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Nation's First Childcare Center for Law Enforcement Receives Final Approval

NEW EXTENDED-HOURS, AFFORDABLE CENTER TO SERVE POLICE PERSONNEL

SAN DIEGO – Taking the final step for approvals, today a proposal to create the first childcare center for the San Diego Police Department (SDPD) was unanimously approved by the City Council.

The childcare facility will be customized to meet the needs of law enforcement by offering extended hours and affordable rates. The public private partnership effort was led by the Police Officers Association (POA) and championed by Mayor Todd Gloria and Police Chief David Nisleit.

"This first-of-its-kind childcare facility is part of a comprehensive effort to ensure SDPD is a great department to work for, and addressing the unique challenges officers face in trying to balance family and work life is proof of that commitment," Mayor Gloria said. "Careers in law enforcement are more demanding than ever, and this program will help ease officers' childcare burdens so they can concentrate on keeping San Diego one of the safest big cities in America."

The childcare center will be housed in a City facility that is leased to the POA, with care provided by KinderCare. Since the initial committee approval in recent weeks, agencies across the nation have begun reaching out to SDPD expressing their interest in replicating this model.

"The San Diego Police Department wants all officers to be able to have a long, successful career and raise a family," Chief Nisleit said. "This childcare center will provide a dedicated childcare option for SDPD employees working long hours and getting called out at unpredictable times. Thank you to our elected leaders, Police Officers Association and all of our partners for making this project a reality."

The initiative is funded for three years and includes a \$3 million investment from State grants secured by Senate President pro Tempore Toni Atkins that were allocated in the Fiscal Year 2022 budget, with additional philanthropic support from KinderCare and the Cushman Foundation's Making a Difference for San Diego grant program. The total for the three years is approximately \$3.7 million.

The program, serving children ages 5 and under, will offer extended operations from 5 a.m. to 10 p.m. and allow for emergency callout services to the employee's home. The additional hours and emergency callout service aims to address the challenges law enforcement personnel face when balancing raising a family with nontraditional schedules.

"The San Diego Police Officers Association has worked tirelessly for nearly four years and engaged with countless partners to bring this project to fruition," said POA President Jared Wilson. "The stress and financial barriers officers face when trying to find childcare to fit their unique needs is now going to be one less burden they have to bear."

The childcare center will charge 50% market rate as well as pay childcare employees 20% above market rate salaries, making it affordable for SDPD personnel and offering more competitive wages for the childcare workers.

With today's Council approval, the POA will now move on to the construction phase of the project with a goal of opening the facility in the next year.

WHAT PEOPLE ARE SAYING ABOUT THE PROGRAM:

Toni Atkins, Senate President pro Tempore

"I am pleased to have secured \$3 million in State funding for this innovative childcare center for San Diego. Law enforcement officers face challenging schedules and a challenging work environment. The added stress of where to get childcare can be alleviated by this public-private partnership. I'm also pleased that the greater availability of childcare that this center will provide can enhance the recruitment of more women and single parents into the department."

Councilmember Vivian Moreno

"The costs of daycare are so expensive that any opportunity we have to help civil servants, like our police officers, to provide care for their children while they serve the people of San Diego should be something we invest in. This public-private partnership could be a model for future efforts to help provide all city employees with affordable daycare options."

Councilmember Chris Cate

"Our City's law enforcement employees continually go above and beyond to protect and serve the needs of all San Diegans. For those with young children, that level of dedication and sacrifice is even greater. This unique childcare facility will improve the lives of our hard-working SDPD personnel and hopefully attract potential new hires."

Councilmember Raul Campillo

"Parents and guardians across San Diego understand the pressing need to create more quality, affordable childcare, and this childcare center for SDPD employees begins to solve that problem. This type of lease is first of its kind and is something we will work to emulate across the city to enhance

childcare options of all city employees. As City leaders, we are committed to creating affordable and quality childcare opportunities for working families in San Diego.”

Steve Cushman, Cushman Foundation

“I want to congratulate Chief Nisleit and the Police Officers Association for their perseverance over the past few years in bringing this project to fruition. The Cushman Foundation's Making a Difference for San Diego grant awarded three years ago started the funding for this historic public/private partnership.”

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