CITY OF SAN JOSE
CAPITAL OF SILICON VALLEY

Memorandum

TO: PUBLIC SAFETY, FINANCE, AND STRATEGIC SUPPORT COMMITTEE

FROM: Paul Joseph

SUBJECT: See Below

DATE: April 30, 2025

Approved *JBchemtri*

Date: 5/7/2025

SUBJECT: Calendar Year 2024 Police Department 911 Disability and Homelessness Call Analysis Status Report

RECOMMENDATION

Accept the status report on 911 calls received in 2024 with a nexus to disability (including mental health) and/or homelessness, including an update on the implementation of data-entry processes and training to appropriately "flag" these incidents.

BACKGROUND

On February 27, 2024, staff from the City Manager's Office presented a report on a 911 event data analysis to City Council[1]. The purpose of the report was to evaluate police events for possible development of alternative response service models. During the meeting, members of the City Council asked for staff to conduct a specific analysis on how the San José Police Department (Department) flags events and 911 calls related to homelessness and individuals with disabilities.

ANALYSIS

The Department's analysis of 911 calls involving individuals with disabilities and those experiencing homelessness is based on data extracted from its Computer Aided Dispatch (CAD) system. CAD is a software system used by the Department to manage and coordinate dispatching, resource allocation, and communication with field personnel. When a 911 operator receives a call for service or when an officer is flagged

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[1] https://sanjoseca.primegov.com/Portal/viewer?id=0&type=7&uid=e643d076-312e-4f9f-a7cd-8d37b0b22290

down or conducts an enforcement stop in the field, an "event" is immediately created in
CAD. As the event develops, call-takers, dispatchers, and officers continually add
information until the event is closed.

Although call-takers and dispatchers create and update events in CAD, they do not
input data on disabilities or homelessness. That responsibility falls entirely on patrol
officers who respond to the events and interact with the involved person(s).
Furthermore, 911 call-takers are not trained to ask callers about disabilities unless there
is a clear disability that is relevant to the event (i.e., speech impediments, deafness,
etc.). Likewise, call-takers do not ask about the caller's housing situation. They ask
questions relevant to the details of each call to determine what services or resources
are needed but they do not input this information in a way that can be searched or
processed.

In April of 2022, the Department added two new fields to CAD's "Event Clear" mask to
allow the Department to gather data on disabilities and homelessness. Each officer
assigned to an event must populate these fields before closing the event or being
cleared (removed) from it. The two fields, shown in Figure 1, that were added to the
mask are:

- Unhoused Related. If the event involved a person or persons suspected or
  confirmed to be unhoused, or if the event involved a geographic area occupied
  by an unhoused person, the officer selects the "Yes" option.
- Perceived Disability. Utilizing a drop-down menu, officers select the most
  appropriate _perceived_ disability involved in or at the center of the event. If no
  disabilities were perceived, officers select "None." Officers are unable to clear or
  close an event in CAD without completing both the "Unhoused Related" and
  "Perceived Disability" fields.

Figure 1. Data field additions to CAD.

It is important to note that each patrol unit assigned to an event must complete both fields. If a two-person unit is assigned to an event, there is only one entry for both officers. Not all officers clearing an event will input the same data in these two fields, as they may have different perceptions and/or have different information at the time of clearance. However, if one unit inputs a response other than "No" for "Unhoused Related" or "None" for "Perceived Disabilities," that data applies to the event. Also, not all data regarding individuals experiencing homelessness and/or disabilities found in CAD is related to 911 calls. If an officer engages in proactive policing or a community member "flags down" an officer to report a crime, the officer has the same data input responsibilities for the field-initiated activities and incidents as they do for 911 calls for service.

In addition to CAD, the Department also collects data on disabilities through its Automated Field Reporting/Record Management System (AFR/RMS). When generating a police report, officers create an "entity page" for each person involved in the event. On the entity page the officer inputs the person's personal information, including name, date of birth, home address, occupation, and identifying documents (i.e., driver's license and social security numbers). Each entity page features a drop-down menu officers can use to select any of nine disability types that they have reason to believe the person has.

Currently, AFR/RMS does not capture data on homelessness. However, the system provider has advised the Department that a new field on the entity page will be available in a future software update. This update is expected within the next year.

Data on homeless individuals contained in AFR/RMS differs from that contained in CAD in two major ways. First, a police report is not created in AFR/RMS for every 911 call or event that is created in CAD. If the event is minor and/or not criminal in nature, officers may close it in CAD without generating a report in AFR/RMS. Second, the field on the entity page that captures data on disabilities is not mandatory, meaning an officer may submit the report without entering a person's disabilities, even if a disability is present. For these reasons, data from AFR/RMS is incomplete and misleading when compared to CAD data and will not be included in this report.

Officers also input data on individuals with perceived disabilities who they encounter in the field as part of the Racial and Identity Profiling Act of 2015 (RIPA). However, RIPA data is incomplete, as it is only collected on individuals who have been stopped or detained by officers. As a result,this data will not be included in this report.

Training

The Department's data entry regarding 911 calls involving unhoused individuals and individuals with disabilities is done almost entirely by sworn field personnel. In addition to patrol officers, this includes officers on the Mobile Crisis Assessment Team (MCAT), who are specially trained in the field of mental health and respond almost exclusively to calls involving people with mental illnesses. While Community Service Officers (CSOs) have the same responsibilities as sworn Department members to document these conditions in individuals they encounter in the field, it is less common given the nature of the events they respond to.

The majority of an officer's training on how to recognize and identify different types of disabilities occurs in the Police Academy and in-house training programs prior to entering the Field Training (FTO) program. During the academy, recruits receive 16-hours of instruction on working with and serving individuals with disabilities. Then, between graduating from the academy and beginning the FTO program, officers receive an additional 40-hour block of instruction known as Critical Incident Training, during which they are instructed on how to recognize and provide services for most types of disabilities, including various types of mental illness. All sworn officers then periodically receive updated or "refresher" training on working with people with disabilities during yearly mandatory Continued Professional Training (CPT) sessions, although no CPT sessions have been specifically centered on individuals with disabilities in the past two years.

Inputting the data is a simple function, and officers are taught it on their first day in the FTO program.

Calendar Year (CY) 2024 CAD events related to homelessness

In CY 2024, 357,375 events were entered into CAD. Of those, 19,830, or 5.5%, were marked as being "Unhoused Related" (shown in table 1). Table 2 shows CAD events in CY 2024 marked as "Unhoused Related" by closing priority. Priority 1-2 events are considered serious crimes, and Priority 1 events are in progress at the time of the 911 call. Priority 5-6 events are officer-initiated. Table 3 shows the top five event types marked "Unhoused Related" in CAD in CY 2024. Table 4 shows the CAD events marked "Unhoused Related" in CY 2024 by City Council District. The Department is currently preparing to launch a public-facing Power BI "Unhoused Dashboard" which will show these and several other data points.

Table 1. Citywide Unhoused Related CAD Events

	CY 2024
Total Citywide CAD Events	357,375
Unhoused Related CAD Events	19,830
% of Unhoused Related Total CAD Events	5.5%

Table 2. Unhoused Related CAD events by Priority

Final Priority	Number of Events	% of Total
1	754	3.8%
2	7,753	39.1%
3	4,242	21.4%
4	1,625	8.2%
5	4,437	22.4%
6	1,014	5.1%
Total	**19,830**	

Table 3. Most Prevalent Unhoused Related CAD Event Types

CAD Event Type	Number of Events
Disturbance	2,679
Welfare Check	1,840
Trespassing	1,664
Community Policing Foot Patrol	2,063
Suspicious Person	804

Table 4. Unhoused Related CAD Events by City Council District

Council District	Number of Events	% of Total
1	635	3.2%
2	950	4.8%
3	5,158	26.0%
4	1,831	9.2%
5	1,915	9.7%
6	4,091	20.6%
7	2,759	13.9%
8	593	3.0%
9	924	4.7%
10	667	3.4%
(blank)	287	1.4%
Total	**19,830**	

CY 2024 CAD events involving a perceived disability

In CY 2024, a total of 9,811 events, or 2.7% of all CAD events, were closed in CAD as being related to a person with a perceived disability. Table 5 below shows the events broken down by the perceived disability identified. The vast majority of events were identified under mental health.

Table 5. Citywide Perceived Disability CAD Events

Perceived Disability	Number of Events	% of Total Disability Events
Blind	15	0.2%
Deaf	23	0.2%
Intellectual or Developmental Disability, including Dementia	253	2.6%
Hyperactivity	21	0.2%
Multiple	507	5.2%
Mental Health	8,305	84.6%
Other	622	6.3%
Speech Impaired	62	0.6%
Total	**9,811**	

The large percentage of CAD events involving a mental health condition (both in general call volumes and for those events involving a perceived disability) highlights the importance of the Department's efforts around alternative response and the 911-988 call transfer program with the County of Santa Clara. Given the large call volumes, the City and County have mutually determined to implement a structured transfer program.

The City and County mutually acknowledge that this program represents an opportunity to enhance crisis response services for San José residents, including individuals with disabilities, through improved coordination and emergency and mental health resources. This program facilitates the transfer of specific 911 calls from the City to Santa Clara County 988 for certain types of calls. Currently, call transfers are being accepted under the following criteria:

1. Caller in emotional distress.
2. Caller has suicidal ideation with no immediate risk to harm self or others.
3. Caller is possibly experiencing a mental health crisis. This could include conditions such as psychosis, mania or depression, or other mental health or substance use disorder.
4. Third party concerned about someone with possible mental distress or substance abuse who is known to the caller.

Of those 9,811 events, 4,491 were simultaneously marked as being "Unhoused Related," representing 45.8% of events. This substantial intersection highlights the importance of the Department's training for properly responding to these complex calls for service. Table 6 shows the events broken down by perceived disability and by housed and unhoused.

Table 6. Perceived Disability CAD Events by Housing Status

Perceived Disability	Not Unhoused Related	Unhoused Related	Total
Blind	11	4	15
Deaf	21	2	23
Intellectual or Developmental Disability, including Dementia	166	87	253
Hyperactivity	12	9	21
Multiple	303	204	507
Mental Health	4,524	3,781	8,305
Other	226	399	622
Speech Impaired	57	5	62
Total	**5,320**	**4,491**	**9,811**

The Department worked with the City Manager's Office of Racial and Social Equity to collect community input on the categories of perceived disabilities used for data collection. The goal of the community input is to inform future iterations of the drop-down menu used for data collection purposes. The community's input reinforced the continued use of many of the current categories described, while several opportunities were identified that could strengthen data collection in the future. For example, the community input identified an opportunity to add "mobility disability" as a drop-down category. The Department will continue to work with the City Manager's Office of Racial and Social Equity to refine the data collection process.
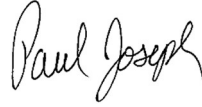
COORDINATION

This memorandum has been coordinated with the City Attorney's Office and the City Manager's Budget Office.

Paul Joseph
Chief of Police

The principal author of this memorandum is Lt. Paul Hamblin, Unit Commander of the Research and Development Unit in the Police Department. For questions, please contact via email or (408) 277-5200.