



**San Diego County Sheriff**

**Training Bulletin**

**William D. Gore, Sheriff**

**September, 2019**



### **THE HOMELESS ASSISTANCE RESOURCE TEAM (HART)**

#### **Background:**

The Homeless Assistance Resource Team (HART) was created in June 2019 to help address the issues arising from homelessness in the unincorporated areas of the county. HART is currently comprised of two deputies, a Sergeant, and a Lieutenant.

#### **Operations:**

Deputies assigned to HART conduct outreach operations in the unincorporated areas of the county with community partners including McAlister, HHSA, PERT, and nursing staff who provide health screenings. They also provide Hepatitis A and flu vaccinations. HART deputies enable outreach workers to go to encampments that they may not know about or they may not feel safe going to on their own. For example, those encampments located in drainage tunnels, wooded areas, or abandoned houses/buildings. The goal of these operations is to connect homeless individuals with outreach workers to help secure them housing and resources that will enable them to enhance their lives. Ultimately, we hope this will reduce citizen complaints and calls for service for patrol.

HART also partners with Department of Public Works and Clean Harbors to conduct sanitation and cleanup operations of encampment sites in the unincorporated areas of the county. During these operations, Department of Public Works posts 72-hour "Notice to Vacate" signs at encampment sites which require individuals to remove their personal property from the area. These sites have been identified through citizen complaints and present a public health and safety hazard to the community. At the end of the 72-hour period, deputies provide security for the sanitation crews while the sites are cleaned.

In addition to accompanying outreach workers in the field, the HART deputies help coordinate events at various community centers around the county. During these events, deputies assist with transporting homeless individuals to a central location to meet with outreach workers. These operations are similar to events that have been organized by various COPPS and CST units around the county.

Currently, HART deputies are conducting outreach operations only in the unincorporated areas of the county. Those COPPS/CST units which have conducted coordinated operations at a station level with outreach agencies in the past may continue to do so. The HART deputies will begin to take over those responsibilities on a case-by-case basis depending on their availability. When the Homeless Assistance Outreach Team is fully staffed in the future, it should be able to relieve those stations, entirely, of the active outreach operations. Additionally, stations receiving transient-related complaints or calls for service will need to continue to handle those calls at the station-level until staffing is expanded. Although HART is only conducting outreach operations in unincorporated areas of the county, those who work in contract cities are welcomed to reach out to the HART team for guidance and planning of outreach operations in their respective cities.

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The information in this Training Bulletin was provided by Sergeant Kenneth Lawrence and edited for distribution by Corporal Brent Longfellow at the In-Service Training Unit. If you have expertise in a particular subject and would like to write a training bulletin, please contact Corporal Brent Longfellow at In-Service Training, [REDACTED]  
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