



## SPD North Precinct Advisory Council

*Expanding Communication between the Police and Community*

NPAC Update

May 1, 2020

Compiled by Nancy Rauhauser, Secretary

Please share this information with your neighbors and neighborhood and business organizations.

Due to the coronavirus pandemic social distancing directive, *NPAC is not meeting again this month*. Instead, here are updates from each of our usual contributors. Thank you, contributors, for keeping us informed, and thank you for your continued service in public safety!

### **Precinct Update: Captain Eric Sano**

To all North Precinct residents, business owners and workers, I hope this report finds you all well during the City's COVID-19 pandemic response. In all of my years, I have never experienced anything like this (and I've been around almost 60 years!). We are truly in unprecedented times, with unprecedented and extraordinary mandates put upon all of us. Many of you may be feeling anxious and wondering if we'll ever get back to normal. Well, if there's one thing that has withstood the test of time, it has been the resilience of our great community members. We **will** get through this together. Even now, our State is leading the way in flattening the curve. Please continue to practice social distancing and strict personal hygiene as we forge on.

As I stated last month, the Seattle Police Department continues to patrol our streets and respond to calls as we have always done. While we are continuing to encourage our citizens to utilize our online reporting, CopLogic (<https://www.seattle.gov/police/need-help/online-reporting>), or telephone reporting to minimize face-to-face contact, that doesn't mean you are not to call 9-1-1 if you believe a crime is occurring, about to occur or has occurred. We are still responding to priority calls or other calls for service. We are still getting dispatched to calls all over the North Precinct.

Our new Community Police Team Sergeant is Cory Simmons, who started on April 1<sup>st</sup>. Sgt. Simmons has 21 years of experience with SPD, with the bulk of his time in Patrol in the West Precinct. He spent the last 5 years a supervisor on First Watch in Lincoln Sector. He was my choice to head CPT and I know he'll do a great job.

Speaking of the **Community Police Team (CPT)**, they continue to work their regular shifts and continue to do their regularly assigned duties. In addition, I have tasked them with keeping an eye on our various encampments and working with the Nav Team to mitigate many of the issues that are arising out of them. Please understand that, since the Governor's Stay-at-Home order, the City's response to homelessness, encampments and RV's has been amended. There is currently a hold on 72-hour parking complaints and camp removals have been suspended. In the

interim, we are working with the Human Services Department, Public Health and other City agencies to do some clean-up and mitigate health concerns as well as educating our various homeless communities on social distancing and hygiene.

CPT Officers are also continuing to monitor the situation at Ballard Commons Park, Lake City Mini Park and in the 8800 block of Nesbit Ave N., in particular, due to some of the criminality issues that are popping up.

Finally, the CPT Officers are also assigned, along with my bicycles, to monitor the modified park rules imposed by the Mayor.

Although the University Street Fair, Fremont Fair and Solstice Parade, has been canceled, we do not know the status of our other annual events (Greenwood Car show, July 4<sup>th</sup> Celebrations at Gasworks, Ballard Seafood Fest, etc.) When we receive updates from the Special Events Committee, we'll let you all know.

So, let's discuss crime since I know that's part of what we discuss at NPAC. After four months, we're down 12% in crime and my only plus category is auto thefts. **Just a reminder:** many of you may be at home and not driven your car in awhile. Please check to make sure it's still where you left it. Our officers have stopped many cars that later turned out to be unreported stolens.

So, during this last month that the Stay-at-Home order was imposed, the good news is that our calls for service are down almost 18% and our on-views (officer initiated activity) are up 24%! We are seeing a huge increase in Directed Patrols (+339%) and Premise Checks (+59%) as we have told our entire precinct personnel to focus on our businesses districts and businesses that are closed.

However, in the last 28-days, our calls for prowlers (+16%) and burglaries (+88%) are both up, despite a number of you being at home. This is also reflected in my actual reported burglaries for the past 28-days, which is at +66% (+138 since this time last year). Now, having said that, I've delved into this a little deeper. It seems that this number is inflated and isn't painting an accurate picture. Much of this has been a result of online reporting and telephone reporting, which have skewed our numbers. For example, let's say a suspect enters into a secure apartment building and steals a bunch of packages in the lobby. It used to be an officer would come out take a report and list one case number with multiple victims, under a common scheme or plan. Now, each victim is calling and reporting so it looks like we had six separate "burglaries" instead of one guy, entering a building and stealing six packages. Does that make sense? Same thing with a suspect entering a secure parking garage and hitting five cars. Now it's reported as five separate burglaries instead of one act with 5 victims.

**This is a reminder to you:** as the weather starts getting nicer, the inclination is to keep doors and windows open. Unless you can monitor those points of entry, don't do that! Also, for those of you that live in secure apartment buildings, be cognizant of people following you in. Unless you know, for a fact, that they live there...keep them out. We are having a number of package thefts from supposedly secure buildings, where the mailboxes are in the lobby area. Lastly, for those of you that have secure parking garages, be cognizant of people following you in there. We've had an uptick in car prowls in supposed secure parking garages. Stay vigilant, be smart but stay safe. If you see something suspicious, call 9-1-1 right away. We'll determine if someone belongs in a secure location or not.

Again, stay home unless you have to go to the doctor, the pharmacy or the store. Take care of one another and know we're going to get through this.

**Crime Prevention Coordinator: Mary Amberg**

Hello NPAC,

Thank you for the last five years. It has been amazing working with you and being a part of the Seattle Police Department family. I have currently left Seattle Police to head into the private sector. They do not know when my replacement will be hired but I am hoping it will be soon. In regards to the sock drive we are hoping that the Seattle Police Foundation will take it over but are still waiting to hear back on a confirmation. For any questions relating to Block Watch, Night Out, Personal Safety Trainings or general Crime Prevention Questions reach out to Sgt. Heidi.Tuttle@seattle.gov . Thank you so much for everything! Don't forget to have good situational awareness and to call 911 when you see something suspicious.

Thank you,

Mary Amberg  
Formally Seattle Police Department

**City Attorney's Office: Joseph Everett**

Court operation in our area remains extremely limited due to the COVID-19 outbreak. In the King County Superior Court, Jury trials in non-criminal cases are currently suspended per order of the Washington Supreme Court until after July 6. Operation of the Seattle Municipal Court, which primarily hears cases involving misdemeanors and gross misdemeanors, has been limited to cases involving defendants who are in-custody only. All other matters in the municipal court have been canceled until after July 31.

Despite these limitations, personnel at the City Attorney's Office have remained extremely busy while adjusting to an entirely new way of working. The Civil Division of the City Attorney's office has been actively involved in the City's COVID-19 response, providing legal advice to City policymakers and departments as they address new and ongoing challenges. The Criminal Division of the City Attorney's Office has been diligently managing in-custody misdemeanor prosecutions, filing new cases and appearing telephonically at hearings. While local jails have implemented booking guidelines that preclude most bookings for non-violent and public order offenses, City Prosecutors continue to seek bail in cases where the defendant is considered a threat to public safety, including domestic violence offenders, repeat DUI offenders, and random assaults of strangers. Victim Advocates continue to reach out to victims of domestic violence to provide information, resources and safety planning.

Additionally, the City Attorney's Office is partnering with the King County Department of Public Defense in the Co-LEAD program, which is a temporary adaptation of the Law Enforcement Assisted Diversion (LEAD) program. This program is using a temporary team of intensive outreach responders and case managers to place people identified by defense attorneys, prosecutors, jail staff, and judges as needing stabilization and support in the community.

Joe Everett continues to temporarily act as the City Attorney Liaison to SPD's North Precinct while Meagan Westphal is assigned to other duties. He can be contacted at

joseph.everett@seattle.gov or 206-733-9594.

## **King County Prosecuting Attorney's Office: Paul Sewell**

KCPAO's biggest news relates to the adjustments our office has had to make in order to continue serving you in the COVID era. Currently, the vast majority of hearings at the downtown courthouse are occurring electronically so that the parties can comply with social distancing guidelines. Similarly, the IT department of the KCPAO has worked diligently to provide our employees the ability to work remotely. As a result, while the courthouse itself is a fraction as busy as it used to be, all of us are still working hard to reach justice on our cases. In fact, since we began telecommuting on March 13, our office has rush filed 435 cases (cases that required immediate filing for a variety of different circumstances) into Superior Court. We have also spent our time reviewing and filing cases in our various backlogs, and now have over 600 cases scheduled to be filed on a rolling basis into Superior Court. We will certainly be busy once we all get back to work!

The timeline for when things will be back to normal is hard to nail down. On Wednesday afternoon, the Washington State Supreme Court ordered that all criminal jury trials are to be suspended until at least July 6, 2020. We're currently unsure about whether this order will be extended further, especially if social distancing becomes the new normal. After all, it would be extremely difficult to keep 12-14 empaneled jurors at least 6 feet away from each other at all times throughout the duration of a criminal trial.

That said, cases continue to be resolved in other ways. Our prosecutors continue to negotiate pleas and sentence in-custody offenders. Additionally, the diversionary programs that address the catalysts for a lot of the criminal conduct we see are still in effect.

I think I speak for everyone in the office when I say that I hope we return to normal soon. Representing the public in trial is one of the great joys of this job and I'm chomping at the bit to get back to it. Until then though, I hope you and yours continue to stay healthy and safe.

### **SPD Victim Support Team**

Here are tips from National Network to End Domestic Violence for helping a friend experiencing domestic abuse during COVID-19:

<https://static1.squarespace.com/static/51dc541ce4b03ebab8c5c88c/t/5e8e0ed3bcc74033b670a8d0/1586368212209/NNEDV+COVID+Tips+FINAL.pdf>

For more information or for questions, please visit the Victim Support Team website- [www.seattle.gov/police/vst](http://www.seattle.gov/police/vst)

1) Home is not safe for everyone. While national and local leaders have encouraged us to stay home to stop the spread of the pandemic, we also know that staying home may not be safe for many adults and children experiencing domestic violence. Community resources may be harder to access, and existing anxiety and fear will be compounded by this new global crisis.

2) Domestic violence thrives behind closed doors. Social distancing can magnify the feelings of isolation that domestic violence survivors may already be experiencing. This is an important time

to encourage friends, family and neighbors to reach out and support each other in new and creative ways. Reaching out to let someone know they are not alone, can be incredibly helpful to break isolation.

3) Help is available. The Seattle Police Department is working alongside local community and national partners to ensure victims have access to the support they need to keep their families safe. If you or someone you know is experiencing violence in your relationship, please call the The National Domestic Violence Hotline, (24 hours everyday), 800-799-7233 or 800-787-3224(TTY).

4) Call if you can, text if you can't. When attempting to call 911, an already dangerous situation can intensify if an abusive partner tries to interfere with the call, or the violence escalates. The King County Text-to-911 technology offers survivors of domestic violence an added resource when they are unable to call for help. People who use this service must remember to text their exact location and type of assistance they need in their first message, so the call taker can begin to dispatch law enforcement response immediately.

### **NPAC Business**

There will be no meeting in June. We will not meet again until social distancing is over. Since we never meet in July and August, September would be the earliest we'd resume meetings. Stay tuned for future plans. We hope to continue sending updates like this until we can meet again.

We normally hold nominations for officers in May and vote in June. Elections would be difficult right now, so we are suspending elections until further notice. Take care and stay healthy!