



City of San Antonio

Legislation Details (With Text)

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Type: Staff Briefing - Without Ordinance

In control: Public Safety Committee

On agenda: 5/22/2019

Title: Briefing and Possible action on the update of the implementation of a cite and release policy for eligible offenses [María Villagómez, Deputy City Manager; William McManus, Chief of Police]

Sponsors:

Indexes:

Code sections:

Attachments: 1. Staff Presentation - Cite and Release

Date	Ver.	Action By	Action	Result
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DEPARTMENT: Police Department

DEPARTMENT HEAD: William P. McManus, Chief of Police

COUNCIL DISTRICTS IMPACTED: City Wide

SUBJECT:

Update - Cite and Release Policy

SUMMARY:

In November 2018, the San Antonio Police Department met with District Attorney Joe Gonzales to discuss the possible implementation of a cite and release policy for Bexar County residents that commit eligible misdemeanor offenses. Over the last several months, those discussions have culminated in the development of a cite and release policy that is scheduled to begin in the early summer of 2019. The SAPD previously briefed the Public Safety Committee on November and December 2018 as well as City Council during the February 13, 2019 B Session to provide an overview of the scope, timeline and anticipated benefits of the policy and the actions taken by the SAPD to prepare for the implementation of the policy.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

Policy Benefits

The primary benefit of the proposed cite and release policy is the significant savings in officer time that will be realized as a result of enhanced officer discretion to cite for eligible offenses as opposed to making a custodial arrest. Since 2014, the SAPD has made a total of 30,559 arrests for offenses eligible for inclusion as part of the proposed cite and release policy which translates to approximately 45,839 hours of officer time dedicated to arrests for minor offenses over the last five years.

Implementation of a cite and release program will also benefit young offenders by removing the stigma of custodial arrest and providing resources available through Bexar County diversion programs that will minimize the likelihood of the offender engaging in further illegal activity.

Implementation

District Attorney Joe Gonzales has identified early summer 2019 as the anticipated start date for the cite and release policy. Since January 2019, the SAPD has been working closely with the District Attorney's Office to confirm program details to include identification of eligible offenses, reporting instructions for cited individuals and the development of performance metrics to be compiled by Bexar County to evaluate program results. The Department has also been developing training, revising existing policies and installing equipment to ensure the Department is prepared for the implementation of the policy as outlined below:

- **Property Box Installation** - In March 2019, secure property boxes and computers were installed at each substation to allow officers that confiscate illegal substances to quickly turn in evidence and return to duty
- **Revised Citation Books** - The Department has been working in coordination with the District Attorney's Office to develop revised citation books. An order for 2,000 citation books was made on May 14, 2019. Books will be delivered to the Department in approximately six weeks.
- **Training** - The Department has developed training to provide officers with information on the cite and release process and an overview of eligible offenses. The training video is being finalized to include reporting instructions being developed by Bexar County. The video will be shown to all officers during roll call.
- **General Manual Updates** - Revisions to the policy authorizing officers to utilize discretion in arrests associated with misdemeanor offenses has been completed and is under final review.

Resolution of Support

The City Attorney's Office is currently drafting a resolution for Public Safety Committee review and consideration on May 22, 2019. It reaffirms the City's support for the implementation of a cite and release policy which will result in significant savings in officer time and will allow persons charged with minor, nonviolent offenses to return to their daily duties and responsibilities that keep them productive members of our community.

RECOMMENDATION:

This briefing is for information purposes only.

