



## *Police Department*

2000 Stevenson Boulevard | P.O. Box 5007, Fremont, CA 94537-5007  
510 790-6800 *ph* | 510 790-6801 *fax* | [fremontpolice.gov](http://fremontpolice.gov)

October 29, 2020 – Letter to the Fremont Community from Chief Kimberly Petersen

Dear Fremont Community Members,

Our ability to do our jobs and keep Fremont safe directly relates to the trust our community puts in us. That's why over the last several months, members of the Fremont Police Department – not just me but officers and professional staff across the department – have been listening to our community, monitoring local and national events and actively engaged in reformative dialogue. This listening has taken many forms. In early June, I co-hosted a [Town Hall](#) meeting that was attended by more than 800 community members. The meeting informed us that more conversations on the topic of race relations and policing were needed. Over the summer, City Manager Mark Danaj hired the Public Dialogue Consortium and led one of the City's most extensive civic engagement initiatives to date. The effort included a community survey, six community focus group meetings, and a second Town Hall meeting. The results of the survey, and community feedback from the meetings were shared on October 13, 2020 with the [Fremont City Council](#), and documented in a [report](#) that can be viewed on our website.

While the Fremont Police Department has a historically low frequency of use of force, we still asked the question: How do we do even better in minimizing use of force? As a department we are working to further strengthen our policies and procedures in several areas, with an emphasis on our response to mental health and low-level property crimes. With this in mind, we've implemented several changes that I'd like to outline for you.

### **NEW DEPARTMENT GOALS:**

- Goal #1: Provide public safety utilizing data-driven policing strategies focused on reducing crime and protecting the community.
- Goal #2: Continue to build trust through open and transparent dialogue with our community.
- Goal # 3: Continue to recruit and hire exceptional people who reflect our community's values; provide progressive training that exceeds industry standards; support our employees' long-term health and wellness.

### **POLICY:**

- The department implemented a more restrictive [pursuit policy](#).
- On [June 6, 2020](#), the Fremont Police Department suspended the use of the carotid control hold.
- The Department's Use of Force policy is currently being updated to reflect all new laws that take effect January 1, 2021.

### **TRAINING:**

- All sworn officers recently completed four hours of Implicit Bias training
- Bias-by-Proxy - When a community member calls the Fremont Police Department and makes false or ill-informed claims of misconduct about persons based on explicit racial and identity profiling, police supervisors contact those citizens and educate them on bias by proxy.



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- As of today, 75 officers have taken Crisis Intervention Training (CIT). Training all officers is a priority for our Training Unit.
- A de-escalation training component has been added to every department training module that includes the use of force.
- All sworn officers have completed training on new use of force laws.

### **PATROL OPERATIONS**

When officers contact people where there is a possibility of a detention or arrest, at minimum, three Fremont officers will now respond. Our goal is to bring as many resources as possible to these incidents to include members of our Mobile Evaluation Team and officers specially trained in crisis intervention tactics. We believe this is the best option to allow personnel to effectively de-escalate situations while not compromising officer safety and the people we serve. Prior to this change, implemented in September, our minimum was a two-officer response. This new policy will be reviewed every 30 days for the next several months to evaluate effectiveness, and to determine the proper staffing level for Patrol.

Officers will now wait until all units assigned to the incident have arrived before making contact. Of course, if there is an imminent threat to a person involved in the incident, officers will not wait and will immediately advance to the scene to aid the person in danger.

- Officers will have the most useful resources to de-escalate and bring a situation to a successful conclusion.
- Meeting as a group prior to arriving on scene allow the officers to more effectively form a de-escalation plan
- Added resources give officers immediate access to more less-lethal tools
- An additional benefit also includes having more body-worn and in-car cameras activated to capture the event from various perspectives.
- With these new procedures, the department understands some non-emergency calls for service will hold for a more extended period before department personnel will be able to respond. We understand how this will inconvenience the community, and that is not our preference. Dispatch will triage all calls. In situations where it's determined to be a non-criminal matter, callers may be referred to another agency, City Department, and/or provided other resources. This will be monitored and tracked over the next several months.

### **MENTAL HEALTH EVALUATION TEAM (MET)**

- A third police officer was added to the team earlier this month. It's important to note that very few professionals can legally place an individual on a mental health hold. Officers do not generally become involved in a call where an individual is cooperative and voluntarily agrees to seek medical care.
- The team recently shifted hours of operation to Monday – Friday from 6 a.m. – 6 p.m. and will soon expand to evening hours. The hours and availability will continue to adjust in relation to our highest volume of mental health related calls.



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- We continue to have productive conversations with our Human Services Department with the mutual goal to add a third clinician to the team.
- We will begin working with the Alameda County CATT team and other mental health service providers as this area of need continues to expand.

### **PUBLIC INFORMATION**

- The Police Transparency Portal has expanded to include a new 2019 Year-End Summary, a 2019 Use of Force Summary, an FAQ with questions from the town hall meetings and a new “submit a question” option. Learn more at [fremontpolice.gov/transparency](http://fremontpolice.gov/transparency)
- The Department will no longer proactively release booking photos of suspects unless the suspect poses a threat or danger to the community. All photos proactively released require the approval of a police Captain.
- A newly redesigned “Week In Review,” formally known as the Police Blotter, is posted on weekly basis and contains crime statistics and other information such as total police reports and arrests. Visit [fremontpolice.gov/weekinreview](http://fremontpolice.gov/weekinreview) for more information.

### **COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT**

- Information Sharing - Several new informational videos have been produced or are currently in production. A new video highlighting the School Resource Office program was released in early October, and a video highlighting our MET team will soon follow.
- We will open registration to a newly revised virtual community academy in November, expanding participation by 100%. The Department will look for additional opportunities to expand outreach with our youth.

### **HIRING/RECRUITMENT**

The very core of local policing starts with the individual and unlike many police departments across the country, Fremont is in a position of strength with more demand for our jobs than we have openings. Fremont has a rigorous testing process, which ensures that even in today’s climate we can maintain our high standards and bring in new officers with not only with the right abilities but also value sets that align with our community.

- The Department recently reached full staffing at 199 sworn peace officers.
- The Department will focus recruitment locally with an emphasis on building a more diverse workforce.

I am honored to work alongside the men and women of the Fremont Police Department, and I am proud of the dedication and professionalism our staff has demonstrated over the last several months. Providing exceptional service during a pandemic and a summer of social change has been challenging. It has also brought before us an opportunity to set an example and provide the highest level of public safety our community expects of us. As a progressive police agency, it is my hope these changes continue to help us lead advancements in the policing environment.



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The members of the Fremont Police Department remain steadfast in our commitment to building strong relationships and trust with our community. Accountability to our community is our top priority - working with you, we will seek opportunities to listen, share information and adjust operational policing strategies according to your priorities. We strive to be forward-thinking and innovative in our pursuit of public safety. We will continue to hire the best people, train them to the highest standards and provide the highest level of professionalism to meet your needs.

Sincerely,

Chief Kimberly Petersen