategic partnerships with law enforcement.

Why Strong Relationships are Important

Strong and positive relationships between the community and police are essential to safety and security. Such relationships allow law enforcement better and quicker responses to emergencies, as well as a familiarity with the community and its facilities. Law enforcement awareness and understanding of the Jewish community allows them to better understand threats specific to the community and variances in security posture. The establishment of a strong working relationship involving information sharing, best practices, mutual understanding and cooperation will lead to a stronger, more secure and resilient Jewish community.

Who's Who

There are approximately 18,000 police agencies within the United States, to include local, state, and federal law enforcement entities, as well as sheriff's departments, college campus departments and others. These entities range in size from one officer to over 30,000.

For strictly local law enforcement, including police and sheriff departments with armed officers, the total is roughly 15,400 nationally.

Each of these departments are subject to different state, county, and city laws and codes. They also each have different policies, practices, and officer training programs. It is important to note that while there are recognized best practices for law enforcement organizations, there is no standard for the structure, size, or governance of police departments in the United States.

Understanding the different agencies can assist in understanding who to call and for what.[1]

State and Local Law Enforcement Agencies

Depending on your geographic location, local and/or state police officers will be the first responders to any incident requiring police assistance. When 9-1-1 is called, a municipal, county or state police officer, sheriff or trooper will most likely be dispatched to respond.

Local Police

Local police includes municipal, county, tribal, and regional police who derive authority from the local governing body by whom they were created. Their primary purpose is to uphold the laws of the jurisdiction, provide patrol and investigate local crimes.

State Police | Highway Patrol

State police often perform specific police duties, to include highway patrol and statewide investigations. Some states have only highway patrol, with investigative functions covered by a separate entity such as a state bureau of investigation. State police may assist local police with investigations and emergencies that extend beyond the resources and jurisdictional boundaries of the local agency.

Special Jurisdiction Police

Officers for special jurisdictions provide police services for defined entities or areas within another jurisdiction. These can include parks, schools, transportation assets (e.g., airports, subways), hospitals, housing authorities, and government buildings. Special jurisdiction police are generally full-service departments, offering the same services as local police.

Sheriffs

Generally, sheriff's offices are granted authority by the state to enforce state law at the local county level. Deputies commonly run the local jail, serve warrants and court summons, and respond to calls for service in areas outside local police jurisdictions.

1. http://www.discoverpolicing.org/whats_like/?fa=types_jobs

Federal Law Enforcement Agencies

There are 65 federal agencies and 27 offices of inspector general that employ full time personnel authorized to make arrests and carry firearms. Historically, the largest employers of Federal officers were the U.S. Customs and Border Protection, the Federal Bureau of Prisons, the FBI, and the U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement, each with over 15,000 full-time law enforcement officers. Federal officers' duties include police response and patrol, criminal investigation and enforcement, inspections, security and protection, court operations and corrections.

Other Entities to Know

Fusion Centers

As of February 2018, there were 79 federally-recognized Fusion Centers across the country, with at least one in every state. According to The Department of Homeland Security, a Fusion Center is "an intelligence gathering, analysis and dissemination state or major urban area center, which is owned by state, local, and territorial law enforcement and Department of Homeland Security entities, many of which were jointly created between 2003 and 2007 under the U.S. Department of Homeland Security and the Office of Justice Programs in the U.S. Department of Justice." The Fusion Center is designed to be the primary source of threat-related information, intelligence and government products passed on by law enforcement at every level.

Where Do We Start

Partnerships between law enforcement and communities are built on relationships, communication and trust over time. Successful partnerships are always a result of ongoing cooperation, communication and shared best practices.

As a community, we should never presume that law enforcement has an understanding or knowledge of our traditions, history or practices. Even where a law enforcement agency may have employees within it who are members of the community, this does not guarantee that there is an organizational or institutional understanding of our community or its institutions and facilities.

As such, it is the community's responsibility to establish those relationships and keep law enforcement informed. Our partners in law enforcement are generally more effective when they have more information that can assist them in understanding our community and, therefore, in making decisions that may impact our community – on everything from knowing when and where our services are held, to being kept up-to-date on emerging trends and threats to the community, which can be influenced by local, national, and international events.

As with any relationship, they require continual investment.

Ongoing Activities

We recommend the following to build a relationship with local law enforcement:

- Contact your local police department and request a meeting with the Chief, or a designated liaison, to discuss the community and any concerns you may have or issues that you have had to address.
- Invite the department to your facility for coffee or a Shabbat dinner; inviting the police officers that routinely patrol the community streets where your facility is located can prove valuable should the need arise.
- Ask your local law enforcement and first responders to undertake a physical walk-through of the facility, allowing them to familiarize themselves with the facility.
- Designate a point of contact within the facility who will act as the liaison to local law enforcement and first responders.
- Consider having your local agency designate a unified liaison to the Jewish community and using him/her as a single point of contact. This will simplify requests for manpower and equipment and allow for an easier two-way flow of information.
- Make your facility Emergency Operation Plan available to your law enforcement liaison. This will give law enforcement a realistic idea of what you and your facility will do in the event of a critical incident.
- If your facility utilizes mobile communications as part of a security plan, attempt to provide both the local 911 center as well as officers that patrol the area with a unit, as well. This will allow near instant communication and provide officers responding to an incident enhanced situational awareness.
- Request regular threat briefings from both the FBI, as well as local and state law enforcement. The more the Jewish community is updated on current tactics and threat information, the more effective we can be in preparing security plans.
- Law Enforcement Appreciation: Invite officers (and their families) to an evening at a JCC pool or to join in a synagogue function. This can also serve as new membership outreach; consider offering law enforcement rates for membership.
- Offering Law Enforcement Facility Use: Reach out to the local, state and federal law enforcement and offer the use of your facility for meetings, training (active threat, building movements, table-top exercises), meetings and other activities.
- Participating in Police Clergy | Citizens Police Academy: If offered by law enforcement, and depending on the nature of your facility, maintaining a presence in these programs can be very beneficial in understanding how law enforcement functions in both day-to-day operations and in emergency situations.

High Holiday Preparation

In advance of the High Holidays, specifically, we recommend the following:

- Request a meeting to discuss the High Holidays. Explain their significance, to include that it is a time of year that sees the highest participation and attendance by community members, significantly increasing the security profile. It is important to make law enforcement aware that the High Holiday period is a time when the community has often faced heightened threats;
- Provide law enforcement with a detailed calendar of events, to include when, where and how many attendees are expected, and;
- Request, to the extent possible, that the department place a 'special attention' and/or provide resources to support High Holiday activities.
- Appoint a liaison to law enforcement: a point of contact who can relay information and facilitate communication between the facility and law enforcement and first responders.

Maintain Regular Contact

It cannot be stressed enough that best practice with regards to strong relationships is to ensure regular contact and outreach.

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