

Mental Health Alliance

PO Box 3641
Portland, Oregon 97208
www.mentalhealthalliance.org

To members of Portland City Council,

The City of Portland is experiencing a crisis of confidence. Even after federal intervention, our system of police accountability remains slow, opaque, and mired in bureaucracy.

City leaders and voters took action in November 2020 to create a new police oversight and accountability system. While the members of the Mental Health Alliance endorsed this initiative, in seven months city leaders have yet to produce a plan for the transition between its current system of accountability and a new one. While the current system of accountability is in transition, without a detailed transition plan the city could wind up with *no* system of police accountability in Portland while we wait for the new system to come online.

A plan of transition from the current system of police accountability to another would build understanding, confidence, and trust. While work on such a plan may already be ongoing within City Hall, providing a solid timeline for making such a plan available to the public would help to alleviate uncertainty within the community around this transition.

At a time where the Portland police continue to display worrying escalations of force, a reduction or an absence of police accountability could be disastrous.

The Mental Health Alliance asks that the City of Portland quickly create and publicly release a **Police Accountability Transition Plan** with the following information:

1. Outlines dates by which:
 - a. The new police oversight committee that will be designing the new police accountability system will be appointed.
 - b. The new police oversight committee should finish and publicly present the plan for the new police accountability system.
 - c. Job descriptions for staff and oversight committee members will be available for review.
 - d. Budget for the oversight committee should be available for review.
 - e. The new police accountability system should be fully staffed and able to take over the handling of all complaints against the Portland Police Bureau.
2. Outlines the timelines and process by which:
 - a. The current Independent Police Review will continue to handle Portland Police Bureau complaints pending the creation of the new police accountability system.
 - b. The current Independent Police Review will maintain the staffing and resources necessary to maintain a meaningful accountability process during the transition into the new police accountability system

More about the Mental Health Alliance at www.mentalhealthalliance.org

- c. The current Independent Police Review will transition its caseload to the new police oversight committee once it is fully staffed and operational.
- 3. Outlines the process the city is planning to use to set up the new police accountability system, including:
 - a. How the new police oversight planning committee will be staffed and resourced by the city.
 - b. What will be the division of authority between the new police oversight committee and the city.
 - c. What will be the process for resolving disagreements around the establishment of the new police oversight committee between the committee and the city.

The Mental Health Alliance realizes the scope and difficulty of building a new police accountability system from scratch, but if public faith in our city's policing is also to be rebuilt, it is important to demonstrate as soon as possible that there is a plan for doing so.

Members of our work group, listed below, are available to discuss this request at the convenience of council members.

Sincerely,

Members of the Mental Health Alliance

| | |
|----------------------------------|----------------------------------------|
| Juan Chavez, JD | Portland Interfaith Clergy Resistance |
| Amanda J Marshall, JD | Rabbi Ariel Stone |
| Patrick Nolen | |
| Meredith Mathis | Oregon Justice Resource Center |
| Liz Reetz, JD | Bobbin Singh - Executive Director |
| KC Lewis, JD | |
| Mark Schorr, LPC CADC I | Disability Rights Oregon |
| Michael Hopcroft | Jake Cornett - Executive Director |
| Jason Renaud | |
| Rochelle Silver, PHD | Mental Health Association of Portland |
| Mary-Margaret Wheeler-Weber | Sandra Chisholm, MPA - Board President |
| Jan Friedman, JD | |
| Maggie Powers, JD | |
| Javonnie Shearn | |
| Mark Chasse, JD | |
| Julia Baker | |
| Tara Candela, APRN, PMHNP-BC, JD | |
| Franz Bruggemeier, JD | |

CC:

More about the Mental Health Alliance at www.mentalhealthalliance.org