



# Community Assistance Program

Public Outreach Summary

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## Background

When you need help, where do you turn? The police? The fire department? Someone else? That is the question many Phoenix residents have when dealing with a crisis. Sometimes it's not clear what is the right place to call for help, especially when the issue involves someone having a mental health crisis or dealing with substance use.

That's where the City of Phoenix Community Assistance Program (CAP) comes in. CAP is the City's program to respond to mental and behavioral health issues that might otherwise be addressed by police or fire department personnel.

The Community Assistance Program was established in 1995 as an all-civilian group that includes five crisis response units with 17 full-time and more than 20 part-time positions. Managed by licensed civilian professionals in social work and counseling, the CAP received more than 4,000 crisis calls for service every year, responding 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

Community members, public safety responders and mental health professionals have all recognized the need for enhanced mental health and crisis response support in Phoenix. The goal of the CAP is to provide additional support to vulnerable communities including children and the elderly, individuals experiencing abuse, poverty and homelessness, residents with behavioral and mental health disorders, or people with alcohol and drug dependencies.

The Phoenix community has been challenged for many years to provide effective crisis response care to these individuals. Recent economic downturns and the societal impacts caused by COVID-19 have exacerbated unfavorable circumstances for many people and have increased the demand for mental health services.

In 2021, Phoenix City Council and Mayor Kate Gallego approved \$15 Million to help with the expansion of the CAP, to improve the response to behavior and mental health calls throughout the City of Phoenix. In November 2021 the City Council also approved the expansion of a contract with Gunn Communications Inc. (GCI) to implement a strategic outreach approach to gather public input and feedback to help shape the expansion of the CAP.

GCI worked side by side with CAP members to attend public events to spread the word about CAP and collect feedback surveys. The outreach process for this project began in February of 2022 and was completed by the end of April 2022. The result of this outreach is what follows.



Community Assistance Program counselors discuss the CAP program at the Melrose 7<sup>th</sup> Avenue Street Fair



Residents filling out the CAP survey at senior center community event

## Outreach

The study team attended more than 30 different community events within the City of Phoenix resulting in a total of 1,663 surveys. Below is the list of events that the outreach team attended.

February – 1 Event		
Date	Event	Location
2/26/2022	Emergency Rental Assistance	Deer Valley Community Center - 2001 W. Wahalla Lane
March – 9 Events		
Date	Event	Location
3/5/2022	Emergency Rental Assistance	South Mountain Community Center, 212 E. Alta Vista Rd.
3/5/2022	Melrose 7th Ave Street Fair	7th Ave between Campbell & Indian School Rd.
3/22/2022	Paradise Valley Senior Center	17402 N. 40th Street
3/23/2022	Coffee with a Cop	Laveen Education Center, 51st Ave & Dobbins
3/24/2022	Paradise Valley Senior Center	17402 N. 40th Street
3/24/2022	Devonshire Senior Center	2802 E. Devonshire Ave
3/25/2022	Helen Drake Senior Center	7600 N. 27th Ave
3/26/2022	Youth Resource Fair	Business Plaza, 5140 W. Baseline Road, Laveen
3/29/2022	Marcos de Niza Senior Center	305 W. Pima St
April – 22 Events		
Date	Event	Location
4/1/2022	South Mountain Senior Center	212 E. Alta Vista Road
4/2/2022	Slope Fest 2022	Palma Park, 12th Street & Dunlap
4/2/2022	Emergency Rental Assistance	Adam Diaz Senior Center, 4115 W. Thomas Road
4/2/2022	Identifreed Grand Opening	13637 N. 32nd Street
4/8/2022	Laveen School District's Spring Festival	5001 W. Dobbins Road
4/9/2022	Maryvale Resource Fair	Maryvale Community Center, 4420 N. 51st Ave
4/9/2022	Pets in the Park	Granada Park, 6505 N. 20th Street
4/11/2022	Pecos Senior Center	17010 S. 48th Street
4/12/2022	Washington Park Neighborhood Assoc.	Virtual
4/13/2022	Deer Valley Senior Center	Deer Valley Community Center, 2001 W. Wahalla Ln
4/13/2022	Social Spin Laundromat	2418 E Portland St.
4/13/2022	Black Mountain Community Alliance	2001 W Walhalla Ln
4/14/2022	Lindo Park Neighborhood Association	Virtual
4/14/2022	Sunnyslope Senior Center	802 E. Vogel Ave
4/16/2022	Senior Opportunities West Senior Center	1220 S 7th Ave
4/20/2022	Cesar Chavez High School	17010 S. 48th Street
4/25/2022	District 8 Coffee with a Cop	5001 W. Dobbins Road
4/26/2022	District 2 Coffee with a Cop	On-line
4/27/2022	District 3 Coffee with a Cop	North Mountain Park
4/28/2022	Aeroterra Community Center Event	1725 East McKinley Street
4/29/2022	Goelet A.C. Beuf Senior Center	3435 W. Pinnacle Peak Road
4/30/2022	Perry Park Outreach Event	2700 N. 32nd Street



# Surveys

The main purpose of the outreach was to collect feedback from members of the community on what they believed would be crucial in the expansion and success of CAP. GCI, with the help of CAP and the City Manager’s office, composed a 10-question survey that was made available in paper and digital format. The survey was officially launched at the February 26 Emergency Rental Assistance event and remained accessible until April 30, 2022. All surveys were made available in English and Spanish and are included in the appendix.

**CAP – Programa de Asistencia Comunitaria**  
**Encuesta de comentarios**

El Programa de Asistencia Comunitaria (CAP por sus siglas en inglés) es un grupo de especialistas dedicados y capacitados profesionalmente, que brindan a residentes de Phoenix, servicios de intervención durante una crisis en el lugar de los hechos y/o asistencia a víctimas las 24 horas del día. Las unidades CAP responden desde las estaciones de bomberos en toda el área de Phoenix y trabajan en conjunto con los Departamentos de Bomberos y de la Policía de Phoenix y agencias de servicios sociales.

Esta encuesta solo le tomará cinco minutos y ayudará a los coordinadores del programa a identificar áreas para mejorar y tener una idea más clara de lo que necesita nuestra comunidad.

Esta encuesta se cerrará el 30 de abril de 2022.

**TENGA EN CUENTA QUE LA INFORMACIÓN RECOPIADA A TRAVÉS DE ESTA ENCUESTA SÓLO SERÁ UTILIZADA POR CAP PARA AYUDAR A MEJORAR EL PROGRAMA Y PARA EVENTOS DE ACERCAMIENTO A LA COMUNIDAD. ESTA INFORMACIÓN NO SERÁ COMPARTIDA CON NINGUNA AGENCIA GUBERNAMENTAL EXTERNA.**

1. Estoy participando en esta encuesta como...  
 Negocio  Organización  Residente de la ciudad de Phoenix  Otro (por favor especifique): \_\_\_\_\_

2. Mi casa/negocio/organización está en el/los siguiente(s) distrito(s)? Seleccione todos los que correspondan  
 Distrito 1 - Concejal Ann O'Brien  Distrito 2 - Concejal Jim Waring  
 Distrito 3 - Concejal Debra Stark  Distrito 4 - Vicecalde Laura Pastor  
 Distrito 5 - Concejal Betty Guardado  Distrito 6 - Concejal Sal DiCiccio  
 Distrito 7 - Concejal Yassamin Ansari  Distrito 8 - Concejal Carlos Garcia  
 Otro: \_\_\_\_\_

3. ¿ A quién llamaría usted si está pasando por una a crisis de conducta?  
 Policía  Bomberos  Otro (por favor especifique): \_\_\_\_\_



Respondents could fill out the survey online through a QR code or through a hard copy survey form.

**CAP - Community Assistance Program**  
**Feedback Survey**

The Community Assistance Program is a group of dedicated, professionally trained specialists who provide 24-hour on-scene crisis intervention and/or victims assistance services to the citizens of Phoenix. The CAP units respond from fire stations throughout the Phoenix area, and work in partnership with the Phoenix Fire and Police Departments and social service agencies.

This survey should take no more than five minutes and will help program coordinators identify areas for improvement and give them a better understanding of what our community needs.

This survey will close on April 30, 2022.

**PLEASE KNOW THAT THE INFORMATION COLLECTED THROUGH THIS SURVEY WILL ONLY BE USED BY CAP TO HELP IN IMPROVING THE PROGRAM AND FOR COMMUNITY OUTREACH. NONE OF THIS INFORMATION WILL BE REPORTED TO ANY EXTERNAL GOVERNMENT AGENCY.**

1. I am participating in the survey as a...  
 Business  Organization  City of Phoenix Resident  Other (please specify): \_\_\_\_\_

2. My home/business/organization is in the following district(s)? Select all that apply  
 District 1 - Councilmember Ann O'Brien  District 2 - Councilmember Jim Waring  
 District 3 - Councilmember Debra Stark  District 4 - Vice Mayor Laura Pastor  
 District 5 - Councilmember Betty Guardado  District 6 - Councilmember Sal DiCiccio  
 District 7 - Councilmember Yassamin Ansari  District 8 - Councilmember Carlos Garcia  
 Other: \_\_\_\_\_

3. Who would you call when experiencing a behavioral health crisis?  
 Police  Fire  Other (please specify): \_\_\_\_\_

4. If experiencing a behavioral health crisis, who would you want to respond to your call?  
 Police  Fire  Behavioral health specialist  Co-response (example: police and behavioral health specialist; fire and police; fire and behavioral health specialist)

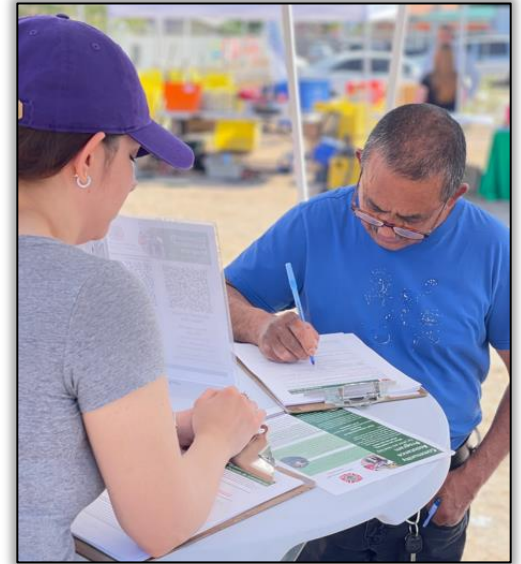
5. If a behavioral health specialist is sent to assist you, would the way they are dressed affect your ability to trust them?  
 No  Yes (please explain or give an example of how you would like them to dress)

\_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

\*\*Please see the back for more questions

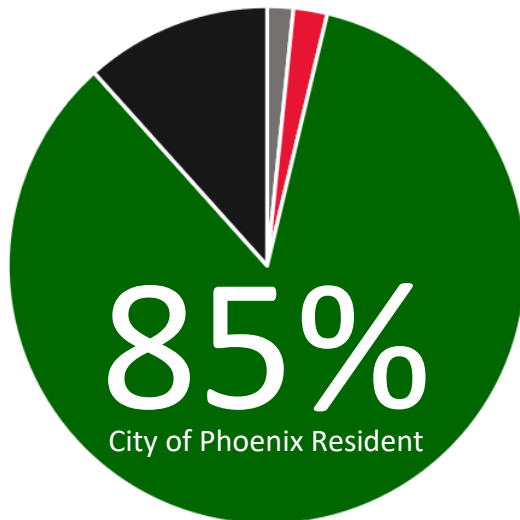
## Surveys Summary

During the survey period, the team collected a total of 1,163 surveys. The survey questions and responses are below."



GCI staff assisting residents fill out the CAP survey at a community center outreach event.

1. I am participating as a \_\_\_\_\_



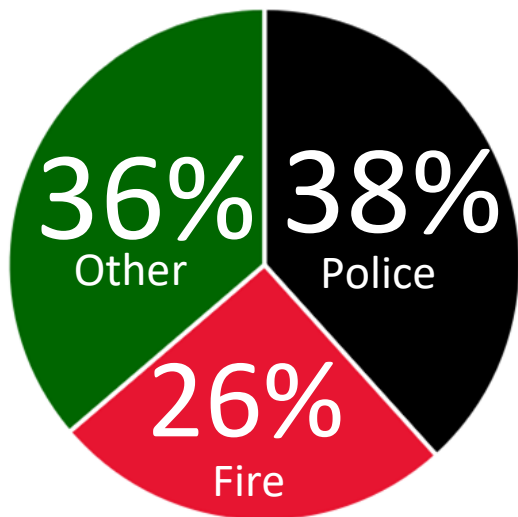
- 85% City of Phoenix Resident
- 12% Other
- 1% Business
- 2% Organization

2. My home/business/organization is in the following Council District,



- 17% District 8 - Councilmember Carlos Garcia
- 16% District 6 - Councilmember Sal DiCiccio
- 15% District 3 - Councilmember Debra Stark
- 13% District 4 - Vice Mayor Laura Pastor
- 13% District 7 - Councilmember Yassamin Ansari
- 10% District 1 - Councilmember Ann O'Brien
- 9% District 5 - Councilmember Betty Guardado
- 7% District 2 - Councilmember Jim Waring

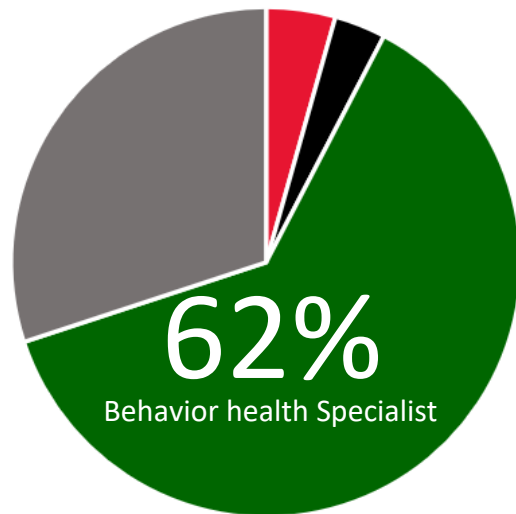
3. Who would you call when experiencing a behavioral health crisis?



Top 3 other options:

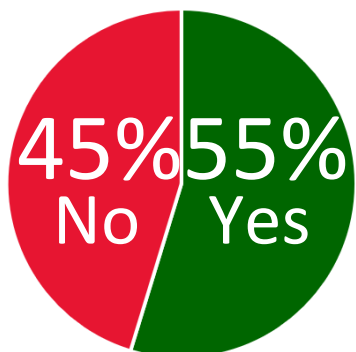
- Crisis hotline
- Health specialist
- Family or friends

4. If experiencing a behavioral health crisis, who would you want to respond to your call?



- 62% Behavioral health specialist
- 30% Co-response
- 5% Police
- 3% Fire

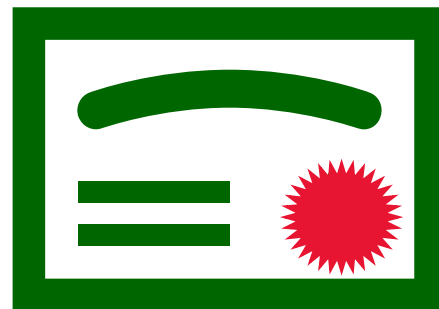
5. If a behavioral health specialist is sent to assist you, would the way they are dressed affect your ability to trust them?



If **Yes**, please explain or give an example of how you would like them to dress:

- 22% Uniforms
- 21% Casual attire (T-shirt and Jeans)
- 17% Casual attire with name tag or badge
- 16% Business casual with ID's and no guns
- 15% nothing that resembles police
- 9% No uniform or weapons

6. What training would you like a behavioral health specialist to have? *Responses were sorted to identify common trainings, below is the list with 1 being the most popular response.*



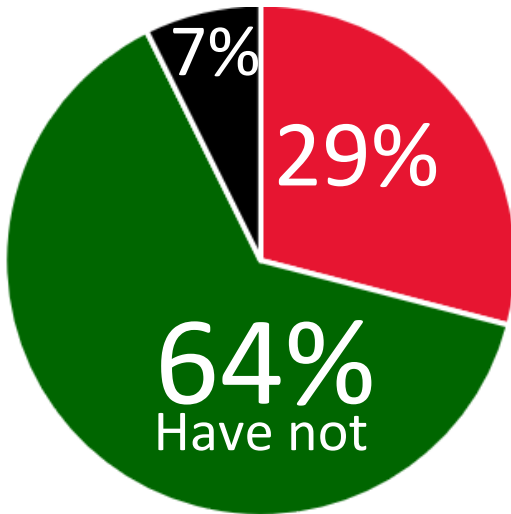
1. Degree in psychology, behavioral, or mental health
2. Crisis response, de-escalation, and PTSD training
3. Social work, empathy, and suicide prevention
4. Substance use and addiction
5. Police or self-defense training

7. How do you feel about having a police officer or firefighter respond to a behavioral health crisis?

A significant percentage (44%) of the respondents expressed feeling uncomfortable or anxious if a call was responded to by police. These respondents said they believe that depending on the situation or nature of the crisis call, they may not be properly trained to assess and resolve the situations.



8. Have you ever experienced a negative interaction with an officer or firefighter responding to a behavioral health call? Explain?

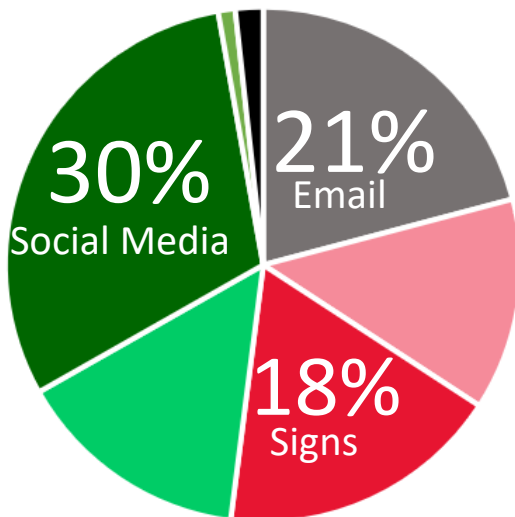


- 64% Have never experienced a negative interaction
- 29% have or know someone that has had a negative interaction
- 7% have not experienced a behavior health crisis

9. What additional services or resources could your community benefit from to help with behavioral health needs? Responses were sorted to identify common services or resources, below is the list with #1 being the most popular response.

1. Designated Hospital for behavioral health, offers affordable or free medical/mental health care.
2. Temp. housing/ Welfare Programs/ Comm Center for individuals struggling with behavioral health.
3. Send behavioral health specialist to help homeless population/more aide for this population/ Help them to get a job.
4. Behavioral Health Training/Education for First Responders/the community
5. Dedicated team of professionals to help the behavioral health population in field and conduct follow ups
6. More PSA's about resources available/ More Public/ Community Outreach
7. Behavioral Health Crisis Hotline, with professionals on the line.
8. Availability of Health Professional(s)/24 hrs
9. Transportation and Translators

10. How would you like to receive additional program information?



1. 30% social media
2. 21% Email updates
3. 18% Signs or billboards
4. 15% Radio
5. 13% CAP pamphlets
6. 2% Community events and notifications
7. 1% All the above



A CAP member discusses the program at an outreach event at Granada Park in north central Phoenix.



A CAP member discusses the program to teens visiting the CAP booth at an outreach event in Sunny Slope.



## Appendix – Flyer

# Community Assistance Program

*For when you need help*

### When you need help, where do you turn?

That is the question many Phoenix residents have when dealing with a crisis. Sometimes it's not clear what is the right place to call for help, especially when the issue involves someone having a mental health crisis.

**That's where the City of Phoenix Community Assistance Program (CAP) comes in.**

CAP is the City's program to respond to mental and behavioral health issues that might otherwise be addressed by police or fire department personnel.

The Phoenix City Council recently approved an expansion of the CAP to improve service delivery to individuals, contacting 911 experiencing

behavioral and mental health issues or in need of emergency crisis response.



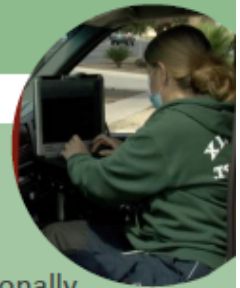
Behavioral Health Specialists

### What is CAP?

It's an all-civilian group that includes five crisis response units with 17 full-time and more than 20 part-time positions, managed by licensed civilian professionals in social work and counseling.

### Why is CAP Important?

Many times, police are called out to situations that don't require a law enforcement presence and can unintentionally increase the stress of someone experiencing a crisis. With CAP responders available the person in crisis can be helped to find the assistance they need.



### What does CAP Provide?

- Grief support
- Mental and behavioral health supportive service
- Substance use disorder supportive services
- Short term case management
- Connectivity to community resources and supportive services

### WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU!

CAP is looking for ways to better assist you and our community. Please scan the QR code or use the link to participate in a brief 5-minute survey.



[surveymonkey.com/r/CommunityAssistanceProgram](https://surveymonkey.com/r/CommunityAssistanceProgram)

Behavioral health specialists providing onsite crisis intervention

# Community Assistance Program

Programa de Asistencia Comunitaria



Especialistas de Salud en Conducta

## Para pedir ayuda

### ¿A dónde acude usted cuando necesita ayuda?

Esa es la pregunta que muchos residentes de Phoenix tienen cuando se enfrentan con una crisis. En ocasiones no es claro a donde llamar para pedir ayuda, especialmente cuando el problema involucra a alguien que tiene una crisis de salud mental.

### Aquí es donde el Programa de Asistencia Comunitaria (CAP por sus siglas en inglés) entra.

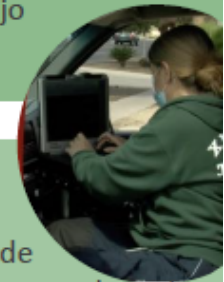
CAP es el programa municipal que responde a situaciones de salud mental y conducta que de otra manera serían atendidas por la policía o bomberos.

El Concejo Municipal de Phoenix recientemente aprobó la expansión de CAP para mejorar los servicios proveídos a personas que llaman al 911 con una crisis de conteniendo un crisis de conducta y salud mental o que necesitan ayuda con una crisis de emergencia.



### ¿Qué es CAP?

Es un grupo de civiles que incluye cinco unidades de respuesta a crisis con 17 puestos de tiempo completo y más de 20 puestos de medio tiempo, administrados por civiles profesionales con licencias en trabajo social y consejería.



### ¿Porque es importante CAP?

Muchas veces, la policía es llamada a situaciones que no requieren la presencia de ellos y esto puede involuntariamente aumentar el estrés de una persona en crisis. Con la presencia de los agentes de respuesta de CAP se puede ayudar a las personas en crisis a encontrar la ayuda que necesitan.

### ¿Qué es lo que proporciona CAP?

- Apoyo ante un duelo
- Apoyo con servicios de salud mental y de conducta
- Servicios de apoyo con problemas por el consumo de sustancias
- Manejo de casos a corto plazo
- Conexión a recursos comunitarios y servicios de apoyo

## ¡QUEREMOS ESCUCHAR DE USTED!

CAP está buscando formas para asistirlo mejor a usted y a la comunidad. Por favor escanee el código QR o utilice el sitio web para participar en una breve encuesta de 5 minutos.



[surveymonkey.com/r/CAPESPANOL2022](https://surveymonkey.com/r/CAPESPANOL2022)

Especialistas de salud en conducta que brindan intervención ante una crisis en el lugar de los hechos.

# Appendix – Survey



## CAP - Community Assistance Program Feedback Survey

The Community Assistance Program is a group of dedicated, professionally trained specialists who provide 24-hour on-scene crisis intervention and/or victims assistance services to the citizens of Phoenix. The CAP units respond from fire stations throughout the Phoenix area, and work in partnership with the Phoenix Fire and Police Departments and social service agencies.

This survey should take no more than five minutes and will help program coordinators identify areas for improvement and give them a better understanding of what our community needs.

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1. I am participating in the survey as a...

- Business    Organization    City of Phoenix Resident    Other (please specify): \_\_\_\_\_

2. My home/business/organization is in the following district(s)? Select all that apply

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <input type="radio"/> District 1 - Councilmember Ann O'Brien     | <input type="radio"/> District 2 - Councilmember Jim Waring    |
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| <input type="radio"/> District 5 - Councilmember Betty Guardado  | <input type="radio"/> District 6 - Councilmember Sal DiCiccio  |
| <input type="radio"/> District 7 - Councilmember Yassamin Ansari | <input type="radio"/> District 8 - Councilmember Carlos Garcia |

Other:

3. Who would you call when experiencing a behavioral health crisis?

- Police    Fire    Other (please specify): \_\_\_\_\_

4. If experiencing a behavioral health crisis, who would you want to respond to your call?

- Police    Fire    Behavioral health specialist    Co-response (example: police and behavioral health specialist; fire and police; fire and behavioral health specialist)

5. If a behavioral health specialist is sent to assist you, would the way they are dressed affect your ability to trust them?

- No    Yes (please explain or give an example of how you would like them to dress)

\*\*Please see the back for more questions



# CAP - Community Assistance Program Feedback Survey

6. What training would you like a behavioral health specialist to have? \_\_\_\_\_

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7. How do you feel about having a police officer or fire fighter respond to a behavioral health crisis? \_\_\_\_\_

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8. Have you ever experienced a negative interaction with an officer or firefighter responding to a behavioral health call? Explain?

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9. What additional services or resources could your community benefit from to help with behavioral health needs? \_\_\_\_\_

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10. How would you like to receive additional program information?

- Emails    Program pamphlets    Signs or billboards  
 Radio    Social Media    Other (please specify): \_\_\_\_\_

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This survey can be made available in a digital format upon request, call our project hotline at 623-825-3444 if you need any assistance with participating.

## Program Resources



CAP Crisis Main Line



Phone: 602-261-8849



Website: [www.phoenix.gov/fire/community-assistance-program](http://www.phoenix.gov/fire/community-assistance-program)





# CAP – Programa de Asistencia Comunitaria

## Encuesta de comentarios

El Programa de Asistencia Comunitaria (CAP por sus siglas en inglés) es un grupo de especialistas dedicados y capacitados profesionalmente, que brindan a residentes de Phoenix, servicios de intervención durante una crisis en el lugar de los hechos y/o asistencia a víctimas las 24 horas del día. Las unidades CAP responden desde las estaciones de bomberos en toda el área de Phoenix y trabajan en conjunto con los Departamentos de Bomberos y de la Policía de Phoenix y agencias de servicios sociales.

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2. Mi casa/negocio/organización está en el/los siguiente(s) distrito(s)? Seleccione todos los que correspondan

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <input type="radio"/> Distrito 1 - Concejal Ann O'Brien     | <input type="radio"/> Distrito 2 - Concejal Jim Waring      |
| <input type="radio"/> Distrito 3 - Concejal Debra Stark     | <input type="radio"/> Distrito 4 - Vicealcalde Laura Pastor |
| <input type="radio"/> Distrito 5 - Concejal Betty Guardado  | <input type="radio"/> Distrito 6 - Concejal Sal DiCiccio    |
| <input type="radio"/> Distrito 7 - Concejal Yassamin Ansari | <input type="radio"/> Distrito 8 - Concejal Carlos Garcia   |

Otro: \_\_\_\_\_

3. ¿A quién llamaría usted si está pasando por una crisis de conducta?

Policía  Bomberos  Otro (por favor especifique): \_\_\_\_\_

4. Si está pasando por una crisis de conducta, ¿quién quisiera que respondiera su llamada?

Policía  Bomberos  Especialista de salud en conducta  Respuesta en quipo (ejemplo: policía y especialista de salud en conducta bomberos y policía; bomberos y especialista salud en conducta)

5. Si un especialista de salud en conducta es enviado para que le ayude, ¿le afectaría usted confiar en ellos por la manera que se vistan?  No  Sí (por favor explique o de un ejemplo sobre cómo le gustaría que se vistieran)

\*\* Por favor, vea el reverso para más preguntas



# CAP - Programa de Asistencia Comunitaria

## Encuesta de comentarios

6. ¿Qué entrenamiento le gustaría que tuviera un especialista de salud en conducta? \_\_\_\_\_

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7. ¿Cómo se siente acerca de que un oficial de la policía o bombero responda a una crisis de conducta? \_\_\_\_\_

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8. ¿Alguna vez ha tenido una interacción negativa con un oficial de la policía o bombero que está respondiendo a una llamada de conducta? Explique \_\_\_\_\_

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9. ¿De cuáles servicios o recursos adicionales podría beneficiarse su comunidad para ayudar con las necesidades de salud sobre la conducta?

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10. ¿Cómo le gustaría recibir información adicional del programa?

- Correo electrónico     Folletos del programa     Letreros o espectaculares  
 Radio     Redes sociales     Otro (por favor especifique) \_\_\_\_\_

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Esta encuesta está disponible en formato digital, comuníquese a nuestra línea directa del proyecto al 623-825-3444 si necesita ayuda para participar.

### Recursos del programa



CAP Crisis Main Line



Teléfono: 602-261-8849



Sitio web: [www.phoenix.gov/fire/community-assistance-program](http://www.phoenix.gov/fire/community-assistance-program)

## Appendix – Media Coverage

■ FOR SUBSCRIBERS PHOENIX

### New Phoenix Fire Department chief is expanding program to divert 911 calls to crisis support



Mike Duran is the new Phoenix fire chief. Mark Hente/The Republic

In the two weeks since he was sworn in as Phoenix Fire Department chief, Mike Duran is already focused on change.

He is overseeing the significant expansion of a program that will divert some nonviolent 911 calls from police or fire to teams that will provide crisis intervention and mental health support.

"Eighty-six percent of our responses are medical in nature," Duran said. "We know that as firefighters, most of our job and most of our days are going to be around serving the community based around medical needs."

Duran, who grew up in Phoenix, was sworn in as the city's 31st fire chief on Feb. 22.

Duran has been a part of the Fire Department for 27 years and has held several positions, including firefighter, engineer and captain. Before his latest promotion, he served as the assistant chief over the Medical Support Services Division, where he gained experience and understanding of the volume and nature of calls for help that have nothing to do with fires.

His priorities also include keeping firefighters safe and preventing drownings, Duran told The Arizona Republic in an exclusive interview Monday.

#### **Priority 1: Expand community programs**

Last year, the Phoenix City Council and Mayor Kate Gallego approved \$15 million to grow the Community Assistance Program, or CAP, which aims to improve the response to behavioral and mental health calls in the Phoenix area.

Duran said the community's needs are changing and city leadership has identified mental health as a priority.

"There are times when our firefighters get to a point where they can only do so much and there's a lot of resources out there that could be provided to the community," Duran said. "We just need to find out what those resources are, and this program is going to help us connect to those resources that are out there."

Duran said his focus is on assisting the community during traumatic events. Nine behavioral health units will be developed and partnered with a behavioral health provider to have specialists providing behavioral and mental health services.

As part of the program, groups are professionally trained to provide 24-hour on-scene crisis intervention or victim assistance. Services include grief support, emotional support, and nonmedical transportation, according to Fire Department documents.

Response units can also give the victims service information, social service referrals and phone numbers for community resources such as counseling, hotlines and food boxes.

The units are dispatched to calls like drownings, major assaults and large fires. They might also respond to domestic violence and death notifications, among others.

Duran said at the Fire Department they don't have the means to always help those who call 911 for shelter, mental health care or other necessities so CAP also alleviates those increasing demands.

With the growth of the city, our calls for service are starting to increase, so our firefighters are seeing a lot of this a lot more," Duran said. "And we're hoping that these programs here could help reduce or help mitigate some of those impacts on our system."

The CAP works in partnership with the Phoenix police and fire departments and social services agencies, the website states.

There are currently five units responding to calls, according to Phoenix Fire's communications department. "In 2021, crisis response units were dispatched 4,046 times and assisted 5,782 individuals. This is less than 1% of total 911 calls received in 2021," they said in an email to The Republic.

The Fire Department said CAP is working with 911 dispatchers to identify calls that will be diverted to behavioral health units, but didn't specify a timeline.

So far, 17 full-time staff and four part-time staff have been hired to work on the program, including the CAP administrator, casework services coordinator positions and caseworker positions for the crisis response units. There are 49 full-time and 48 part-time positions still available at CAP for the fiscal year 2021-2022.

The Fire Department said 23 new vehicles have been ordered for CAP in collaboration with the Phoenix Public Works Department, with most probably arriving in July or August. In the meantime, the Public Works Department is identifying what vehicles can be used.

The City Council also approved the expansion of a contract with Gunn Communications Inc. in November 2021 so that the company could conduct community outreach on behalf of CAP until April 30. The Fire Department said as part of this effort, members of CAP and GCI are attending planned events in Phoenix and asking residents to complete a survey about the program.



### **Priority 2: Preventing drownings**

Another priority for Duran is the water safety program, which expands awareness on preventing drownings. Besides training personnel to respond to those situations, as chief he said he wants to help spread the message of being careful around any body of water all year long, not only in the summer.

According to Children's Safety Zone, an online database that tracks all instances of water-related fatalities and accidents in the Valley, 16 children below the age of 5 died from drowning in 2021 in Maricopa and Pinal counties.

"No one should be alone swimming in a swimming pool by themselves," Duran said. "Obviously, we want families to celebrate, have birthday parties, enjoy themselves around the pool, come to the city pools and the public pools, enjoy themselves out there. But obviously making sure that they're watching their children at all times and having that awareness."

Duran said he is passionate about community outreach and engagement and is planning events to promote programs like this one, but he didn't specify the details.

### **Priority 3: Keeping firefighters safe**

Duran said he also wants to make sure safety measures for fire personnel continue, an initiative started by former Chief Kara Kalkbrenner, who focused a lot on cancer prevention for firefighters. Part of that effort is looking at the equipment, procedures and protocol that firefighters have and seeing if there is an opportunity to make them safer, Duran said. He said they have already implemented firetrucks with better ventilation systems, new turnout gear that protects firefighters from the absorption of contaminants through their skin and have measures to make stations more sterile environments.

"I think those are very important for firefighters, as well as looking at national standards and techniques for firefighting," Duran said. "We're always going to continue to train and making sure we have the best training programs and setting that time for firefighters to have that type necessary training."

Duran also said working with business partners is important to make sure buildings are safe not only for the community but also for firefighters in case of an emergency.

"We've had recent fires where the fire protection systems, the sprinklers, were able to put the fire out, which then doesn't put our firefighters at risk," Duran said. "So risk mitigation and risk reduction methods are another way for me to protect our firefighters."

### **Communication is key**

To continue improving the projects and keep supporting the Fire Department members, Duran said communication with all of the personnel is key. He wants members of the Fire Department to keep in mind the mission and vision of the organization, which he said is to serve the community.

"Part of my plan was to come up with a communication plan for the future and looking at opportunities to where I could be present and engaged with the members, as well as with the community," Duran said.

Making events for the community, sending messages on social media and providing information door to door is part of the outreach he said he is planning. Duran also wants to make sure they are reaching out to the Hispanic population in the city by having communications in Spanish too.

Communicating his gratitude to the membership is also part of Duran's plan, as he said he wants opportunities to thank them for their effort.

"We understand that this is not an easy job or career, and you know that they're working holidays or working on the weekends, a time away from their families. So that's part of that message to thank all the members, our dispatchers and all of our civilian staff, as well as our veterans for their service and support," Duran said. "And then making sure they are taking care of their needs."

**"I represent everybody in the community"**

Duran is the second Hispanic Phoenix Fire Department chief and, he said, the first with two Hispanic parents. While he said he is proud of representing the Hispanic community, he said as chief he wants to represent the whole community. "I am big on diversity, equity and inclusiveness," Duran said. "I represent everybody in the community as the fire chief, so I serve everybody there."

Duran is also continuing his family legacy, as his father is a retired Phoenix Fire Department assistant chief and his brothers also serve in the department. He said he is proud of what his brothers do, and he is happy to share the bond of serving in the department with them and with their dad as their mentor.

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# Appendix – Media Coverage



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Watch this short video and then take our quick survey... we appreciate your willingness to help.

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Details on the plans and the survey are in the #PHXNewsroom:

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