



NEWS RELEASE

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Lubbock Police Department Partners with Business Community to Announce the Creation of Homeless Outreach Team

LUBBOCK, Texas — The Lubbock Police Department announced today the creation of the Homeless Outreach Team to help better address the needs of displaced individuals in downtown as well as the businesses operating there. Though, this effort will ultimately extend across the city. With the support of Lubbock Chamber of Commerce and other allied organizations, the objectives of the new team will be to maintain public safety for all Lubbock residents and to seek lasting solutions for the homeless.

“This is a win-win situation for everybody,” said Beth Bridges, Chairwoman of the Lubbock Chamber. “The new team will help those who need it most and make sure downtown remains a safe place to do business all while saving tax payers’ dollars.”

Responsible for responding to all 911 calls regarding homeless individuals or calls for service, the Homeless Outreach Team will work to keep them out of jail, when possible, by diverting them to services or shelters.

The new team is comprised of Sergeant Eric Quijada, Corporal Steven Bergen and Corporal Korie Archambault who are dedicated to helping the homeless find success. Their duties could range from directing those individuals to agencies that can help address mental health disorders or substance abuse issues when needed, to assisting in resume building or serving as a reference for a job.

“It makes no difference who you are or what your financial status is,” said Police Chief Greg Stevens. “If you need the assistance of the Lubbock Police Department, we will do everything in our power to help.”

As of January 29, 2015, there were more than 350 homeless individuals living in the Lubbock area, according to the point-in-time count conducted by the South Plains Homeless Consortium. An estimated 26 percent of those identified had been continuously homeless for more than one year, making them chronically homeless based on the Department of Housing and Urban Development’s definition.



“Cities across the country have recognized the critical role of local law enforcement in the effort to end homelessness. The Homeless Outreach Team brings an important partnership in homeless services to our community,” said Chad Wheeler, president of the South Plains Homeless Consortium.

The Lubbock Police Department has involved the consortium in its planning activities.

“Homelessness is not a problem unique to Lubbock, but as the city grows, so does the problem,” Chamber Chairwoman Beth Bridges said. “I applaud the Lubbock Police Department for taking a proactive approach in ensuring public safety for all and making way for further economic development.”

The Lubbock Chamber of Commerce represents over 2,000 businesses and over 79,000 employees on the South Plains which accounts for over \$2 billion in annual household earnings in Lubbock and West Texas. The Chamber twice earned the distinguished 5-Star Accreditation from the U.S. Chamber of Commerce and is a two-time Chamber of the Year recognized by the Association of Chamber of Commerce Executives.

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