



# NEWPORT BEACH

## City Council Staff Report

July 23, 2024  
Agenda Item No. 21

**TO:** HONORABLE MAYOR AND MEMBERS OF THE CITY COUNCIL

**FROM:** Joe Cartwright, Chief of Police - 949-644-3701,  
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**TITLE:** Response to the Orange County Grand Jury Report "Law Enforcement's Response to Mental Health Calls for Service"

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### **ABSTRACT:**

For the City Council's consideration is approval of a response letter to the 2023-2024 Orange County Grand Jury report entitled "Law Enforcement's Response to Mental Health Calls for Service" pursuant to Penal Code Section 9.33.05 (a) and (b). The City of Newport Beach is required to comment on specific findings and recommendations in the report no later than September 4, 2024.

### **RECOMMENDATIONS:**

- a) Determine this action is exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) pursuant to Sections 15060(c)(2) and 15060(c)(3) of the CEQA Guidelines because this action will not result in a physical change to the environment, directly or indirectly; and
- b) Approve the City's response to the 2023-2024 Orange County Grand Jury report, "Law Enforcement's Response to Mental Health Calls for Service" and authorize the Mayor to submit the letter to the Presiding Judge of the Superior Court.

### **DISCUSSION:**

On May 30, 2024, the Orange County Grand Jury (OCGJ) released a report entitled "Law Enforcement's Response to Mental Health Calls for Service" (Attachment A), an investigative report on how prepared Orange County law enforcement agencies are to respond to mental health calls for service. As part of that analysis, the Grand Jury gave findings in several areas, such as mental health training for law enforcement officers that exceed state requirements, the development of unique ways to deal with mental health calls, collaboration with the County of Orange's Psychiatric Emergency and Response Team and Be Well OC units to give a better response to mental health calls for service, de-escalating methods for officers such as wearing "soft uniforms," and providing follow-up case management for mental health issues.

The Orange County Grand Jury's report prompted the City to respond to the findings. In the proposed response letter (Attachment B), the City outlines its proactive and robust response to mental health calls for service. The Grand Jury's assessment acknowledged that law enforcement agencies across Orange County have implemented unique strategies to effectively handle mental health calls, leading to the absence of any recommendations in the report.

With the approval of the City Council, the attached response letter can be forwarded to the Presiding Judge of the Superior Court.

**FISCAL IMPACT:**

There is no fiscal impact related to this item.

**ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW:**

Staff recommends the City Council find this action is not subject to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) pursuant to Sections 15060(c)(2) (the activity will not result in a direct or reasonably foreseeable indirect physical change in the environment) and 15060(c)(3) (the activity is not a project as defined in Section 15378) of the CEQA Guidelines, California Code of Regulations, Title 14, Chapter 3, because it has no potential for resulting in physical change to the environment, directly or indirectly.

**NOTICING:**

The agenda item has been noticed according to the Brown Act (72 hours in advance of the meeting at which the City Council considers the item).

**ATTACHMENTS:**

Attachment A – Orange County Grand Jury Report “Law Enforcement’s Response to Mental Health Calls for Service”

Attachment B – Proposed Response to the Orange County Grand Jury Response from the City of Newport Beach