



**CITY OF SUISUN CITY
POLICE DEPARTMENT**

**701 Civic Center Blvd.
Suisun City, California 94585**

Aaron Roth
Chief of Police

September 1, 2021

2020 – 2021 Solano County Grand Jury

Cheryl Clower, Administrative Assistant
Solano County Grand Jury
California Superior Court
Office: 707-435-2575
Fax: 707-435-2566

RE: Written Response to Grand Jury Report

Dear Ms. Clower:

I am in receipt of the Grand Jury Report from the Solano County Grand Jury for 2020-2021 titled: **Does Bias Infiltrate Solano County Law Enforcement?** I have attached a written response to this report as required.

If you need anything further from me, please call me at (707)421-7383 or email me at aroth@suisun.com.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "A. Roth".

Aaron Roth
Chief of Police

Regarding Grand Jury Report from the Solano County Grand Jury for 2020-2021 titled: **Does Bias Infiltrate Solano County Law Enforcement?**

RESPONSE TO FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS:

FINDING 1 – The Solano County Civil Grand Jury found that local law enforcement agencies comply with the statutory requirements when providing training. However, bias training is only required and conducted every five years. Local law enforcement administrations agreed there is too much time between training sessions.

Respondent agrees with finding.

RECOMMENDATION 1 – County law enforcement agencies adopt a more frequent schedule of diversity and bias training over and above the current five-year requirement.

Recommendation has been implemented. – The Suisun City Policy Department currently includes diversity and bias training minimally every two years. Additionally, the department takes advantage of training provided by community stakeholders in these areas when available.

FINDING 2 – Most law enforcement administrations identified lack of adequate funding as an impairment to providing additional and/or more frequent training.

Respondent agrees with finding.

RECOMMENDATION 2a— Law enforcement administrations seek increased funding for diversity and bias training.

Recommendation has been implemented. – The Suisun City Police Department recently requested additional training funding be adopted by the Suisun City Council during the 2021-2022 Budget. The Council approved more funding that will be used for both POST mandated training and additional trainings in the area of racial bias and de-escalation training.

RECOMMENDATION 2b— Collaborate with other local law enforcement agencies in providing diversity and bias training.

Recommendation has been implemented. - The Suisun City Police Department actively collaborates with other law enforcement agencies in Solano County. Additionally, the department is a member of the Napa Solano Law Enforcement Training Manager’s Association where law enforcement agencies from both Napa and Solano County discuss training needs and opportunities and collaborate on ways to provide those trainings to all participating departments.

FINDING 3 -More under-represented people need to be represented in decision making roles.

Respondent agrees with finding.

RECOMMENDATION 1—Law enforcement agencies promote more under-represented people to decision making positions.

Recommendation has been implemented. - The Suisun City Police Department currently employs a very diverse group of people. In addition to the front-line staff diversity, the entire current supervisory staff are either female, or come from a diverse and under-represented ethnic background. Within the department's command staff, two of the four managers, including the Chief, are from an under-represented population. Additionally, a third manager is female. In all, Suisun City Police Department celebrates its diversity and is constantly striving to hire individuals that are representative of our community.

FINDING 4 – California Penal Code section 13651(a) states: “Every police department, sheriff’s office, or other entity that employs peace officers shall review the job description that is used in the recruitment and hiring of those peace officers and shall make changes that emphasize community-based policing, familiarization between law enforcement and community residents, and collaborative problem solving, while de-emphasizing the paramilitary aspects of the job.” All administrators mentioned the general population’s lack of trust of law enforcement officers.

Respondent agrees with finding.

RECOMMENDATION 4a – Ensure that training de-emphasizes a paramilitary approach to policing.

Recommendation has been implemented. – As stated in the report, the Suisun City Police Department’s model of policing is based on the community policing model. Our focus is to engage the community to determine the best approach to ensure our entire community feels included and their concerns are heard.

RECOMMENDATION 4b – Use a collaborative approach with community organizations to problem solve.

Recommendation has been implemented. - The Suisun City Police Department is an active member of our community and engages several neighborhood groups in the Neighborhood Watch Program. We have also engaged our community organizations to help us problem solve and collaborate on issues of concern for those that reside and visit Suisun City.

FINDING 5 – For some Law enforcement agencies employee turnover is an issue.

Respondent agrees with finding.

RECOMMENDATION 5a – Suisun City increase the length of its employment contract to five years.

Recommendation will not be implemented. – Suisun City has historically had retention issues primarily due to the pay disparity when compared with other local police agencies. In order to ensure we are able to recruit desirable and well-qualified applicants, the Suisun City Police Department does not utilize employment contracts for entry level, or unionized employees. Doing so could create a hurdle with regard to attracting applicants into the profession, and similar contracts have been proven to be easily challenged in civil court with regard to the legality of enforcing such contracts. The Suisun City Police Department is currently looking at ways to enhance employee retention through employee development to be able to offer more opportunity to employees who remain employed with the city.

RECOMMENDATION 5b – Law enforcement agencies find ways to achieve pay equity in the county to limit turn over in smaller communities.

Recommendation requires further analysis with temporary enhancements put into place. - The Suisun City, City Council recently approved temporary enhanced pay to public safety employees. This pay enhancement brings employees of the Suisun City Police Department closer to equity in pay and benefits when compared to other Solano County law enforcement agencies.

FINDING 6 – There are reports from the Federal Bureau of Investigation that extremist groups are infiltrating law enforcement agencies. While local law enforcement agencies investigate applicants as part of the vetting process, they rely on employee and citizen complaints to identify current staff social media postings for extremist ideology.

Respondent disagrees partially with finding as it relates to the Suisun City Police Department and other local agencies.

RECOMMENDATION 6a—Solano County law enforcement agencies monitor social media postings by current staff for extremist content.

Recommendation will not be implemented. – As with other law enforcement agencies in Solano County, all applicants and employees of the Suisun City Police Department undergo a rigorous screening process and background check of both their personal and professional activities. Any indication of membership, participation, or affiliation with the activities of extremist associations would immediately disqualify applicants from employment and possibly result in termination of active employees. Currently, the Suisun City Police Department does not have the resources to monitor social media accounts of current staff members.

RECOMMENDATION 6b— Law enforcement agency administrations keep up with the technology that their employees are using.

Recommendation has been implemented. - The Suisun City Police Department utilizes new technology and evaluates how it is used by our employees on a regular basis.

RECOMMENDATION 6c— Law enforcement agency administrations research and implement technology which assists in monitoring social media without violating first amendment rights.

Recommendation will not be implemented. - The Suisun City Police Department currently has policies in place that would prohibit any activity that might fracture the trust of our community. Any complaint made by a community member with regard to violations of policy or community trust will be thoroughly investigated.