



**CITY OF URBANA
ALTERNATIVE RESPONSE TASK FORCE
(ARTF) FOCUS GROUP SESSION**

DATE: Thursday, March 5, 2026

TIME: 3:30 PM

PLACE: Independent Media Center (IMC) 202 South Broadway Avenue, Urbana, IL, 61801

AGENDA

- A. Call to Order and Opening Remarks**
- B. Law Enforcement Action Partnership (LEAP) Presentation and Stakeholder-only Discussion**
- C. Alternative Response Task Force (ARTF) Stakeholder-only Questions and Answers**
- D. Announcements**
 - 1. Next ARTF Focus Group Session – April 2, 2026**
- E. Adjournment**

This Focus Group Session will be recorded. Details on how to watch are found on the UPTV webpage located at <https://www.urbanail.gov/executive-department/page/urbana-public-television>. Meeting materials can be found <https://www.urbanail.gov/meetings>

FAQs: ARTF Stakeholder Focus Group Sessions

What is the Alternative Response Task Force (ARTF)?

The Alternative Response Task Force (ARTF) has two meanings. It is the name of a stakeholder group of representatives from community organizations and key City staff whose experiences and perspectives will inform Urbana's approach to an Alternative Response Model to traditional public safety. More broadly, it also serves as the name of Urbana's overall Alternative Response initiative, which also includes data analysis, one-on-one conversations, and community engagement. The City of Urbana has selected the Law Enforcement Action Partnership (LEAP) as the consulting partner to lead the overall ARTF initiative as well as various community engagement touchpoints, including the ARTF Focus Group Sessions. Learn more about the ARTF on the City of Urbana website:

<https://www.urbanail.gov/executive-department/page/alternative-response-task-force>

What is an ARTF "Focus Group Session"?

An ARTF focus group session (or just "session") is an opportunity for ARTF stakeholders to provide feedback, perspectives, and ideas to LEAP. Their insights help LEAP develop a practical and community-informed alternative response model. Participation by community organizations is voluntary. The ARTF does not make formal recommendations or decisions for the City, nor does it have budgetary authority

When and Where are the ARTF Sessions Held?

ARTF sessions will generally be held on **Thursdays from 3:30 p.m. to 5 p.m. at the Independent Media Center (IMC)**. 2026 dates include: January 29, March 5, April 2, April 30, June 11, June 25, and July 16 (a back-up date). The IMC is located at 202 South Broadway Avenue in Urbana, in the Post Office building. Check the IMC's FAQ page for more information on parking and bus routes: <https://www.ucimc.org/faq>.

What is the Law Enforcement Action Partnership (LEAP)?

The Law Enforcement Action Partnership (LEAP) is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit founded in 2002. It is made up of social scientists, community advocates, and current and former judges and law enforcement officials committed to criminal justice reforms that make communities safer and more just. LEAP advises on a range of topics including police-community relations, incarceration, and alternative response models. Additional information can be found at their website: <https://lawenforcementactionpartnership.org/>

How Will Transparency and Public Access be Ensured?

The City is committed to following procedures that promote transparency and public engagement in alignment with the Illinois Open Meetings Act (OMA). Agendas will be published in advance ("noticed") as Community Civic Events. Summaries of sessions, similar to minutes, will be prepared and published. Feedback received via email or other channels will be included in session records, although time constraints prevent reading into the record. Sessions will follow procedural rules to maintain decorum and productive discussion, guided by the City Clerk and Robert's Rules of Order.

FAQs: ARTF Stakeholder Focus Group Sessions

How Can the Public Participate?

Sessions are open for public attendance. Members of the public may record sessions as long as it does not interfere with others' ability to see or hear the discussion. Check online for an agenda from any recent City Council Regular Meeting or Committee of the Whole for important information on how to share email, verbal, and written input. For more information on public input, please contact the City Clerk's Office at least 48 hours in advance by: (1) phone: 217-384-2366; (2) email: CityClerk@urbanail.gov; or (3) in-person during normal business hours. The IMC is accessible. For more information on accessibility, please review the IMC's website page (<https://www.ucimc.org/accessibility>) or contact the IMC at accessibility@ucimc.org

Will There be a Public Comment Period before the ARTF Sessions?

Due to time and facility constraints, **verbal public comment on the ARTF or Alternative Response should be shared at any City Council Regular Meeting or Committee of the Whole**, usually on Monday evenings in City Hall Council Chambers. Please see **How Can the Public Participate?** for important information on how to share email, verbal, and written input. The discussion format is focused on ensuring LEAP can collect input from the ARTF stakeholders, so we will not be able to entertain audience participation. LEAP will set up subsequent touchpoints, including one-on-one and small group meetings as well as larger community engagement events.

Are the ARTF Sessions Governed by the Illinois Open Meetings Act (OMA)?

The City is committed to following procedures that align with the spirit of the OMA, promoting transparency and public engagement. However, the ARTF sessions are not strictly governed by OMA, because they are not a public body, board, or commission, nor do they have budget authority, direct advisory capacity, or formal decision-making power. Practically speaking, there are also time and facility constraints that require flexibility. No more than two City Council members may participate in any session although they may attend as part of the audience.

Will Sessions be Recorded?

Yes. Sessions will be audio and visually recorded, with a best effort to livestream, and recordings will be made available online when possible.

Where Can I Learn More?

For more details on the ARTF initiative, including **key deliverables**, the **timeline**, other **community engagement touchpoints**, and **other cities LEAP has advised**, please review the FAQs for the October 6, 2025 Council presentation: <https://www.urbanail.gov/media/6841>.

Please join Urbana's Journey to an Alternative Response to Public Safety. Thank you!

MODIFIED ROBERT'S RULES OF ORDER FOR FOCUS GROUP PARTICIPANTS

Dear Task Force Focus Group Participants - To ensure an efficient and productive use of our time together, please review and follow the guidelines (below) for today's Alternative Response Task Force (ARTF) focus group session.

Thank you for your commitment to exploring alternative responses to public safety in Urbana!

Goal: A productive session focused on understanding your perspectives and gathering your insight, to support LEAP in developing options for Urbana's future alternative response model to public safety.

Structure and Group Leadership:

- **LEAP** consultants, supported by the City Clerk, are responsible for conducting the **ARTF** focus group sessions efficiently.
- Participants are asked to observe the **civility, courtesy, and decorum** of Robert's Rules, summarized below.

Guidelines for Participation:

- **Keep remarks brief** when addressing **LEAP's** questions.
- Only **one person should speak** at a time, as directed by the **LEAP** consultants.
- **Address the LEAP consultants** or the focus group as a whole - **not other participants directly**.
- **Do not engage** audience members or members of the public.
- Keep comments **relevant to the question** at hand and confined to the issue's merits.

Prohibited Conduct:

- **Personal insults** are prohibited. **Do not disparage** other people or organizations.
- Do not speculate on **others' motives, states of mind, or unarticulated beliefs**.

Focus and Logistics:

- **Defer private or sidebar conversations** to avoid muddling the recording: the "Owl" microphone is extremely sensitive.
- Phones should be set to **silent or put away**.
- **LEAP** consultants will guide the discussion to keep it **focused and balanced**, so not every participant will need to speak on every topic.
- To make sure a variety of perspectives are heard, **LEAP** may occasionally redirect or move the conversation forward so that **less common viewpoints can be shared**.
- Subsequent touchpoints (one-on-one, small group, and community engagement events) will be set up by **LEAP**.