



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:
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PRESS RELEASE:

Supervisor Doug Chaffee, City of Fullerton, and Fullerton Police Department Announce a Pilot Police Social Worker Program

Fullerton, CA. – Recognizing the need for a greater comprehensive approach to public safety, [Supervisor Chaffee has partnered with the City of Fullerton and the Fullerton Police Department to launch the transformative Fullerton Police Department Social Worker Program.](#) This two-year pilot Program will provide services on calls involving mental health crises, domestic violence or juvenile delinquency and enhance community safety through improving emergency response times.

Supervisor Chaffee provided \$1,000,000 in Fourth District Discretionary Grants to the City of Fullerton, which will fund the hiring of two licensed social workers (LCSW) and the purchase of their equipment and two unmarked police vehicles.

“This first-of-its-kind model in Orange County will dispatch licensed clinical social workers employed by the Fullerton Police Department into the field as a shift in focus from incarceration to treatment, especially in the case of mental health crises,” said Supervisor Chaffee. “The approach aims to reduce the strain on law enforcement resources, while fostering positive community relationships and improving outcomes for those in need. I’m pleased to provide this program in Fullerton, which is my hometown.”

The Fullerton Police Department Social Worker Program represents a change in how cities approach policing in the community. By dispatching social workers alongside or in lieu of police officers, the Program ensures that individuals in crisis receive the most appropriate and effective assistance, including crisis response, mediation and referrals to healthcare providers, providing treatment plans and case follow-ups. Additionally, the social workers will employ de-escalation techniques to resolve conflicts peacefully.

“With the one million dollars allocated to the City of Fullerton by the County of Orange, procured specifically for Supervisor Doug Chaffee's pilot program of utilizing the defined expertise of social workers to provide engagement, residents and businesses in the City of Fullerton will be provided another tool for law enforcement,” said Mayor Fred Jung. “And I want to thank Supervisor Chaffee and the Board of the Supervisors for their forward-thinking initiative.”

“We appreciate the opportunity to collaborate with the Supervisor Chaffee in bringing a much-needed resource to our community,” said Fullerton Police Chief Robert Dunn. “Data will be collected during the Program, and we hope the metrics will show that this model is successful and can be expanded or replicated in other cities.”

The Program follows Supervisor Chaffee’s efforts [to bolster the public health care workforce in Orange County](#) by creating a Master of Social Work (MSW) Stipend Program for MSW students at Cal State Fullerton.

The Orange County Board of Supervisors and Fullerton City Council both unanimously approved the Program on Tuesday, July 18, 2023.

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Orange County Supervisor [Doug Chaffee](#) represents the [Fourth District](#), which includes the Cities of Brea, Buena Park, Fullerton, La Habra, Placentia, Stanton, portions of Anaheim, and unincorporated communities.

The City of Fullerton is a full-service City founded in 1887 and located in North Orange County. The City is comprised of a population of over 140,000 citizens and is renowned for its unique mix of residential, commercial, industrial, and cultural environment. Known as the "Education Community," Fullerton is home to award-winning elementary and secondary school systems, plus five universities and colleges.