



# COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO

## BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

1600 PACIFIC HIGHWAY, ROOM 335, SAN DIEGO, CALIFORNIA 92101-2470

### AGENDA ITEM

**DATE:** April 7, 2015

**01**

**TO:** Board of Supervisors

**SUBJECT:** EXPANSION OF PSYCHIATRIC EMERGENCY RESPONSE TEAMS (PERT)  
(DISTRICTS: ALL)

#### **Overview**

The County of San Diego's Psychiatric Emergency Response Team (PERT) program was formed in 1995 to assist law enforcement and our communities with providing clinically appropriate treatment to individuals experiencing a mental health crisis. PERT consists of specially trained officers and deputies, paired with licensed mental health professionals, who provide on-scene responses to incidents involving individuals with mental illness. In 2014, the Sheriff's Department received over 5,500 PERT-related calls. This is a 62.3% increase from 2008, which was the first full year at the current service level.

Through training and collaboration, PERT is able to link individuals with the appropriate level of care, avoid unnecessary incarcerations and hospitalizations, and provide referrals to treatment providers. Today's action authorizes the Chief Administrative Officer to work with the San Diego County Sheriff's Department to review and analyze the current PERT program, make recommendations regarding the level of service to address the increased needs of the community and identify the necessary funding.

#### **Recommendation(s)**

**VICE CHAIRMAN DAVE ROBERTS, SUPERVISOR DIANNE JACOB, AND SHERIFF BILL GORE**

Direct the Chief Administrative Officer (CAO), in consultation with the San Diego County Sheriff's Department, to analyze the current Psychiatric Emergency Response Team program, make recommendations regarding the level of service needed to address the increased demands of the community and identify the necessary funding.

#### **Fiscal Impact**

There is no fiscal impact associated with this action. Following the Chief Administrative Officer's review, recommendations regarding the Psychiatric Emergency Response Team program may be included in the Fiscal Year 2015-16 CAO Recommended Operational Plan.

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**Business Impact Statement**

N/A

**Advisory Board Statement**

N/A

**Background**

Established in 1995, the County's Psychiatric Emergency Response Team (PERT) program has proven to be a highly successful service that pairs law enforcement officers with licensed mental health clinicians. Mobile emergency response teams respond to potentially life-threatening incidents throughout the county, averting unnecessary hospitalizations and incarcerations for many individuals by deescalating potentially violent confrontations and linking individuals with mental illness to appropriate care.

The County's PERT program is a nonprofit organization comprised of members of our Health and Human Services Agency, 10 local law enforcement agencies, the National Alliance on Mental Illness, and the Community Research Foundation. This highly successful program has positive fiscal and social impacts for our communities. Diverting people with mental illness from hospitalizations and incarcerations by connecting them with targeted treatment makes our region safer and saves local law enforcement agencies and psychiatric facilities time and resources.

The PERT program is currently funded by the County of San Diego's Health and Human Services Agency through Proposition 63, the Mental Health Services Act. PERT presently consists of 23 full-time clinicians, support staff, and a law enforcement liaison. PERT's expansion began in 2007, when a need for outreach was identified and a minimum of 10 teams were added to achieve the present total of 23 teams.

Between 2008 and 2014, there has been a 62.3% increase in PERT-related computer aided dispatch (CAD) entries in Sheriff's Department patrolled areas, along with additional non-documented PERT assistance regularly required at critical incidents. Currently, there are eight County Sheriff Stations that do not house a full-time Psychiatric Emergency Response Team. These eight stations comprised 33% of the total PERT-related CAD entries in 2014 and, in some cases, PERT response was delayed or unavailable because of the lack of a local team. Further, there is currently no Psychiatric Emergency Response Team within the San Diego County Probation Department. The Chief Administrative Officer's analysis will take this into account as future Psychiatric Emergency Response Teams are identified and geographically placed.

Today's action authorizes the Chief Administrative Officer to work with the San Diego County Sheriff's Department to review and analyze the current PERT program, make recommendations regarding the level of service to address the increased needs of the community and identify the necessary funding.

**Linkage to the County of San Diego Strategic Plan**

Today's proposed action supports the Safe Communities Initiative of the County of San Diego's 2015-2020 Strategic Plan by reviewing and analyzing emergency psychiatric response capability to help make San Diego the safest urban county in the nation.

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(PERT) (DISTRICTS: ALL)

Respectfully submitted,

DAVE ROBERTS  
Supervisor, Third District

DIANNE JACOB  
Supervisor, Second District

WILLIAM D. GORE  
Sheriff

ATTACHMENT(S)  
N/A

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**AGENDA ITEM INFORMATION SHEET**

**REQUIRES FOUR VOTES:**            Yes        No

**WRITTEN DISCLOSURE PER COUNTY CHARTER SECTION 1000.1 REQUIRED**  
    Yes        No

**PREVIOUS RELEVANT BOARD ACTIONS:**  
N/A

**BOARD POLICIES APPLICABLE:**  
N/A

**BOARD POLICY STATEMENTS:**  
N/A

**MANDATORY COMPLIANCE:**  
N/A

**ORACLE AWARD NUMBER(S) AND CONTRACT AND/OR REQUISITION  
NUMBER(S):**  
N/A

**ORIGINATING DEPARTMENT:** Board of Supervisors, Districts 2 and 3, San Diego County  
Sheriff's Department

**OTHER CONCURRENCES(S):**    N/A

**CONTACT PERSON(S):**

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