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**MAYOR LIGHTFOOT AND CPD LAUNCH NEW PARTNERSHIP INITIATIVE WITH
LOCAL BUSINESSES ACROSS CHICAGO**

*All 22 Districts to have designated Business Liaison Officers to strengthen the ties
between entrepreneurs and their communities*

Mayor Lori E. Lightfoot today joined Chicago Police Department (CPD) Superintendent Eddie T. Johnson and Department of Business Affairs and Consumer Protection (BACP) Commissioner Rosa Escareno to launch a new community policing initiative designed to build and foster a collaborative partnership with local businesses in communities across Chicago. As part of the initiative, all 22 police districts will have a designated Business Liaison Officer to work closely with the District Commander and BACP to provide positive engagement opportunities for entrepreneurs, address chronic problems or concerns of business owners and improve overall public safety through collaboration with the community.

"Small businesses are the lifeblood of our economy, and if we want our neighborhoods to thrive and grow, then we have to ensure we're supporting our local entrepreneurs while rooting out any bad actors," said Mayor Lightfoot. "This initiative is not only about building partnerships and nurturing trust between small businesses, it represents a new era of collaboration between the Chicago Police Department and our communities."

Each Business Liaison Officer will work directly with businesses in their district to establish engagement strategies to encourage positive community interactions and relationships. Districts will hold monthly community meetings with all local business owners to strengthen the ties between entrepreneurs and their communities by notifying residents of available neighborhood workforce opportunities and ensuring all businesses are connected to city network services and resources. These new meetings specifically focus on local business concerns and opportunities versus the broader community public safety issues discussed at CAPS meetings.



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"Our approach to community policing serves as the engine powering our public safety efforts, and that includes the relationships with local businesses at the district level," said Superintendent Johnson. "Business Liaison Officers will play pivotal roles in ensuring local businesses in each district have the support, resources and access needed to remain in good standing as good stewards of their respective communities."

To ensure businesses within the district are operating responsibly, the Business Liaison Officers will work in partnership with BACP to address targeted problem businesses associated with any illegal activity, license violations and community complaints related to public safety. As part of this enforcement effort, districts will develop plans individualized to each problem business based upon the identified issues and the strategies for resolution agreed upon by the Business Liaison Officer and business owner.

"BACP takes seriously its mission to support Chicago's local business community while ensuring a safe and vibrant marketplace for businesses," said Rosa Escareno, BACP Commissioner. "With this partnership, CPD and BACP will be better equipped than ever to promote good business practices, hold bad actors accountable and create thriving commercial districts in our neighborhoods."

Throughout the year, CPD will also host violence deterrence meetings as a direct approach to intervene with individual problem businesses that have seen criminal activity on or around the business property. Each meeting agenda will be based on specific business and public safety topics for police officers, community members and local business owners to discuss and collaborate on a solution before enhanced enforcement and litigation efforts are required. By working closely with CPD's Business Liaison Officer, BACP is able to make a stronger case to cripple problem business activity.

"Our community businesses are proud to partner with the Chicago Police to ensure every neighborhood entrepreneur has the support and resources they need to succeed," said South Shore Chamber of Commerce Executive Director Tonya Trice.

This new initiative is part of the Chicago Police Department's community policing strategies and its ongoing efforts to improve the communication and cooperation between police officers and the communities they serve.

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