

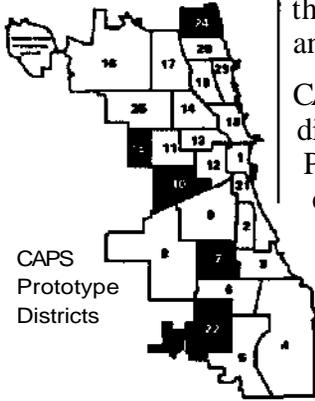


# Fact Sheet

City of Chicago / Department of Police \* Richard M. Daley, Mayor » Matt L. Rodriguez, Superintendent

## The Chicago Alternative Policing Strategy (CAPS)

### What is CAPS?



The Chicago Alternative Policing Strategy (CAPS) is a new community-oriented philosophy of policing and crime prevention. Under CAPS, the police, other government agencies and the community are working together to identify and solve problems of crime and disorder and to improve the quality of life in Chicago's neighborhoods.

CAPS officially rolled out April 29, 1993, on a prototype basis, in five of Chicago's 25 police districts: Englewood (7th), Marquette (10th), Austin (15th), Morgan Park (22nd) and Rogers Park (24th). These five districts have diverse populations—racially, ethnically and socio-economically—and vastly different crime problems.

Taken together, the five CAPS prototype districts provide a unique laboratory for evaluating and improving the CAPS model before it is expanded Citywide.

### Key Features

**Crime Control and Prevention.** Under CAPS, crime control *and* crime prevention are recognized as dual parts of the policing mission. Vigorous and impartial enforcement of the law, rapid response to serious crimes and life-threatening emergencies, and proactive problem solving in the neighborhoods are the foundations of the new policing strategy.

**Organizational Continuity.** To accomplish these goals, the entire Police Department is adopting the philosophy of CAPS. At the patrol level, teams of rapid response officers and beat officers have been established in the prototype districts. Both groups are expected to engage in proactive problem solving, although the rapid response teams are responsible for most of the serious emergencies in the district. This frees up more time for beat officers to work with residents in addressing longer-range problems on their beats. To provide continuity between police officers and the communities they serve, officers are now working the same beat on the same watch each day.

**Community Involvement.** The community is involved at all levels of the strategy. Each prototype district has a Community Advisory Committee which identifies district-level issues and problems, and helps set broad priorities. More specific problem identification and problem solving are accomplished at the beat level, through community meetings, communication with district Neighborhood Relations offices and face-to-face contact with officers on the beat.

**Beat Profiling/Action Planning.** Problem solving is formalized through a process known as beat profiling and action planning. Officers create the beat profile by recording the characteristics and chronic problems of their beats and by identifying the resources available to address those problems. Police, other City agencies and the community then use the beat profile to develop specific plans of action. These action plans prioritize problems, identify strategies and provide a means for measuring success.

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## Key Features (cont.)

**Support from Other Government Agencies.** Recognizing that graffiti, abandoned vehicles and buildings, malfunctioning street lights and similar problems have such an adverse effect on the community and on crime levels. Mayor Richard M. Daley has made CAPS a priority of the entire City government, not just the Police Department. Police officers and personnel from other City agencies are being cross-trained in each others' operations, and special procedures for requesting, logging and following up on requests for City services have been established in the CAPS districts.

**Training.** The Police Department has made a significant investment in training police personnel in the CAPS philosophy and in problem-solving. Approximately 1,750 officers and supervisors from the five prototype districts received training earlier this year. A unique curriculum included interpersonal communication, problem solving, alliance building and, for sergeants and lieutenants, advancement skills. Citizen experts were brought in to co-teach many of the sessions, and community leaders were invited to participate in some of the sessions. Future training will concentrate on more specific problem-solving strategies.

**Computerised Crime Analysis.** The collection and analysis of data at the neighborhood level are key elements of CAPS. Each of the five prototype districts is installing a local area network of advanced computer workstations. These computers will allow the districts to analyze and map crime hot spots, to track other neighborhood problems (such as problem liquor establishments) and to share this information with the community.

**Communication and Marketing.** Communicating the CAPS philosophy to members of the Police Department and to the community—and getting their feedback and suggestions for improvement—are fundamental to the strategy. Ongoing communication includes a newsletter and regular staff and community meetings. Feedback is collected through focus groups, surveys, a special CAPS hotline and suggestion forms.

**Evaluation.** CAPS is undergoing the most thorough evaluation of any community policing program in the country. A consortium of five major Chicago-area universities (led by Northwestern University) is conducting a year-long evaluation of the process and results in the prototype districts. In addition, the Department's Research and Development Division is analyzing the internal survey and focus group data that is being collected.

**Strategic Planning.** To address the broad policy and organizational issues that are inherent in any new policing philosophy, the Department has initiated a broad strategic planning effort around CAPS. The components of change that will be needed to fully implement the strategy over the next three to five years are being identified, and specific action plans are under development.

## For More Information

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The Project Manager for CAPS is Charles H. Ramsey, Deputy Chief of the Patrol Division. Staff support for the project is provided by the Research and Development Division, Barbara B. McDonald, Director.

For more information about CAPS, contact:

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