

DPA's 1st Quarter 2018 Recommendations to Improve Services for Deaf and Hard of Hearing Individuals

A. Background

In November 2017, the Department on Police Accountability brought together a group of community stakeholders including deaf individuals to draft a Department General Order (DGO) on police protocols for interacting with Deaf and Hard of Hearing individuals. The DPA initiated this project because of DPA complaint investigations involving deaf complainants in addition to concerns about raised within the Language Access Working Group about deaf domestic violence survivors receiving inadequate services.

Based on best practice research, the working group has drafted a proposed DGO, created an officer reference guide to use during traffic stops, and identified different technologies to assist SFPD officers at the station and in the field to communicate with deaf and hard of hearing individuals. Representatives from SFPD have attended the working group and contributed to the proposed DGO and officer reference guide.

In May 2018, the DPA and Commander David Lazar met with Chief William Scott to brief him on the progress of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing working group, to request authorization for funding for videoconferencing through officers' cell phones for America Sign Language interpreters and an officer training video to accompany the roll-out of the Department General Order.

The Deaf and Hard of Hearing Working Group continues to meet monthly and is ready to commence work on drafting officer training scenarios. In light of September being National Deaf Awareness month, the DPA suggests that adoption of the DGO and roll-out of the training occur in September.

B. DPA Recommendations

1. Calendar the Proposed Deaf and Hard of Hearing DGO for Police Commission review and action in September preceded by the completion of SFPD's concurrence by the end of July.
2. Similar to the DGO 5.20 officer training video that the DPA and Language Access Working Group produced with SFPD that used paid actors and scenarios written by

the Working Group, SFPD work with the Deaf and Hard of Hearing working group to produce a similar officer training video.

3. That SFPD immediately provide the Language Line application on all officers' department issued cell phones to provide American Sign Language videoconferencing and spoken interpreters, including a schedule and any training for uploading the apps to all phones, and a Department Bulletin announcing Language Line ASL and spoken language service on officers' phones.