

Urbana Alternative Response Task Force Meeting #3 – January 29th, 2026

The meeting kicked off with Daut'e and Chief Tom from LEAP stating the meeting objectives. The stakeholders will get the opportunity to review evidence and metrics from recent studies on the effectiveness of recently implemented alternative response models. LEAP wants to hear community considerations for developing a community responder program in Urbana. Daut'e emphasized defining success early to avoid others defining it later. Goals for the Urbana alternative response model shared from the stakeholders included safe/effective call resolution, reducing police burden and call volume, successfully connecting people to services, improving 911 trust, reducing arrests and involuntary commitments, and ensuring equitable outcomes.

Amos from LEAP presented on recent research from multiple cities assessing effectiveness of their alternative response models from 2024–2026. Assessments evaluated impacts on call volume, safety outcomes, response times, police backup rates, service connections, and community/police satisfaction with alternative response programs.

- Community responder programs rarely require police backup (around 0.2–2 % of the time).
- Police attitudes toward responder programs often improve over time according to surveys conducted by the departments.
- Programs frequently connect people to services and arrange appointments at much higher rates than police previously.
- Research trends shows reductions in arrests and certain low-level crime reports in cities with programs.
- Evidence for reducing involuntary commitments and hospitalizations is promising but mixed.
- Equity concerns exist: some studies show racial and socioeconomic disparities in outcomes.
- Public comfort in calling 911 may increase, though the reasons can be complex.

Stakeholders shared concerns about:

- Capacity of local services may not be able to accommodate referrals or gaps in existing services (lack of warming centers).
- Avoiding “performative” change that doesn't address root causes like poverty, housing

instability, or lack of preventive services.

- Defining key terms such as “use of force” for consistent metrics for the stakeholder discussions.

Discussion continued with community challenges like unhoused individuals seeking warmth and the desire to not criminalize needs based interactions with alternative response teams. Stakeholders urged that new systems prioritize real, humane solutions rather than enforcement-led responses.

The group also discussed the importance of outreach, noting that local communities often feel over-surveyed, unheard, and hesitant to engage unless there is trust and genuine relationship-building.

Each member of the taskforce was asked to complete the 97-scenario call assessment by February 13 so that discussion can occur at the March 5th session. LEAP shared that continued one-on-one meetings with task force members are being scheduled. LEAP will begin developing consensus on eligible call types for community responders. LEAP is planning community engagement sessions (with care for accessibility and trust). LEAP will add accessible research links from the slides to the task force website to further review the discussed studies.

The next meeting will be March 5th, 2026, at 3:30 PM. Full presentation slides can be found [here](#). The full meeting can be watched [here](#).