



Developing Community-Based Public Safety Programs

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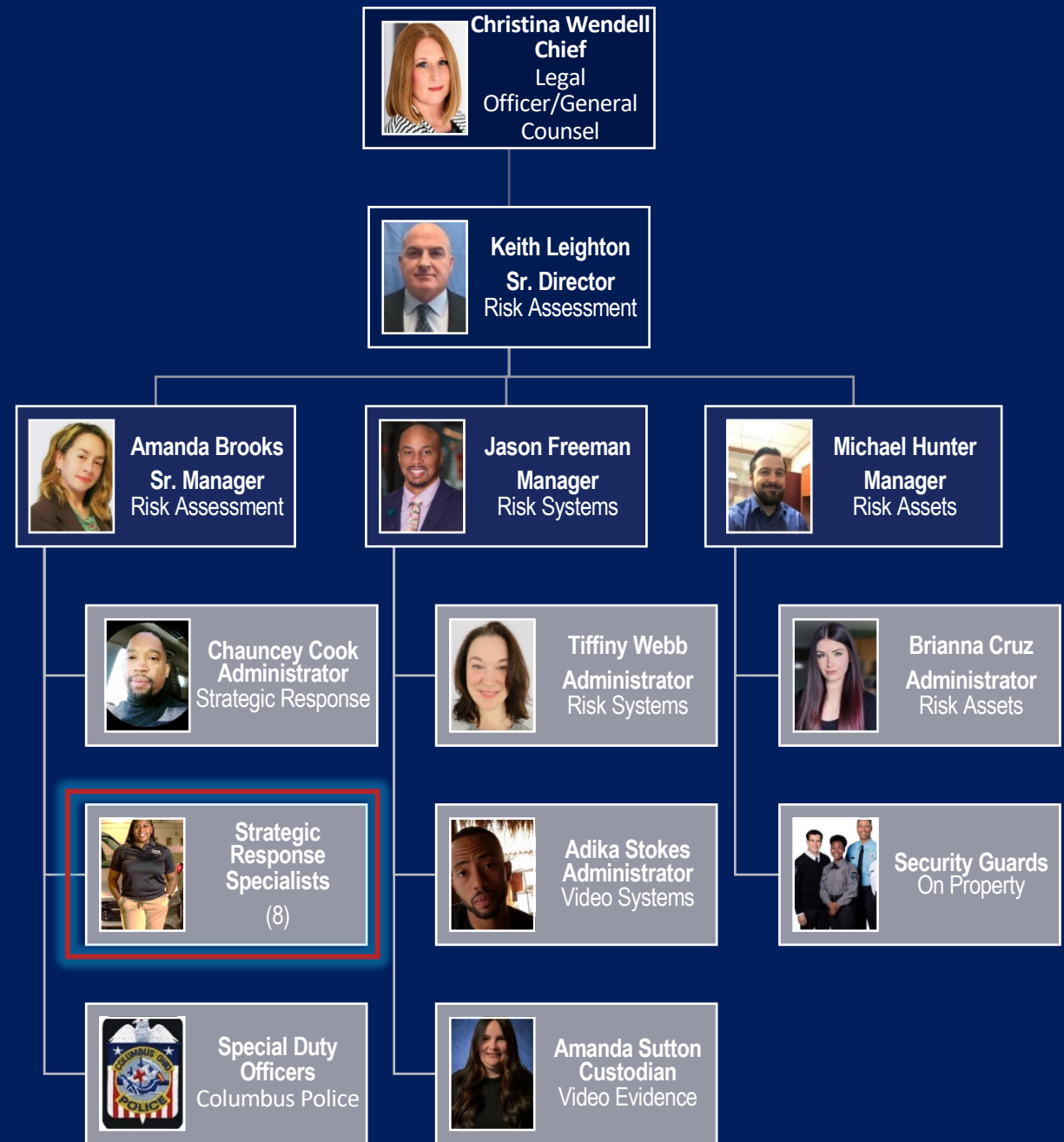
COTA Strategic Response Specialists

COTA

Risk Assessment

Our division is comprised of a team of dedicated professionals who are committed to fulfilling our mission of ensuring a safe and secure transit system for all.

With our combined expertise and diverse backgrounds, we work diligently to identify and mitigate potential risks, making certain that we maintain the highest standards of safety throughout our operations.



COTA *Strategic Response Specialists*

Strategic Response Specialists are change agents within our community to increase safety and security while serving vulnerable populations and proactively addressing issues including unhoused people, substance misuse, and mental health concerns.



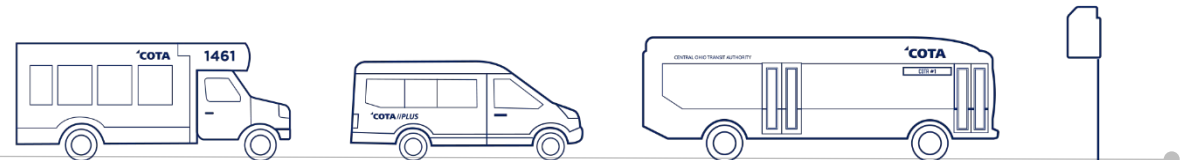
The Strategic Response

Tasks of the Strategic Response Specialists

- Address vulnerable populations with compassion and dignity
- Proactively monitor high ridership lines to have a visual presence and engage riders
- Physical presence at Park and Rides, transit centers, stops and shelters
- Partner and support "Safe and Secure COTA For All" task force
- Align organizational missions of security, accident investigation, claims, and litigation and insurance defense within a single division

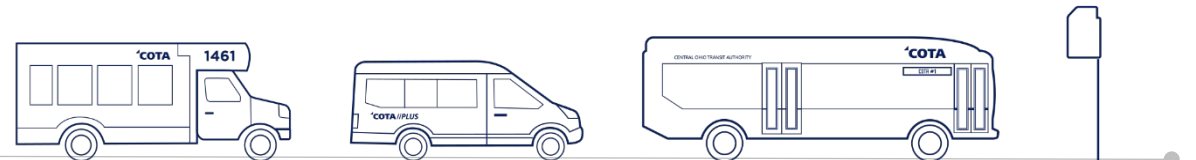
Specialized Training

- Accident Investigations
- ADA
- COTA Strategic Plan
- LINK US Initiative
- Public Records Requests
- Photography
- Report Writing
- Special Duty Officer (SDO) Program/K9
- TSA First Observer
- National Incident Management System
- Active Shooter Training - DHS
- Mental Health Training – North Community Center
- Human Trafficking – Out of Darkness Columbus
- De-Escalation Training – CPD



Strategic Community Partnerships

- Mt. Carmel Hospital Street Medicine Team
- Capital Crossroads Special Improvement District (SID)
- Franklin County Public Health Department
- ADAMH
- University District Organization
- 30+ nonprofit and other community organizations (Task Force)





Safe and Secure COTA for All Task Force

COTA's Safe and Secure for All was created to lessen security issues and safety concerns for all and to help solve issues from a human lens. The goal is to identify solutions that will help connect people with specific needs to existing resources.

Safe and Secure COTA for All *Task Force*

OBJECTIVES

- Reduce non-destination/shelter-seeking customers on COTA
- Partner with nonprofit and public partners to identify solutions
- Address shelter needs with a focus on keeping customers safe and spaces clean and inviting.
- Help to create an environment where all customers feel welcome and safe on our transit vehicles.
- Serve as a collaborative partner to provide access to mental health and/or addiction resources and shelters.

OUR PLAN

- Identify a team of nonprofit and public partners and organizations to help address the prevalence of non-destination and shelter-seeking customers
- Develop a task force with goals, timing and report out-process to the COTA Leadership Team
- Utilize the Task Force to create deliverables to achieve objectives through human-focused tactics
- Utilize partner expertise, resources and initiatives to help solve problems like homelessness, addiction and mental health.

A photograph of a man with a beard and a baseball cap driving a car. The image is partially covered by a semi-transparent blue overlay on the left side. The text is overlaid on the blue area.

Safe & Secure COTA For All Task Force

Community Partnerships

Safe and Secure COTA for All

Task Force



30+ Community Partnerships and counting...

Impact on the Unhoused Community

Collaboration between Task Force members and the Strategic Response Specialists team has been especially impactful in connecting unhoused individuals with community resources

Successful Initiatives

- Warming and Cooling stations
- Overnight lodging during extreme weather
- Winter clothing drive
- Collaboration with the Community Shelter Board (CSB), Mt. Carmel Outreach and the SID.
- Community Ambassador Team (CAT) cards
- Brandon and Richard success stories

These achievements demonstrate the positive impact we are making in addressing the needs of the unhoused community





Success Stories Brandon & Richard

Success Story

Brandon

- Brandon was involved in frequent security incidents due to his excessive intoxication on COTA busses. This intoxication would lead to Brandon becoming unresponsive and requiring EMS response to the scene.
- Brandon had been transported to local hospitals over 50 times. The cost of his medical care due to these behaviors was estimated to cost taxpayers over \$100,000.
- He was approached by SRS in 2022. Brandon confided to SRS that he exaggerated his intoxication so that he could be admitted to a hospital due to not having adequate housing. He was open to assistance.
- The SRS team started researching different facilities to assist Brandon with long-term care and shelter. This process is ongoing.
- In March of 2023, Brandon entered a detox program at an engagement center called Maryhaven. He later accepted further treatment after receiving a sponsorship from a local hospital.

Success Story

Richard

- Richard was sleeping within a COTA bus stop when he was first approached by the SRS team. Richard did not have housing, had mental health concerns, was alcohol dependent, and only had one toe on each foot. He was open to assistance.
- The SRS team contacted Netcare and was informed that they could assist Richard.
- Netcare is Franklin County's 24-hour mental health and substance abuse crisis intervention and assessment services for adults and adults with developmental disabilities.
- Richard was transported to Netcare where he was admitted and transitioned into the facility.

“ We provide solutions that ***connect*** people to prosperity through innovation, dedication and teamwork.”

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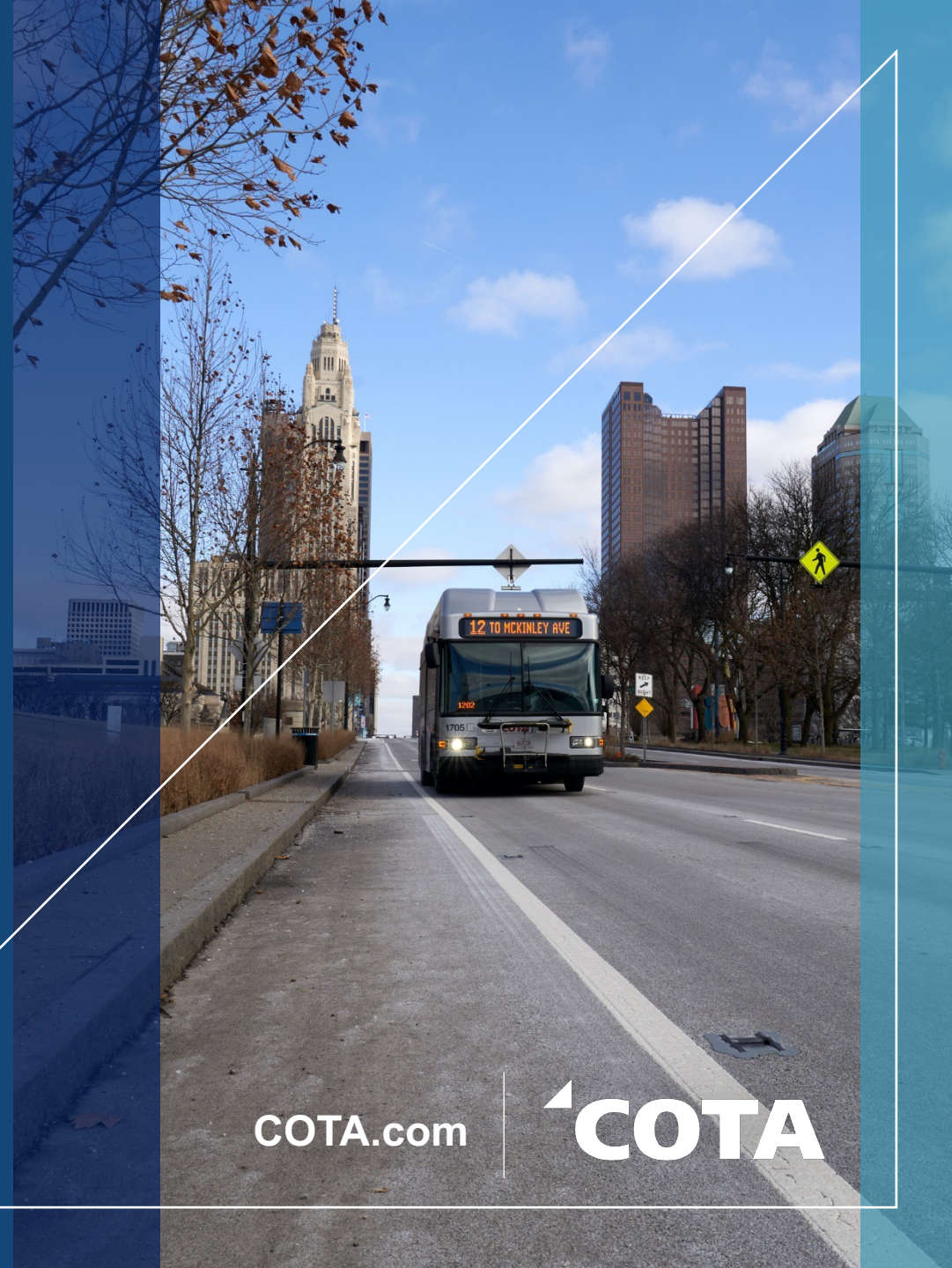


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Managing Homeless, Vulnerable, and Migrant Persons



THANK YOU.

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