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CITY OF SAN DIEGO COMMUNITY RELATIONS DEPARTMENT

FACT SHEET

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CITY OF SAN DIEGO

COMMUNITY RELATIONS DEPARTMENT

INFORMATION

SAN DIEGO STATE UNIVERSITY 1897

COMMUNITY RELATIONS - WHAT IS IT?

Community Relations - from the Community Relations Department point of view - is an activity, event or occasion to assist San Diegans in successfully discharging their rights and responsibilities in their relationship with the law and justice agencies. This includes enhancing the delivery of services from law and justice agencies.

COMMUNITY RELATIONS - WHAT IT SEEKS TO ACCOMPLISH

1. More cooperative and positive attitudes between the community and the various law and justice agencies.

2. Assistance to law and justice agencies and community organizations to mutually solve law enforcement problems as the need arises.

3. Better communication between residents and the Mayor, the City Council, and the City Manager.

4. Inquiries and studies of the operations, practices and policies of law and justice agencies.

5. Increased citizen awareness of their rights and responsibilities in the maintenance of law and order and in the administration of justice.

6. Needed changes in policies and practices which enhance the image of law enforcement officers in the community.

7. In depth evaluations of citizen complaints involving the operation, practices and policies of criminal justice system agencies.

8. Innovative programs to reduce the crime rate and recidivism.

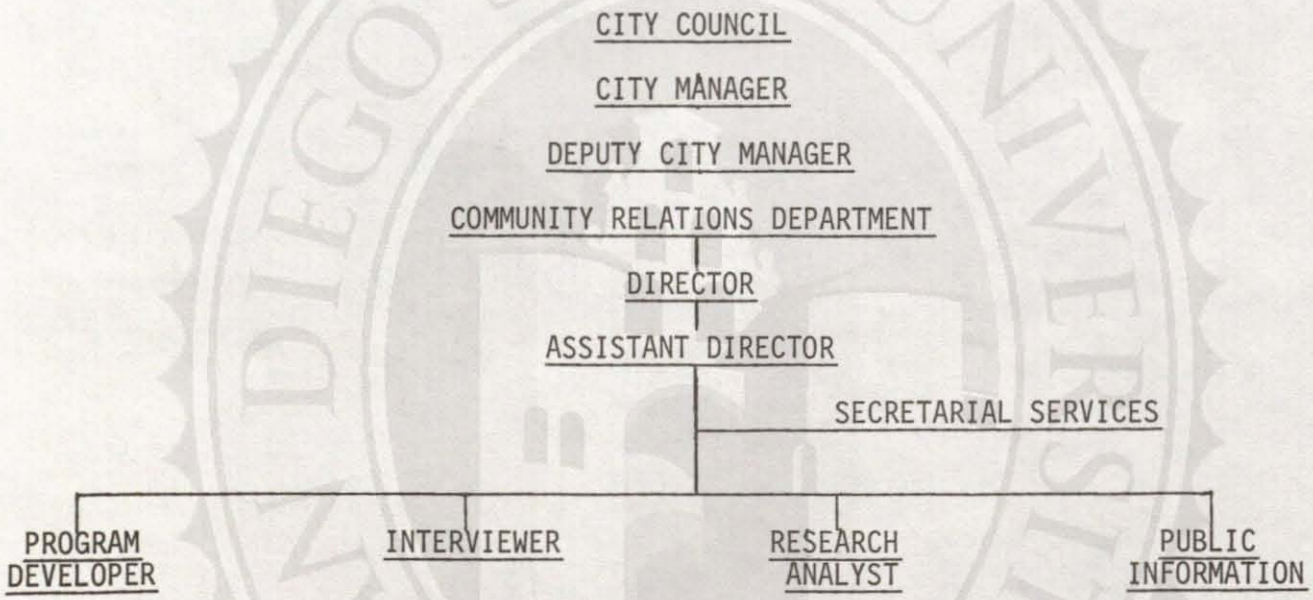
9. Effective avenues by which citizens can participate in the formulation of policies, practices, and programs to make law and justice activities more effective and more responsive to community needs.

10. Cooperation with the United States Department of Justice in a crisis intervention program.

11. Cooperation with the San Diego Police Department in crime prevention programs.

ORGANIZATION

To carry out day-to-day business, the CRD - with a staff of 12 employees - is organized into functional areas under the management of the Director.



Organizational Structure of the City of San Diego Community Relations Department.

COMMUNITY RELATIONS DEPARTMENT COMMUNITY SERVICES

Newsletter - A Spanish and English Newletter is published monthly with special editions. It is mailed to more than 700 persons and organizations. Its contents familiarize the reader with current community services, participative activities, the source of materials and their use in crime prevention or correction. It carries news of significant CRD and CRB happenings.

Research and Data Bank - The research section analyzes penal codes, legislation, judicial decisions and resultant local law and justice policies to:

1. Prepare recommendations to improve the delivery of law and justice services to the public.

2. Develop informational fact sheets for public dissemination regarding specific law and justice policies.

3. Coordinate the development of a data bank containing significant data on agencies and organizations within the law and justice system.

Policy Clarification and Citizen Referral - Department interviewers who take citizen complaints evaluate and clarify regulations and policies of agencies within the law and justice system to assist San Diegans in reducing negative contacts with the law and justice system. The interviewers also help to eliminate individual and group actions which increase the probability of criminal activity. With the development of the department data bank, one-stop referrals of inquiring citizens are possible from the CRD.

Resolving Citizen Complaints - Complaints against agencies of the law and justice system are processed through the Community Relations Department. The objectives are; (1) to expedite a resolution, (2) to familiarize the complainant with agency policies and procedures appropriate to the case, and (3) to gather data which identifies significant trends in the delivery of law and justice services.

Spanish Translation - Free Spanish language interpretation and translation is provided. Also, all newsletters, fact sheets, and other information developed and disseminated by the department are produced in English and Spanish.

Bail Bond - The department serves as a liaison agency for the San Diego County Bail Fund, Inc. The Fund consists of three trustees and a Board of Directors who provide free bail for any responsible resident of the County who can't afford his/her own bail. The CRD assists by filling out the bail fund form and forwarding it to the trustees who

decide what action is to be taken.

COMMUNITY RELATIONS COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION

Community Relaions Board - All administrative staff support for the Community Relations Board is provided by the CRD. The CRB regular monthly meetings are held on the second Wednesday of each month. The meetings are open and the public is invited.

Under the San Diego Municipal Code, the CRB "shall consult and advise the Mayor, City Council and City Manager, and various cooperating elements of the criminal justice system whose activities affect the residents of the City."

The Code says this includes, but is not limited to law enforcement agencies, the judiciary and organized bar, and agencies concerned with confinement, probation, parole and rehabilitation of convicted persons.

"The Community Relations Board shall endeavor to promote and encourage increased cooperation and coordination between groups and agencies which are a part of the criminal justice system and residents of the City, and to develop and conduct activities directed toward increasing awareness in the community of the rights and responsibilities of citizens in the maintenance of law and order and the administration of justice.

"It is the further intent . . . to create an effective avenue by which the community can participate in the formulation of policies, practices and programs which will make law and justice activities more effective and responsive to the needs of the City, and that a means be established thereby to foster and encourage citizen participation in the law and justice system and to develop recommendations and programs toward this end."

Crisis Intervention - A continuing working relationship is maintained with the Department of Justice Community Relations Service. This effort is to provide assistance in preventing major crisis situations. The CRD works with school officials, park and recreation staff facilitators, the Police Department School Task Force and other community organizations to resolve crisis situations within city schools.

Match-Two (M-2) Sponsors Program - The CRD is district sponsor for the Match-Two program, a state-wide activity to recruit persons from the community to become friends with and assist in the rehabilitation of individuals in the state penal system and local honor camps. Program objective is to alleviate feelings of alienation and rejection of prisoners, and to provide resources in the community to help in their plans to return to the outside world.

Volunteers from the community are matched on a one-to-one basis with inmates who also volunteer for the program. The outside volunteers, called "Sponsors", pledge to make regular visits to their match to try to establish a friendly relationship conducive to mutual growth and change. The goal of this program is to reduce crime and recidivism.

The Match-2 sponsor's meeting - open to the public - is held the second Tuesday of each month in the department conference room.

Educational Workshops - A series of public education programs are moderated by department personnel to increase citizen awareness of, and participation in, the operation and improvement of the law and justice system. This is done through use of experts representing all areas of the law and justice system through presentations, discussions, and rap sessions.

Typical areas of interest include: arrest procedure - rights and rsponsibilities; juvenile law; juvenile court; crime prevention; courts; district attorney's office; immigration services; probation; criminal defense rights; civil law subjects; and police and community relations complaint procedures and investigations.

Speakers' Bureau - A speakers' bureau provides speakers expert in all areas of the law and justice system for public gatherings.

To secure a speaker, write or call the CRD office giving your name, address, phone number, and the time and place of the program. The CRD will contact you and give you the name of the speaker with a brief sketch of his background.

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