



Sharing Ohio's Best Program

Recognizing Outstanding Community Policing



Agency of the Month

Delhi Township Division of Police

July 2022



The Delhi Township Police Department has expanded its capabilities to extend new resources to neighbors in need. In January 2022, the Department hired its first-ever Community Advocate, a role that will bring a full-time social worker to assist in advancing the wellbeing of residents by monitoring community health and safety issues and intervening on a social level.

Community Advocate Program

Police Chief Jim Howarth shares that community policing in 2022 needs to be about so much more than enforcing laws and catching criminals to be effective. "Our dispatch officers are the community's first responders for assistance, whether it requires de-escalation of a situation, securing a crime scene, detaining a suspect or administering first aid. Yet, most of the incidents to which we're responding are not what one would describe as a typical police matter."

Police officers around the country spend disproportionate amounts of time responding to incidents for which social service and mental health issues are the root causes. With the help of a dedicated Community Advocate to follow up when issues are encountered by first responders, Delhi Police can extend additional support to neighbors to better address any underlying issues that may have contributed to the request for police support.

The Department anticipates the after-incident outreach of a Community Advocate will result in fewer repeat calls for service and will allow officers to remain focused on the traditional policing and crime-prevention activities they are most qualified and trained to perform. "The Delhi Police Department plays an integral and very visible role in our community," shared Township Trustee Cheryl Sieve. "But it's the behind-the-scenes work and advocacy performed by our men and women in uniform that elevate the community's overall health and safety and make us a great place to call home. Having a Community Advocate will enhance that effort and propel their ability to serve our community."

In addition to being an embedded, civilian member of the Police Department, the Community Advocate will coordinate with the Delhi Fire Department's CARES program, which has employed a similar social-service model to serve as a bridge to connect residents with needed resources. "This new role doesn't replace any officers or in any way change the role of a police officer," Howarth said. "We are adding to our toolbox a new resource that will make a positive impact in our community." While the police departments in Erlanger and Alexandria, Ky., have successfully adopted a model that utilizes trained and experienced social workers, Delhi was the first in Hamilton County to hire a dedicated professional to address this vital community need. Visit delhi.oh.us to learn more.

Delhi Township Police Department's Community Advocate is dedicated to advancing the wellbeing of residents by improving community health and safety and providing support through:

- Basic crisis intervention
- Outreach and education
- Maintaining engagement with active referrals from police personnel, local schools, hospitals and the public
- Connecting residents with vital community resources
- Working closely with the Delhi Fire Department's Community Risk Reduction Specialist