



VISALIA POLICE DEPARTMENT

Jason Salazar, Chief of Police

Sergeant Damon Maurice, Public Information Officer
(559) 713-4216 (office) / (559) 713-4807 (fax)
damon.maurice@visalia.city

NEWS RELEASE

June 28, 2017

Visalia Police Department Announces HOPE Team

The Visalia Police Department would like to announce the creation of the Homeless Outreach & Proactive Enforcement (HOPE) Team, consisting of two full-time officers and a supervising agent. The HOPE Team began as a pilot project in January 2016 to provide a more focused response to the homeless issue in the City of Visalia and became a permanent team in May 2017. The HOPE Team officers work closely with the City's Code Enforcement Team to collaborate more effectively with other essential community stakeholders in reducing the impact of homelessness on our community, reduce the impact of homeless related calls for service on patrol officers, and to develop longer term solutions for both the community at-large as well as the homeless population.

The mission of the HOPE Team is to reduce homelessness in the City of Visalia by working with stakeholders to find long-term, supportive housing for homeless individuals through outreach and community education, and also to proactively address the public safety concerns and impacts related to homelessness. The HOPE Team works with stakeholders and the community through collaboration, education, intervention, and proactive enforcement to minimize the impacts of homeless in Visalia.

We encourage Visalia residents to report ongoing homeless related issues/concerns directly to the HOPE officers: For locations south of Hwy 198 contact Officer Leroy Hickey at: (559)713-4421 or via email: leroy.hickey@visalia.city and for locations north of Hwy 198 contact Officer Nate Henry at (559)713-4422 or via email: nathan.henry@visalia.city. HOPE officers regular hours are: Monday-Friday 7 AM – 5 PM. Supervising Agent Andrew Swarthout can also be contacted at (559) 713-4160 or via email: andrew.swarthout@visalia.city.

If an issue cannot wait for a HOPE officer and you need a police response, contact the Visalia Police Department Communications Center at either the non-emergency number of 734-8117 or 911 for emergencies.

