

# FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

## Proposal to arm additional DPS officers for River Campus and Eastman School of Music

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### What does the proposal entail?

The proposal, titled Proposed Evolution of the Armed Peace Officer Program, is available online at <http://www.publicsafety.rochester.edu/APOProgram.pdf>. Its key recommendation is to expand the current armed peace officer program with three armed officers per shift. Two of these officers would be assigned to the River Campus and one would be assigned to the Eastman Campus.

### What is the process for communicating this proposal to the community?

Department of Public Safety Chief Mark Fischer must propose changes to DPS protocol to the University's Public Safety Review Board (PSRB). The Review Board and this process were established by President Seligman in 2016. The PSRB is comprised of students, faculty and administrators from around the University. Chaired by Trustee and Alumnus, Francis Price, the PSRB meets quarterly or on an as-needed basis to provide regular assessments of DPS policies and procedures, as well as review any significant incidents involving DPS from throughout the University.

Chief Fischer, pursuant to the process established by the PSRB, made the proposal to establish armed patrols on the River and Eastman Campuses. This proposal was initially presented to the PSRB in May 2018, but was tabled until October 2018 until a student representative was able to be present. At the October meeting, Chief Fischer was directed to next communicate the proposal to individual groups and receive feedback.

Chief Fischer is meeting with a number of interested groups on the Eastman and River Campuses in the upcoming weeks and will report back to Holly Crawford (Senior VP for Administration and Finance and CFO), and the PSRB, which will then make a recommendation to the President.

### Where will the additional armed Peace Officers be located?

One armed officer would be assigned to a patrol vehicle on River Campus, which is on the east side of the river. Another armed officer would similarly be assigned to cover the UR properties located on the west side of the river.

One armed officer will be assigned to foot patrol at the Eastman Campus.

All three assignments will be covered 24/7/365 and help ensure a timely response to the incident location.

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### What necessitates adding armed DPS officers to our campus?

#### **DPS DOES NOT CURRENTLY PROVIDE EQUAL COVERAGE TO THE UNIVERSITY COMMUNITY**

Currently, armed officers are able to answer any call for service in Strong Memorial Hospital and throughout the Medical Center Campus. DPS believes the University has a responsibility to provide the same level of protection to all areas patrolled by DPS.

Failing to provide armed officer coverage on River Campus and the Eastman School of Music at best delays the urgent response, and at worst leaves large segments of our community without a timely response from DPS in situations that may warrant it.

#### **RESPONSE TIMES**

It can take as long as 13 minutes and as little as 3 minutes—with an average of 6 minutes—for an armed response from the Medical Center to River Campus.

In an active shooter situation, national statistics indicate an injury happens every 15 seconds and a death every minute. Officers routinely respond to serious felony incidents and crimes in progress on our campuses. Unarmed DPS officers are the first responders to these incidents. This places the community members and officers at a greater risk because it is often unknown to the responding officer whether or not the persons involved are armed with a weapon. While awaiting an armed officer to respond, the community member(s) and the unarmed officer are placed in danger with no adequate defense.

An armed DPS officer assigned to the areas proposed will have a 1-3 minute response to any violent event involving the use of a weapon, depending on location. Armed DPS officers have all received Single Officer Response to an Active Shooter training as recommended by the International Association of Chiefs of Police. This training emphasizes that even one armed officer can make a difference in the outcome of active shootings by taking swift but calculated individual action, which can save lives and prevent serious injuries. It also prepares the officer to immediately locate and engage with a perpetrator in an attempt to stop the threat and save lives.

#### **UR IS AN OUTLIER**

The University of Rochester is currently the only [Association of American University \(AAU\)](#) school with sworn officers that does not provide armed coverage to all of its campuses. All other AAU schools have sworn and armed officers with the exception of Columbia University and New York University, which rely on NYPD officers to provide armed policing of their campuses.

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A sworn officer is an appointed individual who has the authority to make arrests, including warrantless arrests under specified conditions, complete warrantless searches, and investigate all manner of criminal and non-criminal offenses.

Additionally, in New York State, all four-year SUNY schools have sworn and armed officers at all campuses.

### DPS OFFICERS KNOW THE COMMUNITY

DPS officers will always respond to campus incidents more quickly than the Rochester Police Department. DPS officers are more familiar with our students, faculty and staff, as well as the geography of our campuses, the layout of the buildings, and the ability to instantly gain access to all areas.

DPS officers should be the first responders to every call for service, especially those involving deadly weapons where a rapid armed response is needed for life preservation.

### What are the current challenges with the existing armed Peace Officer Program ?

**DELAYED ARMED DPS RESPONSE:** Since the authorization for arming in January 2017, DPS has seen no appreciable difference in criminal activity in either the River or Eastman Campuses. However, the DPS response time from the Medical Center to River Campus is on average 6 minutes, which is more than triple the time when compared to an armed officer already assigned to the campus. In an active shooter situation or a situation involving a weapon, these extra minutes can cost lives.

**THE EASTMAN COMMUNITY:** For the Eastman Campus, there is a complete reliance on the Rochester Police Department for incidents involving a weapon. DPS officers are more familiar with the Eastman Campus, buildings, students, faculty and staff.

**EVENT MANAGEMENT:** In the current structure, armed officers are unable to work the River and Eastman Campuses. They cannot work high-profile events such as Commencement, Meliora Weekend, and Dandelion Day, or events on either campus where there is potential for an elevated threat of disruption or violence. UR Student Event organizations have seen an increase in requests for metal detection screening at special events. An armed officer should be at this type of screening in the event a weapon is discovered and the individual refuses to surrender it or attempts to use it.

**SUPERVISORY LIMITATIONS:** Armed DPS supervisors are unable to attend campus activities, sporting events, or meetings scheduled by Student Life administrators. They are also

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very limited in their ability to interact with students, staff, or faculty, given their armed status when they are working. This impacts their ability to build relationships with the community.

**KNOWLEDGE RETENTION:** Previously, the DPS deployment model required officers to work and have knowledge of all areas of the University. Now, the armed DPS officers who cannot work on the River or Eastman Campuses have shown a loss of geographic knowledge of these areas and familiarity with students, faculty and staff. It is critical for officers to maintain current knowledge of all campuses in the event of an active violence incident.

#### What type of additional training do armed Peace Officers receive?

NYS Department of Criminal Justice Services (DCJS) guidelines mandate that 595 hours of academy training is required to become a sworn peace officer. DCJS requires an additional 96 hours of firearms-specific training to become a sworn armed peace officer. This training includes: Firearms Safety, Weapon Retention and Proficiency, NYS Penal Law Article 35 (Use of Deadly Force), Reality Based Training (RBT) scenarios, and “Shoot, Don’t Shoot” situations.

In addition to the above academy training, DPS and the PSRB require: Fair and Impartial Policing (6 hours), Integrated Approach to De-Escalation and Minimizing Use of Force (24 hours) Racial Diversity Training for Campus Police & Public Safety Officers (8 hours), Crisis Intervention Team Training (40 hours), and Culture Vision (4 hours).

Armed peace officers must recertify training with their handgun at the Academy twice per year (16 hours). Any officer found deficient in this training will not be armed.

#### How do you respond to those who feel that additional guns instill more fear?

We recognize that some of our community members see armed officers as a threat to the campus climate or culture, and may fear accidents or abuse of power. We certainly understand these views based on individuals’ personal experiences, and in light of policing incidents seen in the news where innocent people have become victims of police gun fire.

The DPS proposal, however, is meant to address the real challenges that exist on River Campus and at Eastman to adequately protect every member of our University community when under the threat of violence. The proposal addresses these gaps by placing two highly trained armed officers in vehicles on/near River Campus and one on foot patrol at the Eastman School to quickly respond to situations where the personal safety of others is threatened. We believe this enhancement will address the current safety challenges and is proportional to the issue.

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Through the PSRB, DPS leadership and officers are held fully accountable for their judgements and policing decisions when it comes to interacting with both University community members and members of the public.

#### What is the increased jurisdiction legislation and why does it require armed Peace Officers?

Effective December 2017, the NYS Criminal Procedure Law was amended by legislators to provide DPS with enhanced jurisdiction to include any public street and sidewalk adjacent to the grounds, buildings, and property of the University.

This enhancement allows DPS officers to make arrests on sidewalks adjoining University properties, as well as investigate motor vehicle accidents on city streets running through and adjacent to University properties, such as Gibbs St., Wilson Blvd., and Crittenden Blvd. This provides a timelier response to University community members in areas adjacent to the University.

Officers are increasingly interacting with individuals not affiliated with the UR on city streets and sidewalks. The Rochester Police Department has an expectation that an armed DPS officer will be available to respond to these incidents, which are often jointly investigated. Our current deployment model does not allow for a timely armed response to areas adjacent to the River and Eastman Campuses.

#### How will the armed Peace Officers be selected and screened for this additional duty?

Officers will be selected by the DPS Chief after a detailed review of experience, supervisory assessment, and performance.

Screening includes fingerprinting for criminal record, a psychological assessment, an interview prior to the start of any training, and an updated background investigation. All members of the DPS force have significant additional training above and beyond what is required by NY Department of Criminal Justice Services. Our DPS officers are best positioned to know our campus and members of our community and to understand our culture.

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#### How many officers does DPS have?

DPS employs about 180 members in several different divisions including communications, records management, property/evidence, Information Technology (IT), access control, CCTV, blue light maintenance, patrol, and investigations.

The core responsibility of providing community safety services falls on the uniform patrol section. There are approximately 134 uniform officers, consisting of 47 non-sworn public safety officers and 87 sworn peace officers. Currently, 43 of the sworn peace officers are armed as part of the Medical Center's arming implementation.

#### How are weapons stored?

Each handgun is secured in a dedicated metal locker within a weapon room at DPS Headquarters, when not being carried on duty. The weapon room utilizes multiple layers of physical and electronic security measures to include alarms, dual-level access control, and CCTV monitoring.

#### What type of holster is used?

The handguns are secured in a retention holster which requires 3 specific actions to release the handgun and incorporates an automatic locking of the weapon within the holster. Armed officers also receive extensive training in weapon retention.

#### How often have the current officers un-holstered their weapons since the arming of officers at the Medical Center?

Since the arming programing began 22 months ago, there have been five incidents of un-holstering. The Public Safety Review Board determined that all five incidents were justified and in keeping with current training and policy guidelines.

There have been no discharges of any weapons.

#### Have there been any complaints against the armed officers for their actions to date?

No.

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#### Why can't we just rely on Rochester Police to respond to incidents on our campus that require armed officers?

DPS officers receive significantly more training than required by New York State Division of Criminal Justice Services. Moreover, they understand our University culture, and they know members of our community. DPS officers should be the first responders to every call for service, especially those involving weapons where a rapid armed response is needed for life preservation.

#### What is the difference between DPS Peace Officers and Rochester Police (RPD) Officers?

The main differences between DPS and RPD officers are: University specific training, area of jurisdictional responsibility, and legal authority as it pertains to warrant arrests. DPS peace officers have the responsibilities and powers of police officers, but only on properties owned and controlled by the University.

DPS and RPD officers receive the same initial training from the regional Police Academy, where all local law enforcement agencies train. Subsequent to academy training, DPS officers receive an additional 400 hours of training that is specific to the University environment and our community to include: DPS policy and procedures, university geography, de-escalation tactics specific to patient care and campus environments, HIPAA, FERPA, Clery, and working with the numerous departments within the University.

#### How and when will I know if this proposal is implemented?

After feedback on the proposal is received from various campus constituencies, the PSRB will make a recommendation to the University President, who will then make a determination on whether the proposal should be accepted. This determination will be communicated broadly to the University community.