

Examples of Law Enforcement Defunding/Reallocating/Unbundling Across the US

Prompted by recent events and resulting cries for police reform across the U.S., many jurisdictions have pledged or made significant changes to law enforcement funding in their communities, frequently allocating additional funding to behavioral health and community services. PRI has compiled a list of examples to serve as a resource, as of the date listed above. There is also a shorter section at the end regarding removal of School Resource Officers (SROs).

A Sample of Background Articles:

- Equal Justice USA: [What does it mean to defund the police, and why should we?](#)
- The Appeal: [Community-based emergency first responders: explained](#)
- Treatment Advocacy Center: [People with untreated mental illness 16 times more likely to be killed by law enforcement](#)
- The Washington Post: [Mental Illness is a Health Issues, Not a Police Issue](#)
- The Atlantic: [Unbundle the Police: American policing is a gnarl of overlapping services that should be demilitarized and disentangled.](#)
- NY Times: [How Do the Police Actually Spend Their Time?](#)
 - *A review of data in three areas*
- Treatment Advocacy Center: [Road runners: The role and impact of law enforcement in transporting individuals with severe mental illness, a national survey.](#)
 - *About one-fifth of total law-enforcement staff time and 10% of law-enforcement agencies' total budgets in 2017 went toward responding to and transporting people with mental illness. The study estimated that law enforcement nationwide had spent an estimated \$918 million transporting individuals with severe mental illness that year.*

Jurisdictional Examples:

- **New York City, NY:** On 7/1/20, the New York City Council [approved](#) shifting roughly \$1 billion away from the \$6 billion annual Police Department budget. The budget also shifts school safety and homeless outreach away from police.
 - NYC's [Crisis Management System](#) (CMS) program deploys teams of credible messengers who mediate conflicts on the street and connect high-risk individuals to services that can reduce the long-term risk of violence. In the last three years, the Crisis Management System has contributed to a 15% decline in shootings in the 17 highest violence precincts in NYC. In early June, Mayor Bill de Blasio announced that he plans to increase CMS spending by ten million dollars, hire additional workers, and expand programs to Soundview, Jamaica, Crown Heights, Flatbush, and Canarsie.
- **Minneapolis, MN:** On 6/26/20, the Minneapolis City Council voted unanimously to approve a potential ballot measure to change the city charter and dismantle Minneapolis' police force. Council members said they wanted to do year-long consultations with residents to identify public-safety strategies that do not involve policing. At the end of that process, they would overhaul the responsibilities of the police, and give many of the duties to community groups and other programs.

- **Seattle, WA:** On 7/9/20 a veto-proof majority of the City Council [voted to cut](#) the city's \$400 million police budget by 50%, redirecting much of that funding into community-led public safety initiatives and affordable housing, such as replacing the current 9-1-1 operations with a civilian-controlled system.
- **Los Angeles, CA:** On 6/16/20 the City Council [voted](#) to cut \$150 million (of \$1.8 million total budget) from the Police Department budget, halting a planned increase in funding. The \$150 million will be redirected toward community-building projects and health and education initiatives in minority communities.
- **San Francisco, CA:** As part of a [multi-pronged reform](#), San Francisco will work to divert non-violent calls for service away from SFPD to non-law enforcement agencies. Over the next year, the city will develop a systematic response plan to improve direct connection to community-based or city service providers, such as the CAHOOTS model of crisis response (see next bullet) or the Homeless Outreach Team or Street Medicine behavioral health professionals. This plan will also reduce the need for armed police interventions in schools.
- **Eugene, OR:** For more than three decades, a mobile response program called [Crisis Assistance Helping Out on the Streets](#) (CAHOOTS), has been taking calls for help related to mental illness, homelessness, and addiction. It handles more than 20% of 911 calls in the area.
 - **Denver, CO:** Launched a six-month pilot [CAHOOTS-like program](#) on 6/1/20 called Support Team Assisted Response (STAR). Five days a week, a mental health clinician, along with a paramedic, respond to mental health crises-related calls. In July 2020, Police Chief Paul Pazen [said he would be open](#) to considering moving STAR out from under the police department entirely.
 - **Portland, OR:** In late 2019, the city announced [a similar program](#) to CAHOOTS, Portland Street Response (PSR), which takes police off of low-priority 9-1-1 calls and instead sends a new branch of first responders, trained in behavioral health, to address issues related to people experiencing homelessness or mental health crises. On 6/18/20 the City Council approved \$4.8 million funding for PSR, along with a [3% reduction](#) (about \$15 million) to the Portland Police Bureau budget.
 - **Austin, TX:** The [Community Health Paramedic team](#) (CHP) works with Integral Care's Expanded Mobile Crisis Outreach Team (EMCOT) to dispatch mental health counselors directly to nonviolent, mental health-related 9-1-1 calls. They also use video calls between EMCOT counselors and paramedics/clinicians in the field.
 - Austin City Council members [voted unanimously](#) on 6/11/20 in favor of resolutions to limit the police department's budget by eliminating money for new hires and filling vacant positions in the next fiscal year, as well as restricting officers' use of deadly force. The money will instead fund mental health services, including EMCOT and CHP.
 - **Olympia, WA:** also launched a [CAHOOTS-like program](#), Crisis Response Unit, in April 2019.
- **Salt Lake City, UT:** On 6/16/20 the City Council [unanimously approved](#) a \$5.3 million funding cut to the Police Department. More than \$2 million will be reserved until a [new committee](#) on racial equity and policing can be formed and another \$2.5 million of the budget will be redirected to a social worker program housed within the Police Department.

- **Baltimore, MD:** On 6/15/20 the City Council [approved](#) \$22.4 million (less than 5%) cut to the Police Department's \$550 million 2021 budget, including nearly \$7 million from overtime spending.
- **Philadelphia, PA:** On 6/25/20 the City Council [approved](#) a 2021 fiscal year budget that reduced \$33 million in Police Department funding (cancelling the mayor's previously planned \$19 million increase for the department) and allocated \$45 million into affordable housing, arts funding, and social services addressing poverty.
- **Albuquerque, NM:** On 6/15/20 [the Mayor announced](#) the formation of a new public safety department, Albuquerque Community Safety, designed to relieve stress on the city's police. Instead of the police or fire departments responding to 911 calls related to inebriation, homelessness, addiction and mental health, the new division will deploy unarmed personnel made up of social workers, housing and homelessness specialists, and violence prevention coordinators. Mayor Keller stated that the department's creation will start with a focus on "[restructuring and reallocating resources](#)" that the city is already investing in different areas, saying he anticipated "tens of millions of dollars that will move" with the department's creation.
- **Newark, NJ:** On 6/24/20 the Mayor [signed an ordinance](#) to redirect \$12 million of the city's \$229 million public safety budget to the Office of Violence Prevention, which was also given permanent headquarters.
- **Norman, OK:** The city is [deducting \\$865,000](#) from the Police Department by eliminating nine salary positions. The city has not yet determined how the funds will be specifically allocated, other than general "community outreach and social programs."
- **Durham, NC:** In June 2019, the City Council voted against hiring 18 new patrol officers (a \$1.2 million request) after a public campaign led by a group called [Durham Beyond Policing](#). The city is now exploring a new "community safety and wellness task force" instead. While the city's [2021 budget](#) did include an increase of \$1.2 million for the Police Department, \$1 million was also added for a Community Health and Safety Task Force to "potentially take on some of the responsibilities of policing the city over time."
- **Arcata, CA:** The City Council [unanimously voted](#) on 6/16/20 to reduce Police Department funding by nearly \$750,000.
- **Rochester, NY:** The City Council [approved](#) a budget on 6/16/20 to cut \$3 million (nearly 4% of the total \$95 million) in police funding and reduce recruitment by half.
- **Hartford, CT:** On 6/11/20 the City Council [unanimously voted](#) to reduce/reallocate the Police Department's budget by 6%. About \$1.6 million will be cut and \$1 million reallocated within the Department toward social services including domestic violence teams, increased training, and trauma counseling.

Removing Police/School Resource Officers (SROs) from Schools

- **Minneapolis, MN:** The school board voted unanimously on 6/2/20 to cancel its contract with the Minneapolis Police Department to provide School Resource Officers. The Park and Recreation Board, University of Minnesota, museums, and other venues have [also chosen to limit](#) or end their collaboration with the Police Department.

- **Oakland, CA:** The school board [voted unanimously](#) on 6/25/20 to eliminate its 67-member internal police force, Oakland Unified, laying off members as of 12/31/20. The about \$4 million cost savings could be used to hire more counselors and social workers and allow for the return of some restorative justice coordinators who were let go in 2019-20 to close budget gaps.
- **Milwaukee, WI:** The Board of School Directors [voted unanimously](#) on 6/18/20 to terminate its contract with the Milwaukee Police Department in its public schools.
- **Madison, WI:** The school board [voted unanimously](#) on 6/29/20 to end its contract with the Madison Police Department for School Resource Officers, effective immediately.
- **Rochester, NY:** The City Council [voted](#) on 6/16/20 to end the School Resource Officer program in the Rochester City School District.
- **Charlottesville, VA:** Charlottesville City Schools, the city, and Charlottesville Police Department [made a joint decision](#) to remove School Resource Officers.