

**FY 2023-2024 BUDGET QUESTION**  
***Response to Request for Information***

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DEPARTMENT(S): Austin Police Department

CBQ NO.: 128

REQUESTED BY: Vela

DATE REQUESTED: 07/25/2023

DATE POSTED: 08/04/2023

REQUEST: How much funding is allocated for training officers on interactions and encounters with people suffering from dementia, Alzheimer's, and similar conditions, often but not always associated with advanced age? Who would receive training, i.e., existing patrol officers, new hires, commanders, etc.? How often would the training be offered? Would it be separate training or incorporated into existing training? Would the training be mandatory or optional? If not already planned as a specific component of the FY23-24 budget, is there funding available that could be used to provide such training, whether a) entirely through a contract with an outside vendor; b) contract with a vendor to design the program, which will then be used by APD; c) designed and provided entirely in-house by APD; or d) another delivery method (please specify)?

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**RESPONSE:**

As it stands, various courses in both APD cadet training and in-service training contain aspects of handling and de-escalating situations involving persons with Alzheimer's, dementia, and other related conditions; however, there is no single course that covers the material or a comprehensive program.

Currently, there is no allocated funding targeted towards the development of a comprehensive program for dementia, Alzheimer's, and similar conditions. The Texas Commission on Law Enforcement (TCOLE) provides an online training course that touches on Alzheimer's and dementia which could be implemented immediately. (Course title – First Responder Training: Working w/ Older Adults – 3908)

By partnering with the National Council of Certified Dementia Practitioners (NCCDP), we can ensure that our officers receive comprehensive training that equips them with the knowledge and skills needed to handle dementia-related incidents safely and compassionately.

**Who would receive training, i.e., existing patrol officers, new hires, commanders, etc.?**

- All in service personnel including new hires.

**How often would the training be offered?**

- Training frequency would depend on various factors such as budget, instructor availability and the use of external instructors. However, in-service training could be offered on a monthly basis.

**Would it be separate training or incorporated into existing training? Would the training be mandatory or optional?**

- Incorporating the training into existing training programs would be advantageous, however this would be dependent upon the specific requirements of the course.

**Would the training be mandatory or optional?**

The training would be mandatory for all new hires and FTO's and provided as an advanced education elective for in-service personnel.

The NCCDP offers specialized training programs designed specifically for first responders. Their Certified First Responder Dementia Trainer® program (CFRDT®) is a comprehensive course that covers various aspects of dementia, including understanding the disease, recognizing common symptoms, effective communication strategies, and de-escalation techniques. This training would greatly enhance our officers' ability to respond appropriately to individuals with dementia, minimizing the risk of harm to both the individual and our officers.

One option we have is to utilize the NCCDP's trainers to conduct the training for APD. These trainers are highly experienced and possess in-depth knowledge of dementia care. They can provide our officers with a unique perspective and insights into best practices when dealing with dementia-related incidents and ensure that our officers receive the most up-to-date and evidence-based training available. At this time, there is no allocated funding to support this project.

Alternatively, we could also consider a collaborative approach by combining APD instructors with the NCCDP's trainers. This would allow us to leverage our existing resources and expertise while benefiting from the specialized knowledge and training provided by the NCCDP. By working together, we can create a comprehensive training program that meets the specific needs of our agency and community. There is an 8-hour Trainer certification program that will allow APD instructors to conduct the 5-hour comprehensive "Alzheimer's Disease and Dementia Care Seminar for First Responders" course. The cost for an APD instructor to become a Certified First Responder Dementia Trainer is approximately \$1,500 which could be absorbed within APD's existing budget.