

Public Safety Ambassador Program



Year 1 (October 18, 2021 – October 18, 2022) Program Metrics

As part of CapMetro's new approach to public safety, we created the Public Safety Ambassador Program (PSA). On October 18th, 2021 we launched our team with 8 ambassadors.

On June 6, 2022, we added an additional 9 ambassadors. Our ambassadors assist with various safety and security operations while working as front-line customer service ambassadors. They work to ensure a safer and welcoming environment for our customers, staff and visitors by providing a visible presence on CapMetro's Transit System and Facilities. Their focus is to provide information and directions to customers and act as an informational conduit to the Public Safety Department, CapMetro's Operation Center and other CapMetro Departments.

Ambassadors respond to many incidents on our system and call other Public Safety resources as needed, such as Community Intervention Specialists or Police Officers. The following report will discuss the program metrics, operations and accomplishments during our first year.

Type of Calls for Service

1. **Check Welfare** – Any request to check on the health or safety of an individual
2. **Lost Child** – Incident reporting missing or lost child/children from CapMetro property
3. **Criminal Trespass** – Incident where individuals must be removed from CapMetro property
4. **Loitering** – An incident involving an individual, not a paying customer, waiting around idly, sleeping or utilizing CapMetro facilities without the intent to use CapMetro services
5. **Vandalism** – Any call for service related to the damage of CapMetro property
6. **Special Assignment** – An incident to perform a specific task or duty for a specific amount of time
7. **Suspicious Activity** – Any incident, event, individual or activity that seems out of the ordinary, unusual or out of place
8. **Suspicious Package** – Call for service related to a package or bag that appears suspicious to the reporting party, usually left unattended

In the first year, Public Safety Ambassadors made 5,077-Sweeps at Transit Centers or Park & Rides, 39,738 Customer Contacts, 19,744 Employee Contacts, 476 Calls for Service and 9 CIS referrals.

Definitions

Sweeps – Conduct safety and security checks for CapMetro customers, by checking for unsafe and or dangerous conditions, loitering and individuals that are not using CapMetro services. Inspect security systems and equipment to ensure operational use and report evidence of tampering, damage and/or malfunction.

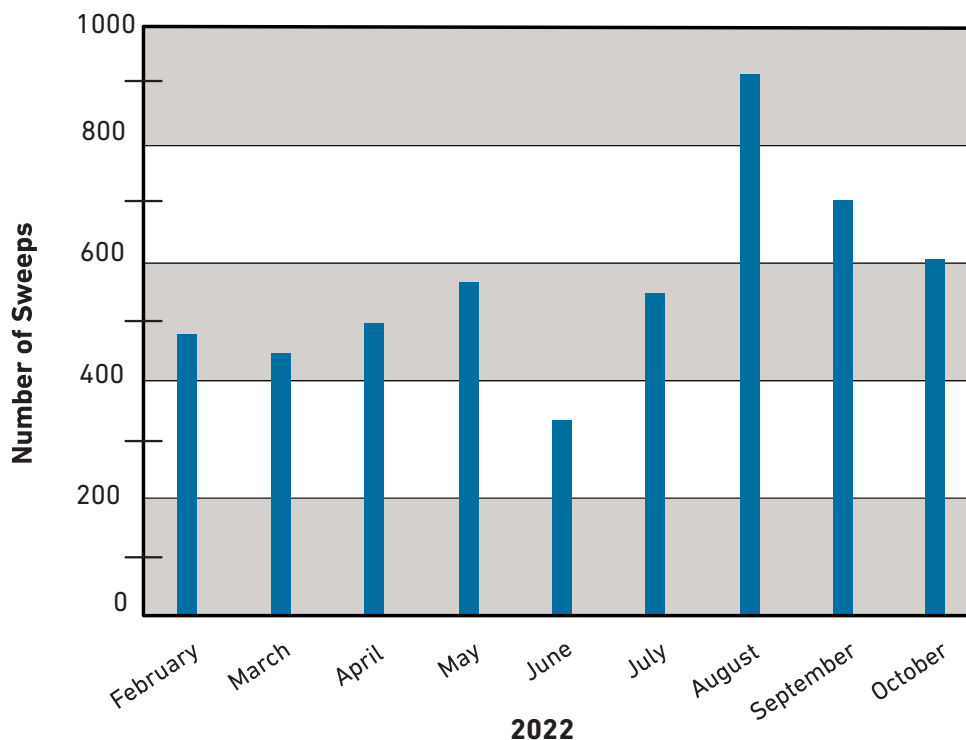
Customer contacts – Engaging and communicating with customers or visitors to provide assistance with system navigation and other customer service-related issues.

Employee contacts – Engaging with operators, CapMetro employees and stakeholders to address Security and Safety issues on the system.

Community Intervention Specialists (CIS) Referrals – Written information sent to Community Intervention Specialists via email for follow-up regarding a person or persons experiencing homelessness, mental health or substance abuse issues that have been identified as needing help accessing social services.

Calls for service – Calls that are dispatched by CapMetro’s public safety dispatchers.

Program Year 1 Totals	
Park & Ride and Transit Center Sweeps	5,027
Customers Contacts	39,738
Employee Contacts	19,744
Calls for Service	476
CIS Referrals	9



Hot Spots

Public Safety Ambassadors visited numerous locations during the first year, ultimately engaging with individuals and staff across the city. Some of the most visited locations for conducting safety and security checks are known as "Hotspots". These locations on the transit system tend to have high levels of quality-of-life issues and suspicious activity.

Emergency Preparedness

As part of Public Safety and Emergency Management's Emergency Response, Public Ambassadors will carry out certain responsibilities at the request and direction of CapMetro leadership and the CapMetro Emergency Operations Center during an emergency or disaster impacting the agency's service area, assets or personnel.

Community Intervention Specialist (CIS)

CIS staff trained Public Safety Ambassadors on the state of homelessness in Austin, provided a basic overview of resources and developed a clear referral process from PSAs to CIS staff. Lastly, CIS staff worked closely with the Public Safety Administrator to establish a new protocol for managing camps on property. This new protocol helps ensure individuals are connected to services and given ample notice before displacement.

Transit Police

Focused police officer's time on specific instances when law enforcement is truly needed.



Success Stories

05/06/22

Kolita Snowden and Crystal Mendez were flagged down at approximately 9:40am while patrolling South Park Meadows Park & Ride. An operator asked what she should do about finding a wallet and bag on the bus. Upon closer observation, Kolita and Crystal notice a small handgun in the bag and immediately called a TPO. A TPO arrived and took custody of the bag and the firearm.

03/17/2022

At Republic Square transit center, Officer Justin Cummings #7080, was working a secondary employment as a CapMetro officer. At approximately 8:21 p.m., Officer Cummings received a dispatched call in reference to a male with a knife, threatening citizens with it. Officer Cummings approached the suspect and gave him commands to put the knife down. The suspect refused and Officer Cummings removed his taser for deployment. Officer Cummings took the suspect down



to the ground while attempting to handcuff the suspect, but was not able to quickly. Public Safety Ambassadors, Tom Dixon, Patrick Cunningham and Kevin Manley were all present during this incident and asked Officer Cummings if he needed assistance detaining the suspect and Officer Cummings said "Yes". All three ambassadors assisted with the detention by holding the suspects legs which allowed Officer Cummings to gain control of the suspect and take him into custody without further escalation and without any injuries.

08/19/2022

Kolita Snowden and Crystal Mendez were conducting safety sweeps at Norwood Transit Center when they observed a male waving a knife as customers were walking by him in between buses. PSA's immediately called 911 and notified Security Dispatch. During the encounter they were also able to keep customers away from the knife wielding individual. APD arrived on scene and the suspect was taken into custody.

10/28/2022

Chris Megliorino noticed an unsheltered male at the bus stop at Menchaca and Redd who was very incoherent. He contacted EMS and when they arrived, they determined that he was suffering from hypothermia and had a core temperature of 85. The man was transported to the hospital for further treatment. According to the medics, the patient would have had an unfortunate outcome had it not been for the intervention of the Public Safety Ambassador.

Public Safety Ambassador Team

The successes and efforts of the Public Safety Ambassador would not be possible without the tremendous support of CapMetro's Board and executive team. The Public Safety Ambassador team is proud to be an industry leader in the transit system and looks forward to building and growing the program in years to come.