



TO: Honorable Mayor & Members of the Fort Lauderdale City Commission

FROM: Chris Lagerbloom, ICMA-CM, City Manager

DATE: May 4, 2021

TITLE: Motion Approving an Affiliation Agreement Between Nova Southeastern University and the City of Fort Lauderdale to Develop and Establish a Police Psychology Practicum Site Program - (**Commission Districts 1, 2, 3 and 4**)

Recommendation

Staff recommends the City Commission approve an Affiliation Agreement between Nova Southeastern University (Nova) and the City of Fort Lauderdale to develop and establish a Police Psychology Practicum Site Program.

Background

The Fort Lauderdale Police Department (FLPD) Psychologist, Dr. Robert Cipriano, provides psychological assistance to police department employees and their immediate family members. In addition, he provides training sessions, supervisor referrals/action plans, group debriefings/team building forums, and other support functions. Psychological services for police department employees were first offered in 2019. Since its inception, the number of employees accessing the FLPD's Psychological Services Program (PSP) has increased beyond one full-time position due to the volume and diversification of services provided (i.e. training, consultations, and treatment not only for FLPD employees but also for their immediate family members). The FLPD's goal in establishing a PSP is to provide confidential services to FLPD employees and their families when dealing and responding to traumatic and emotional situations. The FLPD also hopes to create a safe environment for those seeking assistance thereby ending the related stigma when asking for or getting help on a psychological level.

Nova has offered a unique opportunity to collaborate with the Fort Lauderdale Police Department in creating a Police Psychology Practicum Site under the supervision of Dr. Cipriano and in partnership with Dr. Van Hasselt from Nova Southeastern University. Nova has conducted practicum sites with partner agencies, both public and private, for many years and has approximately 100 sites currently ranging in topics related to their educational tracks. Currently, the Miami-Dade Police Department is the only other local law enforcement agency that partners with Nova and has a Police Psychology Practicum Site.

The Basics of the Practicum Program are:

- Program to begin in August of 2021.
- Nova Southeastern will select a third year Doctoral, Police Psychology Student to participate.
- Dr. Cipriano will agree on the assigned, student selection. Dr. Cipriano will be the designated practicum site supervisor.
- The Nova student is not paid and is not allowed to take compensation.
- The Nova student will be submitted to a full access background check prior to final approval.
- The Nova student will work 10-20 hours weekly, under Dr. Cipriano's license.
- The Nova student will be evaluated, coached, and mentored by Dr. Cipriano for a 12-month period, which can be renewed for one additional term.
- The Nova student will treat patients of various levels, as their skill set is defined, enhanced, and depending on the clientele that is scheduled. Initially, the student will accompany Dr. Cipriano during selected cases and they will learn progressively and be assigned various tasks to increase their professional knowledge and skill base.
- Nova will provide liability insurance policy of one million dollars per occurrence, three million dollars aggregate.
- All actions of the Practicum as well as the Psychological Services Program are conducted in compliance with HIPAA Requirements.

Partnering with Nova on the practicum program is beneficial for many reasons including identifying the need for services within the Department. Also, there is no cost and limited liability. The partnership also highlights the Fort Lauderdale Police Department's efforts in taking care of the mental well-being of its employees and the safety of our community.

Resource Impact

There is no fiscal impact associated with this action.

Strategic Connection

This item is a 2021 Commission Priority, advancing the Safety initiative.

This item supports the *Press Play Fort Lauderdale 2024* Strategic Plan, specifically advancing:

- The Public Safety Focus Area
- Goal 6: Build a safe and well-prepared community.
- Objective: Prevent and solve crime in all neighborhoods.

This item advances the *Fast Forward Fort Lauderdale 2035* Vision Plan: We Are Community

Attachment

Exhibit 1 – FLPD-NSU Practicum Clinical Agreement

Prepared by: Lynette Falzone, Police Captain

Department Director: Patrick Lynn, Interim Chief of Police