

Coeur d'Alene PD adding 3 cops

Coeur d'Alene Police Chief Lee White received official notification today the City has been awarded \$375,000 under the 2015 COPS Hiring Program. The federal funds are spread over a three-year grant period and will specifically be utilized for pay and benefits of three additional police officers.

Over the past several years, Law Enforcement has often struggled with the problem of trying to reduce crime and apprehend offenders while maintaining positive and respectful relationships with the community they serve. With the arrival of a new police chief in late 2014, the Coeur d'Alene Police Department has begun a philosophical shift from traditional response to calls for service to a more proactive and community based style of policing. However, the current below-standard staffing levels of the police department often result in the community policing and engagement aspect of policing philosophy left behind while officers focus on the extremely high demand of calls for service. The Department would like to transition to a higher level of community policing by using the requested positions to create a Community Action Team (CAT). The team will consist of four team members and a Sergeant to oversee operations. Three of the positions will be funded through this grant while the Department will supplement the other position and the sergeant.

The team will work with the citizens in a pro-active, cooperative manner to bolster trust with the community. The team will be using multiple tools/ tactics geared towards the reduction of crime and improving of quality of life such as working with Crime Analysis to focus on existing and emerging crime trends based on information gathered through the crime reports/ other data compiled, working with probation and parole in an effort to better integrate offenders into the community, and focusing efforts to reduce random patrols. This information will be used to focus on areas of concern by providing greater emphasis in these areas and, using the SARA model, develop a cooperative solution with relentless follow-up. Special attention will be given to dangerous criminals living within the city to prevent further potential violent acts, issues surrounding homelessness, drug-related crimes, violent crimes and property crimes.

The team will look into not only violent crime but also property crime and quality of life issues including graffiti and code enforcement issues to clean up areas of concern within the neighborhoods of the City. The team will work with other divisions of the City and County including Streets, Planning, Parks and Recreation, Building, and the Fire Department to work through the quality of life issues as a cohesive unit in an effort towards resolution.

Additionally, the team will work with various stakeholders of the community including block watch groups, clergy, social services, probation and parole, and community activists to strengthen a trusting, lasting relationship geared toward building, improving, and maintaining public trust and transparency.

The award of the COPS grant enables the Police Department to take a significant step forward in addressing staffing needs in order to serve our community better.