

## UC Community Safety Plan: Frequently Asked Questions

University of California President Michael V. Drake, M.D., issued the UC Community Safety Plan in August 2021 to provide a systemwide framework for improving safety on UC campuses and ensuring that all members of the UC community feel welcome, respected and protected from harm.

President Drake initiated the effort amid a national reckoning over bias in policing. Drawing on months of discussions with students, faculty, staff and administrators, the UC Community Safety Plan provides a structure for transforming UC's culture, policies and practices in several key ways.

For the first time, safety will be defined in its broadest sense. A new integrated response model will include wellness, mental health, basic needs and other social services. Crime prevention and law enforcement are facets of this holistic approach, and will be viewed — and assessed — through a service-oriented lens that prioritizes the needs and values of the UC community.

The plan also establishes new structures for accountability and continuous improvement, including the creation of UC-wide data dashboards to empower the UC community and inform change.

### **What is the goal of the UC Community Safety Plan?**

The UC Community Safety Plan aims to transform the University's culture, policies and practices to achieve a vision of safety in which all members of the University community feel welcomed, respected and protected from harm.

### **Why did the University of California develop this plan?**

The deaths of George Floyd, Breonna Taylor and so many others have made it abundantly clear that the nation's systems of policing and law enforcement have not safeguarded all people equally. For some members of the UC community, police and law enforcement are a source of great fear and distrust, and represent long-standing national issues of bias and racial and social inequity. The UC Community Safety Plan grew from a recognition of that fact and a commitment to ensuring that all members of the UC community feel safe and respected.

While no single plan can transform a culture or build trust and respect, this plan establishes mechanisms for empowering the UC community; developing a structure for continuous

improvement; and ensuring that the University's safety policies and practices reflect the needs and values of our diverse community.

### **How does this plan change UC's approach to public safety?**

The plan redefines safety in the broadest possible terms and creates a framework that is both service-oriented and community-centric. It establishes a holistic, integrated approach to safety that includes mental health professionals, social service providers, law enforcement, police accountability boards, and others dedicated to the well-being of the UC community. It also creates a robust foundation for ongoing community engagement and accountability, transparency and continuous refinement.

### **What are the biggest changes?**

The plan details numerous, specific actions that UC and its campuses will take, but they all fall within four overarching guidelines. Those are:

- **Community and Service-Driven Safety**  
Campus safety policies and practices must reflect the needs and values of our diverse community and be in service to them. This fundamental idea is reflected throughout the plan.
- **A Holistic, Inclusive and Tiered Response Model for Safety Services**  
Safety will be defined in its broadest terms, and include mental health, wellness, basic needs and bias/hate response as well as other services. Multidisciplinary teams, available 24/7, will triage behavioral health crises, conduct wellness checks and safely connect individuals to coordinated care, including health and social support resources.
- **Transparency and Continuous Improvement Through Data**  
Campuses will collect and publicly share uniform campus safety data on a UC-wide dashboard to empower the UC community and inform change.
- **Accountability and Independent Oversight**  
Police accountability boards on every campus will provide an independent complaint and investigation process to ensure that officers are acting consistently with rules, policies and the law.

### **How will this plan make UC campuses safer?**

One of the most important aspects of the plan is that it recognizes that everyone has a part to play in creating a safe and respectful community. Students, faculty and staff will be involved in nearly every facet of this plan to ensure that it meets our collective safety needs. Robust data

dashboards will provide another important tool for refining how UC delivers safety services. UC will have an unprecedented level of information available for refining and reallocating safety services as needed. The plan also sets new expectations, across UC, for how safety personnel are trained, including in issues of anti-racism, verbal de-escalation and non-violent crisis intervention; lawful use of force; cultural competency and more. These are just a few of the ways that the plan will improve safety. The plan, taken as a cohesive whole, provides a structure for a continuously evolving UC's culture of safety to prioritize the well-being of our entire community.

### **Who had input on the plan?**

The plan began with a UC-wide effort to listen to faculty, staff and students about what was working well and what wasn't. UC President Michael V. Drake, M.D., convened two UC-wide symposia on policing and campus safety in early 2021 to hear diverse points of view and gather input. The first symposium on February 2, 2021, brought together campus leaders, faculty, students, staff and national experts to discuss foundations and perspectives of campus safety. The second symposium on March 24, 2021, built upon the key themes that emerged from the earlier discussion, focusing on dimensions of change and exploration of areas of common ground. The plan also reflects feedback from campus safety task forces. Many emerging best practices developed by the campus task forces are reflected in this plan. A draft plan was shared with students, staff, faculty and administrators for additional feedback during a 30-day comment period in June. The plan is intended to be a living document that evolves based on ongoing feedback from members of the UC community.

### **What emerging best practices are reflected in the plan?**

The plan creates a cohesive whole from a wide array of emerging practices developed by UC campuses and other universities, municipalities and good governance organizations that were developed in response to the national call for improving safety and policing and eliminating the bias that has disproportionately affected communities of color. Here are a few specific examples:

#### **Community and Service-Driven Safety**

Faculty, students and staff are well-represented on UC campus safety task forces and other working groups related to safety. The UC Community Safety Plan calls for robust community involvement in campus and systemwide working groups to continue, and establishes new mechanisms for community feedback and engagement. This mirrors the evolving practices at Yale, Tufts and Portland State University, among others. The emerging consensus is that true campus safety requires the active participation of all members of the community, along with collaboration, transparency and a mutual understanding of shared values and goals.

### **Holistic, Tiered Response Model**

The holistic tiered response model is a new approach to safety that goes beyond crime prevention and law enforcement. UC Riverside is a good example. It recently reorganized several departments into a new division for Health, Well-Being and Safety with the goal of being more responsive to the full range of community needs. The new division includes UCPD, CARE (Campus Advocacy, Resources & Education), Basic Needs, and Student Health & Wellness Services, among others.

### **Transparency and Continuous Improvement Through Data**

Multiple municipal agencies post police and safety data on publicly accessible websites, including Oakland, San Francisco and Berkeley. Additionally, the California Department of Justice publicly publishes data. Tufts University is considering going beyond legal requirements to report additional incident data. No other University system in the country currently offers the level of detailed police and safety data that is called for in the UC Community Safety Plan. It will break new ground as a tool for empowering the UC community.

### **Accountability and Independent Oversight**

The plan calls for creation of new independent police accountability boards at every campus to ensure there is community oversight of a robust complaint and investigation process. UC Davis's Police Accountability Board, which was launched in 2014, provides a good model of how these boards can promote accountability, trust and communication between the campus community and UCPD. The PAB is composed of students, staff and faculty from the UC Davis and UC Davis Health community, and works to ensure that officers act consistently with rules, policies and the law.

### **Who will oversee plan implementation?**

Each campus will be responsible for local implementation. In addition, the plan includes the creation of a new role, the Systemwide Director of Campus Safety, to provide oversight and monitoring of campus safety and policing across the University, including timely implementation of the UC Community Safety Plan, and development, in partnership with the campuses, of a systemwide data dashboard. The Director of Campus Safety will also convene campuses on emerging best practices for the holistic tiered response model.

### **How quickly will the plan be implemented?**

Implementation begins immediately. Some action items, such as the formation of a working group to develop a UC-wide data dashboard, are expected to be completed in early fall 2021. More complex actions will take longer. Each of the action steps has an expected timetable for completion that is included in the plan. It's important to note that this plan envisions continuous

improvement and community-led engagement. To that end, the plan will be refined and iterated upon.

**Will students, faculty and staff continue to be involved?**

Yes. The plan calls for broad representation of the full UC community, including historically marginalized groups, on campus safety working groups and task forces, including those being convened at the systemwide level. The plan also calls for broad representation on new independent police accountability boards.

**Has UC allocated resources for implementation?**

UC President Drake is allocating funds for several key aspects of this plan, including development of a UC-wide data dashboard. President Drake has also authorized the creation of a new position, the Systemwide Director of Campus Safety, who will provide guidance to campuses on implementation of the plan. The UC Office of the President will also provide centralized assistance to support campuses receiving accreditation from the International Association of Campus Law Enforcement Administrators (IACLEA).

Campuses will fund other aspects of the plan, including staffing for the tiered response model, by reallocating existing resources.

**Will police still have a role on UC campuses?**

Yes. Our campuses and medical centers are complex environments with a wide array of safety and security needs. Campus police are part of our communities and are often UC alumni with deep ties to UC. They know our campuses well and often have strong relationships with the people who live, work and study here. That makes these safety teams far better positioned to respond to emergencies and investigate criminal activity than city or county law enforcement.

By continuing to have UC police on campus, we are also able to hold them accountable to both UC leadership and campus-based independent oversight boards. This gives UC the ability to ensure that campus police follow University policy and practices and demonstrate UC standards for respectful, courteous public service.

The plan calls for an evaluation and reconfiguration of the scope of police responsibilities and the creation of a working group to make recommendations on uniforms, armament and vehicle standards.

**How does this plan differ from the recommendations of the 2019 Universitywide Policing Task Force?**

Former UC President Janet Napolitano convened a task force to review how police complaints were handled; the training police received regarding use of force; and how to improve communications between campus communities and on-site police departments. It was a much narrower effort. The UC Community Safety Plan builds on that work but provides the blueprint for a wholesale re-envisioning of UC's safety practices.

**How, if at all, does this plan change the policies in the Gold Book?**

Systemwide police policies and procedures are housed in the "[Universitywide Police Policies and Administrative Procedures](#)" document, commonly referred to as "the Gold Book." Recently, four chapter revisions underwent systemwide review and were opened for public comment due to recent changes in state law or as a result of implementing the recommendations of UC-wide task forces.

The President has since directed that a new workgroup be formed to [standardize the Gold Book into UC's policy format](#). The workgroup will also review comments from the recent public review period, the new UC Community Safety Plan, and other relevant policies in order to produce a standard policy that will go out for campus review.