

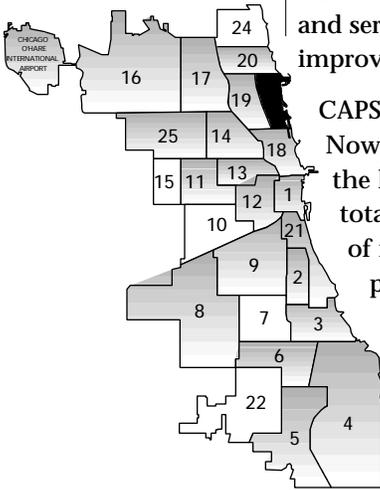


Fact Sheet

City of Chicago / Department of Police • Richard M. Daley, Mayor • Matt L. Rodriguez, Superintendent

The Chicago Alternative Policing Strategy (CAPS)

What is CAPS?



The Chicago Alternative Policing Strategy (CAPS) is a community-oriented philosophy of policing and crime prevention. With CAPS, the police, the community, and other government agencies and service providers work together to identify and solve problems of crime and disorder and to improve the quality of life in all of Chicago's neighborhoods.

CAPS officially began in April 1993 on a prototype basis in five of Chicago's 25 police districts. Now, the strategy has been expanded Citywide. An important part of CAPS expansion has been the hiring, training, and deployment of new police officers. In recent years, the Department's total sworn strength has grown by nearly 1,000, with each police district receiving an infusion of new police officers for patrol duty in the neighborhoods. Other changes have also taken place as a result of CAPS: officers are now part of teams assigned to consistent beats; regular "beat community meetings" are being held in all districts; new technology is helping police and community better analyze crime problems; and new ways of handling non-emergency calls for service are being implemented.

The five prototype districts—Englewood (7th), Marquette (10th), Austin (15th), Morgan Park (22nd), and Rogers Park (24th)—continue to serve as a laboratory for testing new ideas and improving the CAPS model.

Key Features of CAPS

Crime Control and Prevention. CAPS emphasizes both crime control *and* crime prevention. Vigorous and impartial enforcement of the law, rapid response to serious crimes and life-threatening emergencies, and proactive problem solving with the community are the foundations of the City's policing strategy.

Beat Integrity. At the patrol level, CAPS establishes teams of beat and rapid response officers in each police district. Beat officers work the same beat on the same watch each day so they can get to know the beat's residents, its chronic crime problems, and the best strategies and resources for solving those problems. Beat integrity—keeping beat officers on their beat—is achieved through a new police dispatch policy. Rapid response officers are available to answer many of the urgent calls in the district, so beat officers have more time and flexibility to work with residents in addressing longer-range problems.

Community Involvement. The community is an active partner in CAPS. Each police district has a District Advisory Committee that helps identify key issues and set broad priorities. Subcommittees tackle issues as diverse as youth crime, court advocacy, services for senior citizens, and economic development. Community groups, block clubs, and individual residents meet regularly with their beat officers and other police personnel to discuss neighborhood problems and priorities, and strategies for addressing them.

Proactive Problem Solving. Beat and rapid response officers, as well as gang and tactical officers in the districts, are being trained to work together on solving problems of crime and neighborhood disorder, not just reacting to their symptoms. Beat profiles—comprehensive records of the characteristics and chronic problems on beats and the resources available to ad-

Key Features (cont.)

dress those problems—help the police and the community to prioritize problems, identify strategies, and plan missions. Newly created beat plans document the problem-solving process.

Computerized Crime Analysis. The collection and analysis of data at the beat level support neighborhood problem solving. Each district has installed a local area network of advanced computer workstations and a crime analysis system called ICAM (Information Collection for Automated Mapping). This new technology allows beat officers and other police personnel to analyze and map crime hot spots, to track other neighborhood problems, and to share this information with the community.

Support from Other Agencies. Recognizing that graffiti, abandoned vehicles and buildings, malfunctioning street lights, and other signs of neighborhood disorder have an adverse effect on crime levels, Mayor Richard M. Daley has made CAPS a priority of all City agencies, not just the Police Department. Special procedures for requesting City services that impact crime problems have been established in all police districts. Other service providers are also being enlisted to help solve neighborhood problems.

Training. The Police Department is making a significant investment in training police personnel and the community in the CAPS philosophy and in problem solving. All members of the Department—sworn and civilian—are receiving some level of CAPS training, ranging from orientation to advanced problem-solving strategies. Intensive training on problem solving and community partnerships is being provided to district patrol officers and their supervisors. Problem-solving training for community members on their beats, is also being provided through the Joint Community-Policing Training project.

Communication and Marketing. Communicating the CAPS philosophy to members of the Police Department and to the community—and getting their feedback and ideas for improvement—are fundamental to the strategy. Ongoing communication includes newsletters, roll-call training, a cable TV program, a home page on the World Wide Web, and various brochures and videos. Feedback is collected through personal interviews, focus groups, surveys, and suggestion forms.

Evaluation. CAPS is undergoing the most thorough evaluation of any community policing initiative in the country. A consortium of four major Chicago-area universities (Northwestern, DePaul, Loyola, and University of Illinois at Chicago) is conducting a multi-year evaluation of the process and results of CAPS. Initial evaluation reports have focused on experiences in the prototype districts. Future reports will measure Citywide impact.

Strategic Planning and Organizational Change. To address the broad policy and organizational issues that are inherent in any new policing philosophy, the Department has initiated a broad strategic planning effort that includes strong representation from the community. The organizational changes that will be needed to fully implement the strategy are being identified, and specific action plans are under development.

For More Information

The Co-Project Managers for CAPS are Charles H. Ramsey, Deputy Superintendent of the Bureau of Staff Services, and Barbara B. McDonald, Director of Research and Development.

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Or visit the CAPS home page at <http://www.ci.chi.il.us/CommunityPolicing>