



# Fact Sheet

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## Critical Response for Technical Assistance

Being able to provide technical assistance that is flexible to the changing and varied needs of law enforcement agencies all across the United States is paramount to the Office of Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS Office). As a result, the Critical Response for Technical Assistance program was designed to provide targeted technical assistance to law enforcement agencies dealing with high-profile events, major incidents, or sensitive issues of varying need. While the challenges faced by law enforcement agencies may differ drastically from one jurisdiction to the next, if left unresolved they can create tension and stress for the law enforcement agency, its officers, and the community they serve.

**"We requested and welcomed this assessment from the [U.S.] Department of Justice COPS Office. The numerous recommendations they have made will only help us improve our department and the proud service we provide to our community."**

Shelley Zimmerman, Chief, San Diego Police Department

The purpose of this initiative is to provide technical assistance to law enforcement agencies dealing with specific issues in their department and community. The variety and intensity of technical assistance that could be provided can vary drastically based on the severity of the issue. Services ranging from on- and off-site expert assistance, peer-to-peer research and management support,

and facilitation of information-sharing opportunities are among the many tools that can be leveraged to address issues with national implications. Nonetheless, any assistance provided through the Critical Response program embraces community policing as a core fundamental philosophy for law enforcement agencies engaging their communities. While each site has a specific goal based on the needs of the individual law enforcement agency, there are overarching program goals consistent with every site. Critical Response has the following aims:

- Institutionalize and operationalize community policing as a core fundamental philosophy for law enforcement agencies engaging their communities.
- Build community trust through positive community perception of law enforcement legitimacy and fairness.

Once a site has been selected to receive technical assistance through Critical Response, the law enforcement agency and the COPS Office identify the appropriate response and objectives of the assistance. Once the suitable form of technical assistance is determined, the COPS Office will release a report with findings and recommendations that may consist of data analysis and interviews with personnel at various levels in the law enforcement agency, municipal officials, and other community stakeholders on the topic identified. All reports are made public and shared with stakeholders. Critical Response for Technical Assistance does not include post-report monitoring.