

## **Division of Student Affairs and Department of Public Safety Student-Centered Policing**

### **Memorandum of Understanding**

**Effective Date: August 28, 2023**

#### **Purpose**

The University of Maryland's Task Force on Public Safety and Community Policing Report, released in November 2021, included the following recommendation:

*"Develop a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the Division of Student Affairs (DSA) and the Department of Public Safety (DPS) to develop a student-centered approach to policing."*

The purpose of this MOU is to document a framework for on-going, intentional collaboration between the Division of Student Affairs and the Department of Public Safety to further develop UMD's student-centered approach to policing that will promote a safe and inclusive campus environment for all students, faculty, and staff, and to ensure all stakeholders are aware of their respective responsibilities in maintaining safety within our campus community.

#### **Our Missions**

The *Department of Public Safety's* mission is to:

*"Serve the university community, to protect life and property, and to uphold the law, all within a supportive, respectful and inclusive environment. Our values include professionalism, impartiality, empathy, and accountability. We are committed to the concept of community policing and work collaboratively to nurture partnerships, strengthen trust, and enrich quality of life."*

In this effort, police work with the community is a cooperative community policing effort to prevent crime from occurring and to respond and provide assistance to victims once crime has occurred.

The *Division of Student Affairs'* mission reads:

*"We are an inclusive community of care where every student can realize their full potential. Our intentional use of resources creates environments that support and enhance student learning and growth, engagement, belonging and health and well-being."*

The *University of Maryland's* Mission Statement reads, in part,

*"The mission of the University of Maryland, College Park is to provide excellent teaching, research, and service. The University educates students and advances knowledge in areas of importance to the State, the nation, and the world."*

Collectively, DPS and DSA teams work collaboratively to ensure that every individual at Maryland can thrive in an environment that is safe and where every individual can belong.

#### **Our Shared Guiding Principles**

- Physical and emotional safety and well-being
- Communication
- Engagement
- Outreach
- Inclusion
- Equity & fairness
- Collaboration

- Student-centered
- Community-centered
- Complexity
- Grace and understanding
- Safety requires trust and partnership

### **Communication and Collaboration Structures**

DPS and DSA have established a wide range of systems and programs to facilitate open communication, on-going training, and regular outreach and engagement efforts to ensure UMD Police officers are embedded into our campus community and that our students, faculty, and staff are aware of the responsibilities of the police and the responsibilities of each other regarding keeping our campus safe. These structures include:

1. SGA-DPS Student Advisory Council (which includes representatives from SGA and RHA)
2. DPS-Resident Life Leadership Coordination Team
3. City Multi Agency Service Team (CMAST)
4. Chief of Police (or designee) regularly serve on panels at RHA Town Hall meetings each semester
5. Ongoing, day-to-day collaboration between leaders at all-levels in DSA and DPS
6. DPS Diversity Equity and Inclusion (DEI) Training and Free Expression Training
7. Annual DPS / Resident Life Resident Assistant Training
8. Behavior Evaluation and Threat Assessment (BETA) Team
9. Emergency Psychiatric (EP) Service Support Team
10. City Multi Agency Service Team (CMAST) "Knock and Talk" Program

### **Examples of Successful Student-Oriented Policing at UMD**

- Chief of Police meets regularly with SGA & RHA and has provided his direct phone number to student leaders
- When supporting student events, UMD Police have moved away from stationing uniformed officers at events to occasional "stop by" of uniformed officers with DSA staff, primarily present at events
- Collaboration with the InterFraternity Council (IFC) in establishing reasonable safety measures at tailgating events
- The extension of concurrent jurisdiction has been helpful in providing a more student-centered approach to policing in the City of College Park
- UMD Police attend every student and parent/family orientation session
- Establishing a new method of transporting students who are experiencing mental health crises that would include a counselor. In collaboration with DPS, and the UHC, the Counseling Center is working on three important projects:
  - **MHEART team:** The Counseling Center is currently in the process of hiring a *Mental Health Emergency Assessment and Response and Team* (MHEART), which will be composed of four clinicians who will provide after hours and weekend coverage. These clinicians will respond to mental health emergencies occurring on and off campus along with the police and will take the lead in the emergency response whenever appropriate.
  - **Mental Health Emergency Transport:** We have purchased one minivan, which is being outfitted to ensure patient and driver safety. Going forward, this van will be used to transport patients experiencing mental health emergencies to emergency rooms whenever appropriate (student is cooperative and willing to go and is not at imminent risk, for example, they swallowed pills or cut arms with intent to die, etc., which would require an ambulance transport).
  - **Memorandum of Understanding (MOUs) with Hospitals:** We are working on developing MOUs with area hospitals, which would allow for a smooth, efficient, and lower stress

Emergency Room (ER) experience for our students. In addition, the MOUs will also include the option of direct in-patient admission (bypass ER) whenever possible and appropriate.

- Partnership between DSA and DPS to ensure that first amendment freedoms are protected through training of campus event monitors and venue managers.

### **Our Agreements**

A community-centered and student-centered approach to policing focuses on creating a safe, inclusive, and supportive environment for all students, faculty and staff. It is an approach that emphasizes and values collaboration, communication, education, and student, community member and officer well-being as its top priorities. It recognizes the complexity involved in response, follow-up and investigation of challenging situations in our community and places a premium on partnership and transparency.

To foster a more comprehensive and strategic approach to community-oriented policing, both agencies agree to identify additional opportunities for collaboration and student engagement that should include, at minimum:

1. An annual meeting between senior leaders in DSA and DPS to identify areas for improvement and establish annual goals for our collaboration.
2. An annual meeting between the DSA Leadership Team (DSA senior leadership and all department directors) and DPS leaders to review mutual expectations of our units and identify emerging problems to be addressed.
3. Resident Life and DPS will collaborate on a new initiative where a UMD Police officer will serve as a liaison with each residence hall community. The program is expected to launch in August 2023.
4. Development of educational materials and means of distribution (e.g. website, email campaign, flyers) that will help students understand the vital role that DPS plays in the safety and security of the UMD community and educates them on ways to engage positively with officers in our police department.
5. Establish a cross-functional working group to focus on increasing communication and understanding between DPS and historically marginalized student communities by creating positive engagement opportunities and channels for providing feedback.
6. Consider the use of restorative practices as a way to facilitate difficult conversations between students, student leaders and UMD Police officers between students, student leaders and DPS police officers in follow up to incidents.