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Final Report

LAW ENFORCEMENT PANDEMIC RESPONSE FIELD GUIDE

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This document contains the best opinion of CNA at the time of issue.

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INTRODUCTION

The COVID-19 pandemic and resulting public health crisis continue to present public safety challenges, as well as challenges to the agencies tasked with protecting life and social order. Throughout the response to COVID-19, the federal government has deferred decisions about containing the virus to state and local leaders, resulting in an uneven response to contain the spread of this highly infectious disease. This unevenness has resulted in the continued spread of the coronavirus, with state leaders struggling to enforce state mandates on protective measures (e.g., travel restrictions, face coverings, self-quarantine, vaccinations) and lacking the authority to engage in any meaningful interstate enforcement of orders. Further exacerbating this situation is the issue of vaccination requirements, and documentation and enforcement where applicable. Given these realities, state and local agencies continue to risk to their own health and wellbeing to provide mandated services during the pandemic with very little guidance available for how to safely operate within this new environment.

Although healthcare workers are arguably the most affected sector of frontline service providers, the nation’s police officers also face significant challenges in providing their mandated public safety duties in the wake of the pandemic’s uncertainties. According to statistics posted from the Officer Down Memorial Page, “COVID-19 accounted for more than 66 percent of all law enforcement deaths in the line of duty in 2020 and 2021”¹. Seven key areas explored in this report, including community engagement, officer safety and wellness, remote work, training, recruitment and retention, incident coordination, and jail administration, have been drastically impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. Several scholars have researched these areas, adding important contributions to an ever-evolving issue. Ekici and Alexander (2021) surveyed over 200 police agencies in Illinois, Missouri, and Ohio, finding important implications for police-community relations, interagency cooperation, training, and staffing during the pandemic². Shjarback and Magny (2021) surveyed California officers throughout the pandemic to provide important insights into the officer perspectives of constantly changing policy directives and the implications that had on officer morale³. Drew and Martin (2021) explored the sources of additional stress officers face during the pandemic, with important future implications for managing agency wellness⁴. Corder and Bartness (2021) documented the extensive changes to the Baltimore, Maryland, training during the COVID-19 pandemic, including recruit classes, remote learning, and continuing education⁵.

¹ Rai, S. “62 percent of police deaths last year were COVID-related: analysis”. Retrieved November 1, 2021. <https://thehill.com/blogs/blog-briefing-room/news/576801-62-percent-of-police-deaths-last-year-were-covid-19-related>

² Ekici, N. and Alexander, D. (2021). COVID-19’s effects on police departments in Illinois, Missouri and Ohio. Security Magazine. <https://www.securitymagazine.com/articles/96082-covid-19s-effects-on-police-departments-in-illinois-missouri-and-ohio>

³ Shjarback, J. and Magny, O. (2021), “Cops and COVID: an examination of California officers’ perceptions and experiences while policing during a pandemic”, Policing: An International Journal, Vol. ahead-of-print No. ahead-of-print. <https://doi.org/10.1108/PIJPSM-06-2021-0083>

⁴ Drew, J.M., & Martin, S. (2021). Policing during a global health pandemic: Exploring the stress and well-being of police and their families. Journal of Community Safety and Well-Being, 6 (3), 104–111. <https://doi.org/10.35502/jcswb.195>

⁵ Corder, G., & Bartness, M. (2021). Police Training in Baltimore During the Pandemic. European Law Enforcement Research Bulletin, (SCE 5), tbd. Retrieved from <https://bulletin.cepol.europa.eu/index.php/bulletin/article/view/487>

Recognizing that more could be done to share emergent best practices for how agencies are navigating these uncharted waters, CNA's Center for Justice Research and Innovation (JRI) provided internal funding in September 2020 to document and assess law enforcement responses to the pandemic.⁶ Leveraging JRI's relationship with agencies that participated in the Office of Community Oriented Policing Services' (COPS) Advancing 21st Century Policing Initiative, JRI engaged with the Hennepin County, MN, Sheriff's Office (HCSO), the Indio, CA, Police Department (IPD), and the Arlington, TX, Police Department (APD) to assess the agencies' responses to the pandemic outbreak. JRI led these agencies in a guided discussion, as well as monthly phone calls over the course of six months, to determine COVID-19 challenges and innovative approaches to managing the effects of the pandemic.

We hope this work will add to the important work done on the topic by providing practical insights into how three agencies, recognized for their innovative practices, overcame challenges faced by agencies across the nation with innovative solutions, and additionally serve as a roadmap for future pandemics experienced by public safety agencies.

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

The goal of this project was to serve as an extension of the previous efforts, by providing an in-depth analysis of three 21st Century Policing agencies' COVID-19 responses, culminating in a Law Enforcement Pandemic Response Field Guide (this document), as well as a toolkit⁷ to help practitioners identify best practices. The 21st Century Policing agencies are nationally recognized for their commitment to innovation in policing—and for engaging the communities they serve. This field guide describes the lessons learned from three of those agencies regarding their adaptations and responses to the COVID-19 pandemic that are of benefit to the greater policing community. Also included in this field guide and the companion toolkit are examples which other policing agencies have employed which are consistent with 21st Century policing practices.

METHODOLOGY AND APPROACH

During this initiative, the project team conducted an initial assessment, and subsequent monthly check-ins, with three 21st Century Policing agencies: HCSO, IPD, and APD from October 2020 to April 2021. This two-phased approach allowed the project team to track the organizational effects of COVID-19 on the participating agencies.

⁶ Learn more about CNA's internally funded Law Enforcement Pandemic Response initiative here: <https://www.cna.org/centers/ipr/jri/21st-century-policing-during-covid-19>.

⁷ https://www.cna.org/CNA_files/PDF/ADVANCING-21STCENTURY-POLICING-DURING-THE-COVID-19-PANDEMIC.pdf

Initial assessment

The project team developed a guided discussion template to gain an understanding of each agency's readiness capabilities specific to responding to a public health emergency (i.e., the COVID-19 pandemic). Using this template, JRI asked the participating agencies to provide information regarding the following:

- Pandemic policies and planning
- Working relationship and collaboration with their public health authorities
- COVID-19 testing protocols
- Officer safety and wellness capabilities
- Current capabilities for responding to mass demonstrations, civil disturbances, and civil unrest
- Other anticipated or forecasted challenges

The project team then used the results to create a customized engagement plan with each agency, with the goal of providing targeted technical assistance and gleaning lessons learned.

Monthly topical check-ins

Based on the customized engagement plan, a subject matter expert (SME) and analyst were assigned to each agency. The SME and analyst convened monthly calls with the sites for a period of six months to continually assess each area of interest and capture lessons learned. Additional SMEs attended the monthly calls on occasion to provide technical assistance. The project team documented these calls and used this data to identify agency-specific challenges and to capture the innovative ways these agencies addressed these obstacles.

ORGANIZATION OF THIS REPORT

This report contains seven sections that cover the areas of interest identified throughout our engagement with the participating agencies. Specifically, we organize our findings around the following topics:

1. Community Engagement
2. Officer Safety and Wellness
3. Remote Work
4. Training
5. Recruitment and Retention
6. Incident Coordination
7. Jail Administration

We begin each section with a discussion of the challenges to policing, specific to the areas of interest that the COVID-19 pandemic has affected. Following the analysis, we provide specific examples spotlighting how the participating agencies worked to mitigate and resolve these challenges. The report concludes with recommendations for police agencies to consider in their continued response to COVID-19, and as they prepare for future pandemic events.

AREA OF INTEREST 1: COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

The COVID-19 public health emergency and the resulting restrictions on public gatherings initially disrupted much of the community engagement programming that the participating departments typically employed. The effect of COVID-19 was pronounced, and many agencies took time to adjust to these limitations and devise new strategies to continue their community engagement efforts. Agencies practicing 21st Century Policing principles recognize the importance of finding a variety of ways to share information about policing priorities and practices with their communities. These agencies proactively engage with their communities by working together to prioritize and address issues affecting public safety. One tool departments established is a specialized community safety team tasked with improving community outreach and engagement by participating in nonenforcement activities such as attending community meetings and events.

Agencies have also recognized the benefits of expanding their social media programming by creating Facebook pages, Twitter handles, and Instagram accounts to exponentially increase the reach of their public messaging and to convey information to a broader range of community members. Many community engagement strategies prior to COVID-19 relied on in-person community meetings (e.g., Beat meetings run by officer and command staff responsible for a given neighborhood, block club meetings, and public safety advisory committees); however, pandemic-related restrictions required departments to find new methods for reaching their communities. The participating agencies identified the need to maintain a strong social media presence and the need to leverage virtual platforms as two key challenges that they have innovated to address.

LESSONS LEARNED DURING COVID-19

Establishing a strong social media presence facilitates continuity of public messaging. Larger agencies with existing social media platforms, active websites, and substantial public followings were able to convey important information related to the public health emergency, such as locations of COVID-19 testing centers, and frequently-changing public health guidelines. In-person community outreach, messaging, and direct engagements were hampered requiring an even greater relevance on both commercial and social media outlets.

Using virtual platforms can increase engagement in community forums. Some agencies, such as the Albuquerque, NM, Police Department and the Chicago, IL, Police Department, moved quickly to establish virtual platforms. Agencies used these platforms to conduct Beat and Community meetings, community focus groups, and even town hall meetings. Over time, agencies became skilled at hosting and promoting virtual meeting participation. In many instances, hosting events virtually greatly expanded participation to reach segments of their communities usually not in attendance at in-person events. The virtual meetings bypassed the need for community members to travel and allowed them to participate from of their homes—on their computers or mobile devices. Some concerns were raised about community members with limited or no computer access being unable to participate, but mobile access and computer access at

public libraries helped to mitigate those concerns. The Albuquerque PD found a way to conduct a virtual camp with young people engaged in a range of virtual activities. Using virtual platforms, the Chicago PD conducted a series of community conversations about policing involving hundreds of people, and City of Antioch, CA⁸ hosted a series of virtual meetings with community members about racial equity in their policing practices.

Facilitating virtual community engagement presents a new set of challenges. An obstacle that arose was the lack of decorum exhibited from some community members while in virtual engagements. Soon after the onset of the pandemic, the murder of George Floyd by Minneapolis police officer Derek Chauvin, as well as the deaths of Breonna Taylor and Ahmaud Arbery, brought about renewed calls for transparency and accountability. When some agencies began to engage with their communities in virtual settings around the topics of social and racial justice and police brutality, some already exasperated and discontented community members chose to express themselves in an unfiltered or less-filtered way. City and agency personnel also experienced a new obstacle of “Zoom-bombing,” the practice of joining a virtual meeting with the intention to disrupt through audio or video distraction.

Looking forward

Although restrictions on public gatherings may eventually be lifted and law enforcement agencies can return to in person meetings, the use of virtual platforms will be a valuable tool to continue building participation at department-sponsored gatherings. Post-COVID-19, agencies should also continue to expand their social media capabilities to include larger segments of their communities and capture feedback on policing operations and practices. This practice will also benefit the agency in the case of a future pandemic or emergency that requires the agency to communicate quickly and efficiently with their community.

AGENCY SPOTLIGHTS

Hennepin County, MN, Sheriff's Office (HCSO)

During the COVID-19 pandemic, HCSO relied on its strong existing relationships with the community to help navigate the public health complexities amidst the mass demonstrations that occurred over the spring and summer of 2020 calling for police reform and social justice.⁹ In 2020, before the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, Sheriff David Hutchinson formed a new Community Outreach Division staffed with a captain, several licensed peace officers and civilians.¹⁰ With community engagement operating as a core value of the agency, once the pandemic began, HCSO made community education an even higher priority.

⁸ CNA worked with the City of Antioch, CA, to host a series of virtual discussions on police-community relations. Learn more in the article. <https://antiochonthemove.com/bridging-the-gap-dialogue-3/>

⁹ Learn more about HCSO's community outreach strategy in the blog post published with HCSO Senior Community Outreach Liaison Abdi Mohamed. <https://www.cna.org/news/InDepth/article?ID=78>.

¹⁰ Learn more about the Community Outreach Division in HCSO's video, We are the Community Outreach Division: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4TuxHF7v7aw>.

Q & A with Indio, CA, Police Department Social Media Team Lead Nicole Melendez

Who does the social media team consist of?

The social media team consists of a dispatch supervisor, an office assistant to the assistant chief, and four officers.

How do you join the social media team?

Team members submit letters of interest to the social media team lead.

How did you get buy-in from the agency staff?

We noticed a change last year when we recorded a fun “Happy New Year” video with detectives containing bloopers. After that, it was a waterfall approach. I’ve noticed that with virtual engagement, and some changes in the unit, there are some more individuals willing to step up. The Chief will also share things on his personal social media and thank the team.

How do you stay on top of incidents and current events?

Every social media team needs to be real time. The outreach needs to be quick or it’s irrelevant. We designate a point person to work with the public information officer (PIO), have exceptional judgement, and define the boundaries as we go forward with how silly or professional are we going to be. Once you reach the comfort level, there isn’t much worry or concern or oversight.

Following are two examples of how HCSO worked to educate the community about the COVID-19 pandemic:

- HCSO invited imams from the Somali community across Minnesota, not just Hennepin County, to a virtual meeting to provide more education about the pandemic and to discuss strategies for keeping their communities safe.
- County officials, public health officials, and HCSO worked together to deliver food, face masks, and personal protective equipment (PPE) to homeless encampments with the goal of educating people experiencing homelessness about the pandemic.

Arlington, TX, Police Department

The Arlington City Council created a Unity Council,¹¹ which met virtually and aimed to address the community relationships across the city. Similar to agencies across the country, the APD became aware that virtual meetings had the potential to invite those who sought to ruin the decorum of such a forum. Because this type of outreach is likely to continue in the future, more training and resources for agencies in this area will be necessary to ensure officers are equipped to meaningfully communicate with members of their community in virtual settings.

Indio, CA, Police Department (IPD)

IPD excelled at using social media to engage with the community during the COVID-19 pandemic, leveraging its Social Media Team (SMT). Through the SMT, the agency used its growing social media footprint as a way to stay engaged with community members. IPD continually used social media to share information about the COVID-19 pandemic, such as links to county and state public health websites, to share critical information on the virus and protective measures. IPD also disseminated updates through its Twitter, Instagram, Facebook, and NextDoor accounts. The SMT also expanded IPD's social media operations through investing in equipment, such as green screens and microphones, which allowed improved production quality of messaging efforts.

Although IPD would normally engage with the community in-person, it was able to modify and adapt during the COVID-19 pandemic by engaging in a virtual setting. During their Coffee with a Cop event, IPD placed cardboard cut-outs of officers at coffee shops and sent messages to the community to take a picture with the officers and submit them for a chance to win a prize. IPD also livestreamed its National Night Out event at the department and brought in a representative from every unit. The SMT lead arranged the event and instructed each representative to go in and talk about what they do and field questions.

¹¹ Learn more about the Arlington, TX, Unity Council here: https://www.arlingtontx.gov/city_hall/government/mayor/unity_council.

AREA OF INTEREST 2: AGENCY WELLNESS AND SUPPORT

As first responders, police officers are subjected to a higher risk for exposure and transmission of COVID-19 compared to other professions where Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) preventative health guidelines (e.g., social distancing) could be more easily implemented. This has served as an added stressor to the mental and physical health of officers, specifically in regard to the risk of exposure and potential transmission of the disease to their families. Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, law enforcement agencies across the country were already facing significant challenges related to mental health and wellness. Agencies were reporting heightened personal safety concerns, job burnout,¹² cumulative post-traumatic stress, and suicide.¹³ Officer mental health and wellness received renewed focus and was being addressed through a variety of federal funding and resources. However, some of these efforts were undermined because of the implications of the pandemic, causing additional adverse effects on the mental health of both sworn and civilian police professionals.

Through our work with participating agencies, a number of issues were cited as having an adverse effect on officers' wellbeing, specifically the following:

- Fear of infection and potential transmission of the virus to their families
- A lack of clear and consistent internal communication within the agency about altered duties
- The enforcement of changing public health guidelines
- Changes to schedules and overtime
- Balancing personal beliefs about public health directives, and the politicization of mask mandates
- Engaging with a public that is at a higher than usual stress level
- Distancing of civilian personnel from sworn/field officers
- Increased responsibilities despite fewer resources

In addition to these issues, law enforcement has been dealing with a barrage of protests surrounding public health guidelines and matters of racial justice and equity, with many of these protests targeted directly at officers themselves. To counter the effects of these many stressors, the participating agencies acknowledge the importance of having a robust wellness program that meets the needs of all ranks and positions within the department.

¹² W. P. McCarty, H. Aldirawi, S. Dewald, and M. Palacios "Burnout in Blue: An Analysis of the Extent and Primary Predictors of Burnout Among Law Enforcement Officers in the United States," *Police Quarterly* 22, no. 3 (2019): 278–304, <https://doi.org/10.1177/1098611119828038>.

¹³ E. Velazquez and M. Hernandez, "Effects of Police Officer Exposure to Traumatic Experiences and Recognizing the Stigma Associated with Police Officer Mental Health: A State-of-the-Art Review," *Policing: An International Journal* 42, no. 4 (2019): 711–724, <https://doi.org/10.1108/PIJPSM-09-2018-0147>.

LESSONS LEARNED DURING COVID-19

Wellness programming must be comprehensive and holistic in its approach and delivery. Similar to the saying, “you don’t build relationships during a crisis,” agencies that did not have a pre-existing program struggled to meet the wellness needs of their officers during the public health crisis. Though some agencies had singular components of wellness programs, such as a chaplain or employee assistance program (EAP), many acknowledged that their existing resources were overwhelmed as officers sought support in dealing with the increased stress associated with the pandemic. Departments reported increases in staff visits and utilization and were often unable to meet the needs of department members and their families suffering setbacks (e.g., concerns about contracting the virus, increased responsibilities at home due to school closures). The lack of a strong and established wellness program affected those agencies’ ability to fully support their employees and their families.

Executives and department leaders are not immune to mental health challenges. Typically, the phrase “officer wellness and support” brings to mind the patrol officer or detective. An often overlooked aspect of wellness in the police culture is recognizing and addressing the need for supervisors and command staff to receive mental health support as well. Part of the reason for this is the perception that many supervisors and command staff “sit behind a desk” so they do not need or deserve the same support as officers in the field. These supervisors were in the field at some point in their careers and likely have been exposed to a number of traumatic events that stay with them and still affect them. Those staff used to attending internal and external community events experienced a drastic decrease in human interaction. In addition, managing the staffing, internal communications, and protests all during a pandemic raised stress levels and posed challenges. Other leaders in the department also experienced challenges while trying to instill a “new normal” way of thinking for officers, such as not walking into people’s homes and decreasing contact with people to prevent unnecessary exposure. Another added stress for department leaders was handling leave requests and sick time, while trying not to sacrifice the mental wellness of officers.

Remote work has unintended consequences on officer and staff mental health. Another aspect that the pandemic has had on the wellness of officers and staff was the limited face-to-face interaction with colleagues. Some police agencies reported that not having the ability to work directly with their colleagues, and being unable to receive empathy and support from one another in person, had some profound effects on not only job effectiveness but also job satisfaction and stress, especially during traumatic incidents. Wellness and support can come in a variety of ways including having mental health professionals available on staff or on call. Both sworn and nonsworn staff often mentioned that just having someone to talk to who personally understands the challenges of the profession is critical to being able to cope. COVID-19 affected the ability to socialize and share experiences, feelings, and needs in person, and led to a feeling of isolation in some staff.

The mental health of civilian personnel cannot be overlooked. Civilian staff such as crime analysts, report stenographers, and dispatchers are not directly exposed to the same physical threats as officers. However, in the course of their jobs, they can face repeated exposure to others’ trauma and suffering, which can take a toll on their mental health. Dispatchers serve a critical role in policing and have been described as “the officer’s lifeline.” As the individuals responsible for communicating with residents calling 911, dispatchers must maintain a calm demeanor and be able to multitask under stressful situations. This became increasingly difficult as community members were calling into agencies frightened and also confused by frequently changing public health orders. In addition, other civilian personnel found the mandatory work-from-home guidance difficult because it made them unable to support the sworn personnel who were actively receiving backlash as protests against unjustified police practices spread across the country.

Looking forward

Law enforcement leadership should recognize the strain placed on their sworn and nonsworn staff throughout the pandemic and reprioritize officer health and wellness as a focus area. Agency leaders can do this by establishing a comprehensive organizational readiness plan that addresses the mental, physical, social, spiritual, and financial wellbeing, as well as tactical readiness, for the sworn and nonsworn staff.¹⁴ Agency leaders should also take advantage of available federal, state, or private funding opportunities to support building or improving on a comprehensive mental health and wellness program. Consider polling or speaking with staff (once the pandemic subsides) to identify best practices around mental health and wellness and to document these lessons for both daily operations and future pandemics. Departments must continue to protect the mental health and wellness of sworn and nonsworn individuals to combat the staffing shortages, overtime, burnout, and stress of the pandemic.

AGENCY SPOTLIGHTS

Indio, CA, Police Department (IPD)

Because of the importance of maintaining staffing levels in the Dispatch Unit, IPD sequestered its dispatchers from the rest of the agency to maximize social distancing. Although IPD made this decision as a means to protect the health and safety of the dispatchers, this temporary, modified “lockdown” may have inadvertently affected the dispatchers’ ability to decompress with officers after completed calls, as well as their daily interactions with other professional staff in the unit. Moreover, another temporary measure involved dispatchers no longer attending daily Patrol briefings, though this practice has resumed. One tactic the agency used to bolster the mental health of the dispatchers was to switch to a more comfortable uniform, at the request of the dispatchers. To bring stress down in the unit, IPD dispatch supervisor and SMT lead, Nicole Melendez, worked with leadership to allow for the uniform switch to slacks and polo shirts.

¹⁴ CNA. Officer Readiness Assessment Tool. <https://www.cna.org/centers/ipr/jri/officer-readiness-assessment-tool>

The agency increased efforts in the Dispatch unit to help bolster the health and wellness of the dispatchers. As an example, one tactic used by the agency was to switch to a more comfortable uniform, as suggested by some of the dispatchers. Dispatch Supervisors Nicole Melendez (SMT lead) and Lori Brown worked with leadership to allow for the uniform switch to slacks and polo shirts.

Arlington, TX, Police Department

APD identified early on during the pandemic that, aside from the concern about their officers' physical safety, the mental health aspect for officers was a challenge because of the increased operational tempo. One way employee mental health was negatively affected was the delay in receiving their yearly merit raises. A week and a half after launching the COVID-19 response, the city implemented a budget savings plan to avoid going into bankruptcy, which involved removing the 2.5 percent raise that employees were slated to receive. Some employees faced even further financial strain because their spouses and other family members were out of work because of the pandemic, leaving them as the sole income provider.

Fortunately, APD did not have to work to build a mental health program during a crisis because it had prioritized this issue ahead of time. Before the onset of the pandemic, the agency established a wellness program called the "Blue Chip" program, in which all employees are given a blue poker chip that grants them unlimited free services from several mental health providers. According to the agency's webpage, "the department participates in anonymous billing with each provider, so employee records are never shared with the department."¹⁵ In May 2021, the agency received federal funding from the COPS Office for the Blue Chip program.

¹⁵ Christopher Cook, Jan. 27, 2020, "APD Creates Program for Employee Wellness," MyArlingtonTX, https://www.arlingtontx.gov/news/my_arlington_tx/news_stories/a_p_d_creates_program_for_employee_wellness.

AREA OF INTEREST 3: REMOTE WORK

To decrease the likelihood of infection and operate in accordance with CDC health mandates, many agencies allowed civilian employees and those over 65 or with pre-existing conditions to work from home. However, this immediate transition required agency flexibility, employee adaptability, and, sometimes, high costs. Many agencies used money received through the CARES Act to purchase computers, address internet connectivity issues, and navigate access to virtual private networks and other information technology security requirements.¹⁶ Regardless, management styles, technology, and increased tension related to high profile national events remained key areas affecting an agency's ability to operate in a remote work environment.

LESSONS LEARNED DURING COVID-19

Moving to virtual platforms is challenging, but changes made now will ensure continuity of remote work in the future. Police personnel experienced numerous challenges adopting to the new technology required for operating during the pandemic: learning to navigate online communication platforms like Zoom and Microsoft Teams, overcoming unstable internet connectivity, and ensuring the secure exchange of information.¹⁷ Having gone through the initial phase of learning new technologies, many agencies are better prepared for future remote work if needs arise again; agencies should keep abreast of new and improved remote work technologies to ease such transitions in the future.

Managing employees and maintaining morale in a virtual environment takes work. The ability and need to work remotely also introduced new organizational dynamics that required adjustment. Supervisors adapted out of necessity to manage their employees' time from home by instituting telecommuting logs, which helped maintain accountability and ensure that the needs of the department were being met. Although some city employees were able to work from home, police employees (because of the nature of their duties) could not be afforded this option, leading to morale issues in some departments.

Looking forward

Although the forced transition to remote work was not ideal, it presented many opportunities for a profession that, historically, can be reluctant to change. Allowing virtual solutions for some daily tasks (such as meeting attendance) may cut down on travel times and costs. In addition, continuing remote work can increase functionality in localities that experience extreme weather conditions. Also, having a virtual attendance option may help to minimize personnel use of vacation and sick time. Finally, with institutionalized remote work policies, departments may be able to ensure adequate staffing by allowing for personnel who are unable to be on site to perform their work remotely.

¹⁶ U.S. Department of Treasury. Coronavirus Relief Fund. <https://home.treasury.gov/policy-issues/coronavirus/assistance-for-state-local-and-tribal-governments/coronavirus-relief-fund>

¹⁷ Learn how CNA helped courts personnel address key technology challenges while working from home: https://ndaa.org/wp-content/uploads/WFH_Technology_v3.pdf.

AGENCY SPOTLIGHTS

Arlington, TX, Police Department

One way that APD worked to regulate its employees' schedules and keep track of productivity while working at home was by implementing a telecommuting log. Employees working away from headquarters were required to complete a log specifying what they worked on and for how long. The agency also implemented Microsoft Teams, which allowed officers to access the log on both their work computers and their personal devices.

AREA OF INTEREST 4: TRAINING

Evidence-based training on police tactics, investigations, communications, and technology is critical to meeting the demands of the profession and providing officers with the skills required to ensure public safety. As a result of public health guidelines regarding social distancing, however, many agencies have had to cancel or drastically modify their training academies and in-service events. In addition, some agencies had to make the decision to delay academy graduations, which resulted in the inability to certify officers. This delay, coupled with a significant increase in retirements, led to some agencies operating at below minimum staffing levels, further exacerbating the difficulties with training. Many agencies were also encountering budget limitations resulting from pandemic-related lockdowns, hindering their abilities to improve training equipment and facilities. Whether it was navigating the in-person restrictions, training new staff, complying with mandatory training requirements, or adopting to new technology, agencies nationwide struggled to find innovative ways to train while the pandemic upended the industry's way of business. These challenges related to adopting new technologies and continuity of training are described further below.

LESSONS LEARNED DURING COVID-19

New technology adoption and subsequent officer training may be delayed during a public health crisis. One distinct challenge that agencies faced was providing training for their officers to adopt new technologies, such as body-worn cameras. At the onset of the pandemic were co-occurring calls for increased transparency and accountability in the wake of the deaths of George Floyd, Breonna Taylor, and Ahmaud Arbery. However, issues surrounding vendor training and travel restrictions, limitations on the number of people allowed in a room, and the number of officers out on leave substantially impeded the new technology training schedules.

Pandemics may have a critical effect on field training, some of which will not be immediately apparent. Recruit officers are required to go through field training before joining patrol. However, those who underwent field training during the pandemic, whether in a jail or on patrol, had experiences that were often drastically different than normal. For example, to promote the safety of staff and incarcerated individuals in the jails, some processes and facilities were adjusted. The number of individuals permitted in common areas at the same time was limited, intake processes were modified, and housing units were altered. Trainees who worked under these conditions will become fully licensed deputies without any experience operating in a normally functioning jail. This situation could pose a serious threat to the safety of the deputies and the incarcerated individuals when the jails return to the prepandemic environment. Similarly, policing changed during the pandemic; many agencies responded to fewer calls and some protocols changed for the safety of the officers and residents. For field trainees on patrol, this lack of experience can present a risk to the officer and the community when the pandemic subsides because new officers may need to respond to a situation they have not yet dealt with.

Looking forward

Despite the training challenges that agencies across the country have faced and are still facing, many opportunities have also presented themselves. The pause in trainings during COVID-19 has provided an opportunity for departments to reexamine their training practices, find ways to make them more effective, and create a safer environment for their officers and the community members. The pandemic has also shown that though many trainings and conferences must be done in person and on site, some can be conducted effectively in virtual settings, which cuts down on travel, saving both money and time. Although officers who underwent field training during the pandemic may have missed certain training opportunities, travel bans and other restrictions created time for agency-wide refresher trainings. The added time also provided agencies an opportunity to gather feedback from the trainers and trainees on what skills they think were missed due to the pandemic.

AGENCY SPOTLIGHTS

Arlington, TX, Police Department

APD shut down its training center from November 2020 through February 2021. All training was suspended except for recruit training. APD had a facility that allowed for social distancing, so officers were able to continue some “hands off” learning.

Indio, CA, Police Department

Although IPD decided to implement the ICAT¹⁸ use of force training, it struggled with overall training implementation during the pandemic. As law enforcement officers and leaders of the community, IPD did not want to violate COVID-19 rules and guidelines to conduct in-person training. As a result, grappling, defensive tactics, chemical agent use, and other types of training that require physical contact had to be curtailed. Some other types of training, such as range training, were not affected.

Hennepin County, MN, Sheriff's Office

The intersection of social unrest in Minneapolis and the COVID-19 pandemic created major challenges for HCSO. Large staffing needs during periods of unrest and COVID-19 protocols meant the agency could not train on their normal schedule or hold large in-person gatherings. The agency had to adapt and eventually moved a significant portion of its training online. HCSO also moved some of its training—such as mobile field force training for crowd control—outside, sometimes in inclement weather.

¹⁸ Learn more about the ICAT model by PERF at <https://www.policeforum.org/icat-training-guide>.

AREA OF INTEREST 5: RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION

Perhaps at no other point in the history of American policing has there been a more critical time for police to conduct a comprehensive analysis of police recruitment and retention strategies. The challenges, responsibilities, and dangers associated with policing have always made the recruitment and hiring of qualified candidates a complex issue for departments. In addition, simply recruiting qualified candidates for today's police is not enough. The societal expectations and demands for police reform in this past year have made this process even more important, and the COVID-19 pandemic has further complicated the recruitment and retention of officers. Agencies report experiencing issues with proactive recruitment, fear of increased attrition, and the need to revamp their interview processes for a virtual world. These challenges are described in additional detail below.

LESSONS LEARNED DURING COVID-19

Proactive recruitment strategies may be hindered during the pandemic. The COVID-19 public health emergency not only affected departments' abilities to conduct proactive in-person recruitment strategies such as job fairs, citizen academies, college campus recruiting, job shadowing, and ride-along opportunities, but it also affected budgets, staffing, and available resources. Funds that were traditionally allocated for recruitment were often diverted to ensure adequate staffing both in field and support service functions.

Agencies fear increased attrition. Many agencies expressed concerns about increased attrition resulting from the combination of COVID-19 and a renewed call for police reform and social equity.¹⁹ Police and sheriff agencies across the country have expressed fear of increases in officer attrition by not only officers who are eligible for retirement, but also veteran and younger officers who want to transition out of the profession and are willing to take a significant pension penalty to do so. However, the Marshall Project reported that “last year, as the overall U.S. economy shed 6% of workers, local police departments lost just under 1% of employees after a decade of steady expansion, according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics.”²⁰

Virtual interviews aid in easing resource burdens on agencies. When it comes to optimal recruiting and hiring processes, in-person interactions are preferred for steps such as physical fitness testing and final interviews, but the COVID-19 pandemic has revealed the ability for departments to use a virtual process for several other recruiting and hiring steps. Written testing and initial interviews can be conducted virtually, reaching a far broader range of candidates than would be able to travel to the agency in-person. Using a hybrid virtual recruiting and hiring process not only eases the financial burden, time commitment, and stress on the recruit candidates, but it can also save agencies time, money, and resources.

¹⁹ “Survey on Workforce Trends,” June 11, 2021, PERF, <https://www.policeforum.org/workforcesurveyjune2021>

²⁰ Weihua Li and Ilica Mahajan, 2021, “Police Say Demoralized Officers Are Quitting in Drove. Labor Data Says No,” The Marshall Project, <https://www.themarshallproject.org/2021/09/01/police-say-demoralized-officers-are-quitting-in-drove-labor-data-says-no>.

Looking forward

The COVID-19 pandemic is the leading cause of death for law enforcement and jurisdictions across the country face difficult decisions concerning officers' opposition of vaccine mandates.²¹ Additionally, the social and racial justice reform movement has raised questions surrounding the traditional roles of police officers. While this may vary in each jurisdiction, agencies are in need of guidance and support in reimagining what a police officer's role is, and who these officers should be. Initiatives such as the 30X30 Initiative²² have sought to increase the representation of women in agencies across the country, and these types of initiatives should receive federal support to help law enforcement meet current and future societal expectations. Lastly, many of today's younger police recruit candidates are very familiar and comfortable with virtual settings, and requiring them to be physically present for part of a process that could equally be conducted virtually may prove to be a deterrent for them and a lost opportunity.

AGENCY SPOTLIGHTS

Arlington, TX, Police Department

APD uses three strategies for its recruitment. First, it uses a long-term strategy called the "Hometown Recruiting Program," which involves making contact with local high school students, forming positive relationships, and giving priority hiring status to these individuals provided they graduate from college. Second, APD began recruiting through online job platforms during the pandemic, which it credits for increasing their numbers and reach. In congruence with the online job recruitment, APD was conducting virtual preliminary interviews. Finally, APD embodies a culture of procedural justice and transparency, which it believes attracts candidates and is a key factor in retention. To learn more about these strategies, read the one pager authored in partnership with APD Lieutenant Brook Rollins.²³

Hennepin County, MN, Sheriff's Office

HCSO uses its Community Outreach Division for not only engagement, relationship building, and overcoming trust barriers with its communities, but also as an opportunity to recruit potential deputy candidates. HCSO embraces the principles of the 21st Century Policing Report, and its Community Outreach Division helps it conduct outreach to its diverse community, better educating the community on the sheriff's goal of building trust and on the deputies' roles and responsibilities. Its engagements have led to successful recruitments and hires of diverse individuals who may have otherwise not been aware or interested in a career in policing.

²¹ Stephanie Dazio, 2021, "First responders nationwide resist COVID vaccine mandates", The Associated Press, <https://apnews.com/article/health-coronavirus-pandemic-f459b8d187cd915e17588873e07e8bdf>

²² The 30x30 Initiative is focused on "[increasing] the representation of women in police recruit classes to 30 percent by 2030, and [ensuring] police policies and culture intentionally support the success of qualified women officers throughout their careers." <https://30x30initiative.org/>

²³ CNA. Succeeding in Recruitment during COVID-19: Three Important Strategies from the Arlington, Texas, Police Department. https://www.cna.org/cna_files/centers/IPR/jri/policing-covid/Recruitment-IIM-2021-U-029238.pdf

AREA OF INTEREST 6: INCIDENT MANAGEMENT

Agencies have faced new and emerging challenges when integrating their operations with the wider incident response enterprise of a public health emergency. Although agencies are typically well versed in their department's operations and capacities, many face challenges when integrating into response operations led by nontraditional responders such as their local public health departments. Challenges with information sharing, decision making, and guidance on PPE are typical because each requires strong preexisting relationships and coordination with external response agencies (e.g., public health, emergency management, and the private sector). As can be expected, the COVID-19 response has highlighted challenges around information sharing, integrating into a public-health led response, clarity of mission, implementation of protective measures, and ensuring continuity of operations were noted by police personnel. These challenges are further described below.

LESSONS LEARNED DURING COVID-19

Agencies must improve their information sharing with a wider group of response organizations.

Although many agencies have developed communications with other area law enforcement and with fire departments, they are less likely to have consistent communications with jurisdictional emergency management, public health, human services, and private sector partners. Making sure that relevant information flowed between those organizations, each with its own COVID-19 response roles and responsibilities, was challenging for many law enforcement agencies.

Officers need more training and experience activating unfamiliar law enforcement missions. During COVID-19, law enforcement agencies around the country were asked to support several missions that they do not routinely support. These missions—such as providing security at vaccination sites, guarding vaccine transport and distribution sites, and policing public health measures like wearing face coverings and social distancing regulations—proved challenging for officers because they had neither appropriate training nor experience.

Agencies must implement continuity plans with assumptions suited to the COVID-19 environment. If done at all, most jurisdictions plan for continuity against a backdrop of moving operations from one physical location to an alternate location. However, this type of continuity assumes full technological capabilities and a full complement of staff. As experienced during COVID-19, officers who are sick or quarantining after exposure to a sick person can be away from their duties up to several weeks, and whole squads can become unavailable at once. Planning for continuity with absentee rates of 25 percent or more is uncommon and challenging, and law enforcement agencies required creative solutions for dependably providing the most critical services.

Agencies should keep abreast of the latest CDC and other public health guidance, making sure related messages and actions are coordinated. Whether obvious or not, public health decisions have an effect on public safety and security, and on the ways in which law enforcement can carry out their

missions. For example, if a local health department changed the requirements for citizen face coverings, agencies needed information such as what counts as a “face covering,” the exact conditions under when face coverings are mandatory, and to what extent the rules should be enforced. As public health guidance changed with the changing pandemic phases and updated data, many departments found it challenging to stay ahead of the regulations, know how to message the new information, and take necessary response actions.

Coordinating with other departments and agencies over a long period allows agencies to see the value of the Incident Command System (ICS). Although law enforcement has not always embraced ICS, implementing key concepts (such as appointing a safety officer and designating a logistics lead to help find supplies and equipment) may form the base of ongoing ICS practices. This could, in turn, improve multiagency responses to incidents and events in the future.

Enforcing public health regulations provides agencies with opportunities to use education as a law enforcement tool. Agencies across the United States had to get creative when dealing with new and changing public health regulations. As a result, some departments found that making their primary mission education was one way to avoid confrontation over potentially difficult topics, such as wearing a face covering. Focusing on safety instead of security allowed police officers to expand possible approaches and focus on de-escalation as a more effective method.

Amidst a pandemic, agencies can find expanded opportunities to integrate their public information officers (PIOs) and social media teams with those of other jurisdictional departments and agencies. Speaking with one voice is always important during critical responses, and no more so than during COVID-19. Encouraging PIOs and social media teams to coordinate messaging and tasks helped to ensure jurisdictions had aligned messages and could keep track of and address rumors and disinformation.

Looking forward

COVID-19 forced meaningful interaction between jurisdictional health departments and agencies. Even before the pandemic, many incidents left to police began with public and mental health crises (e.g., overdoses, cognitive breakdowns). More frequent and meaningful interaction with public health offices has the potential to improve outcomes for responding officers and for citizens in crisis. Also, recent public health emergencies and civil unrest strongly suggest that agencies across the nation should conduct ICS training more frequently. Although the pandemic was a nontraditional threat, at least one agency has noted that nontraditional threats may surface in the future, and working within the ICS is one way to prepare for such unforeseen circumstances.

Acknowledging that specific resiliency measures will vary based on department and community needs, agencies should work to develop action plans that proactively outline strategic priorities when faced with threats outside of traditional law enforcement activities. Having such a system in place will increase an agency’s resiliency in the face of unprecedented circumstances and will help to mitigate the negative and lasting effects nontraditional threats pose to law enforcement operations.

AGENCY SPOTLIGHT

Indio, CA, Police Department

The county in which IPD operates activated its Emergency Operations Center (EOC) during the COVID-19 pandemic, and once a vaccine was available, IPD received daily updates about vaccine distribution. However, one area for growth the IPD chief noted was practicing integration within the ICS structure more frequently. Using the pandemic as an opportunity to do so, IPD assigned one individual to be in charge of logistics, and another to be the designated intelligence officer. The agency created an officer safety position and the intelligence officer maintained the intelligence function, which resulted in IPD being a city leader in developing COVID-19 protocols such as temperature screening. The intelligence officer also condensed the daily EOC update into one page and disseminated it to the chief and city manager. Being in ICS mode helped IPD to alleviate some of the fears and anxieties for officers because they had structure and knew where to go for their needs. Though the officers train every two years on ICS per a state requirement, they said that the best exercise was living through it. The IPD chief is an ICS advocate and stressed the importance of it to other chiefs by noting that it “reduces duplication of effort” and lets them “focus staff.”

AREA OF INTEREST 7: JAIL ADMINISTRATION

The COVID-19 pandemic caught many jurisdictions and agencies underprepared to handle a public health crisis of this magnitude. Anecdotally, jurisdictions with strong multiagency stakeholder alliances and robust public health capabilities were able to move more quickly to mitigate virus spread; however, this was the exception rather than the norm. Responding to a public health emergency requires strong multiagency collaboration and coordination to quickly implement mitigation strategies such as providing public health directives around safety measures, and prioritizing care for vulnerable populations.

Although the effects of COVID-19 among the general public have been staggering, it has been perhaps even more grueling to those working and residing in confined institutions such as jails. The staff working in jails during the pandemic have faced a daunting task of keeping themselves and those they interact with safe, while experiencing a lack of access to cleaning supplies, the need for PPE, noncompliance with public health guidelines, and an overcrowded and consistently rotating population. These challenges are further described below.

LESSONS LEARNED DURING COVID-19

The structure and function of jails are not conducive to mitigating the effects of a public health pandemic.

The natural flow of operations in a jail, including intake, housing, staffing, and mobility inside the jail make it difficult to mitigate or contain the spread of viruses. During the COVID-19 pandemic, public health experts encouraged individuals to limit their exposure to and interactions with people outside of their household; however, incarcerated individuals and officers working within the confines of correctional facilities do not have this option. Jail staff are considered essential employees, and they were required to report for duty despite the pandemic. In addition to facing risks posed by staff entering the facility from the community on a daily basis, jails also have a highly transient incarcerated population, which increases the risk for virus transmission and spread with each intake and transport. Sometimes, the transport of incarcerated individuals from the jail to prison was delayed because outbreaks in the destination prisons would force a lockdown and prevent any new intakes from occurring; this led to an increased population in the jail. Further exacerbating the population levels at some jails were the mass arrests conducted during the civil unrest in the summer of 2020, often overburdening staffs that were already under resourced because of sick leave and burnout.

Current operational plans must include adequate guidance for responding to a public health crisis. Jail staff were tasked with modifying their standard operating procedures, working with their external partners to forecast the disease spread in their facility, determining the processes to continue programming in the jail while mitigating disease spread, and meeting constitutionally protected rights to due process such as visitation, speedy trials, communication with lawyers and family, and more. Some jails worked with business partners and faith leaders to provide virtual services like worship services and apprenticeships

to the incarcerated populations.²⁴ Jail staff were also prompted to work with the surrounding agencies to alert them of the decontamination and intake processes the agencies needed to observe once they arrived at the jail.

Demands for transparency may place additional burdens for data collection on jail staff. At the onset of the pandemic, organizations from around the world were calling for various levels of decarceration for a range of reasons, such as high levels of positive testing, the inability to socially distance, the vulnerability of the individuals incarcerated, overcrowding, and a lack of adequate health care.²⁵ Prompted by lawsuits, court orders, executive orders, and legislation, some of the jails and prisons across the country released percentages of their population or raised their threshold for intake.²⁶ Although the major decisions around decarceration were not within the job responsibilities of the jail staff, they were tasked with a higher burden of collecting and disseminating accurate and timely data to the public regarding the health and wellness of the incarcerated individuals in their care.

LOOKING FORWARD

The pandemic posed monumental challenges to jail staff and administrators across the country. The overwhelming task of protecting incarcerated individuals and their staff during a pandemic in close and confined quarters was and remains taxing on the entire organization. Moving forward, jail staff should look to those institutions that were able to prevent the virus from overtaking their population and learn what worked and what didn't. Constructing a pandemic plan and revisiting this to adjust for key variables such as population size or an altered facility should be another step jails take. In addition, new jails should be built with pandemic planning in mind. Jail staff may also want to place a greater emphasis on virtual services even after the pandemic comes to an end, as this provides greater access to programming for a larger number of incarcerated individuals. Finally, justice system stakeholders, such as judges, prosecutors, public defenders, law enforcement, and jail staff, should make a data-driven decision to determine whether increased decarceration is the best possible solution for the safety of the individuals incarcerated, their jail staff, and their community.

AGENCY SPOTLIGHT

Hennepin County, MN, Sheriff's Office

During the COVID-19 pandemic, HCSO made procedural changes in the jails, with business partners, and within the courts. One way the agency innovated during the pandemic was by using technology to facilitate the continuity of operations and allow for continued communication with families, lawyers, and

²⁴ "Curbing the Spread of COVID-19 in Jails: Innovating Approaches for Protecting Staff and Incarcerated Individuals," Justice Talks, Episode 2 <https://www.cna.org/news/justice-talks>.

²⁵ C. Kim, Apr. 3, 2020, "Why People Are Being Released from Jails and Prisons During the Pandemic," Vox, <https://www.vox.com/2020/4/3/21200832/jail-prison-early-release-coronavirus-covid-19-incarcerated>.

²⁶ "The Most Significant Criminal Justice Policy Changes from the COVID-19 Pandemic," Prison Policy Institute, <https://www.prisonpolicy.org/virus/virusresponse.html>.

advocates. HCSO implemented the use of video visitation using Chromebooks and iPads, and it held remote court proceedings held as well. Additionally, incarcerated individuals were allowed free phone calls for serious matters, and the agency maintained chaplain services.

The agency made policy changes such as cohorting²⁷ to decrease disease spread, and it has observed a decrease in jail violence since instituting this model. To limit the spread inside the facility, the agency instituted changes in intake, screening, and medical procedures. HCSO also maintained increased external communication as well as open internal communication about masks and regulations with the 36 municipal agencies it serves.

Arlington, TX, Police Department

APD established a decontamination station in the sally port of the jail. To construct this, they placed a portable tarp around it, and instructed officers to bring a spare change of clothes to work. APD started this practice when four officers encountered an individual who was COVID-positive, wearing no mask, and was actively coughing. The agency has learned over time how to hone these practices, and has reduced the decontamination process to 20 minutes, with officers only needing to take off the outer layer of their clothing. The officers also will bring their car to the sally port to fog the police car.

CONCLUSION

The COVID-19 pandemic affected virtually every aspect of policing—from community engagement, resilience, training, and recruitment, to safety and wellness, to arresting and incarcerating individuals. The three agencies we engaged for this initiative showed great amounts innovation and leadership during the pandemic, and still, there are more lessons to learn. State and local agencies were placed in a precarious situation concerning decisions about mandates, restrictions, policies, and procedures. There were many agencies choosing between the “education” and “enforcement” options regarding masks for community members, and there was a rush to create or implement policies based on known infectious diseases. Complicating matters for many departments was responding to civil unrest in a way that recognized imposed restrictions around social distancing and masks, all of which created an unsafe environment for law enforcement.

As stated in the introduction, the JRI funded this initiative to assess the agencies’ responses to the pandemic outbreak and to determine COVID-19 challenges and innovative approaches to managing the effects of the pandemic. We have highlighted a number of findings and lessons learned that not only improve daily operations, but will also serve as a blueprint for future responses during pandemics or other public health emergencies (see Appendix B for the full list of findings).

It is our hope that this guide documents some of the practices institutionalized during the COVID-19 pandemic and provides guidance to help departments more quickly adapt and respond to these unique and historic incidents and events in the future.

²⁷ According to the Minnesota Department of Health, “Cohorting is an infection prevention and control strategy that includes physical and procedural controls to separate infectious residents and decrease risk of transmission to uninfected residents.” <https://www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/hcp/lcpcpchoort.pdf>.

APPENDIX A: ACRONYMS

ACRONYM	DEFINITION
JRI	CNA Center for Justice Research and Innovation
COPS	US Department of Justice Office of Community Oriented Policing Services
HCSO	Hennepin County, Minnesota, Sheriff's Office
IPD	Indio, California, Police Department
APD	Arlington, Texas, Police Department
SME	Subject Matter Expert
PPE	Personal Protective Equipment
SMT	Social Media Team
CDC	Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
EAP	Employee Assistance Program
CARES	Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act
ICAT	Integrating Communications, Assessment, and Tactics
ICS	Incident Command System
PIO	Public Information Officer
EOC	Emergency Operations Center

APPENDIX B: FINDINGS

AREA OF INTEREST	FINDING
Community Engagement	Establishing a strong social media presence facilitates continuity of public messaging. Using virtual platforms can increase engagement in community forums. Facilitating virtual community engagement presents a new set of challenges.
Agency Wellness and Support	Wellness programming must be comprehensive and holistic in its approach and delivery. Executives and department leaders are not immune to mental health challenges. Remote work has unintended consequences on officer and staff mental health. The mental health of civilian personnel cannot be overlooked.
Remote Work	Moving to virtual platforms is challenging, but changes made now will ensure continuity of remote work in the future. Managing employees and maintaining morale in a virtual environment takes work.
Training	New technology adoption and subsequent officer training may be delayed during a public health crisis. Pandemics may have a critical effect on field training, some of which will not be immediately apparent.
Recruitment and Retention	Proactive recruitment strategies may be hindered during the pandemic. Agencies fear increased attrition. Virtual interviews aid in easing resource burdens on agencies.

AREA OF INTEREST	FINDING
Incident Management	<p>Agencies must improve their information sharing with a wider group of response organizations</p> <p>Officers need more training and experience activating unfamiliar law enforcement missions.</p> <p>Agencies must implement continuity plans with assumptions suited to the COVID-19 environment.</p> <p>Agencies should keep abreast of the latest CDC and other public health guidance, making sure related messages and actions are coordinated.</p> <p>Coordinating with other departments and agencies over a long period allows agencies to see the value of the Incident Command System (ICS).</p> <p>Enforcing public health regulations provides agencies with opportunities to use education as a law enforcement tool.</p> <p>Amidst a pandemic, agencies can find expanded opportunities to integrate their public information officers (PIOs) and social media teams with those of other jurisdictional departments and agencies.</p>
Jail Administration	<p>The structure and function of jails are not conducive to mitigating the effects of a public health pandemic.</p> <p>Current operational plans must include adequate guidance for responding to a public health crisis.</p> <p>Demands for transparency may place additional burdens for data collection on jail staff.</p>



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