

LOS ANGELES POLICE DEPARTMENT



MICHEL R. MOORE
Chief of Police

ERIC GARCETTI
Mayor

P.O. Box 30158
Los Angeles, CA 90030
Telephone: (213) 486-8590
TTY: (877) 275-5273
Ref #: 3.5

September 23, 2020

The Honorable Information Technology and General Services Committee &
The Honorable Public Safety Committee
c/o Patrice Lattimore
Office of the City Clerk
Room 395, City Hall
Los Angeles, California 90012

Subject: Joint Committee Report Relative to a Community Online Reporting Service Expansion for Cybercrimes and Reporting by Minors

Honorable Members:

The Committee has requested the Department to report on the feasibility of the following enhancements to the Community Online Reporting Service (CORS):

1. Opportunities to expand CORS to include cybercrimes;
2. Allowing those under the age of 18 to file a police report through CORS;
3. Linking the MyLA311 app to CORS so that a community member can be redirected from MyLA311 to CORS; and,
4. Expanding MyLA311 to include a crime tip line that will allow community members to log reports on cybercrime red-flags.

The Office of Operations assumed primary responsibility for evaluating the feasibility of each and worked with the identified partners to develop the following report.

Expanding CORS to Include Cybercrimes

Working in conjunction with the entity who is primarily responsible for investigating cybercrimes, Commercial Crimes Division (CCD), Detective Bureau, the Office of Operations determined it was feasible to accept online crime reports for 'Unauthorized Computer Access' and 'Online Scams'.

For both of these report types, and similar to existing online reports, CCD identified several important pre-filing criteria to ensure the online expansion does not negatively impact the ability

to identify and apprehend suspects or recover property for victims. Importantly, the feasibility of accepting reports for cybercrimes through CORS is dependent on these criteria because of the real-time nature of the offenses. A data breach or fraudulent monetary withdraw need to be investigated immediately, often requiring live follow-up with the victim, for any ability to have the funds transfer reversed or a suspect identity made known.

Thus, the pre-filing criteria will need to include ensuring there was no monetary loss, that no data was stolen (such as client lists for businesses), the victim is an adult, no named suspects exist, and no extortion or other crimes occurred in conjunction with it (such as criminal threats of harm).

As such, the draft definitions and examples of the two offenses would be presented to community members as the following:

Unauthorized Computer Access: *unauthorized access to your physical computer or cellular device through hacking or phishing, or access to an online-accessible account, including social media where there is no financial loss.*

Examples: Someone accessed your social media account and made changes to your account. OR You received malware designed to take control of your computer, including ransomware on your personal, at-home computer.

Online Scam: *an attempt to trick you into sending money to someone by presenting a deceptive story claiming a need for the money.*

Examples: Someone pretends to be a romantic interest but requests money to be able to see or spend time with you. OR You received a fake wire-transfer request email, including emails stating you are due to receive an inheritance with a request to provide bank account information, but you recognized the scam and did not send money.

This option was deemed feasible. As part of a broader expansion of CORS, the Office of Operations, in conjunction with Application Support and Development Division, will be responsible for implementing these reports.

Allowing Those Under the Age of 18 to File a Police Report through CORS

The Office of Operations collaborated internally with Detective Bureau and externally with the City Attorney's Office to explore the feasibility of this option.

Deputy City Attorney Jonathan Bislig, Public Safety General Counsel section, indicated that, while there are no laws prohibiting a minor from reporting a crime online, there are several important considerations that present with minors. Specifically, minors present unique concerns for protecting their identity and personal information. Additionally, there would need to be an alert mechanism that might require mandated reporting requirements if specific sensitive allegations were alleged. Lastly, to the extent follow-up is required, the Department would need to conform with existing requirements for interviewing minor victims.

Internally, Juvenile Division, through Detective Bureau, reviewed the proposal and determined that CORS is not an appropriate venue for crime reports by minors. As with the City Attorney's

Office, the protection of the minor's identity and personal information was a paramount concern—particularly since a third-party information provider assists in the provisioning of the service.

Additionally, Juvenile Division notes that some criminal allegations require immediate response from law enforcement, and, generally that a minor's parent(s) need to be involved when a crime is committed against a child; similarly, current in-person procedures exist to manage circumstances where the guardian may have culpability in the offense.

As such, the Office of Operations has concluded that this option is infeasible and is not including this as part of the planned expansion effort.

Linking the MyLA311 App to CORS

The Office of Operations and Application Development and Support Division held a conference call with the City's Information Technology Agency (ITA) to discuss the recommendations related to MyLA311.

The CORS reporting website has a mobile optimized version with unique links for each report type. As such, it was discussed that ITA will work to integrate the report links into upcoming MyLA311 app updates.

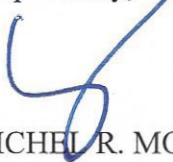
Expanding MyLA311 To Include A Crime Tip Line That Will Allow Community Members To Log Reports On Cybercrime Red-Flags

Similar to above, this request was discussed with ITA, who indicated an ability to add this to the MyLA311. The Department's preference for implementation is to integrate this functionality by leveraging the existing Crime Stoppers tip service, as cybercrime tips are already a developed workflow within Crime Stoppers.

Both of the MyLA311 integrations will be done by the Information Technology Agency. Meanwhile, the Department looks forward to implementing cybercrime reporting along with a significant expansion of existing reports, including those with investigative follow-up, which are currently targeted for the end of the year.

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact Evaluation and Administration Unit, Office of Operations, at (213) 486-6050.

Respectfully,



MICHEL R. MOORE
Chief of Police

FACT SHEET

COMMUNITY ONLINE REPORTING SERVICE (CORS) EXPANSION FOR CYBERCRIME REPORTS

September 11, 2020

Purpose. The purpose of this Fact Sheet is to provide information related to a cybercrime expansion in the Community Online Reporting Service (CORS).

Background. On August 5, 2020, City Council approved a Motion to implement a joint request from the Information Technology and General Services Committee and the Public Safety Committee. The request, in pertinent part, instructed the Department to report on the feasibility of accepting cybercrimes on CORS.

Findings. On September 3, 2020, the Office of Operations (OO) held a working group with Commercial Crimes Division (CCD) to discuss the Council motion.

Preliminarily, OO explained that the goal was to accommodate City Council's wishes while ensuring there was not a detrimental impact on the ability for CCD to identify suspects or recovered property for a victim. With that framework in mind, a general list of qualifying criteria was developed to ensure negative impacts were mitigated, including:

- An adult victim;
- No monetary loss;
- No data stolen; and,
- No corresponding extortion or other crimes.

Reports that were determined to be appropriate for online reporting included many common unauthorized computer access reports, such as those indicating that social media account access was compromised. Additionally, personal computer "ransomware" was deemed allowable, provided the victim did not pay the ransom (ransomware is effectively a virus that destroys files on a computer unless a payment is made to the perpetrator).

Additionally, "Online Scams" as a public-facing category would include many computer-facilitated *attempted* Bunco Theft/Theft by Trickery reports. Commercial Crimes Division reported a number of reports for popular 'romance scams' and 'foreign royalty' scams. The former usually involves a suspect attempting to attract a potential love interest, followed by a subsequent request for money to make the relationship materialize in person. The latter involves the now-ubiquitous emails representing an upcoming inheritance from foreign royalty and requiring bank account information to complete the windfall.

As monetary loss would be excluded from online reporting (due to the need to become immediately aware in order to preserve the best chances for reversing the loss), online scams would only include reports for not-yet-completed offenses. As an example, this would include (as an attempt), the victim who has been corresponding with a suspect posing as a potential lover but who recognizes the red flags when he begins to request wire transfers.

FACT SHEET
COMMUNITY ONLINE REPORTING SERVICE (CORS) EXPANSION FOR
CYBERCRIME REPORTS

September 11, 2020

Conclusion. The Department should expand CORS to include the two categories of cybercrimes listed above, with the qualifying criteria identified to mitigate negative impacts to investigations. Additionally, the implementation of cybercrimes should be done in the same cautious manner as the Identify Theft expansion—that is, beginning with a soft launch, followed by internal evaluation and improvements, before widespread promotion of the availability.

(km) 9/17/20

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY AND GENERAL SERVICES and PUBLIC SAFETY COMMITTEES' REPORT relative to expanding the Community Online Reporting Service (CERS) to include cybercrimes.

Recommendations for Council action, pursuant to Motion (Blumenfield - Bonin):

1. INSTRUCT the Los Angeles Police Department (LAPD) to report in regard to the feasibility and opportunities to expand CERS to include cybercrimes.
2. INSTRUCT the LAPD and REQUEST the City Attorney to report in regard to the feasibility of allowing those under the age of 18 to file a police report.
3. INSTRUCT the LAPD to work with the Information Technology Agency (ITA) to report in regard to the feasibility of linking the MyLA311 app to CERS in such a way that a community member can be redirected from MyLA311 to CERS, or integrated so that a community member can make a police report on MyLA311 which is then sent to the LAPD.
4. INSTRUCT the LAPD and ITA to report in regard to the feasibility of expanding MyLA311 to include a crime tip line that will allow community members to log reports on cybercrime red-flags.

Fiscal Impact Statement: Neither the City Administrative Officer nor the Chief Legislative Analyst has completed a financial analysis of this report.

Community Impact Statement: None submitted.

Summary:

On June 18, 2020, the Information Technology and General Services (ITGS) Committee considered a Motion (Blumenfield - Bonin) relative to expanding the Community Online Reporting Service to include cybercrimes. According to the Motion, cybercrimes are not a new type of crime; however, they are rapidly increasing in scope and threat. With the ubiquity of digital technology, people of all ages are targets for criminals inside and outside of the City of Los Angeles. From social media to commercial operations our private data, wellbeing, and financial assets are at risk of exploitation. The FBI Internet Crime report notes that California, in 2017, was the top target nationwide with 41,974 reported internet crimes. The same report indicates that nearly 20,000 reported crimes occurred on social media. Many more crimes which take place over social media and internet platforms go unreported and often unnoticed. As new social media platforms, online forums, trends, and opportunities to connect individuals arise, so too do the opportunities for bad actors to abuse these. The threats to individuals and society are hastened by the pace at which criminals can acquire new technology or knowledge to exploit social media platforms. The average consumer neither has the time nor the wherewithal to learn and implement the most up-to-date cyber-protection information. Furthermore, the terms of service and content guidelines are often changing, leaving uncertainty for individual users.

The current and expanding landscape of social media platforms is a mix of communities where bad actors and criminals can exploit everyone. The young, elderly, and those from

disadvantaged communities, in particular, are most vulnerable. The rate of change for best-practices online and on social media is constantly changing and people are often uninformed. Worse yet, criminal elements purposely prey on the good faith and trust of community members to commit heinous actions such as human trafficking and lure others into violent situations. The role of an online crime reporting tool is one that empowers many community members to seek justice when they otherwise may be subject to retaliation or further victimization.

Currently, the LAPD has an electronic police report system called the Community Online Reporting Service. This service increases the likelihood that community members will engage with LAPD to report non-emergency crimes including harassing calls, lost property, theft, and vandalism. This online reporting system also has the potential to serve as a means for community members of all backgrounds to report cybercrimes if it is expanded to include prominent cybercrimes. Some prominent cybercrimes include hacking, theft, network intrusion, denial of service attacks, and unlawful access to computers. Other crimes, because of the ubiquity of social media and internet access, are now crimes with a digital fingerprint such as credible threats of violence, abuse, and trafficking. At this time the Community Online Reporting Service is limited to those over the age of 18. While this may be responsive to youth privacy concerns, this limitation inhibits the vulnerable youth populations from engaging with law enforcement. Expanding the online reporting tool to accommodate the needs of those under 18 years old will allow vulnerable youth to engage with law enforcement safely and privately.

Now known as a primary conduit for the public to engage with the City, this platform can be expanded to aid in the fight against cybercrimes and promote social media safety. The effort to fight against cybercrimes and improve social media safety can be enhanced by allowing community members to select an option to file an online police report via MyLA311 and be redirected to the Community Online Reporting Service. Further enhancements can be to integrate the online police reporting into MyLA311 so that a community member can file an online police report on the MyLA311 app, which is subsequently routed to the LAPD. The ability of the LAPD to respond to and investigate cybercrimes can be enhanced by making the appropriate tip lines more prominent on apps used by the community. Integrating a tip line into MyLA311 can help aggregate tips about criminal red-flags useful to the LAPD.

After consideration and having provided an opportunity for public comment, the ITGS Committee moved to recommend approval of the Motion as detailed in the above recommendations. Subsequently, on June 25, 2020, the Public Safety Committee also considered this matter and after consideration and having provided an opportunity for public comment, moved to concur with the ITGS Committee. This matter is now submitted to Council for its consideration.

Respectfully Submitted,

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY AND GENERAL SERVICE COMMITTEE

<u>MEMBER</u>	<u>VOTE</u>
LEE:	YES
BLUMENFIELD:	YES

RODRIGUEZ: YES

PUBLIC SAFETY COMMITTEE

<u>MEMBER</u>	<u>VOTE</u>
RODRIGUEZ:	YES
O'FARRELL:	YES
BUSCAINO:	ABSENT
RYU:	YES
LEE:	YES

ARL
6/25/20

-NOT OFFICIAL UNTIL COUNCIL ACTS-