



OFFICE OF THE SHERIFF CITY AND COUNTY OF SAN FRANCISCO

1 DR. CARLTON B. GOODLETT PLACE
ROOM 456, CITY HALL
SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA 94102



PAUL M. MIYAMOTO
SHERIFF

For Immediate Release: Thursday, June 8, 2023

Contact: Tara Moriarty, Director of Communications (628) 286-8198 Tara.Moriarty@sfgov.org
Kelvin Wu, PIO (628) 286-8168, kelvin.y.wu@sfgov.org

SF SHERIFF MIYAMOTO DEPLOYS SFSO EMERGENCY SERVICES UNIT TO ADDRESS FENTANYL CRISIS

Deputies Crack Down on Illegal Drug Activity in Tenderloin & SOMA communities

San Francisco, CA - San Francisco Sheriff Paul Miyamoto announces plans to activate the San Francisco Sheriff's Office (SFSO) Emergency Services Unit (ESU) for the next six months to areas where open-air drug dealing and drug use runs rampant. ESU deputies have additional, specialized training for handling situations that require intervention for destructive or criminal behavior.

"Fighting the fentanyl crisis and tackling flagrant drug use on our streets requires a head-on, tough love approach," said **Sheriff Paul Miyamoto**. "The sad truth of drug addiction is that individuals rarely want to get the help they need until they hit rock bottom, which for many involved in this crisis, is incarceration. Those suffering from drug addiction are slowly dying on our streets because they have no reason to get clean and drug dealers are profiting off their pain. Without the threat of jail time, the City has no way of compelling individuals to participate in proven programs that address the root causes of addiction."

The goal of this new operation, which will launch at the end of June, is not to arrest people suffering from substance use disorders, mental illness, or homelessness, but to disrupt the cycle of self-harm.

"We must send a clear message that our communities won't tolerate the destructive influence of drugs and open-air drug scenes. That's why I'm committed to working with the Sheriff's Department to increase enforcement efforts in the hardest-hit neighborhoods," said **District 6 Supervisor Matt Dorsey**. "Together, we will create an environment where families can feel safe, where children can thrive, and where our City can flourish once again."

"We have to change what is happening on our streets," said **SFPD Chief William Scott**. "The fentanyl crisis is destroying lives, affecting businesses and creating a poor quality of life for everyone living where drugs are being sold and used. The SFPD is working hard to hold dealers accountable while helping to provide resources to people experiencing addiction. In cases where people are breaking laws by blatantly using drugs and creating a danger for themselves or others, the SFPD will intervene. Our officers will enforce laws with empathy and compassion."

This operation has the following objectives:

- Decrease open-air drug use by arresting dealers and compelling those suffering from addiction into programs and services.
- Increase feelings of public safety with an enhanced law enforcement presence in areas most impacted by the fentanyl epidemic.

“I would like to thank Sheriff Miyamoto for his leadership and commitment to providing additional resources to combat open-air drug markets and improve public safety,” said **District Attorney Brooke Jenkins**. “The Sheriff’s Emergency Services Unit deployment will build on existing efforts to improve public health and public safety outcomes on the street as we work collaboratively to get those suffering with substance use disorders into treatment and prosecute suspected drug dealers and traffickers.”

The **ESU** is comprised of 130 highly trained personnel designated for a variety of specialized assignments, including providing mutual aid for partnered law enforcement agencies. During this six-month deployment in the Tenderloin, Civic Center and SOMA neighborhoods, the ESU will operate as a mobile unit, contributing to the reduction of emergency response times across the City. The ESU will assist the SFPD in making arrests of those engaging in criminal activity.

The **Sheriff’s Patrol Unit (SPU)**, the **Warrant Services Unit (WSU)**, and the **Field Training Program (FTP)** will also offer assistance. The **SPU** will acquire additional deputies to respond to calls for service, bolstering security currently provided by SFSO to sites directly adjacent to the epicenter of San Francisco’s fentanyl epidemic. The **WSU** is now active in this targeted area twice a week, but will also acquire additional personnel to respond to multi-agency efforts. The **FTP** will expand operations to two training cars each on both day shift and swing shifts, and assist SFPD in the Tenderloin District. Additionally, a station transfer wagon will provide safe transportation when needed.

The **SFSO’s Administration and Programs Division** will increase Electronic Monitoring (EM) compliance checks and enforcement in the Tenderloin District. EM allows the SFSO to supervise individuals who would otherwise be in jail. Monitoring is conducted in real-time, 24 hours a day with interventions to encourage the success of the program. Currently, more than 100 EM participants reside in the Tenderloin neighborhood.

###