

Safer Neighborhoods through Precision Policing Initiative

DORAL (FLORIDA) POLICE DEPARTMENT



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Introduction

The Doral (Florida) Police Department (DPD) is one of 15 law enforcement agencies selected to participate in the Office of Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS Office) Safer Neighborhoods through Precision Policing Initiative (SNPPI). SNPPI provides policy review, assessments, training, and technical assistance to a cohort of law enforcement agencies across the nation. The four goals of the initiative are to identify promising strategies that **reduce crime, protect officers' safety and wellness, establish productive interagency partnerships** with law enforcement and community stakeholders, and **implement innovative and effective technologies** to assist police departments to safeguard neighborhoods.

Methodology

Each of the 15 selected departments is assigned a CNA Strategic Site Coordinator (SSC) and an operations analyst to assist with planning, implementing, coordinating, and delivering technical assistance. CNA worked with the DPD to develop a customized strategy to capitalize on the great work already in progress across the four policing principles. To do this, CNA looked at the DPD's policies and practices related to crime reduction efforts, policy effectiveness, technological capabilities, training

structures and offerings, and officer safety and wellness philosophies. The CNA team then helped identify training and technical assistance (TTA) opportunities and additional tools and resources to enhance areas related to the principles of precision policing. The CNA team documented these best practices and will share these initiatives with police departments nationwide to promote public safety.

Background

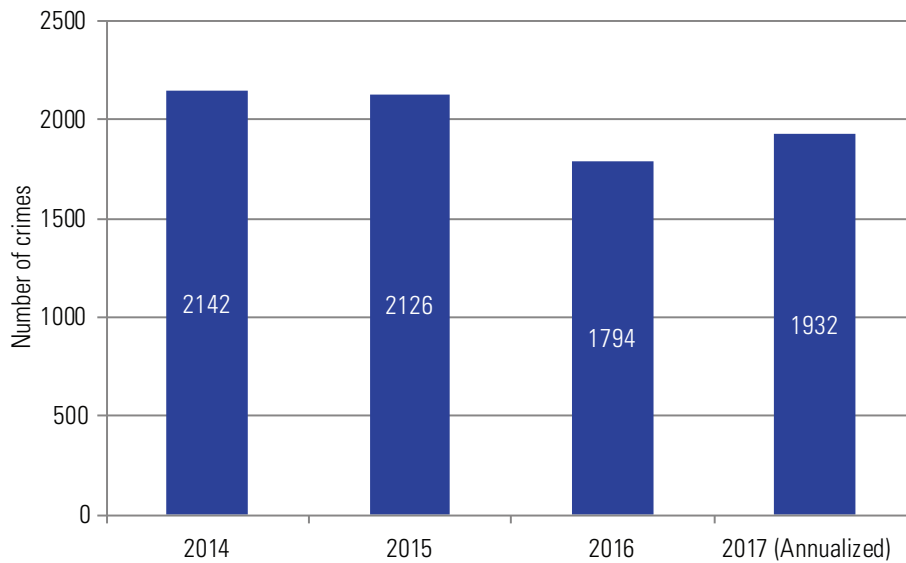
The DPD is a relatively new police agency. It was established in 2008, five years after the incorporation of Doral as a city within Miami-Dade County, Florida. The population of the city of Doral is 53,426, with 82 percent of the population identifying as Latino or Hispanic.¹ Chief Donald DeLucca leads 118 sworn officers and has served in his position since 2014.

Crime Data

Crime rates are historically low in Doral. Violent crime is uncommon, and the majority of crime is property related. While already low, total crime decreased by 15 percent between 2014 and 2017 (figure 1) under the strategies implemented through SNPPI.² To improve public safety, the DPD focuses on limiting the opportunities to commit crimes and seeks to prevent victimization. Through SNPPI, the DPD has embraced a proactive policing approach, engaging interagency and community partners to address the underlying causes of crime.

1. U.S. Census Bureau, "ACS Demographic and Housing Estimates: 2012–2016 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates: Doral city, Florida, 2016," accessed June 21, 2018, https://factfinder.census.gov/bkmk/table/1.0/en/ACS/16_5YR/DP05/1600000US1217935.

2. Florida Department of Law Enforcement Uniform Crime Report (UCR) system, accessed January 30, 2019, <http://www.fdle.state.fl.us/FSAC/UCR-Reports.aspx>.

Figure 1. Crime Trends in Doral, 2014–2017

Identifying Promising Strategies that Reduce Crime

In response to public perceptions of increasing crime, which persisted despite the decrease in actual crime rates, the DPD partnered with the mayor's office to create the Bright Shield 2017 initiative. The initiative increases the visibility of police throughout the city and targets neighborhoods prone to crime. A simultaneous goal of Bright Shield is to increase traffic safety. Patrol officers from each platoon conduct roll calls at least twice per week in high-visibility locations. These officers also conduct daily hot spot patrols.

In addition, the DPD Crime Analysis Unit provides the Bright Shield patrol officers with victim contact information so they can follow up with them after a crime occurs. The mayor and Chief DeLucca both believe that the presence of additional Bright Shield patrol officers increases residents' perceptions of public safety and decreases criminal activity in hot spot areas. "The DPD is committed to ongoing high-visibility patrol strategies to increase the community's awareness of police presence," said Chief DeLucca.



Youth crime prevention and follow-up

The DPD focuses on youth crime prevention by ensuring that young people who have been arrested do not become repeat offenders. Through the Juvenile Arrest/Runaway Follow-Up Intervention Program, the Neighborhood Resource Unit (NRU) officers conduct follow-up contacts with juvenile offenders and their parents. Officers visit youth offenders to learn more about their home lives and to connect them and their families with appropriate social services such as drug treatment programs or anti-gang interventions if necessary. This personalized approach to youth crime reduction fosters public trust by demonstrating to youth and their families that the officers care about justice-involved youth.

The DPD also recently expanded the avenues through which local youth can report crime. A new crime tip hotline specifically for youth allows them to remain anonymous while providing valuable information to the department. Finally, the NRU is responsible for enforcing the Miami-Dade Juvenile Curfew Ordinance by conducting random juvenile curfew enforcement details. The intent of the curfew policy is to reduce youth crime and increase the safety of youth and other Doral residents.

Establishing Productive Interagency and Community Relationships

The purpose of the NRU is to strengthen partnerships between the police and Doral residents through community activities and programs. The NRU conducts weekly meetings focused on topics of mutual interest to the department and the public, including crime trends, crime prevention, and dissemination of information to the community. Neighborhood resource officers attend all local homeowners' association meetings.

Regular NRU presence at meetings allows for nonenforcement interaction with residents and provides officers with the opportunity to stay current on local developments, residents' needs for additional assistance, and possible suspicious activity in each neighborhood. Serving in the NRU enables officers to develop relationships with residents who would not otherwise have regular contact with the police. NRU officers and residents partner to address quality-of-life issues in Doral neighborhoods, often resolving problems before they become criminal concerns. Officers address issues including theft, speeding and other traffic violations, and graffiti and vandalism. Residents have also requested that officers conduct security surveys.

The NRU also plans and coordinates several education and outreach initiatives, and NRU officers facilitate all officer-led youth crime reduction education programs. The Drug Abuse Resistance Education (D.A.R.E.) program is offered to all city fifth-graders. D.A.R.E. is a police-led series of classroom lessons that teaches children how to resist drug-related peer pressure. A second youth development program, Police Explorers, targets youth ages 14 through 21. Police Explorers is a leadership development program that introduces students to law enforcement career paths. It provides an opportunity for young adults to interact with and learn from officers in a nonenforcement context.

Community crime prevention activities are often targeted to specific populations, including Doral's large Spanish-speaking community. The DPD hosts regular "Coffee with a Cop"—"Cafecito with a Cop" in Spanish—events. Spanish-speaking residents have the opportunity to discuss policies, procedures, new crime-fighting techniques, and other

questions or concerns in their native language. In addition, the DPD regularly conducts crime-prevention seminars for local businesses. The seminars cover topics such as workplace violence, active shooter incidents, natural disasters, and cyber safety threats. Officers stress the importance of conducting regular workplace safety and security audits and implementing operations plans for emergency situations.

Like many law enforcement agencies, Doral participates in national community crime prevention initiatives. National Night Out promotes crime prevention and partnerships between the community and the police. Neighborhood barbeques and other gatherings send a message to criminals that neighborhoods are well organized and focused on crime prevention. The DPD also supports Crime Watch, one of the most well established crime prevention programs in the country. Through Crime Watch, community members partner with law enforcement to deter crime.

Community and police immigration workshops

The majority of the residents of Doral are immigrants. The U.S. Census Bureau estimates that 66 percent of the city's population in 2016 was foreign born.³ Community members and stakeholders often have questions about legal issues and law enforcement in the United States, specifically in the city of Doral. To conduct additional outreach to the immigrant community, the department developed new programming to help residents transition to life in the United State and the Doral community. In partnership with a local newspaper, the *Doral Family Journal*, the DPD held several workshops at a local Catholic church focused on the immigrant population. The workshops included panel discussions on topics relevant to immigrants, including the vision and goals of the DPD, business issues, safety, immigration and citizenship information, and city codes and ordinances. Information was available in both English and Spanish. A pro bono immigration law firm was also available to assist residents with legal questions that arose during the event.

3. U.S. Census Bureau, "QuickFacts: Doral city, Florida," accessed July 6, 2018, <https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/fact/table/doralcityflorida/PST045217>.



Citizen Police Academy and Youth Citizen Police Academy

The Citizen Police Academy is an eight-week classroom and field-based program open to all Doral residents. The purpose of the program is to educate citizens about the responsibilities and operations of the DPD. Participants develop a comprehensive understanding of the procedures and techniques that officers use, as well as their rationale and justification for implementing these tactics. Specific topics addressed include use of force, defensive tactics, specialized units, criminal investigations, crime scene and evidence gathering techniques, and demonstrations by the K-9 unit. In addition, participants receive basic firearms training, with the opportunity to shoot at a public range and go on a ride-along with an officer on a scheduled shift. Citizen Police Academy training is hands on, and graduates possess a deeper understanding of what it is like to be a police officer in Doral.

This summer, the NRU hosted the inaugural Youth Citizens Police Academy for students ages 13 through 18. The purpose of the program is to increase participants' understanding of police work through education and interaction with DPD officers. A longer-term goal of the Youth Citizens Police Academy is to build a foundation for strong future partnerships with citizens.

Goodwill Ambassadors

To further strengthen partnerships with citizens and enhance community and neighborhood safety, the DPD implemented the Goodwill Ambassadors, a new initiative in which civilian volunteers provide an extra set of eyes and ears to first responders at large-scale events. The Ambassadors receive event-related training focused on what to look for and how to report what they see to law enforcement or medical personnel at the event. Goodwill Ambassadors do not engage in enforcement activities and are not expected to put themselves at risk; instead, they simply observe and report problems to the police. They wear bright, easily identifiable t-shirts and communicate with the police command center via handheld radios on nonpolice channels. Most of the Goodwill Ambassadors are graduates of the Citizens Police Academy. The initiative aims to increase the safety and perception of safety at large gatherings, such as Doral's annual Fourth of July celebration.

Implement innovative and effective technologies

The DPD has been widely recognized for its innovative use of crime-reduction technology. At the 2017 conference of the IACP, the department received the Best in Force Award from Vigilant Solutions, a law enforcement technology company. The annual award recognizes a law enforcement agency's innovative and exceptional use of license plate recognition (LPR) or facial recognition technology. The DPD Communication section is equipped with a license plate reader notification system. The reader scans license plates and identifies those of crime suspects. Officers then receive an email notification with still images of the vehicles.

The DPD has relied on LPR cameras for a variety of investigations. For example, in 2015 there was a surge of burglaries in which the suspects followed and robbed residents who had made recent ATM withdrawals. A witness provided a partial license plate number, which detectives used to track the suspects' vehicle. Officers conducted surveillance, which led to the arrest of four suspects following an attempted burglary. "The ability to find a stolen vehicle on the street is great, but our detectives go above and beyond by utilizing LPR to identify suspect vehicles, placing suspects or witnesses at the scene of an incident, and using historical data to go back

in time to identify who the involved parties are, making this technology the way of the future as it relates to fighting crime,” said DPD Lieutenant Cathy Jewett.

A second technological innovation in Doral is the Crime Mapping Program, which provides residents access to visual data on recent criminal activity in their neighborhoods. The program is designed to help residents protect themselves and their property. The DPD extracts data from its record system to the Crime Mapping Program on a regular basis to ensure the system reflects the most recent criminal activity. The goal of the Crime Mapping Program is to reduce crime through increasing the information available to residents.

The DPD uses technology to communicate time-sensitive and personalized information to residents via phone calls, emails, and text messaging. During an emergency, the department can deliver messages targeted to specific sections of the city. Many of the bulletins sent to residents have information obtained by the Crime Mapping Program. The DPD also uses social media platforms, including Facebook and YouTube, to communicate with residents. The department uses these platforms to gather community input regarding criminal investigations and to provide public service announcements related to crime prevention and safety. “The Doral Police Department hopes these web pages will encourage community involvement and lead to a safer Doral community,” DPD spokesman Carlos Arango told the *Miami Herald* in 2015.



Doral Police Dept.
@DoralPolice

DPD and the community work together to keep Doral safe. Last week our officers made 20 arrests. Your safety is our priority.

[#CommunityPolicing](#)



Week of Jan 15-21, 2018

**9 Felony Arrests
6 Misdemeanor Arrests
5 Traffic Offense Arrests**



Doral Police Dept.
@DoralPolice

Trabajamos juntos para mantener a Doral segura. La semana pasada oficiales arrestaron a 20 personas. Su seguridad es nuestra prioridad. [#CommunityPolicing](#)

Translate from Spanish



Semana del 15-21 de enero, '18

**9 Arrestos por delitos graves
6 Arrestos por delitos menores
5 Arrestos por delitos de tránsito**



Lessons Learned from SNPPI's Targeted TTA

Through SNPPI, the DPD worked with its CNA SSC to develop a training and technical assistance (TTA) action plan to address remaining challenges and augment effective policing practices. The plan focused on strengthening the department's procedural justice training, mass demonstration policies and procedures, crime investigation competencies, and overall training capabilities. CNA worked with the DPD to identify subject-matter experts and other law enforcement agencies that could provide TTA and share best practices with the department.

Procedural justice training

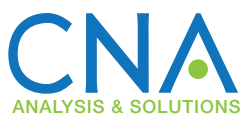
In May 2017, the CNA team facilitated a procedural justice training for 30 command staff, lieutenants, and officers from the DPD and nearby law enforcement agencies. The train-the-trainer approach focused on developing a procedural justice training curriculum, strategies for offering such training, and feedback on the DPD's existing procedural justice training. Participants were pleased with the training and discussed implementing it across agencies. The DPD began using examples from the training to reconstruct policies and practices.

Staffing a criminal investigation unit

Prior to becoming a full service police department, the DPD relied on officers from the Miami-Dade Police Department to assist with certain criminal investigations within city limits. With the transition to an internal criminal investigations unit, the department sought TTA to determine the manpower needs to appropriately staff this function. Dr. Mitchell Weinzetl, Assistant Director for Education for the IACP, provided information on metrics that could calculate the type and quantity of manpower the agency needed. Additional manpower and training will help to further strengthen the department's crime-reduction efforts.

Conclusion

Since its founding in 2008, the DPD has made tremendous progress in implementing precision policing practices to reduce crime and develop strong partnerships with community stakeholders. The department also uses a range of technological tools to communicate with the public, involve community members in crime prevention efforts, and bring criminals to justice. Through SNPPI TTA and site visits, the department has strengthened its policies, improved its approach to training, and bolstered its overall organizational capacity. In turn, the SNPPI project team will use the DPD's strengths and progress as examples of how other departments can implement a comprehensive and effective approach to improving public safety. The department strives to grow along with its community and has implemented proactive initiatives to further strengthen partnerships with the public.



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