

# MENTAL HEALTH RESPONSE ADVISORY COMMITTEE

*ALBUQUERQUE, NEW MEXICO*

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**February 2025**

## **MHRAC 2024 Annual Report**

Pursuant to the Court Approved Settlement Agreement (“CASA”) in *U.S. v. The City of Albuquerque*, the Mental Health Response Advisory Committee (MHRAC) was created to “assist in identifying and developing solutions and interventions that are designed to lead to improved outcomes for individuals perceived to be or actually suffering from mental illness or experiencing a mental health crisis.” See Second Amended and Restated Court-Approved Settlement Agreement [Doc. 465-1], ¶ 111 (July 30, 2019). Additionally, it is the responsibility of MHRAC to “analyze and recommend appropriate changes to policies, procedures, and training methods regarding police contact with individuals with mental illness.” *Id.*

Since MHRAC’s last annual report, the Committee has been incredibly active in engaging with stakeholders and the City of Albuquerque (“CABQ”) to fulfill the Court’s purposes for Committee under the CASA. Discussions at MHRAC have been fruitful and the feedback from participants has been overwhelmingly positive. Credit is due to the support rendered by the parties to the CASA who believe in the importance of MHRAC to help improve outcomes. MHRAC is grateful for the parties’ and Court’s continued interest in the success of MHRAC.

MHRAC is happy to report to the Court that relationships with CABQ has improved overall for the purpose of collaboration and inter-departmental coordination. The effort to get to this point has not been without its challenges, however, and some concerns remain to be worked out in 2025. A priority topic of conversation in 2024, that will continue in 2025, is in relation to CABQ’s encampment policy, training to the policy, and oversight of the policy.

In 2024, MHRAC submitted comments to CABQ’s new encampment policy draft. These comments were approved by MHRAC in November 2024 and posted on the MHRAC website in December 2024. While CABQ did not include MHRAC encampment policy comments in their final encampment policy, MHRAC hopes that CABQ will continue to engage with the committee on this issue in 2025. MHRAC plans to continue to inform how CABQ trains to the policy, shares data on encampment removals, and will continue to provide a forum for public input and discussion on these issues.

MHRAC does recognize the efforts of CABQ to attend MHRAC and offer the departments’ intention to work more closely with CABQ. MHRAC sincerely hopes the dialogue on encampment issues continues to improve.

MHRAC continues to enjoy a productive relationship with APD, and CIU in particular. It is incredibly encouraging that APD has utilized MHRAC to workshop difficult issues officers come across in the community, and consider the feedback MHRAC gives. MHRAC believes this is exemplary of how reform happens in a productive and respectful manner. However, MHRAC is far from its potential to assist APD in reform efforts. Both fatal and non-fatal uses of force continue to occur in circumstances involving a behavioral health crisis.

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Looking forward to the coming year, MHRAC will seek to improve its process and impact. Focus for MHRAC needs to continue to be in the recruitment of active participants and the establishment of MHRAC as a commission in City Ordinance. A subcommittee of MHRAC completed a draft MHRAC ordinance in December 2024 and the subcommittee will work with the Albuquerque City Council and CABQ to see the draft ordinance through the city council legislative process in 2025. MHRAC will also build on the success of publishing policy feedback and will continue to improve transparency for the public on the policy review process. MHRAC will continue to seek guidance and support from CABQ to see that MHRAC becomes a permanent fixture beyond the life of the CASA.

MHRAC thanks the Court and the parties for the time and attention to this, and MHRAC hopes to report on its continued success in the coming reporting periods.

**Respectfully Submitted,**

**Rachel Biggs**  
***MHRAC Outgoing Co-Chair***