

ASSESSMENT AND REPORT ON FINDINGS ON POLICING NATIONAL BEST PRACTICES

SUBMITTED BY:



IN PARTNERSHIP WITH



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Table of Contents

I. Introduction	5
II. About the IntegrAssure Team	7
III. Executive Summary.....	8
IV. The Foundation of Our Work.....	11
V. Our Paradigm	13
Stakeholder engagement.....	14
VI. Use of force	16
Introduction	16
What has already been done in Colorado?	18
Recent National Trends on Use of Force Policy.....	20
Summary	20
Shift from a use of force continuum to a decision-making model	20
Documentation of Pointing of a Firearm	22
Duty to Intervene and Mandatory Reporting.....	23
Use of Chokeholds and Other Neck Restraints.....	24
Use of No-Knock Warrants and Police Raids	25
Required Use of De-escalation Tactics	25
Implementation	26
Use of Force Training	29
De-escalation Training	29
Peer Intervention Training.....	33
Procedural Justice Training.....	35
Implicit Bias Training.....	37
Implementation	40
Innovations and Emerging Practices.....	45
Data Collection.....	45
Community Engagement and Transparency with the Public	46
Oversight.....	47
VII. Crime and community harm reduction	49
Introduction	49
What has already been done in Colorado?	51
Overview of Practices Considered	54

Criminal Justice Reform Act	57
Chicago Narcotics Arrest Diversion Program.....	61
Staten Island Heroin Overdose Prevention and Education (HOPE) Program.....	64
Neighborhood Justice Program	68
Crisis Assistance Helping Out on the Streets (CAHOOTS).....	71
CommunityStat	77
RxStat	81
P.A.A.R.I. One2One Engagement to Recovery Program.....	84
Los Angeles Police Department (LAPD) Mental Evaluation Unit.....	87
San Francisco Financial Justice Project.....	91
Oklahoma Rural Crisis Response	94
The Respond, Empower, Advocate, and Listen (R.E.A.L.) Program.....	98
Innovations and Emerging Practices.....	101
A Police-Mental Health Linkage for Jail Diversion and Reconnection to Care	101
Safety and Health Integration in Enforcing the Laws on Drugs (SHIELD)	103
Transform911	105
VIII. Community-based responses for lower-level offenses and calls for service.....	107
Introduction	107
What has already been done in Colorado?	108
Overview of Practices Considered	109
Red Hook Community Justice Center	110
Kansas City Downtown and River Market Community Improvement District Ambassadors	113
Community and Law Enforcement Assisted Recovery (CLEAR)	116
Regional Response for Rural Departments.....	119
Innovations and Emerging Practices.....	122
My City at Peace	122
Atlanta Police Foundation	123
University of Southern California Social Work and Public Safety Initiative	124
IX. Strategies to effectively move law enforcement and the community forward	127
Introduction	127
What has already been done in Colorado?	129
Overview of Practices Considered	130
Washtenaw County (MI) Outreach Worker Program.....	132

Austin Community Immersion Program	135
Micro-community policing plans / neighborhood-driven policing.....	138
Kansas City No Violence Alliance	141
Juvenile Detention Alternatives Initiative (JDAI)	144
Multi-Agency Resource Center (MARC).....	148
The San Francisco Police Department (SFPD) CIT Liaison Program.....	151
Innovations and Emerging Practices.....	154
Reconciliation	154
CS360	155
Independent Third-Party Oversight.....	158
Debriefing after violent arrests	159
Place Network Investigations (PNI)	160
X. Innovative approaches to officer mental health, recruitment, and retention to address trauma and ensure officer preparedness for community engagement	163
Introduction	163
What has already been done in Colorado?	165
Overview of Practices Considered	167
In-House Mental Health Professionals	168
Police Organization Providing Peer Assistance (POPPA)	172
The American Foundation for Suicide Prevention Interactive Screening Program	176
New Jersey Resiliency Program for Law Enforcement	180
Innovations and Emerging Practices.....	184
Investing in excellence in first-line supervisors	184
Organizational wellness	184
360 Review.....	185
Reforming Police Officer Shifts	186
XI. Recruitment and qualifications standards for entry-level police officer positions.....	188
Introduction	188
What has already been done in Colorado?	190
Overview of Practices Considered	192
Boston Police Cadet Program	193
Law Enforcement Exploring Program	196
LAPD Pledge to Patrol and Recruitment Strategy Overhaul.....	199

Tucson 30x30 Initiative	202
Innovations and Emerging Practices.....	205
Revisiting Officer Recruit Qualifications and Standards	205
Reimagining Law Enforcement Officers – Community Service Officer (CSO) Programs	209
Redefining Police Officer Career Paths – Policing for America	210
Technology-Enabled Solutions to Improve Recruitment and Hiring	211
XII. Police officer support for best practices policing	213
Introduction	213
Organizational Leadership	213
Departmental Culture	214
Training, Instruction, and Supervision	215
XIII. The Importance of Strategy	217
XIV. Conclusion	219
XV. Appendices	220
A. Scope and Structure	220
B. Acknowledgments	221
C. Approach and Methodology.....	222
D. Team member bios.....	224
E. Additional Resources	229
F. Endnotes	252

I. Introduction

The past two years have given rise to a sustained nationwide push for a fresh and in-depth revisitation of how policing is administered and conducted. Policing across America has never been as challenged as it is today. Spurred by a series of high-profile incidents, including the murder of George Floyd, and troubling trends, including increases in violent crime and reduced officer ranks, many states have commenced efforts to identify what can be done to improve equity, fairness, and effectiveness in policing while maintaining public safety. Colorado's extensive efforts culminated in the passage of House Bill 21-1250 (HB21-1250).

HB21-1250 built upon the historic reforms enacted under Senate Bill 20-217 (SB20-217), which legislated expansive body-cam requirements for police officers, imposed new limitations on the use of physical and deadly force, established new reporting requirements on police departments and the state Division of Criminal Justice, and expanded the authority and mandate of Colorado's Peace Officer Standards and Training (POST) unit. SB20-217 also established bystander intervention requirements for police officers, prohibited certain uses of force for crowd dispersal during mass demonstrations, and created new causes of action for infringements of state constitutional rights by police officers for which qualified immunity would not be a defense, becoming the first state in the country to do so.

HB21-1250 modified many of SB20-217's enactments, including advancing the effective dates of some of the latter bill's requirements and clarifying when certain of its mandates apply. Among the changes made by HB21-1250 are new mandates for the suspension or revocation of a police officer's certification for unlawful uses of force or failures to intervene and employment protections for police officers who report unlawful conduct by other officers. Combined, SB20-217 and HB21-1250 represent a comprehensive set of changes that put Colorado at the forefront of enacting legislation that strengthens public safety and improves policing accountability and outcomes for all.

We applaud the Colorado State Legislature's commitment to continuous improvement and its recognition that policing is a dynamic profession. These pieces of legislation are historic and sit at the forefront of police reform. In the spirit of continuous improvement, we encourage the Legislature to monitor how these reforms are implemented in the field to identify potential unintended consequences that may need to be remediated or clarified in future. These acts, however, do not mark the end of the Colorado State Legislature's attention to policing and the ways in which it can be further improved.

Among the provisions of HB21-1250 was a requirement that the Division of Local Government (the "Division") in the state Department of Local Affairs contract with a *"nationally recognized research and consulting entity that is an expert in data-driven, evidence-based policing that is community-focused for an independent study to assess and provide a report and findings on evidence-based policing national best practices in defined areas of study."*

Pursuant to the act's requirement, the Division awarded a contract to IntegrAssure,¹ which had partnered with the National Policing Institute (NPI, formerly the National Police Foundation) to form the IntegrAssure Team to fulfill the act's mandate.

Specifically, the act required the completion of an interim report, which was submitted on December 30, 2021, and a final study, which is presented here. This final study presents *"evidence-based practices in the following areas to promote greater policing fairness, equity, and effectiveness:*

- I. *Use of force strategies, standards, and training that value the sanctity of human life, promote de-escalation tactics, provide clarity for officers, protect communities, and minimize harm to offenders;*
- II. *Crime and community harm reduction strategies that include problem analysis of high-risk people and places, considering racial and ethnic bias in policing with a focus on prevention while improving public safety and police-community interactions;*
- III. *Initiatives to safely increase community response for lower-level offenses and calls for service;*
- IV. *Strategies to effectively move law enforcement and the community forward together by building a shared understanding and identifying common solutions to better protect our vulnerable and underrepresented communities, in addition to those suffering from mental illness or experiencing homelessness through non-traditional policing methodologies;*
- V. *Methods to enhance officer receptivity to engage in evidence-based policing practices that involve harm reduction and reduce reliance on traditional justice system resources and processes;*
- VI. *Innovative approaches to officer mental health, recruitment, and retention to address trauma and ensure officer preparedness for community engagement, and;*
- VII. *Analysis of recruitment and qualification standards for entry-level police officer positions to attract candidate pools with diverse perspectives and ongoing training and qualification requirements to enhance officers' willingness to engage in justice strategies embracing community collaboration while also decreasing and identifying signs of problematic behaviors."*

Each of these areas are indeed core to promoting greater policing fairness, equity, and effectiveness, yet it is clear that without a strong foundation of an ethics-based philosophy, even the best of best practices will not thrive. We therefore have slightly expanded the scope of our effort and also report herein on best practices for establishing that foundation upon which any healthy law enforcement agency must be built and within which reforms and innovations can best take root and flourish.

¹ The contract was awarded on November 30, 2022.

II. About the IntegrAssure Team

The IntegrAssure Team includes national experts in operational law enforcement, criminal justice reform and academic research. Its experts are nationally recognized and have a proven track record of imagining, developing, implementing, and overseeing best, innovative, and promising practices. Biographies of those who participated in the drafting of this report appear in Appendix D.

IntegrAssure: IntegrAssure was founded in March 2021 by Jeff Schlanger immediately upon his retirement as the Deputy Commissioner of the Risk Management Bureau for the New York City Police Department and is dedicated to the proposition that police departments can (and must) continuously improve through a disciplined process of re-examination, re-engineering, and re-imagination of each area of concern. While a new company, its personnel have decades of experience in policing. Its nationally recognized thought leaders range from chief executives in departments of various sizes from around the country, who bring practical operational law enforcement expertise, to thought leaders in criminal justice system reforms, who bring expertise in promulgating and monitoring the best and most promising policing practices.

National Policing Institute: Established in 1970 as the National Police Foundation, the National Policing Institute (NPI) is the oldest nationally known, nonprofit (501(c)(3)), nonpartisan, and non-membership-driven organization dedicated to improving American policing. NPI is a research organization with a long history of successful partnerships with law enforcement, cities, states, universities, federal agencies, other non-governmental organizations, and private foundations. Harnessing the power of science to advance policing, NPI's growing portfolio of scientific research and experiments remains the catalyst for significant changes in policing, informing scholars and practitioners alike, and serves as a model for the systematic examination of real-world challenges. For more than 50 years, NPI has conducted seminal research in police behavior, policy, and procedure, and continues leading efforts in new evidence-based practices and innovations to law enforcement. NPI works closely with public safety and criminal justice agencies across the country and internationally, and has worked on national and local community policing projects, including assessing the implementation of recommendations, concepts, and strategies captured in the *Final Report of the President's Task Force on 21st Century Policing* (Task Force Report) and developing a *Community Engagement Playbook*. NPI has also worked with local police departments nationwide, including the Baltimore (MD) Police Department and the Chicago (IL) Police Department, on implementing recommendations from the Task Force Report.

III. Executive Summary

Policing, as both a profession and a public function, stands at a crossroads as it simultaneously looks back on its history, contemplates its present, and charts a path toward its future. Although conversations regarding policing's role in achieving public safety are not new, Colorado's robust efforts to make policing more fair, equitable, and effective are nonetheless novel at a time when many are seeking answers to the same questions: what has been done, what can be done, and what should be done?

With guidance from the Colorado State Legislature, Colorado Department of Local Affairs, and countless local leaders, police officials, and community advocates, clear and compelling answers to these questions have come to the fore. This report, although commissioned by the state of Colorado for the immediate benefit of its residents and police departments, stands as a resource to all who want concrete answers on how to progress policing forward.

Thematically, this report stresses the importance of leadership, environment, and culture on achieving change from within police departments, and the centrality of community voice in shaping policing's role within public safety systems. It recognizes the need for comprehensive public safety strategies that define public safety broadly, dispensing with antiquated notions that public safety is statically equated with diminished crime rates and that conventional policing—with its emphasis on arrest, prosecution, and punishment—stands as the only means for achieving it.

Rather, this report conceptualizes public safety as the minimization of harm, no matter its source, and recognizes that poor public safety strategies, like over-reliance on policing and under-investment in communities, undermines safety rather than promotes it. Befitting the need for holistic public safety systems, this report, as mandated by the Colorado law that commissioned it, offers recommendations, insights, and analysis into multiple areas where improvement is needed. These areas include use of force, community harm reduction, community-based public safety responses, and officer wellness, recruitment, and retention. The report discusses how police departments and their constituencies can align themselves to pursue common aims and how support for best-practices policing and new public safety approaches can be generated among officers themselves.

The report seeks to maintain a balance between being comprehensive and selective in its curation of available approaches and strategies for each of these areas. Accordingly, it offers multiple approaches and strategies for consideration while highlighting a select subset. Where a strategy or approach has been demonstrated to be efficacious through studied implementation, a discussion of those studies is offered. Where conclusive statistical evaluations are unavailable, this report explores any compelling theoretical, anecdotal, or intuitive basis that indicates its effectiveness. This report also takes into account the tremendous variation in size of departments throughout Colorado—and indeed the nation—and recognizes that, while some best practices may have universal application and efficacy, others may be neither feasible nor necessary for all departments.

Many of the report's areas have strong thematic overlaps with one another. For example, many community-based public safety initiatives are rooted in harm reduction methodologies and could, therefore, be featured in either of the sections of the report dedicated to those areas. To minimize

redundancy, the report's entries were categorized according to where they most strongly overlapped with the scopes and themes of a particular area. However, enough information has been provided for each entry to permit readers to identify the relevance of a program to other areas. Accordingly, readers should take care to review entries throughout the report to comprehensively understand how different strategies and practices can interact with one another to achieve goals that are common to multiple areas. Where available, entries include a list of additional resources and confirmed points of contact for readers seeking to learn more about the programs and practices featured in this report.

For the use of force section, rather than featuring the efforts of individual departments in dedicated entries, the report offers broader overviews of specific use of force practices and related training across multiple departments. This is done to discuss the practices and trainings themselves more effectively rather than their specific implementations within specific departments, for which information is less available or incomplete.

Further, the section on police officer support for best practices policing compiles information taken from throughout the report and discusses the considerations and factors that contribute to officer buy-in for adoption of new practices and programs. Again, the focus is on the considerations and factors themselves rather than the individual experience of particular departments so that common themes are identified and assessed.

The process of reviewing, collecting, and reporting on the most promising practices in policing has yielded important global insights on how to proceed with the endeavor of promoting the adoption of these practices. These insights, presented below as a summary of fundamental recommendations, are intended to guide those who seek to ensure Colorado's adherence to best practices policing. Heeding these recommendations will both boost the prospects of achieving the goals that underlie Colorado's efforts to promote best practices policing and ensure greater fidelity to the substance and spirit of the best practices featured in this report. They include:

- **Viewing best practices policing as a continual effort to be maintained, rather than a static condition to be achieved.** A consistent characteristic across the practices featured in this report is that they were developed and implemented through a process of continual assessment of whether current outcomes were meeting intended goals. This process centers on the question of what more can be done to do better, and is comfortable with the notion that there will always be better outcomes to aim for. Continual improvement both organizationally and individually should be a core principle for all departments and the officers that take the oath of service.
- **Understanding that structural and cultural changes may be prerequisites for achieving substantive changes.** Often, good ideas fall prey to bad implementation. In the realm of best practices policing, bad implementation can result from a failure to appreciate and address structural and cultural barriers to achieving desired outcomes. Many of the practices featured here have succeeded because of a concerted effort to identify and overcome these barriers to ensure they do not get in the way of a good idea.
- **Accounting for harm in all its forms.** As repeated throughout this report, it is incumbent upon advocates of best practices policing to acknowledge and account for the multitude of forms that harm can take. Like any powerful medicine, policing can simultaneously treat one symptom while

triggering another, and may offer too strong of a response given the severity—or relative lack thereof—of some of the harms it may be used to address. Acknowledging this reality will ensure that policing is used optimally as an important, but not exclusive, approach to achieving public safety.

- **Approaching public safety holistically.** If policing is properly understood to be just one contributor to public safety, then care must be taken to develop the other components of a holistic and comprehensive public safety system. This system must include multiple partners across governments and communities, each of whom must participate equally in defining the public's safety goals and share responsibility for achieving them.
- **Forming and sustaining legitimate, meaningful relationships with community members, organizations, and stakeholders.** Creating authentic relationships with the communities that police departments serve creates opportunities for partnership toward achieving mutual goals. These partnerships can help police departments directly demonstrate their commitment to, and successes in, achieving community safety by allowing for direct participation with, and proximity to, police departments and the officers that form their ranks. These partnerships can and should be fomented by incorporating community members, including those with lived experience in the criminal justice system, into the department's public safety efforts, and by improving transparency through the publication of departmental policies on department websites for public review and input. Departments can also sponsor community advisory committees, focus groups, and community interviews to help communities develop public safety goals and track progress toward those goals. Departments should be mindful that communities are complex and diverse, should familiarize themselves with both the individuals and community organizations that comprise their constituencies, and should never lose sight of the dignity and value of those they serve.
- **Using emerging technologies effectively and responsibly.** Innovations in technology, like the growth of web-based platforms and the development of technological tools of increasing sophistication, can and should be leveraged to facilitate the work of police officers and others supporting public safety. While departments should avail themselves of these technologies, they must also take care to ensure that their use is properly overseen and managed through a system of public accountability and transparency.

When taken collectively, these recommendations, and others contained throughout this report, offer a vision for a complete public safety eco-system within police departments, within communities, and between the two in ways that complement—rather than contradict—one another. And although the recommendations articulated in this report are intended as first steps in a longer process of continual improvement, we firmly believe that the long-term vision they support is achievable and sustainable with deliberate effort.

We appreciate the opportunity to have participated in Colorado's effort to improve policing, and we are eager to see the new heights it will reach.

IV. The Foundation of Our Work

The murder of George Floyd rightly brought, on a national level, a re-examination, and in many cases a re-imagination and re-engineering, of policing. Various reforms in jurisdictions throughout the country were enacted. Initial efforts properly focused primarily on increasing fairness in the system. This endeavor was not necessarily an attack on policing itself nor a wholesale attempt to devalue the work of those departments and officers that have worked assiduously to continually improve how they carry out their sworn duties. Rather, it was a clear recognition that more needed to be done in the area of fairness and that there was a unique window of opportunity to do so.

In the two years since that horrific day in Minneapolis, there has been a growing understanding that any practice that ultimately does not fully consider and balance the need for fairness, and the concomitant trust that such fairness will build, with the need for true public safety has the potential to cause unintended but impactful harm to the community. With recent historic increases in violent crime, a growing collateral refrain from communities has been that while they are certainly concerned with police conduct, they are equally concerned with their safety and the safety of their families and neighbors.

Colorado's reforms have recognized the imperative for such consideration and balancing and, indeed, this report is an outgrowth of that recognition. The areas of study called for by Colorado are those that, if reformed in accordance with best practices, would yield a system that is not only more fair, transparent, and responsive to the needs of the community but one that, in the end, will deliver better service and a safer community to those it serves. These areas also recognize that the ecosystem of police-community relations cannot flourish without a concern for making police officers all that the community needs them to be. Because of this, each area in this report recognizes the need to promote the wellbeing of officers and to make them more receptive and willing to engage. Moreover, this report also acknowledges the need for departments to recruit, retain, and promote those who truly share the goals and vision of their community and their department and who demographically represent the communities that they serve.

The sum of our work revolves around the relationship between police and the community and the ways in which this relationship can become more inclusive under a common public safety mission. Since the time of Sir Robert Peel, policing has theoretically rested upon the foundational precepts that "the police are the public and the public are the police" and that the "ability of police to perform their duties is dependent on public approval of police actions."² It is clear, however, that in some communities, rather

² The nine principles of policing according to Sir Robert Peel are:

1. The basic mission for which the police exist is to prevent crime and disorder.
2. The ability of the police to perform their duties is dependent upon public approval of police actions.
3. Police must secure the willing cooperation of the public in voluntary observance of the law to be able to secure and maintain the respect of the public.
4. The degree of cooperation of the public that can be secured diminishes proportionately to the necessity of the use of physical force.

than being one and the same, an adversarial relationship between the community, or at least a significant segment thereof, and the police has grown and trust in the police has waned significantly. Part of this distrust is rooted in the persistent exclusion of significant segments of communities from key conversations about, and involvement in, policing decisions, including the targets and methods of enforcement.

This adversarial relationship has disconnected segments of communities from the officers appointed to serve them, exacerbating the harms that come to each. These harms manifest in three primary ways: harm to the community from criminal activity; harm to the community from poor policing practices; and harm to police officers from the failure of policies and training to properly address the two streams of community harm and otherwise address issues of officer wellness. The goal of reform efforts must be to encourage the adoption of policies that addresses each of these manifestations of harm. By identifying key changes to be made and articulating an overall strategy that brings cohesion to them, we can best ensure that a healthy eco-system of public safety, fairness, transparency, and officer wellness is best achieved.

Ultimately, a system that is fair and responsive to the community, and that relentlessly strives to make officers all that they can and must be, will promote greater trust and respect for police. This in turn will make officers feel better about themselves and the job they are doing, which will make recruitment and retention of quality candidates less difficult. The police and the community will then be able to best collaborate to address and reduce crime, which will make both community members and officers safer.

To the extent that either the community or officers see the system as unfair, the system is undermined, and simply not as effective as it must be to achieve true public safety. Therefore, perceived barriers to fairness on either side must be adequately addressed and, if appropriate, remediated.

The recommendations of best practices featured in this report serve as a roadmap for those who seek to continuously improve policing and see their community-police ecosystem flourish.

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5. Police seek and preserve public favor not by catering to the public opinion but by constantly demonstrating absolute impartial service to the law.
 6. Police use physical force to the extent necessary to secure observance of the law or to restore order only when the exercise of persuasion, advice and warning is found to be insufficient.
 7. Police, at all times, should maintain a relationship with the public that gives reality to the historic tradition that the police are the public and the public are the police; the police being only members of the public who are paid to give full-time attention to duties which are incumbent on every citizen in the interests of community welfare and existence.
 8. Police should always direct their action strictly towards their functions and never appear to usurp the powers of the judiciary.
 9. The test of police efficiency is the absence of crime and disorder, not the visible evidence of police action in dealing with it.

V. Our Paradigm

In examining each of the areas of focus in this report, which were referred to as workstreams by the IntegrAssure Team during the report’s development, we have utilized our RISKS (Remediation of Identified Situations Key to Success) approach to continuous improvement. The defined scope of the assignment for this report has identified those areas that the legislature has determined—and that we agree—are “key to success.” We therefore searched for, and are now presenting, best practice remediations for those areas.

Each of the identified areas presents an area of risk—one in which harm has occurred and will continue to occur unless properly remediated. And, while only one of the workstream areas explicitly calls out harm reduction, harm reduction lies at the heart of each area of study. This report begins its discussion of each area with an examination and analysis of the harms salient to that area, and why reducing that harm is key to success. The report then presents best practices and emerging remediations for the harms presented. Those entries selected for feature as a best practice include those that enjoy the greatest track record of demonstrated success and that have either been replicated widely or that have served as a model for similar implementations across the country. Those entries discussed as emerging and innovative practices include programs that demonstrate considerable promise for achieving their aims but are either too recent to have a sustained track record of success or that, despite being more established, have not been widely adopted or considered for broad implementation.

The report addresses the harms that can come from poor policing and the many forms that poor policing can take. Although deliberate malfeasance, like malicious uses of force and illegal enforcement actions, are among its most visible forms, poor policing can also derive from ineffective public safety strategies or those that are misaligned with a community’s public safety expectations or priorities. The harms of poor policing can combine and compound, transforming isolated incidents into systemic problems. Our approach is attuned to identifying solutions that account for and address these harms in whatever form they assume.

Similarly, we address harms that come to the community through criminal and disorderly activity that range widely from violent crime that, in a split-second, can forever and irretrievably devastate an extended family, to qualify-of-life offenses that slowly erode a community’s sense of wellbeing. Our approach identifies those solutions that have worked best or have the promise of working well to promote the ability of community members and the police to respond to the threats posed by criminal and disorderly activity under the banner of a common public safety mission.

Finally, we address the harms that come to good police officers, who, in the words of Sir Robert Peel, “are the public” and who have undertaken a career in public safety with the intention only to help and do the right thing. This report examines and identifies solutions that address the stress and performance impact that is caused by the combination of performing a demanding job while confronting a deep sense of underappreciation from the community that officers serve.

To address and heal past harms and prevent future harms in each of these areas, evidence-based practices have been identified. Because each featured best practice must be built on a strong institutional foundation, the report also identifies best practices for solidifying that foundation.

Stakeholder engagement

HB21-1250 's mandate for conducting a study into policing's best practices recognizes the importance of seeking input from various stakeholders, whose views must inform this report's recommendations.

To initiate the stakeholder engagement, the IntegrAssure Team attended a meeting coordinated by DOLA on December 16, 2021, to inform the members of the Advisory Council about the Team's plan and to solicit additional stakeholders for outreach.

A list of stakeholders was developed in collaboration with DOLA, and the IntegrAssure Team solicited written feedback from each using a standardized questionnaire that elicited thoughts and recommendations on each workstream and then met with stakeholders over the course of three months. These meetings included follow-up conversations to discuss stakeholder feedback in greater detail, with meetings often including numerous members of the IntegrAssure Team. Each recommendation in this report reflects the IntegrAssure Team's consideration of the feedback from stakeholders, both individually and collectively.

The Team ultimately met with the following stakeholders or their representatives:

- Colorado State Patrol
- American Civil Liberties Union
- Representative Leslie Herod
- Second Chance Coalition
- Senator Bob Gardner
- Fraternal Order of Police
- Colorado Association of Chiefs of Police
- Colorado Municipal League
- Colorado Public Health Association
- Colorado Sheriffs Association
- LifeLine
- Make A Chess Move

The IntegrAssure Team also held an in-person forum on February 18, 2022, at the DOLA office.

Collectively and individually, stakeholders shared input that stressed the importance of improving equity between police and local communities, equipping police officers with the training and resources necessary to do their jobs effectively, and identifying public safety strategies that account for the adverse effects of overcriminalization and under-investment in community-based safety solutions. Policing was universally recognized as an indispensable component of any broad public safety strategy, but not as a panacea for all the public's safety needs.

Policing leaders and community leaders alike shared concerns with the profession's ongoing recruitment difficulties and warned of the damaging effects of growing disconnects between community members and officers. And all lamented recent surges in crime, especially violent crime. Proposed strategies for addressing recent safety trends were similarly consistent across stakeholders, who emphasized the need for officer wellness resources, increased transparency and accountability to the public, and public safety strategies that target root causes of crime and disorder.

Stakeholder feedback revealed far more commonality among perspectives than difference, despite the diversity of backgrounds of those who shared their input. This consistency instills a cautious optimism about the prospects for Colorado's continued work in the areas addressed within this report, as it is clear that both advocates and policing executives understand the need for change.

VI. Use of force

Introduction

Despite continued improvements in policing effectiveness and reductions in crime over the past twenty years, law enforcement agencies face a crisis of confidence about their role in providing public safety and enforcing the law. Calls for reducing police use of force through legislation, policies, and training have been voiced by community members, researchers, policymakers, and police executives alike. In response to this public outcry, law enforcement agencies across the nation and in Colorado have begun critically examining their use of force policies, practices, and training, whether proactively or in response to legislative or judicial mandates. Agencies are looking for evidence-based practices in policy and training to assist in reducing force, injuries resulting from force, and racial and ethnic disparities in policing outcomes. Police agencies are also seeking opportunities to demonstrate their commitment to transparency and community engagement to address strained police-community relations. Unfortunately, due to the decentralized nature of policing in the United States and a lack of comprehensive evidence on best practices for agencies to pursue, the identification of appropriate guidance has been elusive, and recommendations have largely relied on anecdotal evidence.

In an effort to fill this gap, both the Police Executive Research Forum (PERF)—a policing research entity—and the International Association of Chiefs of Police (IACP)—the world’s largest professional organization for law enforcement executives—published reports providing general guidance and best practices related to use of force policy and training. PERF’s *30 Guiding Principles on Use of Force* was released in 2016 and was the product of months of study and consultation with police executives. The resulting 30 principles on use of force include 13 that are policy-related, 11 addressing training and tactics, and six related to equipment and information exchange. The IACP’s *National Consensus Policy and Discussion Paper on Use of Force* was first released in 2017—with an update in 2020—and focuses exclusively on policy. This model policy was endorsed by 11 of the nation’s leading police organizations.ⁱ

The initial response to PERF’s Guiding Principles was mixed and sparked controversy among many in the law enforcement field. One of the primary criticisms of this work was the concern that the principles could lead to officer safety concerns if adopted. There was no research available that assessed the impact of the recommended changes for policy and practice. Others appreciated the value that many of the principles placed on enhancing police-community relations and the sanctity of human life. Partially in response to the controversy over the PERF Principles, and motivated by its own goal of providing additional guidance to police agencies, the IACP partnered with the Fraternal Order of Police (FOP) to bring leaders of several national law enforcement organizations together in 2016 to create a national model policy regarding use of force. The purpose of these meetings was to synthesize guidance on police use of force that could be used as a template for agencies to update their existing use of force models and training. The result was the National Consensus Policy and Discussion Paper on Use of Force that provided agencies with recommendations on policy language, practices, and standards.

In the years following the publication of this guidance from the PERF and IACP – and more recently in response to high-profile, fatal police use of force against unarmed subjects including George Floyd in Minneapolis (MN) in May 2020 – many police agencies across the country have initiated reviews of their

use of force as well as related policies and training. These events also spurred responses by many state legislatures, including in Colorado.

This section begins with a summary of the Enhance Law Enforcement Integrity Act and other force-related practices in the state of Colorado. Following that, the content, adoption (nationally and in Colorado), and impact of six specific use of force policy changes are described. Recommendations for policy implementation are provided. Afterward, four of the most common types of training recommended to reduce police use of force are summarized. This summary provides an overview of the content of these trainings, their implementation by law enforcement agencies across the country, and the available research on their effectiveness. Training-related implementation considerations are also provided. The section concludes with an emphasis on the holistic approach to police reform needed to maximize the impact of individual policy and training changes.

As a prefatory comment, it should be noted that instituting policy change or implementing new training, alone, are unlikely to result in the desired outcomes of sustained reductions in police use of force, racial or ethnic disparities in that use of force, and citizen and officer injuries that often accompany use of force. The combination of clear and comprehensive policy guidance with officer education and skills training are undoubtedly essential elements in police use of force reform, but the underlying tenets of these policy and training changes must be infused into departments through systematic documentation and analysis of relevant data, the support and expectations of first-line supervisors, the prioritization and reinforcement by command staff, and the development and consistent use of an accountability structure that rewards officers for adhering to the agency's policies and practices and holds them accountable if they fail to do so.ⁱⁱ The crisis in police-community relations that exists in communities across the nation therefore requires a holistic approach to use of force related reform.

What has already been done in Colorado?

Following the murder of George Floyd in May 2020, the Colorado State Legislature moved quickly to pass a comprehensive police reform bill. SB 20-217, entitled the Enhance Law Enforcement Integrity Act, passed in June 2020 and contains a number of provisions relating to the use of force by police. Specifically, the law requires the use of non-violent means, when possible, before utilizing force, and permits officers to “use only a degree of force consistent with the minimization of injury to others.” The law further requires officers to specify the justification for any use of deadly force, imposes a penalty for any failure to intervene in cases of excessive force, bans chokeholds, and, beginning in 2023, requires officers to document each time they unholster their weapon.

Although the legislation required “[each] law enforcement agency in the state [to] train its peace officers on the provisions” of the law, it did not specify what the training should include, leaving it to individual agencies to develop and provide their own training content based on their interpretations of the law’s requirements. A recently published report documented this process for the Colorado Springs Police Department (CSPD). The CSPD designed their training to educate officers on their obligations and liability exposure under the bill including:

1. What SB 20-217 requires (e.g., use of non-violent means, when possible, before utilizing force),
2. What SB 20-217 changed (e.g., justification for deadly force, penalty for failure to intervene, banning chokeholds), and
3. What SB 20-217 formalized (e.g., consideration of minimization of injury and the provision of verbal warnings prior to use of deadly force, both of which had already been factored into the department’s use of force policy).

The CSPD training on SB 20-217 was provided in July 2020 and instructed officers to articulate how they are addressing the statutory requirements, both verbally on body-worn cameras and in written reports, including answering the following questions:

1. What is your legal authority?
2. How do you know non-violent means would be ineffective?
3. How can you minimize injury?

Despite this training, focus groups and surveys conducted by an outside research team one year later revealed that CSPD officers and supervisors still expressed concern about officer safety based on changes implemented as a result of SB 20-217. These concerns were particularly related to the perceived confusion among officers about the ability to legally use force and the potential for officers to hesitate to use force even when legally appropriate.

Those concerned also believe the legislature, in the spirit of continuous improvement, should review provisions in HB 21-1250 regarding mandatory POST suspension of certification due to findings of any unlawful use of force and failure to intervene. The relevant provisions of HB21-1250³ effectively terminate an officer without any delineation relative to the severity of the transgression and the extent of injuries. This, they point out, may be unintentionally undermining the legislation’s intention. Despite the best of intentions of the legislature, the language is seen by many in law enforcement as not properly balancing

³ HB 21-125 (2) (a) (III)

a police department's need to be self-critical of its performance, to hold officers accountable with enhanced supervision and training, or, when appropriate, with progressive discipline which is perceived to be fair and proportional to the transgression. Remedies that have been suggested include having the POST review board itself determine a fair and appropriate disciplinary penalty based on the degree and severity of the transgression. The perception of unfairness and fear of losing one's job for a minor and unintentional transgression, the critics argue, may have a perverse effect of potential reduction of effective policing and, in the worst case, of a department shying away from holding accountable and appropriately remediating behavior that is clearly outside the bounds of policy.

As will be highlighted below, the majority of the policy changes required in SB 20-217 are consistent with more widely recommended changes to use of force policy generally. The impact of many of these recommended changes, however, has not yet been sufficiently evaluated to determine if they reduce the frequency and severity of force or racial/ethnic disparities in that force. The following section describes many of these policy changes in further detail, broadly summarizes their adoption nationally and in Colorado, and discusses the extant research, or lack thereof, on their impact.

Recent National Trends on Use of Force Policy

Summary

Administrative policies are an important organizational control on officers' behavior and discretionary decision-making to ensure their behavior is consistent with the agency's mission and vision. Written policies inform personnel of their roles and responsibilities as well as what is expected of them. Since the 1970s, research has consistently demonstrated that police agencies that adopt more restrictive use of force policies (i.e., those that set a high threshold of citizen resistant behavior that justifies the use of more severe types of force) can significantly impact officer behavior related to use of force, including reductions in the frequency and severity of use of force, without adverse impacts on officer safety, crime or proactive law enforcement activities, including arrest.ⁱⁱⁱ Despite compelling evidence that more restrictive use of force policies can make both the public and officers safer, the content and guidance of police agencies' policies continue to vary dramatically.

In the years following the publication of PERF's *30 Guiding Principles* and the IACP's *National Consensus Policy*, many police agencies across the country have critically examined their use of force and related policies. Both the National Conference of State Legislatures and Duke Law School Center for Science and Justice track the legislative changes mandating police reform efforts, including changes in use of force policies in some jurisdictions.^{iv} Recently, six changes within use of force policies have been particularly emphasized, including:

1. requiring officers to intervene and mandating reporting of officer misconduct,
2. restricting the use of chokeholds and other neck restraints,
3. restricting the use of no-knock warrants and police raids,
4. requiring the use of de-escalation tactics during encounters with citizens,
5. shifting from a use of force continuum to a decision-making model, and
6. documenting pointing of firearms.

Each recommended policy change will be discussed in turn, including any available evidence regarding their adoption and any empirical research regarding their effectiveness in impacting use of force.

Shift from a use of force continuum to a decision-making model

Policy Description

One of the most important components of an agency's use of force policy is the guidance provided to officers on when and how to make the decision to use force—and what type of force to use—based on the circumstances that an officer encounters. Guidance regarding what force is objectively reasonable to compel compliance or effect an arrest is typically provided in the form of a use of force continuum or a decision-making model, which prescribes and maps escalating use of force techniques in a linear progression of severity.

Both the PERF *Guiding Principles* and the IACP *National Consensus Policy* strongly discourage the use of a force continuum in favor of a totality of circumstances force model. The main criticism of a use of force continuum is that it is often interpreted in rigid fashion, where, for example, officers are expected to respond to a specific level of resistance with a specific technique or weapon and, if that intervention is ineffective, work their way up the continuum toward more severe tactics. As noted by the IACP, “to maintain the safety of both the officer and others, an officer might need to transition from one point on the continuum to another, without considering the options in between in a linear order.”^v

By contrast, force decision-making models provide officers the discretion to choose from a range of force options that are based not only on legal principles but also on officers’ assessment of the totality of the situation, including the nature of the threat, the changing circumstances, and alternatives that may be viable even if initial force options are ineffective. As described by PERF, the decision-making model “entails finding the most effective and safest response that is proportional to the threat.”^{vi} Depending on their assessment of the threat, officers are expected to make decisions based on the range of options available to them. PERF specifically endorsed the adoption of the Critical Decision-Making Model (CDM), which was adapted from the United Kingdom’s National Decision Model. As described by PERF, “the CDM guides officers through a process of: Collecting information, assessing the situation, threats, and risks, considering police powers and agency policy, identifying options and determining the best course of action, and acting, reviewing, and re-assessing the situation.”^{vii}

Policy Adoption

In a study published approximately a decade ago, researchers found that approximately 80% of the surveyed police agencies employed a use of force continuum. However, this information has not been systematically updated since PERF’s recommendation to adopt the CDM model, leaving a void in understanding whether law enforcement agencies nationally guide officer decision-making based on a use of force continuum or a totality of circumstances model.

SB 20-217 does not include a specific endorsement for guiding officer decision-making. Although some of Colorado’s police agencies guide officer decision-making based on a use of force continuum, many of the largest agencies—including Boulder, Colorado Springs, Denver, and the Colorado State Patrol—favor an adaptation of the Critical Decision-Making (CDM) model or totality of circumstances model.

Research on Impact

Previous research indicated that officers want their agency policy to provide adequate guidance regarding when force can be used but do not want their discretion to be too tightly restricted.^{viii} Understanding whether one type of guidance results in better outcomes (i.e., less frequent or severe force) is a complex empirical question that has not been adequately examined. Despite the lack of research supporting it, the prevailing consensus of leading law enforcement executives and scholars is that the adoption of a policy that incorporates a decision-making model is considered a progressive law enforcement practice while the use of force continuum is viewed as outdated and rigid. Importantly, the adoption of the CDM model must be accompanied by appropriate training; likewise, de-escalation training that relies upon the CDM model must include the model within its formal use of force policy. A current concern among policing

experts is that agencies are doing one or the other but not both; this results in conflicting guidance and requirements for officers involved in use of force incidents.

Documentation of Pointing of a Firearm

Policy Description

One of the PERF's *Guiding Principles on Use of Force* specifically recommends that police agencies document and review incidents that involve the pointing of firearms at individuals as a threat of force in the same manner that they capture and review the use of weaponless physical force, force involving less-lethal weapons, or force involving deadly weapons. The adoption of a policy requiring the systematic reporting and administrative review of pointing of firearm incidents is considered a law enforcement best practice, the positive impact of which is supported by initial research findings.

Policy Adoption

Based on the Bureau of Justice Statistics (BJS) review of local police departments in 2016, approximately half of departments (54.1%) required written documentation by officers when they displayed their firearm. This policy was more common among agencies serving populations under 100,000 residents than those serving larger populations.^{ix} Many Colorado police agencies already require the documentation of pointing of firearms as part of their use of force policy, including departments in Aurora, Boulder, Colorado Springs, Denver, and the Colorado State Patrol. For example, the Boulder Police Department has documented information about these events since 2000, while CSPD has documented pointing of a firearm since 2017. Some agencies consider pointing of a firearm as a use of force, while others document it as a “show of force.” A provision in SB 20-217 requires all law enforcement agencies, beginning January 1, 2023, to document each time an officer unholsters their weapon during a police-citizen encounter.

Research on Impact

Unlike most of the other policy changes described herein, which lack empirical examination of their impact, two recent studies demonstrated that the adoption of a policy requiring documentation of the pointing of firearms is correlated with reductions in officer-involved shootings. Specifically, one study examined the impact of a variety of organizational policies on the rates of fatal police shootings nationally and found that only one policy—requiring officers to document each time they pointed their firearm—resulted in significantly lower levels of fatal police shootings.^x Similarly, a study examining the impact of this type of policy within the Dallas (TX) Police Department found significant reductions in shootings after a “point and report” policy was implemented. Significant reductions were also noted in the proportion of cases involving a “threat perception failure” (i.e., where an officer perceives a gun when there is none). Importantly, the adoption of this policy *did not* significantly increase the likelihood of officer injuries.^{xi}

Further research is needed to replicate these findings, but the initial studies are promising regarding the positive impact of the implementation of policies that require the documentation of pointing of a firearm.

Duty to Intervene and Mandatory Reporting

Policy Description

Police agencies have been encouraged to adopt policies that require officers to intervene if they witness the use of excessive force by their peers or supervisors in the course of their work and to report any related misconduct, including a variety of inappropriate or unlawful behaviors.^{xii} Some peer intervention training programs (described more fully below) have very specific requirements to supplement duty to intervene and mandatory reporting policies. For instance, law enforcement agencies that adopt the Active Bystandership for Law Enforcement (ABLE) training are required to commit to ten standards to ensure ABLE-based programs are implemented effectively and meaningfully.^{xiii} One provision specifically related to policy is that agencies must adopt a strong written anti-retaliation policy to ensure interveners are not punished, targeted, or otherwise ostracized.

Policy Adoption

A *Washington Post* survey in 2020 of the 65 largest U.S. police departments found approximately 75% of surveyed agencies reported having duty-to-intervene policies in place for cases where excessive force is witnessed.^{xiv} Colorado legislation SB 20-217 specifically requires officers to intervene in cases of excessive force by another officer and report the intervention to their supervisor. It also made failure to intervene a Class 1 misdemeanor instead of just an administrative policy violation. This has been incorporated into agency policy by several police agencies within Colorado – including but not limited to Aurora, Boulder, Colorado Springs, Denver, and the Colorado State Patrol.

Many agencies incorporate the duty to intervene requirement into use of force policy, but the IACP recommends that creating a separate “duty to Intervene” policy sends a message to agency personnel that intervention is expected for *any* misconduct or violation of law or policy, not just in cases of inappropriate use of force.^{xv} ABLE provides model policy language related to the requirements included in the project’s ten standards.^{xvi}

Research on Impact

Although the recommendation for this policy change is based on research that police departments are often observed to embody a culture that discourages some officers from speaking up or against colleagues who engage in inappropriate behavior (i.e., the “blue wall of silence”), the impact of duty-to-intervene and mandatory reporting policies on police use of force has not been the subject of rigorous empirical evaluation.^{xvii} Only one known study has examined the impact of bystander training on police. Surveys of Baltimore Police Department officers pre- and post-training of *Ethical Policing is Courageous (EPIC)* showed positive views of the usefulness of the training and self-reported increased confidence to

intervene with peers in problematic situations. No studies, however, have assessed actual changes in officer behavior or reports of misconduct.^{xviii} Given the lack of evidence regarding effectiveness, the impact of these policy changes on the frequency and severity of use of force, or police misconduct and mistakes, remains unknown.

Use of Chokeholds and Other Neck Restraints

Policy Description

Discussions surrounding the ban or restricted use of neck restraints typically refer to the use of chokeholds—which restrict individuals’ ability to breathe—and vascular restraints like carotid holds—which limit blood flow to the brain. Both techniques can render a person unconscious and, in some cases, can be lethal.^{xix} In their recent policy assessment, the Council on Criminal Justice’s (CCJ) Task Force on Policing^{xx} found no reliable national data describing the frequency or outcomes of officers’ use of neck restraints. However, some estimate that asphyxiation accounts for less than one percent (0.7%) of police-involved deaths.^{xxi}

Policy Adoption

Police agencies across the country are moving to restrict the use of neck restraints by police officers.^{xxii} The 2020 *Washington Post* survey of use of force policies in the 65 largest U.S. police departments found that 46 (or approximately 70%) ban the use of chokeholds and that 44 (or about 68%) ban carotid holds.^{xxiii} Just under half of these agencies revised their policies following the death of George Floyd in May 2020. Additionally, since then, at least 17 states have enacted legislation to ban or restrict the use of neck restraint techniques by officers, including Colorado in SB 20-217.^{xxiv}

The *Washington Post* survey noted that some departments report that chokeholds are prohibited or restricted, but such prohibition or restriction is not explicitly included in their written use of force policy; rather they appear in official memoranda or other command directives, or in some cases the prohibition is simply implied because it is not specifically mentioned in policy or included in use of force training. Both the IACP and the PERF recommends that *specific guidance* on chokeholds be included in use of force policy.^{xxv} Four of the largest local police agencies in Colorado—Aurora, Boulder, Colorado Springs, and Denver—as well as the Colorado State Patrol—specifically prohibit the use of chokeholds in their use of force policies.

Research on Impact

The impact of these changes in policy on police use of force is not well understood. Specifically, it is unclear whether statutory or departmental bans on these restraints will reduce their use, particularly in situations where the bans are not effectively enforced or when officers are permitted to use the restraints in situations where they perceive a significant, deadly threat.^{xxvi} However, the recent proliferation of

chokehold bans and similar restrictions, coupled with new reporting requirements, should help with tracking and evaluation efforts moving forward.

Use of No-Knock Warrants and Police Raids

Policy Description

The U.S. Constitution's Fourth Amendment prohibits unreasonable searches and seizures and requires that search warrants be supported by probable cause. Search warrants typically require officers to make their presence known prior to entering a premise, but police officers may request a no-knock warrant from a judge to permit them to lawfully enter a business or residence without advance notice or the permission of occupants.^{xxvii} These types of warrants are typically limited to urgent circumstances, such as those instances when unannounced entry is viewed as necessary to avoid harm to officers and others, to prevent the escape of a suspect, or to limit the destruction of evidence. Police raids, in turn, are a type of search that involves forcible entry. Raids may or may not involve a no-knock warrant but do require reasonable suspicion of exigent circumstances.^{xxviii}

Policy Adoption

According to the CCJ, as of 2020, most states allow no-knock warrants in some form. Police agencies have been increasingly advised to prohibit or severely restrict the use of no-knock warrants and unannounced police raids.^{xxix} As of January 2021, state bills and local ordinances banning or restricting no-knock warrants were introduced in 22 states and 20 cities. The Colorado Revised Statutes permit the use of no-knock warrants in very limited circumstances and charge the Colorado Department of Public Safety Division of Criminal Justice with reviewing policies related to their use.^{xxx} Colorado legislation HB21-1250 created the No-Knock and Forced Entry Study Group to review policies and practices related to the use of no-knock warrants and forced entry, and the group's recommendations for minimizing and regulating the use of no-knock warrants were presented to the Colorado Attorney General at the end of 2021.^{xxxi}

Research on Impact

Despite widespread introduction and adoption of state bills and local ordinances banning or restricting no-knock warrants, no empirical studies have been conducted on the impact of changes to policy or legislation banning or restricting no-knock warrants. Furthermore, due to the infrequency of these types of warrants, the possible impact of these changes on use of force has been questioned.^{xxxii} Research is needed that considers a cost-benefit analysis regarding the continued use of no-knock warrants given the possible added risk of injuries or death to citizens and officers.

Required Use of De-escalation Tactics

Policy Description

Law enforcement agencies across the U.S. have also been strongly encouraged, and in some cases legislatively mandated as they are in Colorado by SB 20-217, to require the use of de-escalation tactics where feasible during interactions with citizens. For example, PERF's *30 Guiding Principles* recommended that law enforcement agencies adopt de-escalation as a formal agency policy, including General Orders and/or policy statements that make it clear that de-escalation is the preferred approach in many critical incidents. The *Consensus National Policy* – endorsed by 11 leading law enforcement organizations – also recommended the inclusion of de-escalation in use of force policies. Specifically, it is recommended that policies require officers to use de-escalation techniques whenever possible and appropriate before resorting to force and that officers allow opportunities for individuals to submit to verbal commands before force is used.

Policy Adoption

There is limited knowledge of the extent to which law enforcement agencies have adopted de-escalation policies, the content of those policies (e.g., how de-escalation is defined or operationalized), or of how changes in use-of-force and de-escalation policies impact their day-to-day operations.^{xxxiii} The Bureau of Justice Statistics routinely reviews local police departments' policies, however its most recent review is from 2016 and did not collect data on written policies or procedural directives related to de-escalation.^{xxxiv} Although SB 20-217 does not use the term de-escalation, it does require officers to “apply nonviolent means, when possible, before resorting to the use of physical force.” It further states that an “officer may use physical force only if nonviolent means would be ineffective in effecting an arrest, preventing an escape, or preventing an imminent threat of serious bodily injury or death to the peace officer or another person.” Four of the largest local police agencies in Colorado—Aurora, Boulder, Colorado Springs, and Denver—as well as the Colorado State Patrol require the use of de-escalation whenever reasonable and appropriate based on the circumstances.

Research on Impact

Unfortunately, there has been no specific empirical research on the impact of requiring the use of de-escalation tactics and skills to be included within agencies' use of force policies. However, several studies have recently examined the impact of de-escalation training (summarized in the next section), demonstrating promising findings that comprehensive training can positively impact officers' attitudes and reduce the frequency of use of force and officer and citizen injuries.

Implementation

Logistics

Law enforcement agencies should have a designated sworn or civilian policy coordinator whose primary responsibility is to lead the department's efforts to organize, structure, review, and revise their policies and procedures. Agencies should also consider whether an electronic document management software system (e.g., PowerDMS) is a feasible option for managing the agencies' policies. This type of software

can make it easier for multiple people to collaborate on policy revision, offers a method for easily identifying the changes made to policy, and can be used to administer policy knowledge tests to agency personnel when needed.

Agencies must consider several factors in developing or revising policy related to use of force, including local, state, and federal legislation; court rulings^{xxxv}; accreditation standards; collective bargaining agreements; and the mission, vision, and values of the agency and community it serves.^{xxxvi} This can be a daunting endeavor, but there are several resources to assist agencies. Collecting and reviewing policies from peer agencies can be useful in this process. Additionally, the IACP produces model policies, concepts and issues papers that provide background information, and “considerations” documents, which provide recommendations that acknowledge that agencies’ expectations, missions, and capacity vary tremendously. Finally, the Justice Department recently announced the creation of its National Law Enforcement Knowledge Lab in partnership with the National Policing Institute and 21st Century Policing Solutions.^{xxxvii} The Knowledge Lab is free for law enforcement agencies and the public to use and compiles, in a searchable library, resources on a variety of policing issues.^{xxxviii} Its goal is to support agencies in their work on voluntary reform.

Facilitators and Barriers

Policy Review Committee. Policy changes are more likely to be effective if they are fully embraced and understood by those that they affect. One way to increase buy-in from agency stakeholders is to establish a policy review committee that includes representation from across the agency (e.g., command staff, first-line supervisors, patrol officers, training, professional standards/internal affairs).^{xxxix} The committee should be tasked with the routine review and update of policies related to use of force and other critical policies to ensure they are kept current and in line with best practices. Once revisions are discussed and incorporated, draft copies of the policy should be circulated among committee members for additional review and feedback.

As described above, national model policies and guidance exist, but blanket adoption of these policies is not recommended. Agencies must customize their policies to be consistent with their mission, vision, and values as well as the nature and demands of their work. Officers are more likely to embrace a policy that is specifically relevant to the reality and needs of their organization and jurisdiction. Further, public support for police policies is predicated on the policies’ availability in an accessible and transparent matter, with language that makes the policy understandable to officers and members of the public alike. Any implementation of a policy review committee should therefore account for the value of public accountability in its design.

Support Policy Change with Holistic Agency Approach: To maximize the impact of policy changes on police behavior, they need to be accompanied by comprehensive training, reinforced by supervisors in the field, supported through managerial oversight, and maintained with appropriate disciplinary and reward structures that reflect an organizational culture that prioritizes and expects the standards associated with the policy changes.^{xl}

Officers must be trained on the requirements associated with policy changes and what led to these changes, though the nature of the training will vary based on the type and extent of policy revisions. For example, some policy changes may be included as part of a more comprehensive training related to use of force, peer intervention, etc., while other changes may be effectively covered in brief roll call training by shift supervisors.^{xli} Regardless of the nature of the training, departments should ensure that there is an adequate feedback mechanism for officers to clarify questions about policy and their knowledge of the policy changes should be systematically assessed. To enhance officer buy-in, supervisors and command staff should champion policy changes, ensure officers understand them, and subsequently hold them accountable for acting in accordance with them. Finally, agencies should routinely evaluate the impact of policy changes on a variety of outcomes over time, including frequency and severity of use of force, officer and citizen injuries, and citizen complaints.

Additional Resources

- [The International Association of Chiefs of Police, National Consensus Policy on Use of Force \(2020\)](#)
- [Police Executive Research Forum, Guiding Principles on Use of Force \(2016\)](#)
- [National Conference of State Legislatures, Law Enforcement Legislation: Significant Trends \(2021\)](#)
- [Duke Center for Science and Justice, Tracking Police Reform Legislation by State \(2020\)](#)

Use of Force Training

Calls for more research on the effectiveness of police training date back several decades,^{xliii} but the general lack of systematic evaluations of the impact of police training programs persists. For the majority of police training curricula, we simply do not know whether they have the intended impact or any unintended consequences.^{xliii} Few other areas that are as critical to public policy are more underdeveloped, although scholarship in this area is beginning to flourish in the past five years.^{xliiv} This section summarizes four of the most commonly recommended types of training specifically related to use of force (e.g., training related to de-escalation, peer intervention, procedural justice, and implicit bias), the implementation of these training programs by law enforcement agencies across the country, and the available research on their effectiveness. The section concludes with training implementation considerations for agencies.

De-escalation Training

Background

Some law enforcement officials suggest the concept of de-escalation is not new—it has been embedded in policing for decades, with officers often receiving training on de-escalation skills such as communication skills, crisis intervention, and using space to slow down encounters.^{xliiv} Yet, in the last decade, calls for the adoption of use of force “de-escalation” policies and training have steadily grown and are now widely endorsed by policymakers, policing experts, and the public. This widespread support for de-escalation training has only intensified since the police killing of George Floyd in May 2020, with several states introducing legislation mandating de-escalation training for the police.^{xlivi}

Despite the vast promotion of this training from politicians, academics, expert panels, and the public, there is little consensus on what de-escalation is, what de-escalation training should include, and how it should be taught.^{xliivii} A review of how the term de-escalation is defined in other disciplines (e.g., nursing, psychiatry) revealed that de-escalation is described as a process used to prevent, reduce, or manage aggressive behavior during an interaction between two or more persons.^{xliiii} As it relates to policing, the National Consensus Policy and Discussion Paper on Use of Force released in October 2017 first proposed the following definition of de-escalation:

Taking action or communicating verbally or non-verbally during a potential force encounter in an attempt to stabilize the situation and reduce the immediacy of the threat so that more time, options, and resources can be called upon to resolve the situation without the use of force or with a reduction in the force necessary. De-escalation may include the use of such techniques as command presence, advisements, warnings, verbal persuasion, and tactical repositioning.

More recently, and based on focus groups conducted with officers, the following more concise definition has been offered: “bringing a situation or citizen in crisis back to a calm state, using the least amount of force possible.”^{xlix} Police trainings do not routinely define de-escalation but often describe it using the concepts of “reducing intensity,” “diffusion,” “crisis mitigation,” and “conflict management.”

Training Description and Implementation in the Field

Forms of de-escalation training for police have proliferated across the United States in recent years. In a 2019 national survey of 155 large police departments, nearly all responding agencies indicated that they offer de-escalation training to at least some of the officers in their agency.ⁱ Generally, de-escalation training is designed to provide officers with enhanced skills to resolve conflicts in highly confrontational situations without the use of force or with less force.ⁱⁱ Dozens of de-escalation trainings exist, varying in length, delivery methods, and training content.ⁱⁱⁱ Most de-escalation courses are completed through 8 to 24 hours of instruction. Some agencies, however, have elected to significantly reduce the number of hours of instruction. It is unknown what impact changes in the curriculum content or number of hours of instruction have on the effectiveness of the trainings.

Some of the most commonly used de-escalation trainings include:

- *Integrating Communications, Assessment, and Tactics*, developed by the Police Executive Research Forum
- *Tact, Tactics, and Trust*, developed by Polis Solutions
- *Fundamentals of Realistic De-escalation*, developed by Force Science Institute
- *Insight Policing*, developed by Center for Applied Insight Conflict Resolution
- *Confident Non-escalation*, developed by Premier Police
- *Applied De-escalation Tactics*, developed by Law Enforcement Innovation Center

A preliminary review of these and other de-escalation training curricula show several commonalities among their topic areas and instruction. For example, the following topics are routinely included in de-escalation training curricula:

- Officer Use of Force (e.g., current events, context of critical incidents, statistics)
- Officer Safety
- Recognizing Persons in Crisis / Potential Crisis Situations
- Effective Communication (verbal and non-verbal)
- Building Empathy and Rapport
- Identifying the Impact of Officer Behavior in Crisis Situations

Most of these trainings are delivered through formal and informal discussions, using PowerPoint presentations and group discussions as their foundation. Some trainings rely more heavily on video-based instruction than others. More advanced trainings include scenario-based instruction for skill practice and topic reinforcement, whereas others do not include this during the allotted training time. A recent survey of officers conducted with the Colorado Springs Police Department showed that officers were concerned

about the amount and quality of use of force and de-escalation training provided by their agency. Officers indicated a desire for more hands-on, realistic, and interactive training particularly as it relates to use of force.^{lviii} Research on adult learning modalities across disciplines confirms that training that incorporates scenario-based, role playing, and other hands-on skill practice should enhance trainees' knowledge and ability to apply their knowledge to police work in the field.^{liv}

Some agencies have elected to develop their own de-escalation training by including various components of pre-existing training and infusing this instruction with their own materials. For example, the Tempe (AZ) Police Department developed an agency-specific comprehensive curriculum after conducting a thorough vetting process and working directly with line-level officers to customize the training content and delivery.^{lv} Likewise, the Cincinnati (OH) Police Department is currently implementing their own training, De-escalation through Tactical Communication (DTC). Both of these agencies are currently working with research teams to assess the impact of their training.

Research on Impact

Until recently, the available research on the impacts of de-escalation training provided limited insight. A multidisciplinary systematic review of de-escalation training evaluations conducted prior to 2019 shows that over 60 de-escalation trainings were evaluated across other professions, but no studies were found that measured the impact of de-escalation training for police or any other criminal justice practitioners. Since 2019, ten studies examining the impact of police de-escalation training have emerged.^{lvi} Most findings demonstrate promising, positive changes in officers' self-reported behavior, knowledge, perceptions, and attitudes that aligned with the goals of de-escalation training, while one study showed significant impact on use of force in the field.^{lvii}

- A randomized controlled trial (RCT) evaluation of the *Tact, Tactics, and Trust* ("T3") training program implemented by the Fayetteville (NC) and Tucson (AZ) Police Departments showed that trainees in both the low and high dose groups had improved attitudes on procedural justice priorities, but the high dose treatment group de-prioritized physical control. No significant changes in officer use of force behavior were observed.^{lviii} A related study examining trainee receptivity for the T3 training program found that the trainees' internal locus of control was associated with their motivation to train and that this motivation was, in turn, associated with receptivity to the training and perceptions of skill acquisition.^{lix}
- A randomized control trial (RCT) evaluation of a customized de-escalation training program designed by the Tempe (AZ) Police Department demonstrated that both control and experimental groups reported positive perceptions of de-escalation tactics, frequent use of those tactics, and favorable attitudes toward de-escalation before and after the training. Trained officers, however, self-reported more frequent use of specific de-escalation tactics and placed greater emphasis on compromise. No significant differences in use of force behavior in the field were observed between experimental and control groups of trainees.^{lx}
- An evaluation of the Integrating Communications, Assessment, and Tactics (ICAT) training was conducted with the University of Cincinnati Police Division and demonstrated significant changes in officer attitudes related to the use of force, understanding of persons in crisis, and officer

confidence in handling critical incidents in support of the training principles.^{lxi} Officer behavioral changes were not assessed due to infrequency of use of force by officers in this police agency.

- ICAT training was also examined retrospectively in Camden County (NJ). Although the analyses of individual officers did not find significant impact of the training on use of force behavior, a comparison of the Camden County Police Department to other large regional agencies in New Jersey revealed that use of force by CCPD was reduced by 40% after the implementation of ICAT and other significant changes to policy and training.^{lxii}
- To date, the sole evaluation of de-escalation training that has demonstrated significant changes in officer behavior *in the field* involved an RCT of the impact of ICAT training implemented by the Louisville (KY) Metro Police Department. The randomized timing of the training was associated with a 28% reduction in officer use of force, 26% reduction in citizen injuries, and a 36% reduction in officer injuries.^{lxiii} The training was also associated with a significant impact on improving officers' and supervisors' perceptions of and receptivity to training, self-reported use of de-escalation tactics in the field, and significant and positive changes in attitudes related to interactions with the public, persons in crisis, and use of force.^{lxiv}

Additional Resources

- [Council on Criminal Justice Task Force on Policing, De-escalation Policies and Training \(2021\)](#)
- [Police Executive Research Forum, ICAT Training Guide](#)
- [International Association of Chiefs of Police and University of Cincinnati, Louisville Metro Police Department ICAT Evaluation, Initial Findings Report \(2020\)](#)
- [Polis Solutions, T3 - Tact, Tactics, and Trust](#)
- [Force Science, Fundamentals of Realistic De-Escalation](#)
- [Insight Policing](#)
- [Premier Police Training, Confident Non-Escalation](#)
- [Law Enforcement Innovation Center at the University of Tennessee, Specialized Training](#)
- [Center for Violence Prevention and Community Safety at Arizona State University, Tempe Smart Policing Initiative - Final Report](#)

Peer Intervention Training

Background

As described in the policy section above, police agencies and state legislatures have widely adopted policy mandates related to officers' duty to intervene if they witness another officer engaging in misconduct or using excessive force. Calls have been made to develop and implement training designed to provide officers with the skills to meet the expectations surrounding these mandates, typically through the implementation of peer intervention training. One of the first training programs of this kind, Ethical Policing Is Courageous (EPIC), was developed by the New Orleans Police Department (NOPD) in 2016 in response to a requirement from their consent decree with the U.S. Department of Justice that NOPD develop a use of force training that emphasized ethical decision making and peer intervention.^{lxv}

Training Description and Implementation in the Field

Peer intervention trainings are designed to provide officers with skills to intervene in situations of unethical behavior, policy violations, and excessive force by peers or supervisors. This type of training typically includes instruction on most or all of the following topics:

- Understanding and reinforcing moral motivation, moral clarity, and moral courage
- The power of professional integrity, mutual support and mutual accountability
- The science behind active bystandership^{lxvi}
- Factors that put officers at risk for mistakes and misconduct
- Individual, team, and agency practices that reinforce moral courage
- Effective language and skills for difficult conversations and intervention
- The importance of individual wellness and interpersonal relationships in maintaining moral courage

EPIC training was built upon the social science research regarding "active bystandership"^{lxvii} and "inhibitors of action."^{lxviii} It was designed to prevent and mitigate police officer mistakes and misconduct by promoting safe and effective peer intervention by officers through the instruction of learnable skills.^{lxix} Building on EPIC, the NOPD and Georgetown Law School's Innovative Policing Program developed a national training curriculum called ABLE (Active Bystandership for Law Enforcement).

The objective of ABLE is to "prepare officers to successfully intervene to prevent harm and to create a law enforcement culture that supports peer intervention."^{lxx} ABLE offers training, technical assistance, and research available at no cost for all departments in the nation to teach the importance of and allow for the facilitation of officer intervention.^{lxxi} ABLE is a one-day training, team-taught by at least two instructors and covering the following content: introduction of the concept of active bystandership, social science research supporting it, the inhibitors to active bystandership, and the strategies and skills needed to

intervene effectively. It is important to note that one of the included modules—*ABLE: What's in It for Me?*—specifically focuses on enhancing officer buy-in for this training. ABLE includes PowerPoint lecture, classroom discussion, individual and small group learning exercises, and scenario-based role playing.

While ABLE is one of the leading peer intervention programs, other programs have been developed across the US, including *Leading Behind the Badge* (provided by the Legal and Liability Risk Management Institute), and *Reinforcing Moral Courage* (provided by Ethical Leaders in Action). Although the training delivery is largely the same, it is unknown the degree to which skills practice and scenario-based learning are included. These training programs are also shorter in length than ABLE.

ABLE is further distinguished from these training programs in that it requires adopting agencies to commit to the creation of a comprehensive organizational environment that expects and values active bystandership. Notably, to be considered an ABLE-trained agency, agencies must adopt ten standards to ensure training model fidelity, including demonstration of community and agency administrative support for the training, written policy protection for those who intervene, program awareness, and agency support for the empirical evaluation of ABLE training, among other standards.

Several large departments, including Baltimore (pursuant to a federal consent decree), Boston, Minneapolis, Philadelphia, and the Washington State Criminal Justice Training Commission are already participating.^{lxxii} In total, over 240 police agencies across the country have become ABLE-certified and it is part of the state-mandated training in progress for all police agencies in New Jersey.^{lxxiii}

Research on Impact

While peer intervention trainings are based on strong conceptual frameworks and social psychological research, there is insufficient empirical evidence to understand whether they achieve their intended effects of: (1) changing police culture, and (2) reducing excessive use of force, problematic behaviors, or mistakes. The NOPD reported preliminary success of EPIC based on significant reductions in citizen complaints and several officers' anecdotal accounts of program success in the field, but the program's impact has not been independently evaluated.^{lxxiv} The National Policing Institute (NPI) surveyed officers pre- and post-EPIC training in the Baltimore Police Department and reported positive views regarding the usefulness of the training to promote ethical conduct, as well as increased confidence and willingness to intervene in problematic situations with coworkers.^{lxxv} However, the effectiveness of ABLE (and other peer intervention trainings) for changing police behavior in the field has not been empirically examined.

Additional Resources

- [Center for Innovations in Community Safety at Georgetown Law, Active Bystandership for Law Enforcement \(ABLE\) Project](#)
- [New Orleans Police Department, Ethical Policing Is Courageous](#)
- [International Association of Chiefs of Police, Peer Bystander Intervention in Law Enforcement Agencies](#)

- [The Council on Criminal Justice Task Force on Policing, Duty to Intervene](#)

Procedural Justice Training

Background

Distrust between the police and communities of color is a significant barrier to effective policing. Building trust and legitimacy in the police was identified by the President’s Task Force on 21st Century Policing as a key pillar for the future of American policing.^{lxxvi} Over the last 30 years, public trust and confidence in the police has decreased despite consistent reductions in violent crime rates.^{lxxvii} In 2021, a Gallup poll revealed that 51% of Americans reported having confidence in the police, but the gap between White (56% confident) and Black respondents (27% confident) was 29 percentage points; this represents a slight rebound in Blacks’ confidence in police from a low of 19% in 2020.^{lxxviii} When communities lack trust in the police and believe that officers treat them unfairly, they are less likely to work collaboratively with law enforcement or defer to their authority.^{lxxix} Extensive research has shown that trust and confidence in law enforcement, related to individuals’ perceptions of police legitimacy, has a significant impact on public safety.^{lxxx}

Training Description and Implementation in the Field

Scholars and police experts agree that to gain legitimacy, the police need to address concerns related to the four principles of procedural justice:^{lxxxi}

1. *Voice*: the need for people to be able to explain themselves or state their case before judgment
2. *Neutrality*: the desire to have officers react to objective evidence and enforce the law consistently, without bias
3. *Dignity and Respect*: the need for people to be treated with courtesy, with respect for their rights, and
4. *Trustworthiness*: the manner in which officers present themselves, including physical cues that show benevolence and trustworthiness as opposed to suspicion.^{lxxxii}

Recognizing this need, departments across the country have begun to adopt or develop training programs to address these four tenets by identifying key issues that contribute to a lack of trust in police, educating officers on the importance of procedural justice to increase public perceptions of police legitimacy, and providing them with the tools to incorporate procedural justice into daily police work.^{lxxxiii}

The most well-known version of procedural justice training was developed and implemented by the Chicago (IL) Police Department (CPD) in 2012 with the expertise and technical assistance of academics.^{lxxxiv} The program, attended by all CPD officers, included two training sessions. The initial phase of the program included a “Legitimacy and Procedural Justice Training” course aimed to provide officers with a clear understanding of the principles of procedural justice and how it can be applied to police work. The second phase used scenario-based training and videos featuring community-member perspectives to reinforce the concepts taught in the initial session.

Chicago’s procedural justice training program has been adopted by many police agencies across the country. Shortly after the program was implemented, CPD representatives ran workshops for several

municipalities in California, many of whom then designed their own programs to address the unique circumstances of their cities. For example, Oakland (CA) decided to include community leaders in the process of planning their training program in an effort to improve an already tense relationship between the Oakland Police Department and the city's community.^{lxxxv} More departments are continuing to build upon this program, including Birmingham (AL), Fort Worth (TX), Minneapolis (MN), and Pittsburgh (PA), for instance, while others like Seattle (WA), have developed their own.

Research on Impact

Only a handful of studies have examined the impact of procedural justice training for police. An empirical evaluation of the CPD training program demonstrated some success. For example, after the training a vast majority of officers (95%) reported positive attitudes, which were largely sustained over time, about resolving the concerns of the community.^{lxxxvi} A later study measuring the effects of the program initially found that the timing of the training corresponded with a 10% reduction in complaints against officers and a 6.4% reduction in police use of force against civilians, but the authors later issued a correction from their original findings, noting that when the data were reanalyzed using a more appropriate statistical method, the impact on complaints was not statistically significant.^{lxxxvii} Other studies of the CPD program found that trainees in the experimental group were more likely than the control group to exhibit respectful behavior during role-playing scenarios and that officers' support for procedural justice was increased.^{lxxxviii}

An evaluation of the Seattle Police Department's procedural justice training program also showed reductions in officer uses of force and arrests. Specifically, the procedural justice training was correlated with reductions in use of force incidents ranging from 16 to 50 percent.^{lxxxix} This program evaluation also demonstrated that reductions in officers' use of arrests and force were correlated with short supervisory meetings with officers focused on modeling procedural justice techniques.^{xc} While these initial findings are promising, further research is needed to sufficiently evaluate the potential impact of procedural justice training on outcomes of interest.

Additional Resources

- [The Council on Criminal Justice Task Force on Policing, Procedural Justice Training](#)
- [Police Chief Magazine, Procedural Justice: A Training Model for Organizational-Level Change](#)
- [National Policing Institute, Promoting Officer Integrity through Early Engagements and Procedural Justice in the Seattle Police Department](#)
- [National Police Research Forum, The Chicago Quality Interaction Training Program](#)

Implicit Bias Training

Background

Implicit bias refers to an unconscious prejudice that people may develop due to differential life experiences.^{xcⁱ} In contrast to explicit bias, which is analogous to traditional “racism,” all humans are subject to some form of unconscious bias that may influence perceptions and behaviors, resulting in discriminatory decision-making.^{xcⁱⁱ} The “automatic association people make between groups of people and stereotypes about those groups,” is a well-studied psychological phenomenon.^{xcⁱⁱⁱ} Long noted as a barrier to fair policing, implicit bias provides one potential explanation for the well-documented racial and ethnic disparities that exist across a range of policing outcomes across the country, including traffic and pedestrian stops, arrests, and use of force.^{xc^{iv}} Indeed, the existence of implicit bias in officers specifically has been demonstrated in research.^{xc^v}

Training Description and Implementation in the Field

Although not specifically designed to reduce police use of force, some have suggested that implementing implicit bias training could reduce racial and ethnic disparities in policing outcomes.^{xc^{vi}} Based upon a large body of psychological research demonstrating that biases can be managed,^{xc^{vii}} this type of training typically begins by educating individuals regarding the existence and consequences of implicit bias, and, subsequently, teaching various skills to reduce and manage these biases in police work.^{xc^{viii}} The most well-known implicit bias training is called Fair and Impartial Policing, which was developed with support from the federal Office of Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS) and has been implemented in state, local, federal, and university police agencies across the country.^{xc^{ix}} Other implicit bias trainings include Tools for Tolerance,^c Tactical Perception,^{ci} Implicit Bias Awareness and Mitigation,^{cⁱⁱ} and Counter-Bias Training Simulation.^{cⁱⁱⁱ}

The following comparison chart illustrates the differences among common training programs, which can vary in length, content, and delivery method.

Table X. Comparison of Common Implicit Bias Training Programs

Training	Developer/ Vendor	Type of Training	Hours	Delivery Methods	Modules/Content	Remarks
Counter-Bias Training Simulation	Washington St. University	Officer training or Train-the- Trainer	4 hrs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Classroom instruction Debriefing and self-evaluation Simulator: shoot / don't shoot scenarios 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Goal is to reduce likelihood that implicit bias influences officers' ability to detect threats and make decisions in real-world events 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Researchers are currently conducting a RCT to examine the effectiveness of this training
Fair and Impartial Policing	FIP Trainers, with support from the COPS Office	Train-the- trainer	8 hrs: (officers, first-line supervisors) 12 hrs (command)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lecture-based Learning activities and social exercises Role-play scenarios 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The science of implicit bias and its potential implications for police work Consequences of biased policing Six skills to manage biases 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Trainers are instructed to emphasize the non-accusatory tone and format Command staff training includes additional module on implicit bias as it relates to supervision
Implicit Bias Awareness and Mitigation	National Training Institute on Race and Equity	Officer or executive training	Available as 4 or 8 hrs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> PowerPoint lecture Interactive exercises Small group discussion 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Define implicit bias and its root causes How to assess and identify implicit bias Implications of bias CUE Model (Communicate with, Understand, and Empathize with those different from oneself) 	
Tactical Perception	The National Initiative for Building Community Trust and Justice	Officer training	8 hrs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lecture, Race implicit association test Classroom discussions Videos Small group activities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Introduction to implicit bias, how different from stereotypes, prejudice, discrimination, and racism Situational constraints that may produce "fast traps" – decisions that occur quickly, outside of conscious awareness "Slow traps" – conscious responses to threats Strategies to defuse traps 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Third of a three-part program from the National Initiative. The first two trainings focus on procedural justice. Officers are taught about implicit bias from race, but also bias from other social identities (gender, sexuality)
Tools for Tolerance	The Museum of Tolerance	Train-the- trainer	Varied program options from 1-4 days (some only in CA)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Video presentations Small group activities Classroom discussion Personal testimonies Role-play and teach-back exercises 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Growing cultural diversity and implications for law enforcement Legal issues, historical context of racial profiling, and community concerns Criminal profiling vs. racial profiling 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Not developed specifically for law enforcement Command staff programs focus on bias as it relates to leadership models and having difficult conversations

Adapted from Worden et al. 2020.

Research on Impact

Research in other disciplines examining implicit bias training on changes in behavior reveals a mixed assessment of its impact.^{civ} A recent meta-analysis concluded that many procedures to change implicit bias may not consistently alter explicit bias, but some of these procedures were more effective than others. Other research has suggested unintended consequences from implicit bias training, resulting in the normalization or increases in the expression of bias.^{cv}

By contrast, there remains a critical need for empirical research evaluations of implicit bias training for police.^{cvi} Only one study evaluating the Fair and Impartial Policing implicit bias training implemented by the New York City Police Department (NYPD) has been conducted to examine its impact on police attitudes and behavior. Using a modified randomized control trial design, researchers found that training delivery correlated with increases in officers' reported knowledge about implicit bias and modest changes in officers' attitudes.^{cvi} For example, 70 percent of participants reported improved understanding of implicit bias, while more than two-thirds learned new strategies that they anticipated applying to their work.^{cvi} Despite these positive knowledge and attitudinal findings, the NYPD study failed to find any statistically significant changes in reported racial or ethnic disparities in stops, frisks, searches, use of force, arrests, summons, or citizen complaints after the training was implemented.^{cix}

Summarizing this lack of research related to implicit bias training and its questionable effectiveness based on the NYPD study, the Council on Criminal Justice concluded: (1) additional research is needed to determine whether implicit bias trainings that differ in content and dosage may yield better results, and (2) lowering the frequency of high-discretion police stops may be more likely to reduce biased policing than offering implicit bias training.^{cx} The need for further research is clear, but it is important to note that the CCJ's recommendations did not consider the potential (unknown) positive impact that implicit bias training may have for changing the culture of policing. As noted by the authors of the NYPD study, if racial and ethnic disparities in police outcomes are the product of factors other than implicit bias, it is possible that this type of training may have little impact on disparities, although increasing trainees' general knowledge and understanding regarding implicit bias should remain an important goal of police agencies.^{cx}

Additional Resources

- [Council on Criminal Justice, Implicit Bias](#)
- [Implicit-Bias-Awareness Training, Fair and Impartial Policing](#)
- [Fair and Impartial Policing Training - COPS Training Portal](#)
- [International Association of Chiefs of Police, The Impacts of Implicit Bias Awareness Training in the NYPD \(2020\)](#)
- [Milo Range, Police Counter Bias Training from Milo Range](#)
- [National Training Institute on Race and Equity at Morehouse College, Implicit \(Unconscious\) Bias Training](#)

- [National Initiative for Building Community Trust & Justice Implicit Bias](#)
- [Museum of Tolerance, Tools for Tolerance® for Law Enforcement and Criminal Justice](#)

Implementation

Logistics

Identify Training Needs. Police agencies have limited training hours available, a situation that is currently exacerbated by increasing amounts of state-mandated training and staffing shortages faced by departments nationwide. To ensure that they prioritize the most needed and relevant types of training, it is recommended that each agency conduct a comprehensive review of their current training compared to the recommended best practices in police training, which were documented most recently by the CCJ's Task Force on Policing.^{cxii} The focus of this review should include:

- Gaps in topical content: The CCJ found that police training overwhelmingly focuses on enforcement, defense tactics, and weapon use, which fails to prepare officers for work consistent with community-oriented principles.^{cxiii} More training time should be devoted to communication skills, de-escalation tactics, principles of procedural justice, and situational management.
- Whether training delivery methods incorporate adult learning modalities (e.g., role-play, scenarios, or tabletop exercises) that provide opportunities to promote critical thinking and allow officers to apply problem solving skills
- Standards for selection, observation, coaching, and evaluation of instructors
- Lesson plan requirements (e.g., clearly stated, realistic performance objectives, review of lesson plans before instruction)

To assist in this endeavor, agencies should consider the formation of a training committee if one does not already exist. This committee should comprise a cross-section of agency personnel that is charged with conducting an annual review of training and the development of an annual training plan. Officers' and supervisors' representation on the training committee can be an effective method for enhancing buy-in for new training at the line level. Finally, training needs should be routinely assessed over time by soliciting officer feedback following each provided training. Officers should be given the opportunity to provide confidential feedback on the performance of their instructor, the content and usefulness of the current training, and training needs in general.

Collect Data to Enable Evaluation of Training. Agencies must systematically evaluate the impact of implemented training. At a minimum, agencies should assess trainees' knowledge and understanding of training content. More advanced evaluation of training to measure changes in attitudes and perceptions before and after training can create a feedback mechanism within police agencies, where the findings can provide information to police trainers to refine and enhance training. Finally, agencies should collect and analyze official data to measure training impacts on officer behavior (e.g., use of de-escalation tactics, use of force, arrests) as well as citizen complaints and injuries to citizens and officers. For example, the

Oklahoma City (OK) Police Department includes the systematic capture of information related to the use and perceived effectiveness of de-escalation tactics as part of their use of force data collection. Similarly, the University of Cincinnati Police Division captures this information for all pedestrian and traffic stops. The collection of this type of information related to de-escalation creates an accountability structure that allows an agency to assess how often officers are putting their de-escalation training into practice in the field and complying with the policy to do so. Requiring officers to document their use of de-escalation tactics also reinforces the expectation that de-escalation be employed in all appropriate circumstances.

Carefully Consider Modifications to Training. Police agencies often modify or adapt training programs' content, delivery method, or duration of instruction based on available training hours, resource constraints, instructor preference, or other agency needs.^{cxiv} Sometimes, locally implemented modifications can be used to increase the relevance and engagement of trainees by including locally relevant scenarios, where possible.^{cxv}

When considering modifications, however, it is critical that agencies ensure that core elements of curricula are still present. For example, a recent train-the-trainer de-escalation course funded by the Collaborative Reform Initiative for Technical Assistance Center (CRI-TAC)^{cxvi} was provided to 19 attending agencies. Researchers conducted follow-up interviews with each of these agencies to identify implementation plans, which revealed that no agencies planned to train according to model fidelity.^{cxvii} The few trainings that were delivered included major modifications, such as eliminating the allotted four hours of dedicated skill practice, delivering training over a much shorter amount of time than the original two required days, or integrating the training into a different program (e.g., crisis intervention training or separate use of force training). Rationales for these training modifications included limited officer resources, the pressing needs of other required trainings, or overlap with existing courses.

When a developed training course is significantly modified, these changes may potentially result in a program that is less effective or with outcomes that were not originally intended. It is imperative that agencies carefully consider how the changes to training delivery may impact training outcomes. In particular, reducing or eliminating time for interactive practice components (e.g., scenarios, role-playing, skill practice) could be particularly consequential.^{cxviii}

Facilitators and Barriers

Historically, traditional police culture has been resistant to change, valuing field experience over evidence-based approaches.^{cxix} One of the greatest barriers to training implementation is officer receptivity to new training. Police executives participating in the development of PERF's Re-Engineering Training publication widely acknowledged that a shift in culture is a prerequisite for successful implementation of training changes that challenge traditionally held beliefs.^{cxx} Previous research has demonstrated a significant negative relationship between officer cynicism and openness to organizational change.^{cxxi} On the other hand, a 2014 study found that over 95% of surveyed officers were willing to try new evidence-based strategies. Although many of the officers also expressed skepticism about their agencies' long-term commitment to changes, it is nonetheless an encouraging finding that officers are open to new strategies.

The key for agencies is to implement training in such a way that facilitates officers' receptivity, particularly over the long term as the pace of police reforms and new training requirements quickens.

Examinations of training receptivity in other disciplines, including organizational behavior and human relations, shows that receptivity to training is influenced by several factors.^{cxxii} Based on this research, researchers recently proffered a theory of training motivation and receptivity as it specifically relates to police officers.^{cxxiii} Specifically, they posit that training motivation is impacted by:

- organizational justice (factors related to officers feeling that they have a voice in the organization, that outcomes are consistently based on quality of work, that decisions are explained, and that officers are treated respectfully),
- internal locus of control (belief that training can impact behaviors), and
- self-efficacy (confidence in ability to perform a task).

Training motivation, in turn, influences officers' receptivity to training, including their satisfaction with training and perceived skill acquisition, which itself relates to the impact on officer behavior and organizational level change. Indeed, recent studies demonstrate that officers' receptivity to training is an important predictor of training impact on behavioral change.^{cxxiv}

Based on these theoretical propositions, previous research in other disciplines, and the limited research on police training receptivity, the following strategies are critical for the success for training programs that are ultimately selected or developed by agencies:

1. Clear organizational support (e.g., executive leadership, clear dissemination of information, particularly as it relates to the benefits of the training)
2. Quality instructors that are perceived as credible by officers
3. The use of interactive, hands-on opportunities to practice the skills that are taught
4. Continual reinforcement through field supervision and managerial support

Clear Organizational Support: Police executives and scholars agree that strong, authentic organizational leadership that champions particular changes and effectively communicates the impetus behind those changes to the line level can facilitate buy-in for organizational changes.^{cxxv} In a vertical hierarchical structure that is typical of most law enforcement agencies, it is critical that the commitment to new training is clearly articulated from the executive level and that senior staff embrace the tenets of training. Practically, police executives and researchers agree that this can be facilitated by training executive staff first. This allows them to understand the curriculum officers will be experiencing and consider how the tenets of training can be embedded throughout the organization and enhances their specific knowledge to allow them to more authentically model and champion the training curriculum for others in the organization.^{cxxvi}

Previous research also suggests that the nature of organizational messages and dissemination of information is particularly important for enhancing officer buy-in.^{cxxvii} Specifically, internal messaging should:

- explain the advantages and benefits of training for officers (e.g., officer safety, increased civility during interactions)
- provide officers the opportunity to ask questions and provide feedback about the training
- recognize officers' field experiences and knowledge but simultaneously reinforce that officers' skills can always be improved to better respond to interactions with the public

Finally, although size of agency is not a factor that can be changed, it is still important to note that it may be easier to effect change through organizational culture, messaging, and practices in smaller sized agencies where there is less organizational distance between line level officers and more senior ranks.^{cxxviii}

Selection of Instructors. Training receptivity may be enhanced by selecting instructors that are “credible messengers.” These are individuals who 1) fully embrace the training’s concepts, 2) demonstrate mastery of the training material, and 3) are experienced and skilled enough to engage officers that may be cynical about the training or have pre-conceived negative connotations about specific training topics (for example, de-escalation or implicit bias).^{cxxix} Instructors can also increase participant receptivity to training by acknowledging the skills and experience that students already have and then build upon it by interweaving it with the training material.

Adult Learning Training Modalities. Although there is scant empirical evidence on specific training modalities as it specifically relates to police training^{cxxx}, the little research that exists suggests that some police training is outdated and that agencies would benefit from adopting evidence-based, theory-informed curricula and delivery methods specifically targeted for adult learners (including mixed modalities of lecture, real world video examples, scenario-based role playing, and group discussion),^{cxxxi} which will ultimately improve learning and skill retention.^{cxxxii} While no studies have directly examined how frequently refresher courses should occur with police training, the fields of psychology and education clearly demonstrate the value of repeated content exposure and practice for knowledge retention^{cxxxiii} and other studies have demonstrated the utility of booster trainings in police work.^{cxxxiv} It is recommended that agencies should measure changes to officer attitudes and skill use over time to examine training decay and the need for and impacts of refresher trainings. In the Louisville de-escalation training evaluation, for example, over 40% of officers agreed that they would benefit from an ICAT refresher course in their follow up survey responses.^{cxxxv} These types of approaches are likely to increase officer satisfaction with training and perceived skill acquisition.

Continual reinforcement through field supervision and managerial support

As with training of executive level staff that occurs before department-wide training, it is recommended that supervisors are also trained before their assigned officers. This allows them exposure to the training concepts, but also assists them in understanding their role in better supporting the implementation of the training as officers complete it. A recent study found that supervisors’ receptivity to ICAT de-escalation training in Louisville Metro Police Department was a significant predictor of actual engagement in

supervisory activities that champion the training tenets for their assigned officers,^{cxvii} illustrating that establishing buy-in at the supervisory level is critical for enhancing training receptivity at the line level. Officers are more likely to accept training concepts that they have already seen being valued and exhibited by their supervisors.^{cxviii}

The messaging that comes from executive leadership and first line supervisors must be supported by organizational policies and practices. Agency level management needs to establish consistency between what is taught in training and what is required by agency policy. Supervisors and commanders must then maintain these expectations by holding officers accountable through the process of performance evaluations, reward structures and appropriate corrective or disciplinary actions when needed.^{cxix} Without these organizational supports in place, officers are likely to believe changes related to training are a fad or will not substantively change their work in the long term.

Finally, it is important for agencies to understand that some training changes may require greater organizational efforts to overcome resistance and enhance training receptivity. Previous research notes that training changes that are related to controlling or correcting officers' discretion are typically associated with greater officer dissatisfaction.^{cx} For example, the Louisville Metro Police Department (LMPD) is actively developing opportunities for supervisors to coach, mentor, and evaluate officers on their use of de-escalation tactics and skills based on research that indicated there was insufficient support of the tenets of ICAT training from first-line supervisors. The study with LMPD also demonstrated that when officers believed their first-line supervisors and chain of command supported ICAT training, they were more likely to report using de-escalation tactics and skills in the field.^{cx} Similarly, the creators of peer intervention trainings note that the success of programs like EPIC and ABLE depend on a culture change within the department that is based on the involvement and support of superior officers.^{cxii} For example, the ABLE program requires the designation of a program coordinator who will roll out, promote, and reinforce the program; the adoption of a meaningful officer wellness program that includes access to professionals (e.g., counselors, social workers, etc.).

Additional Resources

- [Council on Criminal Justice Task Force on Policing. Effectiveness of Police Training - Assessing the Evidence](#)
- [Police Executive Research Forum, Re-Engineering Training on Police Use of Force](#)
- [Police Executive Research Forum, Guiding Principles on Use of Force](#)

Innovations and Emerging Practices

Data Collection

As succinctly summarized by the Police Executive Research Forum, “you can only manage what you measure.”^{cxlii} For agencies to better understand what factors influence police officers’ decisions to use of force, they should collect (in a readily accessible format) and analyze data for all use of force incidents. Although SB20-217 includes a data collection provision, the information is required only for use of force incidents that result in death or serious bodily injury. Existing research, however, demonstrates that most incidents involve less severe types of force, with death or serious bodily injury occurring rarely.^{cxliii} Additionally, some empirical evidence suggests that racial and ethnic disparities in the use of force might be more common at lower levels of force.^{cxliv} Agencies should therefore not limit their examination of use of force to only these most severe cases, but should rather be as comprehensive as possible in their collection and analysis of data by including, for example, incidents that involve the pointing of a firearm.

Despite a considerable body of evidence that identifies multiple factors that are important to consider when examining police use of force, this information is often not systematically collected or analyzed by police agencies. As a result, for some agencies, this may involve enhancing their current use of force data collection protocol to meet best practices. PERF developed a Use-of-Force Data Framework, which includes an all-inclusive list of measures related to use of force that agencies should consider collecting.^{cxlv}

For other agencies, it may require a more nuanced analytical examination of already collected data. Some law enforcement agencies compile and issue an annual report on use of force to the public, but these are often summary reports that do not provide an in-depth examination of use of force or inform actionable next steps. Agencies should conduct a comprehensive analysis of use of force, racial and ethnic disparities in force, and officer and citizen injuries resulting from force to better understand specific patterns and trends and identify the most immediate reform needs. For example, the Colorado Springs Police Department recently commissioned a study that employed a multi-method approach to provide a deeper and more contextualized understanding of how, when, why, and against whom officers use force.^{cxlvi} Specifically, this study involved:

- Quantitative analysis of official police data related to use of force and pointing of firearms designed to answer the following questions:
 - What factors contribute to the use of force by CSPD officers?
 - Do disparities exist in rates of force experienced by different racial and/or ethnic groups relative to risk (i.e., representation in arrest or criminal suspect population instead of just comparisons to overall residential population)?
 - Are individuals’ race, ethnicity, or gender related to the level of force used by the police while accounting for resistance and other relevant individual, situational, and environmental factors (i.e., level of resistance, presence of a weapon, neighborhood crime rate, etc.)?

- What factors or combinations of factors contribute to the likelihood of officer and citizen injuries during use of force encounters (e.g., type of force, citizen impairment, level of resistance, etc.)?
- Focus groups and surveys to consider community and officer perceptions of use of force and police-community relations; and
- Expert review of use of force-related policies and a comparison of CSPD policies to similarly situated agencies.

The result was a clear path forward for the agency to make specifically targeted improvements to policy, supervision, and training based on identified patterns and trends as well as the feedback of its officers and the community it serves. Employing this type of multi-faceted approach to data analysis focuses on understanding use of force, citizen and officer injuries, and racial/ethnic disparities, examining the possible explanations for these outcomes, and helping agencies make informed decisions about the types of evidence-based practices that can be implemented to respond to observed findings.^{cxlvii}

Community Engagement and Transparency with the Public

The collection and analysis of use of force data can also be a mechanism for increasing transparency and engagement with the public. The PERF Guiding Principles include a recommendation that agencies release regular use of force reports to the communities they serve to build understanding and trust, which can increase public perceptions of legitimacy.^{cxlviii} Data analysis alone, however, is only one component of providing meaningful updates to the public. Annual reports should summarize and explain use of force-related training that officers have completed in the past year. Similarly, if changes to use of force policies or practices have been made, the report should educate the public about why these changes were made and how they further the agency's goals of reducing use of force and increasing officer and public safety. The report should provide the public with an explanation of how the agency has used or will use the findings of the data analysis to inform updates to policy, practice, supervision, and training in the coming year.

It is recommended that police agencies involve community stakeholders in the collaborative development of strategies to respond to the findings from use of force data analyses. Research examining community members' perceptions of police use of force demonstrate a difference between community expectations for police behavior and the legal standards guiding the use of force.^{cxlix} Providing community members the opportunity to share their perceptions and experiences of use of force encounters allows police agencies to supplement officially reported data with contextual information from an external perspective. Furthermore, an important step in improving police-community relations is to solicit feedback from the community on identifying potential responses to patterns and trends in use of force.^{cl}

Agencies should also publish use of force policies on their website, so they are publicly available. Many agencies also post de-identified use of force data in a publicly available format. Agencies must be cautious in this endeavor, however, as improper analyses or conclusions can easily be drawn. Agencies who provide publicly available data need to educate the media and the public about what the data can and cannot show to protect officers from methodologically flawed comparisons and misguided interpretations.

In addition to the public release of annual use of force reports, police agencies should have an established protocol for the release of public information (including body worn camera footage) following a critical use of force incident. This type of standard response is important because it allows the public and the agency's officers consistency in their expectations about what information will be released, the timing of release, and any factors that might delay such release. Some of the agencies that prioritize the timely release of critical incident information to the public in a routinized format include the Las Vegas Metro Police Department, Los Angeles Police Department and Phoenix Police Department. This type of transparency is critical for building and maintaining trust with the public, but also sends a message of support or accountability to officers.^{cli}

Oversight

The President's Task Force on 21st Century Policing recommended the establishment of both internal and external review and oversight for serious use of force incidents as a critical component of building public trust, fostering transparency, and improving police-community relations.^{clii} The PERF *Guiding Principles* placed a similar emphasis on understanding community expectations for how they want to be policed and their priorities for public safety as critical components in policing in a democratic society. The role of oversight in policing, however, can take a variety of forms. Stoughton (2022) argues that, regardless of its format, use of force review should serve two goals: accountability for involved officers and "enhancement," which is rooted in the overall improvement of agency policy, practices, and training based on lessons learned from the specific incident reviewed.^{cliii}

Internal review, based on holding officers accountable, typically involves an administrative investigation, with the PERF *Guiding Principles* recommending that all incidents resulting in death or serious bodily injury are reviewed by specially trained personnel with the appropriate resources and expertise. Internal oversight can also take a lessons-learned approach to critical incident review, where the goal is to review use of force incidents for officers' use of tactics and decision-making, as well as dispatch and supervisory response in order to provide recommendations for improvement to policy, training, and practices.^{cliv} The Colorado Springs Police Department, on the other hand, utilizes an internal Use of Force Committee that takes a broader approach to the regular evaluation and revision of CSPD's use of force policies and training as needed based on changes in law or best practices and innovation in the field that is not limited to just critical incident review.

Often, critical police use of force incidents are also reviewed by an internal, external, or hybrid Use of Force Review Board, but the roles, membership, authority, and responsibilities of these vary significantly by jurisdiction.^{clv} As described by several scholars, use of force review boards are typically either investigation-focused, review-focused, or audit/monitor-focused, or a hybrid of multiple models.^{clvi} Each of these models provide different amounts of input for civilians depending on where in the process their input is provided, including "(1) the initial fact-finding investigation; (2) the review of investigative reports and the power to recommend action by the chief executive; (3) the review of decisions already taken by the chief executive."^{clvii}

The research on the effectiveness and impact of review boards is limited and made complicated by the local variation of their implementation.^{clviii} The scant research that exists demonstrates that civilian review

boards are more common in large agencies than small to mid-sized agencies,^{clix} and suggests that citizens have positive views of external review boards and believe that they increase department transparency.^{clx} The perspective of police officers and agencies is more mixed. Traditionally, officers have opposed external oversight for three reasons: belief that citizens are not qualified to judge police actions, belief that civilians should not have this type of authority, and fear of scrutiny.^{clxi} More recent research suggests that officers view citizen oversight as legitimate and police agencies report that citizen oversight improves police-community relations and their internal investigations process.^{clxii} Other research suggests that citizen complaints were more likely to be sustained in cities where external civilian oversight was coupled with internal police investigations than agencies without external oversight.^{clxiii}

In summary, scholars and police administrators agree that there is no one-size-fits-all approach to providing community voice in policing; rather, establishing, and sustaining the use of a citizen review or advisory board should be based on a model that is tailored to the local needs of the individual agency, jurisdiction, and police-community relations.^{clxiv}

VII. Crime and community harm reduction

Introduction

Policing efforts solely focused on the reduction of crime through aggressive law enforcement have, in many communities, led to over-policing and its well-documented harms. The failure to recognize these harms, and to re-design strategies that strike the appropriate balance between enforcement and collateral harm, risks increasing a sense of divisiveness between the police and the communities they serve, resulting in reduced trust and significantly diminished public safety outcomes overall.

The prevailing public safety strategy in the United States is to seek reductions in crime rates using the conventional law enforcement tools of arrests, prosecutions, and incarceration, with police officers serving as the public's sole safety agent. This approach, which evolved from placing the primary responsibility for public safety on the shoulders of the police, has historically measured public safety by crime rates and defined success through the reduction of those rates. The approach persists despite a growing realization that public safety is a more complex and collaborative endeavor than the traditional approach implies. Although community-based organizations have been at the forefront of promoting and implementing new ideas that promote public safety along multiple metrics—including crime, social wellbeing, education, and health—efforts to realize an improved public safety regime require sustained political will, leadership, and coordination.

A primary critique of enforcement-focused public safety strategies is that they have been relatively ineffective in deterring offenders or addressing the root causes of their behavior. Since many offenses are ultimately rooted in chronic conditions like homelessness, poverty, addiction, and illness, traditional police responses have, at most, a limited effect on whether someone offends. Further, conventional police tools, like the authority to use force and make arrests, have no utility when it comes to addressing public safety risks that are non-criminal in nature and where, accordingly, there exists no legal basis for coercive police action. Continuing to insist that police rely on these tools to prevent crime at its root sets an unreasonable expectation on police while ignoring the vital importance of other public safety strategies. Finally, police-focused strategies have often ignored the role that policing, particularly poor policing, can have in diminishing trust in the police with the attendant harms that diminished trust brings. As such, new approaches that incorporate comprehensive harm reduction strategies operating in tandem with conventional law enforcement is warranted.

One promising approach is adapted from a set of public health strategies and principles centered on reducing the negative outcomes associated with certain behaviors, like addiction, substance use, or the commission of petty crimes. This approach stands in deliberate contrast to others that seek to address chronic problems through punishment, forced abstention, and retribution. Instead, it finds value in incrementally improving and reducing the severity of behaviors that are resistant to change and the harms they can produce. In this way, this harm reduction approach is not entirely alien to policing, since few officers see their goal as permanently addressing society's deeply rooted problems, but rather limiting the worst of their effects. However, although these strategies are, in principle, compatible with the goals of many policing and public safety efforts, they are, in their traditional form, distinct from conventional law

enforcement. Instead, traditional harm reduction applies public health methodologies to meet public safety goals.

According to a common refrain within the harm reduction community, harm reduction practices “meet people where they’re at, but don’t leave them there.”^{clxv} Instead, harm reduction strategies provide support intended to maximize individual wellbeing, through mutual aid, peer mentorship, and evidence-based treatment services. These strategies seek to reduce adverse outcomes for both individuals and their communities without reliance on ineffective (and often counterproductive) criminal prohibitions and punishments. At its core, a public safety strategy rooted in harm reduction recognizes that public safety must be holistically pursued and evaluated along multiple lines that are unified by the common goal of maximizing individual and collective wellbeing.

Harm reduction approaches may assume different forms to achieve different outcomes, but they address the immediate factors that promote disruptive and dangerous behaviors that degrade public safety. They can include employment and housing support, substance and mental health treatment, and diversion from the criminal legal system, and linkage to treatment and services. Although provision of these supports can, at first glance, appear to require a significant investment of new resources into multiple public systems, a more accurate understanding is that they call for the efficient utilization of existing systems—including policing—in accordance with their core competencies.

By leveraging their strengths and avoiding costly and ineffective functions that are not central to their competencies, public systems can actually reduce costs and reinvest the savings elsewhere to further support aspects of their public safety mission that would benefit from an increased focus. For example, a police officer who is no longer expected to provide homelessness servicing is then freed up to perform other critical policing functions such as criminal investigation, avoiding the need to recruit more personnel to serve multiple roles. Additionally, to the extent that police officers continue to respond to calls involving behavioral health emergencies, they are able to either use harm reduction strategies to improve outcomes or partner with others who can focus on delivering treatments while the officers work to maintain safety and security at the scene, participating directly only as needed and only for as long as needed. Local and state governments should therefore explore opportunities to achieve these efficiencies. Doing so in a coordinated fashion will help maximize the collective impact of their efforts across multiple systems.

House Bill 21-1250 requires the study to “determine evidence-based best practices... to promote greater policing fairness, equity, and effectiveness” in the area of “crime and community harm reduction strategies that include problem analysis of high-risk people and places, considering racial and ethnic bias in policing with a focus on prevention while improving safety and police-community interactions.” The programs featured here represent a diverse set of interventions that operate to serve the goals of harm reduction-based public safety strategies. They include programs that divert people away from the criminal legal system when doing so is consistent with maintaining or improving public safety; that connect people with treatment services and counseling to help address the root causes of problematic behaviors; and that change how police approach and carry out their responsibilities by incorporating a harm reduction lens in police training and operations.

What has already been done in Colorado?

Colorado has exhibited significant motivation to pursue harm reduction approaches both statewide and locally. A potent combination of state legislative leadership and local initiative has seen the development and implementation of a wide array of harm reduction policies and strategies. In sum, it is clear that the notion of harm reduction as an effective and resonant public safety principle is not new to the people of Colorado or their representatives in state and local government.

Among the state laws passed in recent years that advance the harm reduction cause include those that:

- make it easier to establish syringe exchange programs that protect the health and safety of intravenous drug users and their wider communities and exempt participants from prosecution for drug paraphernalia charges (C.R.S. § 25-1-520 and §§ 18-18-425 to 18-18-430.5);
- immunize from prosecution good Samaritans who report emergency drug or alcohol overdoses to emergency service providers as well as those who receive emergency care for overdoses (C.R.S. § 18-1-711);
- permit people other than licensed medical providers to administer opiate antagonists for treating opiate-related overdoses and immunize them from prosecution for doing so (C.R.S. § 18-1-712);
- allow opiate antagonists to be legally prescribed and dispensed in the state (C.R.S. § 12-36-117.7);
- immunize from prosecution for possession of drug paraphernalia or for possession of a residual amount of a controlled substance any person who informs police officers of the presence of a syringe or needle on their person while being searched (C.R.S. § 18-18-428);
- require insurers to reimburse hospitals for providing covered persons with opiate antagonists upon discharge (C.R.S. § 10-16-153); and
- permit pharmacists to notify people about the availability of naloxone (C.R.S., §12-280-123).

At the municipal level, harm reduction partnerships between local law enforcement and public health officials have proliferated. Supported by state grant aid from the Colorado Department of Human Services, eight localities have implemented co-responder programs for responding to mental health and substance use crisis calls with behavioral health interventions, and another four localities have implemented law enforcement-assisted diversion (LEAD) programs that utilize police responders to link people in crisis with supportive services outside of the criminal legal system. These interventions not only address underlying contributors to mental illness and substance use disorders but have also helped reduce recidivism among people with those conditions, minimizing the need for costly criminal legal interventions like arrest, jail, prosecution, and prison.

Denver's Support Team Assisted Response (STAR) program, for example, comprises the efforts and resources of multiple organization—including the Mental Health Center of Denver, the Denver Health Medical Center, the Denver Police Department, the Denver Department of Public Health and Environment, and a network of community partners—to improve responses and outcomes for calls for service for people experiencing mental health, homelessness, substance abuse, and other crises. Under the STAR program, calls for service for people in crises are handled by STAR teams that consist of licensed behavioral health specialists and paramedics, who respond in street clothing in part to distinguish themselves from other first responders like police officers. STAR team members are equipped to provide a series of services directly to people experiencing crisis, including de-escalation, referrals to community-

based supports, and immediate resources like food, water, and clothing. The program, which began service on June 1, 2020, has reported significant success in achieving its harm reduction goals, including responding to 1,396 calls for service in its first year of operation, none of which necessitated police intervention and none of which resulted in arrests or injuries to people in crisis or STAR team members. Other cities have taken similar steps to promote community response for lower-level offenses and calls for service.

The Fort Collins Police Department (FCPD) has partnered with SummitStone Health Partners—a community mental healthcare provider—and the University of Colorado Health System to create a new response model for mental health-related police calls. The goal of this partnership is to improve coordination between law enforcement and mental healthcare professionals, with the aim of diverting persons experiencing mental health crises away from the criminal legal system and toward care-based interventions. Under this partnership, police officers and licensed mental health counselors separately but simultaneously respond to designated calls for service, with the counselors available to provide on-site services to persons in crises and others who may be present, like family or friends. Counselors receive training from SummitStone on how to provide trauma-informed care and from the FCPD on police protocols to familiarize them with both the practices and procedures of offering emergency care in the field. Upon arriving at the scene of a crisis call, counselors assess the person in crisis, including interviewing any family or friends at the scene, and can refer people, 24/7, to outpatient treatment at a clinic, with officers available to intervene in the event that public safety demands it. The clinic, which is operated by a SummitStone health partner, offers several services, including psychiatric screening and evaluation; crisis intervention and de-escalation; follow-up care, including medication evaluation, therapy, peer support, and case management; and referrals to other mental health and addiction treatment services. The FCPD also uses smartphone applications to access medical profiles intended to be shared with emergency dispatchers and responders in the event a person experiences a medical emergency, including behavioral health crises. The profile, which contains information voluntarily submitted by the subject person, may contain their photograph, medical history, treatment information, emergency contacts, and descriptions of both behavioral health triggers and effective techniques for care and de-escalation of behavioral crises.

Other cities have implemented their own behavioral health response programs. The Boulder Police Department (BPD) has four licensed behavioral health clinicians from the city's Housing and Human Services Department embedded within its ranks as part of the city's Crisis Intervention Response Team (CIRT) program. Under this program, the clinicians respond to calls involving behavioral health crises that come through BPD dispatch. Calls for service may relate to self-harm and suicide threats, extreme behavioral issues, persons with psychosis, or persons with declining mental functionality who need care. The team operates between 10:00am and 8:00 pm daily, with supplementary clinical and peer support services available 24/7 via hotline, text, or in person. As with the efforts in Fort Collins, the goal of Boulder's CIRT program is to maximize the level of care people receive in the community, avoid hospitalization, and minimize contact with the criminal legal system for people experiencing crisis.

In Aurora, the city's Mobile Response Team (AMRT) program offers an alternative to police officers for responding to behavioral health crises. The team pairs a mental health clinician from Aurora Mental Health with a paramedic from Falck Rocky Mountain to provide trauma-informed crisis intervention and de-escalation services on the scene to individuals experiencing a behavioral health crisis related to mental

health, depression, homelessness, poverty, or substance use issues. As of March 12, 2022, AMRT has responded to 187 calls for service, serving as the sole primary response for 145 of those calls and as a secondary support to police response in the remaining 45 calls. As a result of the reallocation of police, emergency department, and criminal justice resources, AMRT is credited with an accumulated cost savings of \$63,876.63 for the city of Aurora between August 25, 2021, and March 12, 2022. Currently operating only in the northwest portion of the city, AMRT demonstrates significant potential for expansion and development, especially after Aurora dispatch identified 893 calls for service where an AMRT response would have been appropriate based on an analysis of citywide calls for service.

Among interventions aimed at alleviating homelessness crises, the Homeless Outreach Team (HOT) of the Colorado Springs Police Department (CSPD) is worthy of mention. CSPD's HOT team, which was formed in 2009, helps coordinate efforts among advocacy groups, service providers, and law enforcement to address the wellness needs of people experiencing homelessness and the communities in which they reside. Interventions include offering referrals for housing and serving as a linkage to wellness service providers. The Arizona State University's Center for Problem-Oriented Policing conferred its International Herman Goldstein Award for Excellence in Problem-Oriented Policing to the HOT team in 2010.

Colorado's efforts are certainly not limited to what its police departments are doing, and one would be remiss if they failed to credit the work of the multiple community-based organizations who have lobbied and continue to lobby for public support for harm reduction interventions and policies. Among such organizations is the Harm Reduction Action Center, based in Denver, which offers harm reduction services to people who inject drugs and advocates for public investment in harm reduction approaches. Elsewhere in Colorado, organizations like High Rockies Harm Reduction in the Roaring Fork Valley and The Works Program in Boulder County offer training and education on harm reduction techniques like administering opiate antagonists and testing drugs for contamination with fentanyl. The work of these and other organizations too numerous to mention here indisputably forms the foundation of harm reduction efforts in Colorado and elsewhere, and a significant debt is owed to their tireless and ongoing advocacy.

Overview of Practices Considered

The breadth of the field of harm reduction presents limitless opportunities for exploration of new and established approaches for reducing the harms associated with both crime and sub-optimal criminal response. Reviewing the field's most promising practices therefore necessitates a focused approach that homes in on those practices and strategies that address harm without inadvertently perpetuating it. These include interventions both where the police and other governmental institutions remain at center stage, albeit with redefined tactics and expectations, and where they act in partnership with others who share responsibility for addressing problems that, historically, have been handled primarily or exclusively by law enforcement.

The assorted programs and strategies featured here share critical similarities, including the goal of improving outcomes for those whose behaviors and circumstances make them likely to be the subject of arrest and prosecution. These programs differ from conventional crime-fighting tactics by deploying interventions that seek to address problematic behaviors without processing people through the criminal legal system. These interventions recognize that law enforcement responses can often contribute to harm by trapping people in a cycle that is not easily escaped and that fails to address root causes of problematic behavior.

Even where police officers or prosecutors are involved, the goal is to use arrest and prosecution as interventions of last resort, relying instead on express offers of assistance to help people change the personal circumstances that lead them toward adverse contact with law enforcement authorities. These programs target substance use disorders, housing insecurity, and other chronic conditions that are overrepresented within the country's jail and prison populations and that cannot be addressed by incarceration and retributive punishment.

The harm reduction movement has gained momentum over the past decade, and for good reason. This has led many police departments and local governments to experiment with new models of public safety rooted in harm reduction principles that involve participation by, or partnership with, police while deemphasizing criminal response. However, many of these programs are too recent to be ripe for assessment, or too limited in scope to effectively measure their impact. They have, accordingly, not been featured here. Instead, this section highlights those harm reduction interventions that have either the most established track record or have been deployed at sufficient scale to lead to measurable results. Although the world of harm reduction is far larger than what can be presented here, these entries offer the field's most promising strategies and interventions for transforming public safety and the institutions charged with its administration.

To identify the most promising harm reduction strategies, we reviewed several different intervention models and programs that each sought to implement new approaches for responding to service calls that do not involve immediate or substantial threats to public safety. Many of these models and programs fall under the broad categorical umbrellas of "crisis intervention" and "community response" and seek to accomplish similar goals. These goals typically include improving health outcomes for people experiencing crisis by reducing their contact with the criminal legal system and providing direct crisis care to them without hospitalization. These goals reflect a contrast to the more conventional approach of relying on

arrests, prosecutions, incarceration, and involuntary hospitalization when managing mental health or substance use crises and the low-level offenses they can generate.

These programs, however, vary greatly in their implementation and underlying philosophies, with some seeking to eliminate or minimize police involvement and others retraining police officers to be a central part of new front-line crisis responses. Some shift crisis response away from police responders to non-police mental health professionals and crisis interventionists. Others utilize specialized police units dedicated to crisis response, like homeless outreach and substance use intervention. Others, still, deploy co-response teams that pair police officers with crisis counselors whenever the safety of the person in crisis or those around them may be at risk.

The programs that have been featured here as best practices represent the most promising harm reduction strategies currently in place. Specifically, they represent the most widely recognized and celebrated practices within the areas of crisis intervention and comprise an assortment of approaches for tackling non-violent or non-criminal threats to public health and safety that deemphasize arrest, prosecution, punishment and, to varying extents, reliance on conventional policing. They are supported by a combination of anecdotal and, where available, statistical information on their effectiveness, have among the most established track records of success, and have been replicated or exported more often than other similar programs. Also included are programs that demonstrate what can be done in areas where resources are sparse and where community support infrastructure may be minimal, as well as strategies for improving buy-in among police officers and departments for harm reduction approaches to public safety.

Many programs have demonstrated significant potential at improving public safety outcomes for both police officers and community members, but few places have implemented crisis intervention and community response long enough for their efforts to have reached maturity. Although increasing attention has been paid to the need for public safety strategies that respond directly to the needs of persons with substance use disorders or mental illness, many states and municipalities have only recently begun to implement new approaches. Accordingly, many programs can be considered as still emerging and are presented here as such, with data about their impact still to be collected and assessed.

Other programs, including those that have been established for longer, lack independent validation of their models, with their impact largely appraised through self-assessments. Additionally, many programs, despite their maturity, are unclear about how they measure their own success, offering instead a sampling of disparate statistics (like rates on arrest and overdose prevention) without offering a baseline against which those statistics can be compared. This can make it difficult to identify whether a given program has had a significant impact on public health and safety outcomes compared to status quo interventions (like arrest and hospitalization). These limitations are, unfortunately, commonplace, with further study needed. These practices have, accordingly, also been featured as innovative and emerging practices to account for either their developing track record or limited adoption.

Below is a sample of the many resources that were consulted to aid in the identification and evaluation of potential featured practices:

- [The National League of Cities – Spreading and Scaling Innovative City Approaches to Address Mental Health, Substance Use and Homelessness](#)

- [The International Association of Chiefs of Police – Responding to Persons Experiencing a Mental Health Crisis](#)
- [The Council of State Governments Justice Center - Police-Mental Health Collaborations: A Framework for Implementing Effective Law Enforcement Responses for People Who Have Mental Health Needs](#)
- [Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration – Safe Policing for Safe Communities: Addressing Mental Health, Homelessness, and Addiction \(Executive Order Report\)](#)
- [The National Policing Institute – How Small Law Enforcement Agencies Respond to Calls Involving Persons in Crisis, Results from a National Survey](#)

Criminal Justice Reform Act

Decriminalizing low-level quality of life offenses

Summary

The Criminal Justice Reform Act (CJRA) is a package of local laws that went into effect in New York City in 2017. The legislation gave the New York Police Department (NYPD) the option to issue civil summonses in lieu of criminal summonses for approximately 50% of the cases that had previously been enforced through the criminal system. The offenses included in the legislation were possession of open container of alcohol; assorted parks-related offenses; public urination; littering and spitting; and unreasonable noise. The goals of the CJRA were to lighten the touch of low-level enforcement, create more enforcement options for police, reduce collateral consequences and criminal warrants for people who were subjected to enforcement, and provide for a better quality of justice. Instead of being heard in criminal summons court, the newly created civil offenses were sent to an administrative tribunal where the hearing officers were trained in procedural justice and where community service in lieu of a fine was made available as a means to resolve cases. An independent evaluation found that in the year following implementation of the CJRA, there was a 94% decline in criminal summonses issued and a 93% decline in warrants for failure to appear in court.

History and Development

In 2015, over 150,000 criminal summonses were issued by the NYPD for possession of open containers of alcohol, parks offenses, public urination, littering and spitting, and unreasonable noise. These offenses were sent to the criminal summons court, where some people who pled or were found guilty ended up with permanent criminal records, leading to immigration, housing, and employment collateral consequences. Furthermore, individuals who failed to appear for their court dates were being issued criminal bench warrants, meaning that the next time they encountered police they would be subjected to mandatory arrest and detention until they appeared before a judge to resolve the warrant and summons matter.

To increase fairness, create more proportional responses, and reduce collateral consequences, the CJRA was developed by the New York City Council and the New York City Mayor's Office of Criminal Justice in partnership with a number of other stakeholders, such as the NYPD, the New York City Law Department, and others. Ultimately, the legislation that was signed into law gave the NYPD the ability to issue civil summonses instead of criminal summonses for the most common lower-level offenses. As part of the development of the CJRA, it was decided that these offenses would be sent to a city administrative law tribunal called the Office of Administrative Tribunals and Hearings (OATH), which previously handled administrative matters like building violations and taxi and limousine hearings. With the addition of these new offenses, OATH underwent trainings in procedural justice and a new community service option was added for the cases that fell under the CJRA so that individuals charged with designated lower-level offenses could resolve their cases without financial penalty.

Implementation

Logistics. From 2015-2016, the New York City Mayor's Office and the City Council worked together to develop the CJRA. The negotiations of the bills included several stakeholders and city agencies that would be impacted by the changes, including the NYPD, the Sanitation Department, the Parks Department, the City Law Department, and more. The CJRA was signed into law on June 13, 2016, and required that the City implement the new administrative system within one year, with over 100,000 cases being taken out of the criminal justice system and sent instead to civil adjudication. A group overseeing implementation consisted of representatives from 16 city agencies and departments and met monthly to build the new civil system. The implementation group was divided into six subgroups that focused on particular aspects of implementation: budget; process design and payment alternatives; rulemaking and penalty structure; technology; training; and reporting, monitoring and evaluations. Over the course of the year, this group developed the logistics for sending cases to the new civil system, including the creation of the new community service option. By June of 2017, the CJRA was fully in effect.

For offenses falling under the CJRA, the NYPD and other enforcement agencies were given the option to issue a civil summons in lieu of a criminal summons. The law created a preference for civil enforcement over criminal enforcement and required that the NYPD provide guidance to their officers on determining when to enforce a law with a civil or criminal sanction. The NYPD released criteria for excluding individuals from the CJRA and permitted officers to issue a criminal summons when the individual: (1) had an open warrant; (2) had three or more unanswered civil summonses in the last eight years; (3) had two or more felony arrests in the past two years; (4) was on parole or probation; (5) was being issued a criminal summons for another charge at the same time; or (6) if the issuing officer could articulate a legitimate law enforcement reason to issue a criminal summons and the summons was approved by a supervisor.

The community service option was created by the Center for Court Innovation in New York City, which worked as a part of the implementation workgroup to develop a program that helped teach participants the value of taking care of New York City and its quality of life. In addition to this option, the law added the option for hearing officers at OATH to dismiss cases in the interests of justice. The law also reclassified many offenses from misdemeanors to non-criminal violations and added civil enforcement options where none had been previously available. Finally, the legislation mandated reporting by the NYPD on the issuance of criminal and civil summonses, including data on race, ethnicity, and other demographics.

Facilitators. The shift of moving such a large number of cases from criminal courts to civil adjudication impacted several agencies in New York City, and creating the law and overseeing its implementation required a substantial commitment of effort from different partners within and outside of city government. From development of the law's mandates to the enforcement of the law's civil offenses to the adjudication of those offenses in a new civil justice system, the CJRA had a substantial impact across New York City government and those involved with justice administration. Without the concerted effort of these diverse partners, the CJRA could never have been conceived, let alone realized and implemented.

Barriers. One of the more difficult aspects of developing the CJRA was striking a proper balance between ensuring that enforcement of CJRA offenses defaulted toward the issuance of civil summons while preserving the discretion of NYPD officers to issue criminal summonses where appropriate. Ultimately, this discretion and its contours was reserved for the NYPD to determine, but the law required the NYPD

to develop and publish guidance on how this discretion would be exercised and to publicly disclose subsequent enforcement data.

Impact, Validation, and Replication

The Data Collaborative for Justice at John Jay College of Criminal Justice (previously called the Misdemeanor Justice Project) conducted an independent evaluation of the CJRA, which included a pre-implementation baseline report, a post-implementation reform report analyzing initial findings, and a final report 18 months after implementation. The final report found that there were approximately 123,000 fewer criminal summonses and 58,000 fewer warrants due to the CJRA during the first 18 months the law was in effect. In the law's first year, there was a 94% decline in the number of criminal summonses issued by the NYPD and a 93% decline in warrants for failure to appear. The Data Collaborative for Justice also found a 48% decline in the combined issuance of criminal and civil summonses for CJRA offenses in the first 18 months. Other findings included that appearance rates at OATH were similar to rates of appearance in criminal court, but those who failed to appear at OATH were not facing a warrant as a result. The evaluation also found that 74% of people who appeared in person at OATH chose to participate in the community service alternative instead of paying a fine. After the CJRA's initial rollout, New York City continued to monitor the outcomes of the offenses impacted by the CJRA and regularly evaluated new offenses to move from the criminal system to the civil system after noting the law's successes.

Additional Resources

- [NYC Mayor's Office of Criminal Justice – Summons Reform Fact Sheet](#)
- [NYC Mayor's Office of Criminal Justice – Summons Reform Fact Sheet: One Year After Legislation](#)
- [New York City Council – Criminal Justice Reform Act](#)
- [New York City Council – The Criminal Justice Reform Act: One Year Later](#)
- [Data Collaborative for Justice at John Jay College: New York City Experiences 94% Decline in Criminal Summonses After Criminal Justice Reform Act \(CJRA\)](#)
- [Data Collaborative for Justice at John Jay College: Evaluating the Impact of New York City's Criminal Justice Reform Act](#)
- [The Criminal Justice Reform Act Evaluation: Trends in Criminal Summonses Pre-Implementation 2003-2016](#)
- [The Criminal Justice Reform Act Evaluation: Post Implementation Changes in Summons Issuance and Outcomes](#)
- [Testimony regarding the Criminal Justice Reform Act, Elizabeth Glazer, Director of the Mayor's Office of Criminal Justice - January 25, 2016](#)

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Chicago Narcotics Arrest Diversion Program

Police-led diversion of drug offenders

Summary

The Chicago Police Department's (CPD) Narcotics Arrest Diversion Program (NADP) seeks to divert people with substance use disorders—specifically, opioid users—from the criminal legal system by connecting them with effective medications, treatment, and social services instead of arrest. This approach contrasts with other diversionary interventions that occur after arrest and that rely on deferred prosecution to induce participation in treatment. In other words, NADP diverts individuals without first charging them with a crime and instead seeks to maximize individual and community health outcomes by avoiding exposure to the criminal legal system. The program aims to reduce addiction and moderate the criminal and risk behaviors that result from it. Evaluations of the program support the efficacy of NADP's approach and indicate that it substantially reduces arrest rates for diverted persons compared to their non-diverted peers.

History and Development

NADP originated as a pilot program in 2018 in Chicago (IL) in response to persistent year-after-year increases in fatal opioid overdose rates and was developed through a partnership between the CPD, the Chicago High Intensity Drug Trafficking Area, the University of Chicago Urban Lab, and Thresholds, a community healthcare provider. Recognizing that the opioid overdose crisis was, at its core, a public health emergency, Chicago implemented NADP to avoid premising treatment on participation in the criminal legal system. This approach avoided burdening the court system with an increase in low-level drug cases and permitted city officials to connect opioid users more speedily with treatment and social services. The program's design intends to reduce arrest rates and improve the health outcomes for opioid users, particularly by reducing overdoses and fatalities. An underlying premise of the program is that improved health outcomes for opioid users and treatment of the conditions that spur their substance use will lead to improvements in users' behavior, including reduced criminality.

Implementation

Logistics. Having originated in 2018 as a pilot project in one of Chicago's 22 police districts, NADP was expanded citywide in 2021. Diversion under NADP is available to persons aged 18 years or older who are liable for arrest for certain low-level drug crimes, including possession of one gram or less of heroin or cocaine and possession of related paraphernalia like hypodermic needles.

People who agree to participate in NADP are first assessed for substance use disorders by a clinician at a community healthcare provider before being referred either to an inpatient or outpatient treatment facility. After their initial assessment by the community clinician, participants are released from custody without being criminally charged and are taken to their referred treatment facility for a follow-up assessment. People may also proactively seek a referral for treatment through NADP at any police district, even without first entering police custody upon suspicion of having committed a drug offense.

NADP's development required the cultivation of new relationships between city officials and community partners and the coordination of their efforts to combat Chicago's worsening opioid crisis. This involved amending existing police arrest processes to allow for possible diversion to treatment and service providers and creating new processes for assessing and referring candidates.

Facilitators. A significant facilitating factor for NADP's implementation as an alternative to arrest is that the program has benefited CPD, people with substance use disorder, treatment and service providers, and the court system alike. Police officers benefit from the availability of a new, non-coercive option for inducing potential arrestees into cooperating with them and from the avoidance of lengthy arrest processing for individuals committing low-level offenses. People with substance use disorder benefit by both the available access to treatment and social services and by avoiding the negative health effects of incarceration and involvement in the criminal legal system. Providers benefit from the establishment of a new avenue for connecting with their intended service population. And the court system benefits from a reduced criminal docket of low-level offenses for conduct that, ultimately, requires a public health response and not a criminal system response. Accordingly, moral support for the program is wide and sustainable.

Barriers. Despite its wide basis of support, NADP must still contend with critical limitations. Establishing a citywide network of treatment and service providers, and coordinating them with a sizeable police bureaucracy, is not a simple undertaking and requires a sustained commitment of resources and effort. Localities unable to commit those resources or sustain their efforts may have to reduce the scope of their diversion programs accordingly and instead offer such programs on a more limited basis or to a smaller service population. Additionally, the realities of substance use disorder is that not all participants will succeed in treatment, and may in fact experience repeated failures despite multiple attempts at intervention. Such realities can undermine the perception that diversionary efforts are worthwhile, though evaluations of NADP do indicate the program's substantial impact in improving outcomes along both public health and criminal metrics.

Impact, Validation, and Replication

The University of Chicago's Urban Lab has partnered with the city of Chicago to offer a continual evaluation of NADP and its impact on various metrics, including treatment outcomes and arrest rates. During the most recent evaluation period, 818 individuals were diverted for treatment for opioid use disorder, avoiding arrest entirely. Of these individuals, 80% enrolled in treatment, with 52% remaining engaged in treatment for at least 30 days. As a baseline, people who were eligible for diversion were 17% less likely to be re-arrested for drug-related charges during the observation period than people not eligible for diversion. However, within the diversion-eligible populations, people who actually enrolled in treatment through NADP were approximately 44% less likely to be re-arrested in that same period, a substantial improvement in re-offense rates.

Although Chicago's NADP is among the largest and most comprehensive diversion-to-treatment program in the country, the model utilized by NADP exists in many jurisdictions, including Tucson, AZ. The strong indicators of the program's success should serve as encouragement for other cities to adopt the model, particularly given its apparent efficacy at simultaneously improving health and crime metrics in tandem.

Additional Resources

- University of Chicago Urban Lab – Narcotics Arrest Diversion Program (Overview)
- University of Chicago Urban Lab – NADP Research Brief
- U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration – High Intensity Drug Trafficking Areas Program
- Thresholds

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Staten Island Heroin Overdose Prevention and Education (HOPE) Program

Pre-arraignment diversion to prevent opioid deaths

Summary

The Heroin Overdose Prevention and Education (HOPE) Program is a pre-arraignment diversion program started in Staten Island (NY), also known as Richmond County, in response to high rates of opioid overdoses. The program takes a harm reduction approach and redirects individuals arrested for low-level drug offenses to community-based health and treatment services in lieu of prosecution and jail. Staten Island's HOPE program is similar in some ways to the Law Enforcement Assisted Diversion (LEAD) Program, however, unlike LEAD, the point of intervention for this program is after arrest and, therefore, managed through the prosecutor's office instead of through a police discretionary diversion program. The goals of the program include reducing overdoses; improving health outcomes through connection to resources; and improving public safety by reducing recidivism. The program underwent an implementation evaluation after its first year, which indicated a high rate of meaningful participation in the services offered through the program and a reduction in subsequent arrests.

History and Development

HOPE was developed in 2016 after record-high overdose deaths in Staten Island, with an overdose death rate of 31.8 per 100,000 people, the highest rate in New York City and one of the highest rates in the state. Between 2015 and 2016, the overdose rate increased 66 percent, the majority caused by opioid use. Led by the Richmond County District Attorney, Michael McMahon, HOPE was collaboratively developed over a 9-month planning process with the New York City Police Department (NYPD), the Mayor's Office of Criminal Justice, the New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene (DOHMH), the Legal Aid Society, the Staten Island Performing Provider System, and several community-based organizations in Staten Island. The program officially launched in January 2017. Together with public awareness campaigns and a communications strategy to reach into the community, information about the program was disseminated early on throughout Staten Island. At its core, the program is built on harm reduction principles and aims to reduce overdoses and improve public health outcomes while improving public safety.

Implementation

Logistics. The HOPE program is available to individuals arrested on Staten Island for low-level drug possession charges who meet the criteria set out by the NYPD for a desk appearance ticket (DAT), which serves as a summons to appear in court for arraignment at a later date and allows the individual to be released after arrest in lieu of being detained in the interim.

Those who are deemed eligible for the HOPE program are brought to the police precinct for arrest processing and receive a DAT stating that they must return to court within 7 days, which is sooner than the 20-day return period that is typical for a DAT. The arresting officer contacts the HOPE director at the District Attorney's Office, who arranges for a trained certified peer mentor to meet the individual at the police precinct. The individual is also contacted by a defense attorney from the Legal Aid Society during

this time to discuss the HOPE program and its requirements. While waiting at the precinct, additional materials are provided to the individual explaining the program.

Once the individual is released upon being issued a DAT, the peer mentor provides a naloxone kit and instruction on how to use it and explains the program's next steps. To avoid arraignment on criminal charges on the court return date specified on the DAT, the individual must meet with a licensed counselor at a designated Resource and Recovery Center. The peer coach can bring the individual immediately to a center for an assessment, or the individual can go at any point before the 7-day DAT return date.

Once at the Resource and Recovery Center, the individual undergoes an assessment and a service plan is developed, with additional services, treatment options, and resources offered to them. If an assessment is completed during the allotted 7 days, no court appearance is required and the District Attorney will adjourn the case for an additional 30 days. The individual then has 30 days to "meaningfully engage" in the individualized service plan developed by the program. By design, a person's level of engagement is determined by the program's licensed counselors, not by law enforcement. If it is determined that the individual has meaningfully engaged during the 30-day period, the District Attorney will then decline to prosecute the pending case and there will have no criminal record associated with the arrest. If a counselor determines that a person has failed to meaningfully engage with their service plan, the criminal case then proceeds through the court system as would any criminal case.

Facilitators. The Staten Island District Attorney's Office acted rapidly to foster collaboration early in the planning process for HOPE. A significant factor in the development and widespread support of the program was that it was designed in partnership with all stakeholders at the table from the start. This included the police, prosecutors, defense bar, service providers, and a variety of relevant city agencies and community partners. Additionally, and to compliment the range of perspectives and active participants involved in planning, the program benefitted from a central coordinating structure at the District Attorney's Office, including a director that was in constant communication with all pieces of the program. The program also offers regular and ongoing training for the police and peer mentors involved in it.

In addition to the communication and collaboration, the success of the program was further facilitated by the short return date to court. Cutting down on the return time to court to 7 days from the typical 20 days helped to motivate participants and allow for timely connections soon after arrest. Furthermore, the 7-day return date provided some level of urgency and an incentive to participate to avoid impending criminal charges. Finally, HOPE owes its programmatic success to its adherence to harm reduction principles and its corps of peer mentors who, through both training and lived experience, help navigate participants through an early path to recovery.

Barriers. Although some of HOPE's success can be attributed to the collaboration of its extensive network of stakeholders, having such a wide diversity of perspective and opinions can be challenging for moving the program's work forward. Additionally, when working with peer mentors, there is always the possibility that some peer mentors will themselves relapse, the same as any participant. Having a support system in place for the peer mentors engaged in this work is important to mitigate this risk, though it does not eliminate it. Finally, tracking and evaluating the success for this program, and other health related diversion programs in general, can be made difficult by the confidentiality protections that surround the

health records of HOPE participants. Getting appropriate consents from participants and making sure that these are properly reviewed and discussed with participants is therefore essential.

Impact, Validation, and Replication

The New York City Mayor’s Office of Criminal Justice hired the firm Metis Associates to conduct an implementation evaluation for the first year of the program. The evaluation found that, in HOPE’s first year, 94% of participants meaningfully engaged in services and had their cases declined prosecution. The evaluation also reported that participants who meaningfully engaged were rearrested far less often than those who did not meaningfully engage, with a 15% rearrest rate for those who meaningfully engaged in 2017 versus 60% rearrest rate for those who did not as of June 30, 2018. Additionally, the evaluation reported that HOPE participants were much less likely to be arrested than those who were not involved in HOPE, regardless of meaningful engagement, with respective arrest rates of 19% and 44%.

Beyond the evaluation, the program has continued to report out data. From its inception in 2017 through the end of 2020, HOPE reports that 92% of participants have meaningfully engaged in services and have had their cases declined prosecution. In the same period, overdose deaths declined 29 percent compared to 2016, the final year before HOPE began.

HOPE has since been replicated in other New York counties, with adjustments made to accommodate each county’s unique needs and resources. Manhattan, the Bronx, and Brooklyn have developed a program similar to HOPE, which they named Project CLEAR (Collaborative Legal Engagement Assistance Response) and which adopts a similar model of intervention and diversion.

Additional Resources

- [New York State HOPE Program Overview](#)
- [Staten Island HOPE Press Release](#)
- [Implementation Evaluation of Staten Island HOPE Program](#)
- [Staten Island HOPE Website](#)
- [Brooklyn CLEAR](#)

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Neighborhood Justice Program

Restorative justice alternative to criminal prosecution

Summary

The City of Los Angeles (CA) launched the Neighborhood Justice Program (NJP) in 2015. Developed by Mike Feuer, the LA City Attorney, the NJP is a voluntary and confidential pre-filing diversion program based on the principles of restorative justice that is geared toward non-violent first-time offenders. The goals of the program are to enhance public safety and quality of life by using a community-based process to address root causes of criminal behavior. The program aims to reduce recidivism and avoid giving first-time offenders a criminal record.

Those who are eligible for diversion under the program appear before three trained community volunteer panelists who work with diverted individuals to help them understand why they committed the offense and how their offense harmed the community. Together, the individual and panelist determine an appropriate consequence such as restitution, community service, classes, or a letter of apology. If the individual completes the program's requirements, no criminal charges are filed against them. Otherwise, the case is referred for prosecution.

NJP has handled over 5,000 cases and those who have successfully completed NJP have a 5% recidivism rate, a rate substantially lower than baseline. In addition, over 22,000 hours of community service have been completed as part of the program. To date, there are over a dozen NJP panels throughout LA and over 400 community volunteers have been trained to participate.

History and Development

Approximately 120,000 misdemeanor cases each year are reviewed by the LA City Attorney's Office, about 40% of all cases heard at the LA Superior Court. Mike Feuer, since becoming the LA City Attorney, has focused on expanding the office's diversion programs to better handle many of these cases. While in office, he developed the Community Justice Initiative (CJI), which serves as the umbrella program for the office's alternative sentencing, diversion, and restorative justice programming, including the Neighborhood Justice Program.

The NJP aims to address root causes of criminal behavior for first time non-violent offenders. The program was designed in a similar fashion to the San Francisco Neighborhood Courts program, which started in 2012. Based on a restorative justice model, NJP was developed in neighborhoods across LA where trained volunteer panelists would meet with individuals eligible to participate and determine the cause of the offense and an appropriate consequence. The program is funded by the California Endowment, the County's Dispute Resolution Program, and the U.S. Department of Justice through the Smart Prosecution Initiative.

Implementation

Logistics. Cases are referred to NJP after an individual is arrested or issued a citation for a non-felony offense. In its first year, NJP-eligible offenses included petty theft, vandalism, disturbing the peace, public

intoxication, and possession of alcohol by a minor, among others. Individuals who committed these offenses, were over the age of 18, and were first time offenders were eligible for diversion under the program.

Before new misdemeanor cases are filed by the LA City Attorney, the office will review the case and the individual's record and decide whether to refer it to NJP. The LA City Attorney's Office contacts the individual to offer the program and, if the individual accepts, he or she is connected to one of over a dozen neighborhood-based community panels. Participation in the program is voluntary and confidential.

The individual then meets with three panelists, a trained mediator, and the victim when available, and discusses the offense, the harm caused, and the individual's willingness to address that harm. The group typically sits in a circle during the discussion. The panel then decides on a set of "obligations" for the individual to complete within a set time frame. These obligations can include community service, counseling, writing an apology, receiving services or training, or other obligations. If the obligations are met, then the City Attorney's Office is notified and does not file the case. If the obligations are not met, the case is referred for prosecution.

NJP is staffed by one attorney and six administrative coordinators. The administrative coordinators play an important role in making initial contact with the individual, conducting a risk and needs assessment, attending the panel, and keeping in contact with the individual after the panel.

Facilitators. NJP's localized approach and foundation upon the principles of restorative justice have helped ensure its success. Keeping the panels local and neighborhood-based makes them well-situated to focus on the direct harms caused by criminal behavior in individual communities. This model provides a more concrete basis for encouraging the individual who committed the crime to understand the harms of their conduct, take responsibility, and position themselves to not commit similar acts in the future.

The program has also been successful because of how it tailors responses to individuals' needs, something that is much more difficult to achieve through the traditional criminal justice system. By addressing the needs of participants, the programs efforts are more meaningful and effective at addressing behavioral root causes and preventing recidivism. NJP has partnered with community-based service providers to further localize the model into a neighborhood-based restorative system.

Barriers. In the first-year review of NJP, the data revealed that only about 10% of eligible NJP cases were sent to NJP. Upon further investigation, it appeared that line-prosecutors, who were overwhelmed with high caseloads, did not have enough information about NJP and oftentimes simply forgot to refer cases to the program. As a result, the recommendation at the end of the first year was to widen the net of eligible offenses for NJP to all misdemeanors, with some exceptions such as family violence, sexual abuse, and other serious offenses.

Impact, Validation, and Replication

One of NJP's key principles was to be data-based and to strive to use metrics and collect data that supports rigorous evaluation of the program. In NJP's first year, 92% of program participants successfully completed their obligations and only 2% of participants reoffended in the first 6 months. Since NJP's first year, recidivism has been around 4-5%, approximately 3- to 5-times lower than for defendants convicted of

misdemeanors through the criminal justice system. Almost 80% of the program's first-year participants were 18-35 years old and 78% reported a household income of \$20,000 or less. Additionally, most participants were referred to NJP for petty theft or shoplifting cases.

According to data provided by the LA City Attorney's Office, the average cost per participant in NJP is \$710. In comparison, the typical cost of a misdemeanor case in California is approximately six-times higher, at \$4,277.

Additional Resources

- [LA City Attorney's Office Neighborhood Justice Program Overview](#)
- [LA City Attorney's Office Community Justice Initiative Overview and NJP Statistics](#)
- [Neighborhood Justice Program Year One Analysis](#)
- [Neighborhood Justice Program: Smart Justice through Community Involvement](#)
- [Prosecutor-Led Pretrial Diversion: Case Studies in Eleven Jurisdictions](#)
- [California Board of Psychology Journal Spring 2021 – The Neighborhood Justice Program: A Relational Response to Crime, Michael Evans-Zepeda, Psy.D., City Attorney's Office, Los Angeles, Neighborhood Justice Program](#)

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Crisis Assistance Helping Out on the Streets (CAHOOTS)

Community-based emergency response services

Summary

Serving the cities of Eugene and Springfield (OR), the Crisis Assistance Helping Out on the Streets program (known more commonly as CAHOOTS) provides crisis intervention services using non-law enforcement personnel trained to provide emergency medical, mental health, and substance abuse services. Implemented through a partnership between the Eugene (OR) Police Department (EPD) and the non-profit White Bird Clinic, CAHOOTS is among the most well-established non-law enforcement crisis response programs in the United States, though it operates in close coordination with police personnel, including officers and dispatchers.

Its service model has gained significant national attention in recent years as the demand for policing alternatives for non-criminal crisis calls has surged. The program has a demonstrated record of successfully handling calls that are diverted to it, which has simultaneously improved service outcomes for persons in crisis while also relieving police officers of the responsibility of responding to calls that do not merit a law enforcement response. Although the program has demonstrated success along several metrics, perhaps the most telling metric has been its longevity, with the program having continuously operated as a part of emergency response in Eugene since its establishment more than 30 years ago.

History and Development

The foundations of what would eventually be formalized as CAHOOTS were laid in 1969 with the founding of the White Bird Clinic in Eugene (OR). The clinic, which was founded to offer an assortment of social services to persons distrustful of official authority, has nonetheless always maintained a relationship with local law enforcement, though the relationship would not become formal until the establishment of the CAHOOTS program in 1989.

Whether formal or informal, the Clinic's relationship with the Eugene Police Department and its officers has been central to the efficacy of the Clinic's service delivery. Rather than operating fully independently of law enforcement, CAHOOTS serves as an alternate first responder that seeks to meet the service needs of persons experiencing mental health, substance use, or homelessness-related crises. Only when a service call develops into a situation requiring a law enforcement response, such as if a person's behavior escalates into a safety threat for others, do CAHOOTS responders call for a police presence, with a significant majority of calls resulting in non-arrest outcomes regardless of whether police are also on-scene.

The CAHOOTS model is predicated on the theory that non-criminal crisis calls are best treated as public health issues, not law enforcement issues. Instead of relying on arrests to deal with issues like homelessness and mental illness, the CAHOOTS model relies on mental health first aid and connection to resources, with the express goal of avoiding both jail and unnecessary hospitalization. By directly addressing the health needs of individuals experiencing crisis, the model predicts that amelioration of the crisis will both improve health outcomes for those individuals while also addressing any secondary public safety concerns that arise from it, like crime and disorder. Additionally, the CAHOOTS model theorizes

that using compassionate service providers who expressly lack the authority to arrest or use force foments trust between CAHOOTS responders and the persons they seek to serve, increasing the likelihood that people will seek out the program's services. The program's success has resulted in people often reaching out directly to it for assistance rather than through public emergency dispatch systems. As such, CAHOOTS responders also provide other services outside of its crisis intervention services, including welfare checks.

Implementation

Logistics. CAHOOTS response units consist of 2-person teams that pair a medical professional—either a nurse or emergency medical technician—with a trained crisis worker. The teams operate out of vans that are described by the program as “mobile mental health clinics” that are equipped to offer on-scene crisis intervention services, including crisis assessment, counseling, referrals, and non-emergency first aid.

CAHOOTS currently operates as an integrated component of the Eugene, Oregon, 9-1-1 emergency service system, with direct dispatch through the Eugene Police Department service channel. Calls for service may also be referred to CAHOOTS either directly through the White Bird Clinic's own service line or through the Springfield, Oregon, non-emergency number. The program's integration into the 9-1-1 emergency service system allows emergency dispatchers to triage calls directly to CAHOOTS after determining either that a law enforcement response is not needed or that CAHOOTS is needed to assist or relieve a police responder. Coordination with police responders thus occurs largely through the 9-1-1 triage and dispatch process.

Coordination of CAHOOTS and police responses is facilitated by a clear delineation of the circumstances under which either a CAHOOTS unit, a police unit, or both, will respond to a service call. Where a call requests assistance for a non-criminal crisis involving homelessness, substance use, mental health, or non-violent disputes, CAHOOTS will generally be dispatched in lieu of police. However, where there is a report of a crime, particularly those involving violence, or where there is a life-threatening medical emergency, the service call will be directed to conventional police and EMS personnel. However, some calls may involve the joint dispatching of CAHOOTS and conventional responders, particularly when a combined crisis, criminal, or emergency medical response is warranted.

Facilitators. The CAHOOTS program owes much of its success to several factors that have helped it become an integrated component of crisis response in the Eugene-Springfield metropolitan area. Foremost has been the sustained willingness of police department officials to work with the White Bird Clinic and help it advance its service mission, even before their working relationship was formalized under CAHOOTS. Having seen firsthand the limitations of an arrest-and-incarcerate approach to dealing with mental illness and substance use, police in Eugene and Springfield have welcomed the White Bird Clinic's involvement in addressing crisis calls. Without this cooperation, the eventual integration of CAHOOTS into the local 9-1-1 emergency service system would likely have never occurred, and the service delivery model conceptualized by CAHOOTS would have been fundamentally impaired. This integration has allowed for the automatic coordination of dispatch between CAHOOTS and other responders, further improving service delivery and, consequently, service outcomes.

In addition to the cooperation of public officials and the integration of CAHOOTS into the public emergency response system, CAHOOTS benefits from its association with the White Bird Clinic. The

availability of the clinic's social and health-related services allows CAHOOTS responders to connect people in crisis with servicing beyond the on-site care provided by its mobile mental health clinics. Without the option of providing referrals to more permanent services, the impact of CAHOOTS would be limited by the often-fleeting durability of mobile crisis treatments, which may be effective at addressing acute crisis but are inadequate to address the root causes of chronic crises. By offering referrals to sustained treatment options, CAHOOTS is able to extend its impact beyond its mobile response services.

Barriers. Given the indispensable importance of police support and the availability of community-based services to the success of CAHOOTS, it is foreseeable that communities that lack either or both will be at a severe disadvantage when attempting to adopt the CAHOOTS model. Because CAHOOTS derives much of its effectiveness from its integration into the 9-1-1 emergency services system in Eugene, any attempted implementation of the CAHOOTS model without similar integration into the local emergency services system will substantially impede service delivery. Significant inefficiencies may arise when different responders, without prior coordination, are sent to the same calls for service, a scenario that may lead to uncertainty over whether law enforcement or crisis management responders are expected to take charge of the call. Potential conflicts that arise from uncoordinated responses could undermine the interests of each response unit to the detriment of all, including the subject of the service call. Successful implementation of CAHOOTS therefore almost certainly requires the cooperation of local authorities, both in terms of moral support for the crisis intervention mission and in terms of logistical coordination and integration into the local emergency services system.

Impact, Validation, and Replication

To the extent that CAHOOTS intends to improve service outcomes for non-criminal crisis calls and to divert non-criminal calls away from law enforcement responders, its impact can be measured by a multiplicity of metrics. Overall, these metrics strongly indicate that the program has had a positive impact in the Eugene-Springfield metropolitan area on safety, crisis service delivery, and diversion of police resources.

One of the most critical metrics is the call volume handled by CAHOOTS. Between 2014 and 2019, the volume of service calls dispatched to CAHOOTS through the Eugene 9-1-1 emergency services system nearly doubled, from 9,646 calls to 18,583 calls. Although this number is relatively small compared to the number of 9-1-1 calls handled by Eugene police (105,403 in 2019), the EPD has credited the program for diverting between 5-8% of calls away from police responders, despite operating with an annual budget equivalent to approximately 2% of the total annual funding received by the police departments in Eugene and Springfield. Additionally, the tally of calls dispatched to CAHOOTS through the 9-1-1 system does not include the calls that are received through the non-emergency phone lines maintained by both the White Bird Clinic and the City of Springfield.

Within the volume of calls handled by CAHOOTS, only a fraction (approximately 3%) required police assistance, a strong indicator that the alternate response model the program implements can stand on its own without reliance on police co-response. The ability of CAHOOTS to effectively respond to calls that would otherwise be handled by other, more costly, public response units has resulted in an estimated savings of \$8.5 million per year for the City of Eugene, plus additional savings to the city's hospitals and healthcare system.

The success of the CAHOOTS model has generated widespread interest in replication nationwide. The White Bird Clinic estimates that in the past year they have consulted with public officials and community activists from more than 50 cities, including Denver (CO), Oakland (CA), Olympia (WA), and Portland (OR), which have each commenced their own programs modeled after CAHOOTS. Other localities that have consulted with CAHOOTS to learn more include New York (NY), San Francisco (CA), and Harris County (TX). Federal bills (Senate version / House version) that would fund additional CAHOOTS-inspired services have also been introduced, though remain pending as of this report's publication.

Among the most noteworthy programs that replicate some form of the CAHOOTS model include Denver's STAR program, as discussed on page 51, and programs in Oakland (CA), Olympia (WA), and Portland (OR), summaries of which follow below.

Oakland MACRO Program

The Mobile Assistance Community Responders of Oakland (MACRO) Program originated in 2019 specifically as an effort to replicate the CAHOOTS model. After an initial feasibility study was commissioned by the Oakland City Council, the Council approved an 18-month pilot of the MACRO Program beginning in March 2021. Under the pilot, MACRO would be housed within the Oakland Fire Department (OFD) and would offer response services for non-violent, non-emergency calls routed through the city's 911 dispatch system. MACRO's stated goals include reducing police and fire responses to calls that do not necessitate a police or fire response, reducing adverse outcomes for police responses to calls for service involving non-violent emergencies, and promoting community-based responses for people experiencing crises, particularly among the city's minority community.

Under the pilot project, three MACRO teams work to cover a 16-hour service period from 7:00am to 11:00pm each day. During these service hours, MACRO team members provide various community caretaking services for quality-of-life calls, including conducting wellness checks; handling low-level community complaints regarding public intoxication, noise, and disorderly juveniles; and responding to calls for behavioral health issues that require low or moderate levels of intervention. These shifts currently cover two geographic areas within the city. However, as MACRO reaches the end of its 18-month pilot period, the OFD will conduct an evaluation of the program and consider expanding it citywide.

Olympia Crisis Response Unit & Familiar Faces

The efforts of the city of Olympia to reduce police involvement in crisis response has culminated in the creation of two separate but related response units: the Olympia Crisis Response Unit (CRU), which handles calls for service involving people experiencing mental health and substance use crises, among others, and the Familiar Faces program, which uses peer specialists to conduct outreach services for individuals who have exhibited the greatest level of resistance to connection to resources and support. In addition to providing direct services, CRU and Familiar Faces team members regularly meet with police, community, and health partners to conduct case reviews and engage in collaborative problem solving, motivated by mutual public health and safety objectives.

CRU, whose service model was inspired in part by CAHOOTS, shares access to the city's 911 dispatch system and retains discretion to determine which calls to respond to based on the descriptions offered by emergency dispatchers. CRU members can elect to respond directly to calls or to serve in a support capacity for other responders, including police. However, the Olympia Police Department has reported that officer involvement in CRU responses is minimal and that, as officers grow increasingly confident in CRU's ability to respond to calls without police support, the level of police involvement is expected to further decrease.

The Familiar Faces program seeks to address more chronic conditions of personal crisis, including resistance to intervention services by individuals whose unmet behavioral health needs have contributed to their frequent contact with the city's police. Familiar Faces relies on peer navigators who can share their first-hand experience with crisis to offer outreach services to between 15 and 25 individuals who have been identified as being in most significant need of intervention. Services include supportive housing referrals, health care and life skills development, and trauma-informed counseling, among others.

Portland Street Response

The Portland Street Response (PSR), which is coordinated by the city's Fire and Rescue department, seeks to provide an alternative response capability that reduces reliance on police officers for calls involving low-level crises that do not pose public safety risks. PSR responders may be dispatched by 911 operators if an incoming call for service meets certain criteria, including a mental health or substance use crisis that is occurring in a public or publicly-accessible space. Calls involving obstruction of traffic, suicide, or violence toward others, or calls involving persons in private residences, are not routed to PSR.

Having originated as a pilot program covering a single neighborhood, PSR was later expanded to the entirety of one of Portland's police precincts before being expanded citywide in at the end of March 2022. Although PSR currently operates between 8:00am and 10:00pm every day, the city is currently considering a budget proposal that would permit 24-hour operation beginning with the city's next fiscal year. The city of Portland partnered with Portland State University's Homelessness Research & Action Collaborative to conduct six- and 12-month evaluations of the program, each of which found that the program has succeeded in reducing police and fire rescue response for non-emergency calls and in significantly reducing the number of calls that result in hospitalization, reflecting PSR's ability to provide effective interventions in the field when dispatched.

Additional Resources

- [The White Bird Clinic](#)
- [The Emergency Dispatch Process in Eugene \(OR\) – Infographic](#)
- [CAHOOTS Brochure](#)
- [Vera Institute of Justice, Case Study of CAHOOTS](#)
- [The Council of State Governments Justice Center – Spotlight on CAHOOTS](#)

- [Denver STAR Program](#)
- [Oakland MACRO Program](#)
- [Olympia Crisis Response Unit](#)
- [Vera Institute of Justice, Case Study of Olympia Crisis Response Unit and Familiar Faces Program](#)
- [Portland Street Response](#)
- [Portland Street Response Data Dashboard](#)
- [Portland State University Evaluations of Portland Street Response Program](#)
- [Street Roots Advocacy Campaign for Portland Street Response](#)
- [IACP / University of Cincinnati Center for Police Research and Policy, Assessing the Impact of Co-Responder Team Programs: A Review of Research](#)

CommunityStat

Data-driven public/private partnership to prevent opioid deaths

Summary

CommunityStat was started in Burlington (VT) in 2016 under the umbrella of the Chittenden County Opioid Alliance with the goal of reducing opioid overdose deaths. The program's focus on opioid deaths stemmed, in part, from its criticality as a public health metric and because, unlike other aspects of the opioid crisis, opioid deaths could be objectively assessed and tracked. The main strategy for achieving this reduction was to distribute medications for treating opioid use disorder (MOUD), like including buprenorphine and methadone, to everyone who needed it, at all touchpoints, with few or no barriers to access for those individuals.

The program operated under four main principles, including: accurate and timely data and information; development of effective tactics and strategies; rapid deployment of resources; and relentless follow-up and assessment of outcomes. The CommunityStat model was based on the New York City Police Department's (NYPD) CompStat system, but with a specific focus on combatting the opioid crisis. It brought together public safety, public health, and social services providers to coordinate efforts and reduce opioid overdose deaths, including the coordination of case management services. Executive level stakeholders attended monthly coordination meetings that focused on the progress being made toward achieving program's goal of reducing opioid overdose deaths.

Under CommunityStat, several new interventions were put into place to expand access to MOUD, including the elimination of the regional waitlist for medication-assisted treatment; prescription of low-barrier buprenorphine at the city hospital's emergency department and the city's syringe service program; statewide MOUD-treatment in jails and prisons; expanded primary care treatment at the city's federally-qualified health center; and decriminalization of the possession of buprenorphine.

By the end of 2018, these interventions were collectively associated with a 50% (17 vs. 34) reduction in the county's fatal overdose deaths, while deaths increased 20% in the rest of Vermont outside of Burlington. The reduction was sustained through the end of 2019.

History and Development

Prior to the development of CommunityStat, some of the early efforts to combat the opioid crisis in Burlington included a Good Samaritan law enacted in 2013 to protect people calling 911 for an overdose from prosecution or arrest, the distribution of naloxone to police officers in 2016, an order in 2016 making naloxone available at pharmacies, and funding for naloxone distribution through a local syringe service program. With these programs already in place, the main strategy behind the CommunityStat effort was to focus on harm reduction by getting the agonist medication of buprenorphine to as many people as might need it as possible. Although the CommunityStat strategy was established to achieve a public health aim, it originated and was operationalized through the Burlington Police Department (BPD) since the city did not have a department of health or any full-time public health officials on staff.

BPD's Chief of Police, who previously worked at the NYPD where CompStat originated, looked to use a similar model to address the city's opioid overdose crisis. Accordingly, CommunityStat was structured as

a series of monthly meetings to track the city's response to the opioid crisis. Running the program was the opioid policy coordinator, who oversaw the city's response efforts and managed the program's operations to ensure that they aligned with public health evidence of proper substance use disorder treatment. Funding from United Way supported additional positions within the program, including a dedicated analyst and data manager. The police department also appointed a scientific advisor on treatment.

Implementation

Logistics. CommunityStat was structured as a monthly meeting with executive-level stakeholders across the city's public health and public safety agencies and service providers. Participants included the mayor, the Chief of Police, executive-level representatives from the city's hospital system, housing officials, the state Department of Health, elected officials, prosecutors, and defense attorneys. The opioid policy coordinator would develop a list of topics to cover at each meeting as well as key findings, data, and prompts, along with next steps. To promote candid discussion among participants, press and the public were excluded from CommunityStat meetings. The end goal of the program was to make improvements where needed and make forward progress across all systems that interacted with individuals with substance use disorders.

In addition to the larger CommunityStat meetings, the opioid policy coordinator ran a biweekly meeting called SubstanceStat ("SubStat"), which focused on individual cases involving people at higher risk of experiencing a fatal overdose. The purpose of these meetings was to develop treatment plans specific to each high-risk individual and to coordinate interventions to these individuals among multiple agencies. Through CommunityStat, local officials were able to troubleshoot obstacles that inhibited the city's opioid response plan. For example, the CommunityStat team identified that a wait list for medication-assisted treatment was caused by the limited availability of facilities through which prescriptions for buprenorphine and methadone could be issued. CommunityStat thereafter tracked the progress of a new facility that was under construction and lobbied the governor's office to expedite the permits it needed to open. Once the new facility opened, access to these medications increased and the waitlist was eventually eliminated.

Another CommunityStat intervention was to prescribe buprenorphine at the city hospital's emergency department, which began prescribing 3 days-worth of buprenorphine to anyone who was found to have an opioid addiction, as well as scheduling them to meet with a psychiatrist. Buprenorphine was also made available through the city's syringe service program, based on data presented at the program's monthly meetings and evidence that syringe service programs would provide a comfortable setting for some individuals seeking treatment. Access to medications for low-income residents was arranged through the Community Health Center of Burlington, which specialized in providing community-based services to low-income populations and whose executives participated in CommunityStat meetings. CommunityStat also successfully lobbied for state legislation mandating that jails and prisons offer medication for treating opioid addiction to anyone who screened positive for opioid addiction or who was on such medication before their incarceration. Ultimately, up to 31% of the inmate population received treatment with opioid use disorder medications after the law went into effect.

Finally, in recognition that illegally diverted buprenorphine is generally taken for self-treatment, the Chief of Police and the county's prosecutor agreed to not arrest or prosecute people for possession of buprenorphine without a prescription. This policy was later codified into state law in 2021 by the Vermont legislature, which removed unprescribed personal possession of buprenorphine from the state's criminal code.

Facilitators. CommunityStat focused on a shared goal of reducing fatal opioid overdoses across the entire community. The program's steadfast commitment to improving public health outcomes helped engender a commonality of purpose and approach that united its diverse participants. Because of this commitment, the program retained its public health approach despite being operated through the Burlington Police Department. The program's focus on evidence-based health outcomes was essential for getting stakeholder buy-in and cooperation, and ultimately for reducing overdose deaths. The inclusion of diverse stakeholders, including community advocates, defense attorneys, and government officials from multiple departments helped to emphasize the program's message that outcomes were focused on equity and on the community as a whole and were not intended to serve the parochial interests of any single stakeholder.

Barriers. Bringing together a wide diversity of agencies and organizations presented logistical and philosophical challenges. As with any effort that comprises a large team across multiple disciplines and philosophies, managing a range of different institutions can be difficult. However, sustained support from local officials ensured that participating organizations received available support, and the program's unifying mission helped the group maintain cohesion. Accordingly, even though the program was adapted from policing's CompStat model, which has negative connotations for some due to its connection with instances of overly aggressive policing, CommunityStat nonetheless succeeded in its effort bring multiple stakeholders together to address a public crisis of equal concern to all.

Impact, Validation, and Replication

The interventions developed as part of CommunityStat led to a 50% reduction (17 vs. 34) in the county's overdose fatality rate by the end of 2018, which continued through the end of 2019. In contrast, overdose fatalities rose in the rest of the state by 20%. However, these results, while indicative of the program's significant impact on overdose fatality rates, have not been subjected to rigorous evaluation to confirm a causal link between CommunityStat's interventions and Burlington's greatly reduced overdose rate during the same period.

Additionally, the reductions in overdose deaths associated with CommunityStat did not withstand the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, with fatal overdoses having increased by 57.6% statewide in 2020. Although this increase has not yet been studied, it is possible that it is the result of a shift in public health resources away from the opioid crisis and toward the ongoing pandemic. This reduction in opioid-related resourcing coincided with the severe social impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic, including increased isolation and instability, factors that likely promoted higher drug misuse and a subsequent increase in overdoses.

Additional Resources

- [CommunityStat: A Public Health Intervention to Reduce Opioid Overdose Deaths in Burlington, Vermont, 2017–2020](#)
- [Press Release: City of Burlington and Burlington Police Department Announce New Efforts to Free the City from the Grip of the Opioid Epidemic](#)

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RxStat

Interagency coordination and response effort to address opioid crisis

Summary

RxStat was established in New York City (NY) in 2012 to reduce overdose deaths. At its core, RxStat relies on data analysis to help public health and safety agencies create policy responses to reduce drug overdoses. RxStat is based on a public health framework, approaching drug misuse as a public health concern, albeit one requiring a joint public health and safety response.

RxStat involves the convening of dozens of agencies to review real-time data trends around the use and overdose of opioids and other drugs. Four main principles guide the program: timely data collection and analysis on drug misuse; development of data-informed strategies; deployment of public health and public safety resources to high priority areas; and follow-up on strategies to ensure their effectiveness.

The multi-disciplinary nature of RxStat promotes an inclusive approach to protecting public health and public safety together through policies that rely on both systems.

History and Development

In 2012, opioids were involved in 73% of overdose deaths in NYC and had been on a steady increase for over a decade. The data also showed very high rates of opioid prescriptions and treatment admissions. The New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene (DOHMH) noted a pattern of high rates of prescriptions occurring in the same neighborhoods with high rates of opioid-related deaths.

The Mayor of New York City at the time, Michael Bloomberg, established the New York City Task Force on Prescription Painkiller Abuse. One part of the Task Force included a data workgroup called RxStat, which launched in 2012. RxStat was developed and run by DOHMH and the New York/New Jersey High Intensity Drug Trafficking Area (HIDTA), with participants from city, state, and federal government agencies. These participants all shared datasets and were thereby able to look at the bigger picture of prescriptions, overdoses, and crime. Although the workgroup started with the sole focus of prescription opioid-involved overdoses, over time it has broadened to focus on drug misuse issues generally.

Funding for RxStat initially came from NY/NJ HIDTA, and later from a grant awarded by the U.S. Department of Justice's Bureau of Justice Assistance.

Implementation

Logistics. RxStat functions as a monthly meeting led by DOHMH. Attendees are mid-level or senior representatives of the public health and public safety agencies in NYC, with a designated coordinator who manages the meeting's logistics. The participants come from a variety of agencies, including: DOHMH; NY/NJ HIDTA; the NYC Mayor's Office of Criminal Justice; the NY State Department of Health; the NYC Department of Homeless Services; each of the five District Attorney's Offices in NYC; both of the U.S. Attorney's Offices with jurisdiction over NYC; the NYC Special Narcotics Prosecutor's Office; the NY State Attorney General's Office; the Drug Enforcement Administration; the NYC Health and Hospitals Corporation; the NYC Human Resources Administration; the NYC Fire Department; the New York Police

Department; the NYC Office of the Chief Medical Examiner; the Regional Emergency Medical Services Council of NYC; the NYC Department of Probation; the NY State Department of Alcoholism and Substance Abuse Services; and others.

Data sources for regular tracking of drug misuse in NYC include mortality data on overdose deaths; emergency room visits for overdoses; fire and EMS calls for overdoses; data from drug prosecutions; prescription data; poison control data; and qualitative research data. The program then applies a public health approach to analyzing and presenting this data to the attendees of RxStat meetings.

One example of how RxStat uses data to inform policies and programs involves the program's effort around addressing the opioid issues in the NYC borough of Staten Island. Through real-time data analysis, RxStat found that the rates of opioid overdoses in Staten Island were significantly higher than in the city's four other boroughs. The data also showed much higher rates of filled prescriptions for opioid painkillers in Staten Island in 2012, with prescriptions in Staten Island having, on average, a greater supply count and higher dosage. Using this data, DOHMH conducted 1,000 visits to physicians and other people in the medical field to deliver recommendations for prescribing opioids and providing patient education materials. This was paired with a communications campaign in Staten Island that included meeting with community groups and doctors' forums. This type of targeted response was later replicated in other boroughs as they experienced spikes in opioid overdoses.

Another example of the use of real-time data by RxStat concerned the uptick of fentanyl in NYC. Data shared by the NYPD at RxStat revealed the growing presence of fentanyl in drugs seized by police officers. Additional RxStat data showed where rates of overdoses were increasing rapidly, facilitating a speedy, targeted response that included the deployment of naloxone kits to neighborhoods experiencing opioid overdose spikes.

Facilitators. Real-time data sharing between participating agencies has been integral for the success of RxStat. The program has utilized dedicated data analysts to study the data between meetings and has worked to overcome barriers in agencies' willingness to share data with such a large group of attendees. There is an understanding among participants at RxStat that the information shared at RxStat meetings is confidential and only for the individuals and agencies in attendance.

Another key to the success of RxStat has been keeping its localized focus. Expanding it to cover a larger geographic area would impact the participants' ability to understand the jurisdiction's residents and tailor policies and programs to their needs. Any expansion would therefore require the cultivation of local knowledge of the areas in which the program may be expanded.

Barriers. As with any data-based initiative, RxStat must balance getting as much specific data as possible while also protecting privacy interests. Because RxStat focuses on larger data trends, all data is de-identified before being presented, though this may require considerable advance preparation by those presenting their findings.

Additionally, RxStat participants are drawn from a diversity of systems and backgrounds, which can lead to a conflict of positions and priorities. However, by focusing on data and reiterating the group's common mission, the program has been able to maintain its cohesiveness and focus on its core purpose of facilitating the sharing of information and development of common strategies to fight the effects of drug misuse.

Impact, Validation, and Replication

RxStat is considered a national model for public health and public safety coordination around overdose trends and responses. In 2013, the Bureau of Justice Assistance awarded a grant to develop a technical assistance manual for RxStat. The technical assistance manual is designed to assist other cities and municipalities in implementing similar programs.

In 2018, Bloomberg Philanthropies announced a \$50 million investment in partnership with Vital Strategies, Pew Charitable Trusts, Johns Hopkins University, and the Centers for Disease Control to reduce opioid deaths through implementation of data-driven programs in multiple states. This investment signaled a recognition that programs like RxStat retain significant promise as core components of data-based, health-focused approaches to addressing drug-related public health crises.

Additional Resources

- [RxStat Technical Assistance Manual](#)
- [RxStat Presentation at the National Governor’s Association Institute for Governors Criminal Justice Policy Advisors](#)
- [RxStat September 2013 Report](#)
- [HealingNYC: Preventing Overdoses, Saving Lives](#)
- [Colleaga: The NYC RxStat Initiative - Case Study](#)

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P.A.A.R.I. One2One Engagement to Recovery Program

Public distribution of fentanyl test kits

Summary

The Police Assisted Addiction and Recovery Initiative (P.A.A.R.I.) is a nonprofit organization headquartered in Boston (MA) that comprises a national network of almost 600 police departments. P.A.A.R.I. works to support non-arrest programs to prevent overdose deaths and expand access to treatment and recovery. P.A.A.R.I.'s One2One: Engagement to Recovery initiative is a project across Massachusetts and Maine that aims to reduce fatal overdoses by having police officers and community partners distribute fentanyl test strip kits in the community. The program empowers police and community partners to provide referrals to treatment and information about other resources available to those in need. The One2One program is evidence-based and was pilot-tested and evaluated before it was expanded.

History and Development

In 2013, fentanyl, which is 50 times more potent than heroin and is rapidly absorbed upon consumption, was illicitly manufactured and introduced into the drug supply, causing a steep increase in overdose deaths. In New England, fentanyl has been found together with drugs such as heroin, cocaine, and other controlled substances, as well as on its own. By 2019, 93% of overdose deaths in Massachusetts involved fentanyl ingestion.

Fentanyl test strips (FTS) are easy-to-use and inexpensive test strips that can identify the presence of fentanyl and common analogues. They give results within minutes, allowing for timely identification of fentanyl products. When compared to other testing tools, such as Raman Spectroscopy (TruNarc device) and Fourier-transform infrared (FTIR) spectroscopy (Bruker Alpha device), FTS were found to identify fentanyl most successfully, exhibiting the lowest detection limit and the highest sensitivity among these products.

The 2020 Massachusetts state budget included an appropriation for a number of harm reduction programs, including a pilot program for the procurement and distribution of FTS. The pilot program was implemented by P.A.A.R.I., which distributed kits to 11 police departments in Massachusetts, 6 of which were evaluated by Brandeis University. The pilot ultimately demonstrated the feasibility of distributing FTS and the increased referrals for services stemming from their distribution, suggesting that a key method of distribution of FTS is through partnerships between the police and community agencies.

Following the pilot program, P.A.A.R.I. received a \$150,000 grant to expand the One2One program in Massachusetts and in Maine.

Implementation

Logistics. For the pilot program's initial distribution period, P.A.A.R.I. selected 11 police departments to receive FTS kits. P.A.A.R.I. provided these departments with training on safety, use of FTS, outreach and metrics and created a series of training videos. The kits contained three fentanyl test strips, informational

brochures and resources on naloxone, the number for a substance use hotline, and contact information for a recovery coach.

Each department initially received 50 kits to distribute, with an allocation of up to 300 additional kits. Police departments were encouraged to add any additional resources or items to the kit that they thought would be beneficial, such as additional brochures, naloxone, hand sanitizer, or other items.

Once the police received their boxes, they conducted outreach on their own or jointly with a community partner. They could also provide the kits to community partners to distribute without officer involvement. Distribution was encouraged to take place through street outreach, by mail, at community events, during post-overdose outreach visits, and at police stations, among other ways.

As part of the One2One program, there was a 1:1 ratio of kits to referrals made as the distribution of kits facilitated referrals for services.

Facilitators. FTS kits have become an important engagement tool for police as they have been able to reach individuals most at risk of overdose and most in need of intervention, with the exchange of the kits presenting an opportunity to make referrals for services. The inclusion of three test strips in each kit has helped facilitate distribution of FTS to others in the community, as those who receive kits directly are then able to further share any extra strips. Also, the pilot found that the police departments that chose to partner with community groups to jointly distribute kits were able to distribute the most FTS kits compared to departments and community groups who distributed kits on their own, indicating the potential strength of collaborative efforts between law enforcement and community partners.

The qualitative results of the pilot evaluation further indicated that participation in the pilot program led to an expanded interest in harm reduction tools both by community partners and the police.

Barriers. Although the pilot demonstrated both the viability and potential success of achieving harm reduction through the distribution of FTS kits, some participants in the pilot reported confusion over whether FTS constituted drug paraphernalia under the law and whether distribution of the kits was therefore unlawful. Those interviewed as part of the pilot overwhelmingly supported changing the language of the law to make it clear that the possession and distribution of FTS would not violate any law against possessing or distributing drug paraphernalia or facilitating unlawful conduct.

Other recommendations from pilot participants included having written materials translated into other languages and reducing the amount of paper materials in each kit, as they tended to make the kits bulkier and overfull.

Impact, Validation, and Replication

Brandeis University evaluated the One2One: Engagement to Recovery initiative pilot in 2020. The evaluation concluded that the pilot demonstrated proof of concept that police can effectively distribute FTS kits and can most effectively do so in partnership with community agencies. During the pilot, over 300 test kits were distributed with approximately a 1:1 ratio of referrals given for each test kit distributed. At the end of the pilot, P.A.A.R.I. received another grant to expand distribution efforts to 19 police

departments across Massachusetts and Maine. In March 2021, they expanded to an additional 2 Maine departments, bringing the total number of participating departments across both states to 21.

Additional Resources

- [P.A.A.R.I. One2One Website](#)
- [P.A.A.R.I. Pilot Project Press Release](#)
- [P.A.A.R.I. One2One Expansion Press Release](#)
- [P.A.A.R.I. One2One March 2021 Expansion Press Release](#)
- [Brandeis University Evaluation of One2One Pilot Program](#)

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Los Angeles Police Department (LAPD) Mental Evaluation Unit

Police-led mental health crisis response

Summary

Established in 1986 by the Los Angeles Police Department (LAPD), the Mental Evaluation Unit (MEU) assists people who experience mental illness or a mental health crisis in Los Angeles County (CA) by helping them find appropriate mental health services and programs in their community. For people with conditions that make them susceptible to committing “disorder” offenses or being perceived as disobedient of police commands, these connections to care help them avoid the behaviors or conditions that can lead to adverse contact with the police, diverting them from the criminal legal system. In addition to handling calls for service in support of patrol operations, MEU uses what it refers to as a “multi-layered approach” that aims to provide alternate care for community members and facilitate the fast return of police patrol units to patrol activities.

In 1993, the LAPD added the Systemwide Mental Assessment Response Team (SMART) and Case Assessment Management Program (CAMP) to MEU with the support of the Los Angeles County Department of Mental Health (LACDMH). MEU is one of the oldest mental health policing programs and its partnership with LACDMH has made it the country’s largest police-mental health co-responder team. The MEU model has been recognized as an improvement in law enforcement’s response to mental health crises. Additionally, MEU has been designated by the Council of State Governments Justice Center as one of six national training sites for specialized mental health policing.

History and Development

In 1986, the LAPD formalized MEU to address several incidents involving persons suffering from mental illness. The unit’s role was to develop, improve, and maintain crisis intervention practices in calls for service related to mental disorders. In 1992, the Incarcerated Mentally Ill Task Force (IMITF), convened by the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors, concluded that there was a societal failure in meeting the needs of the county’s mentally ill population. The task force’s recommendation was to implement a Systemwide Mental Assessment Response Team (SMART) pilot program. Each SMART team comprised a police officer and a mental health clinician. In 1993, the LACDMH and LAPD pledged to provide personnel and resources to staff SMART. In 2005, MEU/SMART operated 20 hours/7 days a week. In addition, MEU added CAMP as a follow-up and investigative entity in 2008. Composed of LAPD investigators and LACDMH clinicians, it aimed to identify individuals with mental illnesses who often utilized emergency services or who were at a high risk for violent encounters with law enforcement. In 2014, the Department redesigned its mental health training and introduced the Mental Health Intervention Training (MHIT), which is a 40-hour course delivered 24 times a year to officers who have the greatest likelihood of interaction with mentally ill persons who are in crisis.

In 2015, in partnership with the LACDMH, the LAPD increased the number of SMART units deployed and established Bureau liaison officers throughout the county. By 2016, MEU/SMART operated 24 hours/7 days a week and updated its training with an 8-hour CA-POST certified Crisis Intervention course titled the Mental Health Intervention Training (CI-MHIT). As of February 2022, over 3934 LAPD officers have received MHIT training. More than 20 percent of patrol officers of the LAPD have specialized training. This

percentage is due to a mandatory curriculum during the probationary year for new sworn personnel, which both primes and equips officers to adopt and use public health-based interventions. The LAPD has made a commitment for all patrol officers to be more effective in serving vulnerable individuals. In doing so, the hope is that city crime and uses of force can both be reduced.

Implementation

Logistics. MEU has a Triage Desk that evaluates all LAPD's contacts with persons experiencing a mental health crisis. The Triage Desk provides advice, manages radio calls and deployment, guides field personnel, coordinates response resources, and records all mental health calls for service through a Mental Evaluation Incident Report (MEIR). The MEIR is a screening tool that collects personal data, which includes behavioral patterns, religious affiliations, interpersonal relationships, and medication usage. Access to these reports is limited to MEU personnel to protect personal medical information.

During the triage process, mental health professionals work alongside law enforcement officers and refer to the LACDMH database for an individual's psychiatrists or treatment center history. The Triage Desk then determines whether to dispatch a SMART unit or to transport the individual directly to a mental health facility with the help of field personnel.

Starting in 2021, if the Triage Desk deems it necessary, it simultaneously dispatches a patrol and SMART unit with the goal to relieve patrol officers from the field. Generally, patrol officers establish the first contact with the person in crisis and the SMART unit provides support. If both teams arrive simultaneously, SMART officers can de-escalate the situation if the patrol officers allow it. Once imminent danger is mitigated, both units determine how to proceed. If applicable, the patrol officers conduct any criminal investigation, which takes priority over the SMART team's responsibility to address the mental illness portion of the service call. If the Triage Desk determines that a person has constant contact with law enforcement or has demonstrated high-risk behaviors, the case will be referred to CAMP for more intensive intervention.

Facilitators. MEU's expansion seeks to address the increasing number of mental health-related calls for service in the city. It aims to deploy a minimum of 8-10 SMART units in Los Angeles during a given shift, essentially doubling the ability of the specialized unit to assist patrol officers in the field. The LAPD's training program, including its MHIT module, has been effective at educating officers in the tenets and techniques of mental health intervention and demonstrating the value of such interventions for improving policing's toolset for responding to crisis calls.

Barriers. However, increasing clinical staff remains a challenge as there is a high demand and low supply of specialized mental health social workers. Nonetheless, MEU can overcome this challenge by leveraging its growing mental health partnerships, including those with the National Alliance on Mental Illness of the San Fernando Valley, the National Alliance on Mental Illness, the Autism Society of America Los Angeles, the Los Angeles County Department of Health Services, the Metropolitan State Hospital, the State of California Mental Health Services Act Oversight and Accountability Commission, the Hospital Association of Southern California, the Gateways Hospitals – ConRep Administrator and Community Reintegration Program, the Los Angeles County Superior Psychiatric Court, the Los Angeles County District Attorney's

Office, the Los Angeles County Superior Court, the California Department of Justice – Bureau of Firearms, Department of Veteran’s Affairs, and Los Angeles Unified School District.

With the growth of the MEU, there is an expectation that SMART units will soon be able to respond to most mental health crisis calls within Los Angeles. However, although the LAPD requires officers to report all encounters with a person with a mental illness to the MEU team, it cannot guarantee that officers will communicate this information to MEU’s Triage Desk. Another limitation is that MEU officers are tasked with entering data into the LAPD database, but there is no control over the veracity of the entry into the database, making it vulnerable to error.

Impact, Validation, and Replication

MEU’s success depends on how officers collect and capture data when they respond to calls for service, how data is used to inform the rest of the LAPD and MEU, and the officers’ faith in the program. All MEU officers and mental health clinicians receive 40 hours of training to ensure calls are properly categorized, dispatched, and managed. This training, which is mandatory for all officers in LAPD, also aims to educate officers about the importance of responding to calls for service with empathy. Moreover, it seeks to decrease officers’ reluctance toward MEU’s impact on Los Angeles communities. As part of the training, officers attend field trips to mental health courts and meet with judges, public defenders, and prosecutors to learn about court proceedings to understand what happens after they respond to calls for service that are mental health related.

Four senior lead officers hold weekly discussions with MEU team members regarding concerns and satisfaction with the program to keep officer buy-in. Similarly, data analysts present data to the Chief of Police during monthly meetings to discuss MEU’s performance. Every three months, findings are presented to the Mental Health Crisis Response Program Advisory Board to discuss how partnerships are operating, trends in referrals or overdoses, increasing capacity in specific crisis centers or hospitals, and if there have been more calls for service from a particular community.

In 2020, the LAPD responded to approximately 19,226 mental health related calls for service. MEU handled around 6,712, and CAMP addressed 1,572 cases, seizing 768 weapons. About 5,627 calls resulted in a hold being placed on an individual. Moreover, the LAPD mandates that MEU is contacted before a person suspected of having a mental illness or crisis who committed a criminal offense is booked into a custodial facility.

Because of its accomplishments as a co-response program, the MEU has been recognized on multiple occasions. Its awards include, but are not limited to, the Ash Center for Democratic Governance and Innovation Award at the Harvard University John F. Kennedy School of Government, the Los Angeles Police Department Police Meritorious Unit Citation, and the Christine M. West Award from the Forensic Mental Health Association of California (FMHAC). As of 2022, MEU has received thirty-two awards recognizing its work. Additionally, MEU has gained recognition by the Council of State Governments Justice Center and the Bureau of Justice Assistance (BJA). Having been selected by CSG to serve as a national learning site for specialized policing responses in law enforcement and mental health, MEU can certify training programs

that officers participate in to build knowledge and develop skills that would help them respond to calls for service.

Additional Resources

- [Los Angeles Police Department - Mental Evaluation Unit](#)
- [Council of State Governments, Police-Mental Health Collaborations: A Framework for Implementing Effective Law](#)
- [Council of State Governments, Law Enforcement - Mental Health Learning Sites](#)

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San Francisco Financial Justice Project

Reduction and waiver of criminal justice system-related debt

Summary

The San Francisco Financial Justice Project (FJP) was launched in 2016 out of the Office of the San Francisco Treasurer, which oversees revenue collection for the city. The purpose of FJP is to assess and reform how state-imposed fines and fees impact low-income residents and communities of color in San Francisco.

FJP works with other government departments, the courts, and community groups to develop meaningful reforms to reduce the financial burden that fines and fees have on San Francisco's residents. Some of the reforms accomplished by FJP include: launching payment plans and community service options; eliminating all locally-controlled fees for people exiting the criminal justice system; making phone calls free from county jail; reducing boot removal fees by 80% and towing fees by 50% for low-income individuals; allowing unhoused individuals to resolve quality of life citations by receiving social services; allowing free entry to museums; and waiving library debt, among others.

Thus far, \$33 million in criminal justice debt has been waived under FJP, with changes to other types of fines and fees yielding further debt reductions and waivers.

History and Development

In March 2015, the U.S. Justice Department released the Ferguson Report, outlining the findings from its investigation into the city of Ferguson (MO) and its criminal legal system. Among its findings was the determination that the city of Ferguson relied on an abusive system of fines and fees to fund critical governmental services, with those fines and fees disproportionately impacting low-income residents and communities of color. Shortly after the release of the report, community groups in San Francisco called for reforms of similar practices in San Francisco and other cities in California. In 2016, a new coalition called Debt Free SF was formed, bringing together legal aid and other community organizations to call for a range of reforms around fines and fees.

In November 2016, the Treasurer of San Francisco, José Cisneros, wrote an opinion editorial in the San Francisco Chronicle announcing the launch of the Financial Justice Project to respond to the many calls for reform in San Francisco, which thereafter became the first city and county in the country to launch a widespread reform program. Among its early efforts, the city founded a fines and fees task force, which met for 6 months before releasing a report of recommendations in May 2017. FJP then conducted an inventory of all fines and fees across San Francisco city and county government before beginning the process of enacting a series of reforms.

Implementation

Logistics. FJP is housed in the San Francisco Office of the Treasurer. It has a team of three full-time staff members and is funded philanthropically and through city and county public funding. The work of FJP starts with listening to people directly impacted by fines and fees and to community partners familiar with

these impacts. This is achieved through listening sessions and one-on-one engagement. FJP also spent a significant amount of time gathering data from across county and city departments to complete an inventory of all city-imposed fines and fees. Taking all this information, FJP researched solutions to the problems that they uncovered and worked together with partners to develop reforms.

In developing solutions, FJP looked at the following aspects of the fines and fees they were assessing: effectiveness, equitability, fairness, efficiency, sustainability, and revenue impact. The recommendations that followed were generally either to base the fine or fee on ability to pay; to eliminate or modify the fine or fee; or to offer non-monetary alternatives. Each problem had its own solution and reform, ranging from payment plans and community service to free jail calls and eliminating library debt. FJP's work remains ongoing as it continually reexamines the city's self-evaluation of its system of fines and fees.

Facilitators. One of the key facilitators for the success of FJP has been that it was established by the Office of the Treasurer and has strong support from the Mayor and other elected officials. Such strong support from the local governmental leadership in San Francisco has enabled it to work closely with partners across government to enact changes. Additionally, FJP has worked to establish trust with its partners and its constituency, forging close connections and ongoing partnerships with community groups through listening sessions, one-on-one engagement and ongoing collaboration and follow-up. FJP also brings extra staff capacity to any new reforms, easing the administrative burden on other government departments. Finally, FJP's focus on research and evaluation has bolstered their reforms by allowing them to base reforms on available data and to track and assess each reform according to its intended impact.

Barriers. FJP's efforts are not without their challenges. Collecting accurate data on fines and fees was difficult at the beginning of the project, with such data having been limited and diffuse across local government at the time. It also took a lot of trust-building and effort to create an inventory of the fines and fees across San Francisco's government, with some leaders pushing back against FJP out of concern that there would be significant revenue loss from any comprehensive reform of the city's fines and fees structure. These fears, however, were largely alleviated by research showing that when it is easier and cheaper to pay fines, people pay more regularly, sometimes leading to revenue increases, not decreases. Another challenge has been communicating out to low-income residents about new reforms and discounts available to them, though time and continued outreach is helping to spread the word.

Impact, Validation, and Replication

The impact of FJP has been far-reaching. Through various reforms, FJP eliminated \$33 million in criminal justice debt owed by approximately 21,000 people. FJP further waived \$1.5 million in debt stemming from overdue library fines, and boot-removal fees and towing fees have been reduced by 80% and 50%, respectively, for low-income residents. FJP has also cleared 88,000 holds on driver's licenses for people who missed traffic court, lifting significant financial barriers for the beneficiaries of those clearances.

FJP has also studied the impact on revenue and found that reforming practices often leads to increased collections. In a 2020 report, FJP found that ending driver's license suspensions increased average collections per ticket by 8.9% in the year after the reform. Additionally, an independent evaluation was conducted by the Urban Institute to study the waiving of child support debt. The evaluation supported the value of the reform, stating that when this debt was lifted, parents paid more consistently. Other

studies have shown that generally the revenues that were anticipated to be lost due to FJP's reforms, were rarely, if ever, actually collected by agencies before the reforms went into place, making many such losses illusory.

Additional Resources

- [San Francisco Financial Justice Project Website](#)
- [San Francisco Financial Justice Project Overview](#)
- [Advancing Financial Justice in San Francisco: The Experience and Lessons of the City's Financial Justice Project](#)
- [Results for America: San Francisco's Financial Justice Project: Reducing the burden of fines and fees on San Franciscans with low incomes](#)
- [Fines and Fees Justice Center](#)

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Oklahoma Rural Crisis Response

Mental health crisis response for rural communities

Summary

A longstanding challenge for law enforcement agencies is negotiating the intersection between typical law enforcement responses and the mental health needs of those individuals with whom they engage. The Rural Crisis Response initiative is an attempt to facilitate those interactions and meaningfully engage with individuals in rural areas who experience mental health crises and lack accessible services. The project is a mental health initiative based in twelve rural Northeastern and Northcentral counties in Oklahoma. The primary goal of the initiative is to create an expedient and efficient way to provide immediate aid from mental health professionals to individuals experiencing mental health crises, while simultaneously lessening the burden placed upon responding officers who respond. It is the mindset of those operating the program that individuals should have constant access to these vital services wherever and whenever they are needed.

The program aims to provide treatment in the least restrictive environment possible and to ensure that all police officers are properly supported by ensuring that all participants in the process have 24/7 instant access to licensed mental health professionals. To achieve this, the program relies on a well-established network of crisis centers throughout the twelve participating counties, staffed by highly trained professionals. By using a locally developed app on program iPads, police officers and patients alike can immediately contact mental health professionals at local crisis centers. Patients can further receive counseling and treatment options and transportation to a location that will best service their needs.

History and Development

In 2015, there were 4,325 open clients serviced by local crisis centers in the twelve Northeastern and Northcentral rural Oklahoma counties. Of those clients, 835 had been admitted to inpatient hospitalization, the highest level of mental health care available in the counties at that time. This high level of inpatient hospitalization resulted from an inefficient care network and a process that placed substantial burdens on law enforcement officers responding to mental health crises. At the time, when a law enforcement officer encountered an individual in the field and determined that they were potentially experiencing a mental health crisis, the officer would transport the individual to the emergency room. The officer would remain with the individual until a licensed mental health professional (LMHP) could be summoned. At night, this process could take several hours. When the mental health professional arrived, they would examine the patient and provide a recommendation regarding future treatment options. The police officer would then transport the individual in crisis to the facility where the treatment was going to occur. Due to the need for rapid turnover in the emergency rooms, this would often result in transportation to an inpatient hospitalization facility. By this point, the police officer would have been pulled out of the field for several hours. This system was highly inefficient, both for the law enforcement officers and the clients seeking assistance.

To remedy this problem, the Oklahoma Rural Crisis Response team set out to provide a way for police officers to immediately access mental health professionals (including LMHPs, recovery support specialists, nurse practitioners, and psychiatrists), allowing them to quickly provide on-scene assistance to individuals

experiencing mental health crises while also bypassing the inefficient emergency room processes. Since it was unfeasible to place these professionals on patrols with the officers, a virtual care system was implemented. All law enforcement vehicles were stocked with iPads, each of which contained a program app that allowed for quick access to local crisis centers. By using this app, police officers are quickly routed to a specialist at a local crisis center who can speak with the individual on-scene, provide an assessment, and recommend further action.

In order to take these calls and maintain 24/7 functionality, multiple urgent care facilities and crisis centers were developed. These centers are strategically located in the twelve counties and are fully staffed around the clock by mental health specialists who monitor the iPads and respond to incoming calls. Additionally, if appropriate, police officers can transport individuals to these facilities to directly receive necessary mental health services. The police officers themselves can also take advantage of these systems. Upon experiencing a traumatic incident, the officers can utilize a function of the app to be connected with a professional at their local crisis center.

Recently, the program has been dramatically expanded to provide these specialized iPads to a number of other entities. Currently, 835 iPads have been distributed to law enforcement vehicles for use in the initiative. Additionally, all schools and emergency rooms in the counties have been supplied with iPads for the same purpose. For individuals who repeatedly experience mental health crises, iPads are provided directly to the client, with 5,000 to 6,000 iPads currently in clients' homes. The program is in the process of supplying them to jails as well, and other organizations, such as museums and libraries, have requested use of the service.

There are currently twenty-two crisis centers in the twelve rural counties, with three of the urgent care facilities being operational 24/7. The team is in the process of opening three more of these centers, which will result in any police officer in the twelve counties being no more than thirty miles from an operational crisis center at any given moment.

Implementation

Logistics. The program operates through an app that is placed on program-specific iPads. The app serves as a means of efficiently connecting the possessor of the iPad to a mental health professional at a local crisis center. The process typically begins when a police officer, in possession of one of these iPads, encounters an individual who the officer believes may be in crisis. Upon engaging with the individual, the officer will ask the person if they wish to speak to a therapist. If the individual agrees, the officer will press a designated prompt within the app. The app will then transmit a signal to a local crisis center, where specialists manning the app within the center will answer the call. The officer will then hand the individual the iPad and the therapist will engage the individual and ask them questions. The specialist in the crisis center will then diagnose the issues and determine the best course of action. If it is determined that further services are necessary, and the individual consents, the officer will transport the client to the crisis center.

Clients who repeatedly require assistance are given a personal iPad to keep with them in their homes, through which they can press a button on the app to immediately access to a professional at a local crisis center. Additionally, there is a second prompt which allows for the client to be connected to their personal

therapist. The therapist will then receive a message stating that the client wants to speak. Whenever the therapist becomes available, they will call the client.

Facilitators. There are several promising elements of this program that point towards its successful implementation. First, the program allows for more specialized and rapid responses. Rather than waiting for several hours for assistance, which is a burden on both the person in crisis and the responding officer, the person can receive nearly instantaneous assistance from a trained mental health professional. Clients can now receive services and treatment that are specialized to their needs, and law enforcement officers are not long diverted from their patrol duties. Additionally, this method allows for substantial relationship development between the person in crisis and the mental health professional with whom they are connected since the staff member who answers the person's call on the iPad is typically the same staff member who greets them at the door when they arrive at the center. Rather than having to interact with a broad array of individuals (like law enforcement officers, doctors, therapists, and crisis center workers), the patient can begin developing relationships directly with service providers almost immediately. Finally, the versatility of the iPad app allows for meaningful expansion to a broad array of entities, such as schools, hospitals, jails, museums, libraries, and more.

Barriers. Although the program has been highly effective at increasing access to services, the program is still limited by the types of services that are available. Improving access does not, in and of itself, create more levels of care. Despite the 24/7 access, there are still only a few treatment options available to patients. While the program is working to expand these options throughout the counties, the program's success will be limited until more treatment options are made available.

Impact, Validation, and Replication

The team routinely evaluates the impact of the program, and the data they possess indicate the program's efficacy. Data gathered from the first few years of program showcase the overall benefits that it has provided to individuals it has served. In general, the program has been effective in reducing the number of individuals with mental health concerns who routinely interact with law enforcement. Further, the establishment of an extensive network of care has allowed for high accessibility and rapid response by specialized professionals. Furthermore, the shift toward relying on these specialized professionals for intervention in the field has substantially reduced the amount of time that police officers must dedicate to these types of calls. Over the past few years, the program has saved police officers a total of 297 days of driving, and 409,000 miles of travel. This has resulted in savings of \$221,000 on mileage and \$146,000 on officer time. Further, these savings do not account for the improved response times and better police services able to be provided to others by virtue of the increased availability of officers.

Additionally, the program has significantly reduced the number of individuals who are directed to inpatient hospitalization. In 2015 when the project was started there were 4,235 open clients utilizing these crisis center services, and of those, eight hundred thirty-five ended up in some form of inpatient hospitalization. Since 2015, despite the growing number of people seeking mental health services since the implementation of the program, the number of those going to inpatient care substantially decreased.

It remains to be seen how the program will continue to develop as the Rural Crisis Response team works to further expand its work, including implementing additional technology and broadening the initiative's scope. However, the program has already enjoyed a large degree of success in achieving its aim.

Additional Resources

- [Oklahoma Department of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services - Comprehensive Crisis Response](#)

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The Respond, Empower, Advocate, and Listen (R.E.A.L.) Program

Peer-led response for mental health and substance use crises

Summary

In collaboration with the Mental Health Association of Nebraska, the Lincoln (NE) Police Department developed the Respond, Empower, Advocate, and Listen (R.E.A.L.) Program to respond to individuals experiencing mental health and substance use crises. The purpose of the initiative is to make individuals aware of the types of mental health services available to them following a mental health crisis, while simultaneously diverting them away from law enforcement involvement and averting future crises requiring engagement with law enforcement personnel.

The R.E.A.L. Program is entirely voluntary and operates through a referral system in which peer supporters receive referrals from patrolling police officers. The peer supporters then respond to the scene and engage with the individual, assisting them with seeking out suitable services to address their fundamental needs. The program places emphasis on lived experience and the ability of program staff to connect on a personal level with individuals in crisis. Fifty-one percent of the program's Board is required to be composed of individuals with lived experience in mental health and substance-use issues and every one of the program's staff members has such lived experience.

History and Development

Historically, interactions between police officers and individuals in crisis often ended with the officers having to take the individual into custody. If the person had committed a crime, the individual would be arrested and taken to the local jail. However, even if the person had not committed a crime, when the crisis was particularly severe, the responding officer could place the individual into emergency protective custody, transporting them to a crisis center. This process was particularly damaging to the trust and morale of the individuals who were forcefully taken into custody, as well as the responding officers themselves. Furthermore, upon dropping the individual off at a crisis center, the responding officer had no way of determining whether or not the person ever received the aid they needed. In addition, even when the interaction did not result in the person being placed in custody, the police engagement itself typically heightened the stress of the situation, making it far less likely that individuals would emerge from the encounter with the necessary tools or information to seek aid on their own.

To address these concerns, the Lincoln Police Department partnered with the Mental Health Association of Nebraska to create a post-crisis assistance program for individuals in the community, called the Respond, Empower, Advocate, and Listen (R.E.A.L.) Program. Program staff, composed primarily of peer specialists with lived experience, engage with individuals in crisis to determine their essential needs, work with the person to develop a plan to meet those needs, and then facilitate connections to appropriate services.

Additionally, as part of the Program, peer specialists engage in trainings for individuals in the community to provide them with the skills to recognize individuals in crisis and provide necessary referrals themselves. Such trainings have been provided to physicians, bus drivers, landlords, elected officials, and individual families. Since the goal of the program is to prevent engagement with law enforcement when

possible and appropriate, while emphasizing referrals to trained mental health professionals, providing local community members with the skills to make these referrals goes directly to the diversion goals of the program. Furthermore, peer specialists assist with the training of new police officers, dispatchers, sheriff's deputies, and Lincoln Fire and Rescue personnel so that those entities understand the goals of the program and how to best engage with individuals in crisis. There is also a 40-hour behavioral health and threat assessment class given to police officers and deputies from both city and rural agencies.

Most recently, the pandemic placed considerable strain on the program, which led to further expansion. Mobile crisis teams (consisting of a therapist, medical aid provider, and a social worker) were expanded to respond directly to individuals in need. The hours of operation were also considerably expanded. Finally, the program added a local space called "The Living Room," which operates as a safe environment in which people can take temporary shelter while eating a meal, speaking to a peer, and regrouping before returning to their home.

Implementation

Logistics. The process typically begins when a police officer responds to a call and, upon engaging with an individual, determines that the person has a mental health or substance use-related problem. The officer then assesses the person's needs and, if they determine that a referral to the R.E.A.L. Program is appropriate, will ask the individual if they consent to meeting with a peer specialist from the program. If they consent, the officer then writes an e-mail to the Mental Health Association briefly describing the contact, any relevant mental health issues, and provide contact information. The officer will also include some personal details about the individual, which allows the responding peer specialist to connect personally with the individual, typically within 12 to 24 hours. Upon engaging with the individual, the peer discusses their own past experience and asks the individual about their current issues and needs. The peer then assists the individual with planning for addressing those concerns and will facilitate connections to the proper resources to meet those needs. Furthermore, the peers have direct access to mobile crisis teams, which can be dispatched directly to the individual as necessary. Upon completing their meeting, the peers will then alert the officer who responded initially to the individual to provide information regarding the outcome of the interaction and to provide details that will be helpful to the officer should they encounter the individual again.

In some circumstances, it is necessary for the responding officer to arrest the individual before a referral is made due to the individual having committed a crime. However, the referral to the R.E.A.L. Program is nonetheless made, and the program's peer specialists have access to the county jail, where peers can assist those individuals with developing a re-entry plan to meet their needs and work to facilitate connections to suitable care providers.

Facilitators. The implementation of the R.E.A.L. Program has resulted in substantial benefits for individuals with mental health concerns who now have access to these services. First, utilization of peer specialists has allowed for the development of meaningful relationships between program staff and community members, allowing for individuals to be more effectively referred to critical services that address their needs. Additionally, police officer morale has been considerably improved. By using the service and receiving the follow-up information from the peer specialist, officers can be secure in the knowledge that the individual has received appropriate care and is having their needs addressed. This

feature has, in turn, allowed for a positive change in officer's culture and attitudes regarding the facilitation of recovery as an effective means of diversion from the criminal justice system.

Barriers. Rural communities do not possess the same resources as larger cities, so some areas may lack available service providers to whom individuals can be referred. Additionally, it can be difficult for peer specialists to locate individuals and, even upon being located, some people refuse the program's services. Finally, the program's effects are not immediate. For the program to have a significant impact, there must be repeated engagement with an individual over a long period of time. Change is only directly measurable one to two years after first contact is made. This delayed effect is due to the complexity of mental illness, waiting lists, medication changes, the challenge of securing employment, establishing a support network, and other barriers. These obstacles can slow the recovery process down considerably, and those replicating the model must accordingly allow sufficient time for recoveries to occur on realistic timelines.

Impact, Validation, and Replication

Since 2011, the program has received over 4,000 referrals from on-duty police officers and individuals within the community, averaging approximately five to six a week. Anecdotal evidence showcases the benefits of this, as diversion away from the criminal justice system results in far fewer traumatizing encounters for individuals who are in crisis. Furthermore, this has anecdotally resulted in a positive change in police officers' culture and attitudes. Officers are now able to see the improvements to individuals' lives because of the process and have begun adopting recovery mindsets. Finally, data collected every twelve months suggests that the number of mental health calls to emergency services is gradually decreasing, showing that the diversionary goals of the program are being met.

However, the program still has a long way to go to reach maximum efficiency. Currently, data suggests that peer specialists are only able to locate the individual 62% of the time. Of those who are contacted, only 85% consent to receiving assistance. Additionally, as noted above, it may take several years for substantial change to be noted.

Additional Resources

- [Mental Health Association of Nebraska – R.E.A.L. Program](#)
- [Behavioral Health Center of Nebraska – Partner Profile, R.E.A.L. Program](#)
- [National Association of State Mental Health Program Directors – Keeping it REAL: Assisting Individuals after a Police-Abated Mental Health Crisis](#)

Innovations and Emerging Practices

A Police-Mental Health Linkage for Jail Diversion and Reconnection to Care

The criminal legal system suffers from several defects that impair its ability to effectively meet the needs of persons with serious mental illness (SMI), whose conditions expose them to police-involved encounters at disproportionately high rates and whose behaviors can be misinterpreted as being deliberately defiant or violent. One such defect is the lack of coordination and information-sharing between police departments and mental healthcare providers for people with SMI. Consequently, many people with SMI experience severely adverse consequences like a disruption of care, exposure to conditions that worsen their mental wellbeing, and isolation from critical supports that are better suited to addressing the symptoms and causes of their illness.

One approach to address this defect has been to establish police-mental health linkages, or lines of communication and information-sharing between police officers and community mental healthcare providers that enhance the ability of officers to identify and appropriately respond to calls for service involving people with SMI. The linkage system, which consists of three operational steps, is intended to divert people with SMI away from the criminal legal system and back toward health-based interventions for addressing SMI. Although evaluations of the linkage system is ongoing, there are early indicators that the model has been effective in reducing exposure to the criminal legal system for people with SMI, especially when arrests are otherwise not obligatory.

The linkage system was first developed by a team of academics and mental health practitioners who sought to identify new ways for minimizing the risk of arrest for people with SMI during encounters with police officers. The team first evaluated the potential buy-in among police officers for the linkage system by conducting a series of focus groups with various police officers, including those who had and had not received crisis intervention training, as well as people with SMI. Having found consistently high levels of interest across the focus groups for the linkage system model, the team partnered with officials in Georgia to pilot a linkage system there. Although the pilot has been suspended because of the COVID-19 pandemic, observations of the pilot indicated high utilization of the linkage system, suggesting it could be a durable approach for lowering arrest rates for people with SMI and improving sustained participation in mental healthcare.

The linkage system comprises three basic steps. First, people with both SMI and a history of arrests are voluntarily enrolled in the system after giving informed consent to participate. Enrollment in the system involves submission of a brief description of a participant's mental health status in the state's criminal justice information system (CJIS), including identifiers like the person's name, address, sex, race, date of birth, and social security number.

Second, when an officer encounters someone who they suspect may have SMI, they can run a query into the CJIS to see if the person is a participant in the linkage system. If a match comes up in the system, the officer is notified via a message that states, "the individual is a possible participant in a mental health linkage system project; participants are enrolled in a treatment program." The message also includes the contact information for a linkage specialist who can provide additional guidance to the officer.

Third, the officer can call the linkage specialist, who is a licensed mental health professional and is employed by the community mental health providers where the person with SMI has been receiving treatment. During the call, the specialist can provide additional information about the person, including their diagnosis and treatment, and can guide the officer on how to approach the person during the encounter. Where arrest remains avoidable, the specialist can also inform the officer of available alternatives, like care facilities where the person can be either directed or taken for evaluation.

The police-mental health linkage system enjoys several significant facilitating circumstances. Foremost is the significant level of interest and buy-in among law enforcement officials, mental healthcare providers, and persons with SMI. This level of interest is indicative of an overall interest in new approaches for improving the outcome of interactions between police officers and people with SMI and reflects support for cooperation and coordination between officers and mental health professionals.

The linkage system model also benefits from relatively low logistical costs, making it an economical option for states and localities with established networks of community mental healthcare providers. Aside from making minor modifications to CJIS to permit inclusion of limited mental health data and selecting linkage specialists to serve as resources to officers, the model does not require significant expenditure or commitment of resources for either police departments or mental healthcare providers.

Finally, the voluntary nature of participation in the system for people with SMI means that those whose names come up as linkage participants are already predisposed toward cooperating with police to the extent that their SMI will permit. This fact may help assuage concerns about officer safety, especially to the extent that officers can rely on the assistance of linkage specialists to guide them through an encounter with someone in crisis. Because the specialist has prior familiarity with the participant and their mental health history, responses can be directly responsive to the person and their specific condition, leading to a more efficacious response by officers.

A significant barrier of the linkage system model is that it is only as effective as police officers are willing to use it. Further, the assistance of linkage specialists is only as effective as they are both available to officers and knowledgeable of the person with SMI. In areas with an inadequate network of community mental healthcare providers, development of robust linkages with police will be more difficult or prohibitive.

Additionally, for some officers, arresting someone is an easier approach for dealing with behavioral health crises, allowing them to assume command and control of potentially volatile situations more assuredly than alternatives. Further, the voluntary nature of participation in the linkage system means that the program may be self-selective and may exclude people with SMI for whom participation would be most beneficial.

The linkage system is presently under evaluation in a randomized controlled trial funded by the National Institute of Mental Health. Although the results of the evaluation are not yet available, early findings from the pilot project in Georgia indicated that the availability of the linkage system did lead to an increase in diversion of people with SMI from arrest and toward continued treatment. These findings were strongest when officers had the highest level of discretion to avoid arresting someone (i.e., the people's conduct was not sufficiently threatening to public safety to merit immediate arrest).

Additional Resources

- Dr. Michael T. Compton et al, *A Potential New Form of Jail Diversion and Reconnection to Mental Health Services Stakeholders' Views on Acceptability*
- The Police-Mental Health Linkage System Pilot Project Summary

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Safety and Health Integration in Enforcing the Laws on Drugs (SHIELD)

The SHIELD (Safety and Health Integration in Enforcing the Laws on the Drugs) program is a training program that encourages officers to embrace and utilize harm reduction measures by emphasizing the benefits of such measures for both officers and for people with substance use disorder. The training focuses on how various harm reduction approaches, like access to sterile syringes, actually promote both officer safety and wellness outcomes for people who use illicit drugs. The training reframes how police officers think about harm reduction approaches by properly characterizing harm reduction strategies as ones that materially benefit all.

SHIELD was first developed in Tijuana (Mexico) before eventually being implemented in Rhode Island, Massachusetts, Missouri, and Indiana. The program presumes that resistance among officers to harm reduction interventions is the result of persistent stigma, unfamiliarity with the theory and mechanics of harm reduction interventions, and uncertainty of how these interventions serve law enforcement goals. Overcoming this resistance, which has led to a reduced level of participation by officers in diversionary efforts, is a central goal of the program.

The program intends to re-educate officers about harm reduction strategies and to foment buy-in from them by focusing on the value these strategies have for promoting officer wellbeing. A central guiding principle of the program is that better, accurate training will ameliorate officer stress, burnout, and exposure to disease risk by correcting misinformed or incomplete training.

SHIELD training focuses on harm reduction techniques and how those techniques serve the interests of law enforcement specifically. For example, the program explains how harm reduction measures decrease police exposure to infectious diseases, decrease the frequency of overdose calls, and address addictive behaviors that are associated with crime. The core curriculum, which is divided into three modules, addresses responder resilience (including stress, burnout, and trauma and resources for officer wellness); responder safety (including the risks of bloodborne disease, proper response to exposure to illicit substances, and minimization of needlestick injuries); and public safety (including strategies to free up resources and best practices for improving safety outcomes). Avoiding a one-size-fits-all approach, the SHIELD program—of which the training curriculum is a component—is meant to be adaptable to local conditions and operates in three phases.

Phase I of implementation involves cultivating relationships between law enforcement, public health, and community stakeholders and adapting the SHIELD curriculum to reflect local policies and priorities. As part of this effort, a partnership pre-survey is conducted to help establish a baseline for evaluating the impact of SHIELD training.

Phase II involves administering the training to police officers in a collaborative process that involves both police and public health instructors. This phase also includes a pre- and post-training evaluation of trainees, again for the purpose of evaluating impact.

Phase III involves the provision of technical assistance for ongoing training, evaluation, and analysis of impact on officers and on the strength of police-community partnerships, and the publication of findings.

A significant advantage of SHIELD is that it frames alternative approaches to public safety in a way that speaks directly to the values and interests of police officers, which means that buy-in is engendered simultaneously with the training of officers in new techniques and strategies. This approach contributes to the durability of training and increases the likelihood that officers will utilize harm reduction strategies, improving outcomes for both officers and those they interact with. Additionally, the program's design flexibility permits it to adapt to local factors rather than rigidly adhering to a singular model, allowing the program to respond to and accommodate local conditions.

Barriers. The effectiveness of harm reduction strategies is limited by the availability of local resources to offer and support alternative responses to substance use-related calls for service. A lack of local treatment options and harm reduction infrastructure can restrict the options available to officers, which can make it less likely that officers will both utilize harm reduction strategies and see their value in the field.

A pilot study found that officers who received SHIELD training were more likely to refer people to treatment or support services instead of arrest. Additionally, since 2005 and to the present day, several peer-reviewed publications have evaluated SHIELD along multiple metrics, including its training design, the experiences and perspectives of police officers, and its impact on public health. Collectively, these publications form a substantial basis of support for SHIELD's effectiveness in both training officers on harm reduction techniques and generating support among officers for harm reduction strategies generally.

Additional Resources

- SHIELD Training Website
- The Core SHIELD Curriculum
- The SHIELD Evidence Base

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Transform911

Transform911 was launched by the University of Chicago Health Lab in July 2020 to gather data and assess how the 911 system can better serve safety, justice, and public health. The project gathers experts from across a variety of disciplines to collect perspectives on how best to transform the 911 system. Transform911 seeks to evaluate the “police-first” model of responding to 911 calls and examines whether police are always the optimal responders for the various types of calls that come in through the 911 system. The project is looking at how to determine who the best responder is for the situation at hand and how best to dispatch the right responder at the right time. Transform911 also seeks to gather and disseminate best practices for 911 responses.

In the United States, more than 650,000 calls are made to 911 each day, most of which involve a police response despite not involving any alleged criminal activity. In recent years, a lot of focus has been paid to the overreliance on the police for all of society’s issues, ranging from mental health crises to lower-level quality of life concerns. As calls for such a wide range of issues come in through the 911 system, police are often dispatched as the first responders for areas that would be better addressed by other agencies.

Transform911 was formed at the University of Chicago Health Lab with support from a \$1.1 million grant from Arnold Ventures to study the 911 system and gather data, research, and expertise on the best practices for 911 and responder deployment. The project launched in July 2020 with the formation of six workgroups focused on six areas: 911 professional and career supports; alternative first responders; 911 hotline alternatives; emergency communication center (ECC) operations; 911 governance; and 911 technology and infrastructure. The workgroups are composed of people with a wide diversity of expertise, including 911 professionals, advocates, policymakers, public health providers, researchers, and more. The workgroups, which are each headed by two co-chairs, are tasked with discussing ideas, gathering evidence, and making recommendations relating to their assigned focus area. Transform911 also hosts convenings with outside experts to identify ways to innovate and transform the 911 system. The workgroups will continue to meet through June 2022, with the final recommendations to be released in the summer of 2022.

As part of the project, a strong base of research is being developed to be used nationwide in determining what works for emergency response. Transform911 released a report, entitled “Transforming 911: Assessing the Landscape and Identifying New Areas of Action and Inquiry,” which focuses on the six workgroup areas and lays out the research evidence and questions going forward for how to address the 911 system. At the March 2022 convening, draft recommendations were released and published online for public comment.

Part of the success thus far of Transform911 has been the focus on research and evidence-based best practices in exploring policy solutions, which appear poised to yield strong recommendations by the time the final report is released. Particularly important has been the effort to choose workgroup co-chairs and group members who are well-positioned to facilitate and contribute to discussions that are inclusive and that move toward real solutions. Once the final recommendations are released and localities begin to

adopt changes, evaluations of new policies and procedures and replications of successful models can begin.

Additional Resources

- [Transform911 Website](#)
- [Transform911 Report – Transforming 911: Assessing the Landscape and Identifying New Areas of Action and Inquiry](#)
- [Transform911 Launch Press Release](#)
- [The Crime Report Article – Reimagining the 911 Emergency System](#)
- [Transform911 Draft Recommendations by Workgroup, as of February 28, 2022](#)

VIII. Community-based responses for lower-level offenses and calls for service

Introduction

House Bill 21-1250 requires this study to “determine evidence-based best practices... to promote greater policing fairness, equity, and effectiveness” in the area of “initiatives to safely increase community response for lower-level offenses and calls for service.” As seen in the examples highlighted in this section, these practices include those that seek to minimize police involvement in calls for service involving either no criminality or non-violent offending by persons in crisis, as well as practices that reshape how police respond to such calls from both a tactical and philosophical standpoint. Our findings seek to offer a variety of approaches for consideration that can be adapted based on consideration of resource availability, public support, and feasibility, among others.

Despite noteworthy attempts to limit policing’s footprint, the scope of American policing has expanded considerably in the past century into areas outside of conventional law enforcement. This expansion has seen police become responsible for calls for service that do not necessarily involve criminal conduct but may nonetheless impact public safety, such as calls involving homelessness and mental health or substance abuse crises. Despite almost universal police involvement in these kinds of calls, there is widespread recognition among police and community leaders that police officers, as currently trained and deployed, are not the best choice for providing the safest, most efficacious response to these types of calls.

Accordingly, there is an increased focus on achieving the best outcomes for both individuals and their communities by routing them into a stream other than the standard police patrol function. In many cases, vulnerable populations are being connected to a continuum of critical services by public officials, including police officers, in partnership with a diverse coalition of community-based organizations and service providers. This approach recognizes the myriad individual, environmental, and social factors that contribute to conditions like homelessness and addiction, permitting the development of tailored solutions that do not involve arrest and prosecution and eliminate the concomitant dangers of ill-prepared officers. Additionally, there are an increasing number of strategies being implemented that go beyond policing, focusing instead on what can be done within communities themselves to proactively improve outcomes by addressing the root causes of chronic social ills.

Concerted cultivation and support of these community-focused approaches can compound their benefits, ensuring multiple pathways for alternate response and intervention. By taking account of available community-focused strategies, as well as their nexus with—and impact on—key public safety metrics and goals, public officials can identify and nurture new, effective approaches to achieving sustainable public safety.

What has already been done in Colorado?

Colorado has taken significant steps to develop its community-based public safety infrastructure. At the legislative level, the advocacy efforts of the Colorado Criminal Justice Reform Coalition helped lead to the enactment of House Bill 17-1326, which created the Justice Reinvestment Crime Prevention Initiative, also known as the Community Crime Prevention Initiative (CCPI). The CCPI, which was established with bipartisan support, administers an estimated \$3 million per year to fund small business lending and community grant programs.

The money, which is sourced from savings accrued through reforms to the state's parole system, currently supports community investments in four localities: the neighborhoods of north Aurora and southeast Colorado Springs, and the municipalities of Grand Junction and Trinidad. These communities were selected in part because they experienced disproportionate rates of crime and incarceration coupled with historic community disinvestment.

Investments made through the CCPI aim to achieve crime reduction and prevention by strengthening local communities and are administered by a combination of financial institutions that distribute state-backed small business loans and community foundations that distribute state-funded grants, with local planning teams determining funding priorities. The impact and outcomes of the CCPI will be formally evaluated by the state in 2026 to determine continued funding for the initiative and potential expansion to additional localities throughout Colorado.

Colorado's towns and cities have also proactively developed community-based programs, their efforts spurred in part by national calls to action. Denver has sponsored youth violence prevention work in recent years that was inspired by President Barack Obama's My Brother's Keeper (MBK) initiative, which led to the creation of MBK Denver. The program, which is overseen by Denver's Office of Children's Affairs, works with schools, community organizations, private businesses, and other government agencies to develop strategies that improve outcomes for Denver's boys and young men of color. Its efforts include summer work programs, mentorship opportunities, and initiatives aimed at improving relations between youth and police. Denver also commenced its Youth Violence Prevention Action Table in 2019 to foster dialogue and information-sharing among community organizations and government agencies to identify deficiencies in support for youth and improvements that will help reduce violence affecting the city's youth. Efforts like these have helped lay the foundations for future work and community investments locally and statewide.

Overview of Practices Considered

An ideal public safety system would, by design, be reflective of the needs and wants of the communities for whom it administers justice. However, experience has demonstrated a disconnect between what our current criminal justice system is equipped to deliver and what communities demand, particularly when it comes to low-level offenses and calls of service. Often, the tools available through the criminal legal system, including arrest, prosecution, and imprisonment, are disproportionately severe to be appropriate responses to conduct that, while perhaps antisocial, poses a minimal threat to public safety and is not necessarily motivated by deliberate criminality. Identifying the most promising initiatives for safely increasing community response for lower-level offenses and calls for service therefore requires sorting through existing efforts to fill the critical gap between what the criminal legal system presently offers and what an ideal public safety system would. The practices and programs featured here represent those that most effectively fill that gap.

Given the breadth of what may constitute a community response, there are some similarities between the practices that are featured here and those that are featured in other sections of this report. For example, many of the practices pertaining to harm reduction have substantial community components to them and were established to help communities address certain societal problems without resorting to the criminal justice system as a first response. However, the practices reviewed specifically for this section also highlight what can be done within the system itself so that its work is more community-oriented and less rooted in retribution and punishment.

The breadth of what can constitute a community response also allowed for the exploration of strategies that were not only reactive but also proactive. Because calls for community-based responses echo calls for community reinvestment, with the two commonly intertwined, it was important to consider how community response efforts could be served by localized economic investment. Accordingly, among the practices included in this section are ones that involve substantial community reinvestment as a component of a broader public safety strategy.

Those entries featured here as best practices include those with a sustained record of demonstrated success and that have either been replicated widely or that have served as a model for similar implementations across the country. Those entries discussed as emerging and innovative practices include programs that demonstrate considerable promise for achieving their aims but are either too recent to have a sustained track record of success or that, despite being more established, have not been widely adopted or considered for broad implementation.

The result of our comprehensive review is a diverse selection of practices and initiatives that each address community response from different angles, including from within and outside the criminal legal system and conventional policing. Although they each fill different needs and accomplish different aims, they are all motivated by the same mission of improving how community problems, which often manifest themselves in low-level offending, can be tackled at their roots.

Red Hook Community Justice Center

Multi-jurisdictional community court

Summary

The Red Hook Community Justice Center (the Justice Center) is a problem-solving court located in the Red Hook neighborhood of southwest Brooklyn (NY). The court handles low-level cases, such as misdemeanors, summonses, and juvenile delinquency cases, that occur in the neighborhood or the surrounding area. The case dispositions ordered by the court are designed to be meaningful and reduce recidivism. The Justice Center takes a restorative approach and offers a number of programs, including peacemaking, a youth court, and a housing resource center.

The key features of the Justice Center include: coordination of multi-jurisdictional cases all heard by one judge; a focus on restitution back to the community; the provision of services to individuals who would benefit from additional community support; emphasis on accountability and regular court check-ins; and crime prevention by addressing underlying causes of offending conduct. Ultimately, the Justice Center seeks to improve the quality of life in the Red Hook community.

A 2013 independent evaluation found that the Justice Center's approach significantly reduced recidivism and the incarceration rate of the people whose criminal cases were heard by the court. The evaluation demonstrated how the community court model can reduce crime and strengthen neighborhoods without resorting to overly punitive or retributive approaches to safety.

History and Development

The first community court, aimed at improving public safety and quality of life at the neighborhood level, was established in 1993 in Manhattan (NY). The model was later expanded across the country, with the Red Hook Community Justice Center being founded in 2000. Established at a renovated schoolhouse, the court originated as a partnership between the New York State Unified Court System, the Center for Court Innovation, the Brooklyn District Attorney's Office, the Legal Aid Society of New York, the City of New York, and other governmental and nonprofit organizations. To meet its goals of improving the neighborhood's quality of life, the Justice Center has focused on achieving deterrence through meaningful sanctions; intervention and treatment through services; and legitimacy through procedural justice.

Implementation

Logistics. The Red Hook Community Justice Center is set up to handle several different types of cases all under the same roof. Normally, individuals would have to go to separate criminal, civil, and family courts—which are typically housed in their own, separate court houses—to handle various matters. However, within the Justice Center building there is a criminal court for adult misdemeanor cases and minor felony cases, a summons court, a family court for juvenile delinquency cases, and a housing court for landlord-tenant cases.

Cases are sent to the Justice Center from a catchment center in the Red Hook neighborhood. People who are arrested and brought to the court for arraignment are met by a representative from the New York City Criminal Justice Agency, who interviews them and tries to identify any social services they may need, and the person is assigned a lawyer if he or she does not have one. Cases that are not resolved at a person's initial appearance before the Justice Center's criminal court remained on the Justice Center's docket rather than being sent to regular county criminal court.

Among the case dispositions available through the Justice Center are educational or community service conditions that are tailored to the person and the specifics of their offense. Compliance monitoring of any imposed conditions is conducted through the Justice Center, meaning that the life cycles of cases—from inception to resolution—are handled entirely within the center.

Facilitators. Adherence to the principles of procedural justice has been key to the Justice Center's success, so much so that an independent evaluation funded by the National Institute for Justice and released in 2013 noted that evidence suggests that procedural justice had perhaps the biggest impact in reducing recidivism and arrests. The role of the judge as a respectful and neutral arbiter who cares about the people appearing before them and who gives them a voice in the process is essential in fostering a culture of procedural justice. Beyond the judge, the design of the courthouse and elements of the various programs at the Justice Center all facilitate the perception of fairness, respect, and legitimacy by and among the people who appear before the Justice Center.

Barriers. The structure of a multijurisdictional court carries with it some costs and logistical constraints. Although the development of a court with a wide-ranging docket helped zero in on the needs of the community and helped the justice center feel hyper-local, it can be difficult to find judges who can handle such a wide range of case types across diverse specialties. Furthermore, processing housing disputes alongside criminal and juvenile delinquency cases, for example, can be distracting and can lead to a judge prioritizing cases in some subject matter areas over other cases in other areas. It can also be difficult to find the right mix of staff, from court officers to treatment and social service providers, and to ensure that they all believe in the mission and follow the tenets of procedural justice.

Further, because community courts strive to achieve a mission rooted in a community's goals for itself, finding a location and edifice that fosters and symbolizes that communal mission and that is able to integrate into the community as a local institution can be a challenge. Accordingly, those seeking to implement the community court model must give due attention to both the practical and symbolic considerations that are attendant to the model's core features.

Impact, Validation, and Replication

The 2013 NIJ-funded evaluation found that after two years, adults whose misdemeanor cases were processed through the Justice Center were 10% less likely to be rearrested than the comparison group, and juveniles were 20% less likely to be rearrested. This trend continued well beyond the initial 2 year follow up period. The evaluation also found a decrease in felony and misdemeanor arrests in the police precincts served by the Justice Center.

The evaluation further found that the Justice Center increased the use of alternative sentences when compared to the regular criminal court in Brooklyn, with 78% of people with criminal cases heard by the

center receiving community service or social service sanctions compared to 22% of people whose cases were heard in the county criminal court. Additionally, the Justice Center reduced the use of jail by 35%, with only 1% of people entering jail at their first appearance before the court, with others receiving it as a sanction for failing to comply with other sanctions.

The evaluation also measured saved costs and found that the total resource savings from using the Justice Center instead of traditional criminal court in 2008 were \$6,852,477. The multiple successes of the Red Hook Community Justice Center have earned it significant recognition since its establishment, including several awards that recognize it as a model for other community courts across the country.

Additional Resources

- [Red Hook Community Justice Center Website](#)
- [National Institute of Justice Crime Solutions – Red Hook Community Justice Center Program Profile](#)
- [A Community Court Grows in Brooklyn: A Comprehensive Evaluation of the Red Hook Community Justice Center](#)

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Kansas City Downtown and River Market Community Improvement District Ambassadors

Sharing public safety responsibilities with community partners

Summary

In and around Kansas City (MO) are a number of Community Improvement Districts (CIDs), including within the city's Downtown and River Market neighborhoods, that work to keep the districts clean and safe. The individuals who work as part of the CIDs are called ambassadors and have various jobs covering the public safety and maintenance aspects of the CID. As a supplement to the services already offered by Kansas City, these ambassadors provide security, cleaning, and additional services throughout the CIDs.

The annual budget of the Downtown and River Market CIDs is approximately \$3 million, which covers the cost of 22 maintenance ambassadors and 27 safety ambassadors.

History and Development

Community Improvement Districts in Missouri are made possible through state legislation and are meant to improve community conditions and foster new growth. The first CID in Kansas City was founded in 2002, with 77 more CIDs forming since then, including the Downtown and River Market CIDs, founded in 2003 and 2006, respectively. Each CID has different focuses based on the needs of the community, but the Downtown and River Market CIDs have focused on public safety and keeping the areas clean.

Missouri law permits local governments to form CIDs either as a political subdivision of the local government or as a not-for-profit organization. Approved CIDs may impose taxes or special assessments within the district to fund their operations, with most in Missouri opting to impose a sales tax. Those seeking to establish a CID must define the district's area, establish a board of directors, propose a budget, identify its proposed funding sources, create a business plan, and contact all affected property owners within the proposed district.

Implementation

Logistics. The Kansas City Downtown and River Market CIDs utilize ambassadors for public safety and cleaning services throughout the districts. The public safety services include a number of aspects. First, the public safety ambassadors coordinate with the Kansas City Police Department (KCPD) and are trained to assist in responses to thefts and other crimes, with ambassadors receiving additional training provided through a variety of programs and classes. Once trained, some of the public safety ambassadors, referred to as "bumblebees," patrol the area 24/7 with the goal of deterring crime and assisting people in the community as needed. Additionally, the public safety ambassadors work to help homeless individuals transition to shelters and connect with supportive services. The CIDs also have partnerships with the Kansas City Streetcar Authority and the Central Library with ambassadors providing way-finding services on the KC Streetcar and providing safety services to the library.

In addition to the CID's safety ambassadors, the CID employs maintenance ambassadors to provide a number of services to supplement city sanitation services and the private property maintenance of individual property owners. The CID maintenance ambassadors work to keep the parks and sidewalks clean at all times, 7 days a week. This includes sweeping twice daily and power washing monthly in warm weather. When it snows, maintenance ambassadors clear sidewalks, fire hydrants, bus stops, and other areas in coordination with the city. Additionally, some maintenance ambassadors are specially trained to remove graffiti from buildings, signs, and other areas. They are also tasked with maintaining street furniture in the district. The work of the CID's safety and maintenance ambassadors serve to improve the overall quality of life for the district's residents and visitors.

Facilitators and Barriers. The CID's coordination with existing city services and property owners in the districts is an essential feature of the ambassadors program. Additionally, significant training for the ambassadors is a key facilitator of their success. Given that the safety ambassadors effectively act as civilian safety officers, they face safety concerns that can only be met through proper training and support from the KCPD, both of which they receive.

However, while coordination with existing city services is key, some CIDs' oversight has been lacking. According to a 2021 report from the city's Office of the City Auditor, some CIDs have failed to follow regular reporting guidelines, making it difficult to track and evaluate their operations, including revenue generation and expenditures. As such, the City Auditor has called for more transparency, accountability, and supervision.

Impact, Validation, and Replication

Kansas City's Downtown and River Market CIDs have metrics available to the public showing the impact of the work of the ambassadors. From 2018-2019, the Downtown CID reported 4,481 citizen assists, directions, and special events; 3,626 trespass, drug activity, and public drinking interventions; 1,046 homeless contacts and referrals; 193 citizen and merchant introductions; 184 aggressive panhandler interventions; 129 safety escorts; and 65 police arrests/assistance and medical assistance. For that same period, the River Market CID reported 497 citizen assists, directions, and special events; 1,149 trespass, drug activity, and public drinking interventions; 1,513 homeless contacts and referrals; 54 citizen and merchant introductions; 291 aggressive panhandler interventions; and 16 safety escorts. However, outside of these kinds of self-reported statistics, there has not been a formal evaluation of the program.

In April 2021, the Office of the City Auditor released a performance audit about CIDs in general across Kansas City. The performance audit made a number of recommendations for ways to improve oversight, transparency, and accountability of CIDs. These recommendations included reducing CID lifespans, submitting annual financial statements, requiring more reporting from CIDs on expenditures benefiting the public, and fining CIDs for failing to submit reports. Another recommendation was also that a formal evaluation be conducted to independently validate their performance and impact.

Additional Resources

- Downtown and River Market CIDs Website
- Office of the City Auditor Performance Audit, April 2021 – Community Improvement Districts: Strong Oversight Needed to Ensure Public Benefit, Transparency, and Accountability

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Community and Law Enforcement Assisted Recovery (CLEAR)

Supportive services and peer support for economic and behavioral health crises

Summary

Serving the city of Winthrop (MA) since 2017, the Community and Law Enforcement Assisted Recovery (CLEAR) Program relies on an intra-departmental approach and peer mentorship recovery model. CLEAR assists individuals interested in recovering from mental health and substance use disorders by referring them to community-based service providers. Formalized as a partnership between Winthrop's Department of Public Health & Clinical Services (WDPHCS) and the Winthrop Police Department (WPD), CLEAR provides on-the-ground support for people facing housing difficulties, food scarcity, domestic violence, or those who suffer from mental health and substance use disorders, conditions that all increase the likelihood of involvement in the criminal legal system.

Because of its success in community outreach and as a peer-mentorship program, CLEAR was recognized by the U.S. Department of Justice and invited to act as a mentor for its Peer Recovery Support Services Mentoring Initiative in 2021. Consequently, the department has been chosen to provide training on its diversion model throughout the United States, particularly in Connecticut and Arizona. CLEAR team members serve as subject matter experts assisting with the development of public health and safety partnerships that use peer-based support services to connect vulnerable individuals to psychiatric resources, medical support, and in-patient recovery options.

History and Development

In 2014, Winthrop joined its neighboring communities to form the Winnisimmet Regional Opioid Collaborative (WROC) to address the increase of opioid overdose deaths. In 2015, Winthrop hired two peer recovery coaches and a licensed mental health counselor who began working with the WPD. Subsequently, CLEAR was formalized with the support of WPD and WDPHCS in 2017.

The CLEAR team works with fire and public health personnel in crisis intervention efforts, including preemptively addressing crises by locating at-risk individuals interested in connecting with mental health services and programs. CLEAR continues to grow its partnerships to improve its accessible support services for Winthrop's residents. These include the Boston Medical Center, East Boston and Chelsea Courts, Suffolk County House of Corrections and District Attorney's Office, Winthrop's Inspectional Services, Public Schools and Juvenile Diversion Programs, and Councils on Aging and Housing.

Implementation

Logistics. The CLEAR model consists of a police sergeant and a team of certified addiction recovery coaches, a registered nurse, a licensed mental health professional, and a social worker who selectively co-respond to calls for service. Specifically, the WPD aligns drug-related cases with a recovery coach using incident reports and dispatch log entries found in its IMC system to direct the liaison officer to further investigate and contact the individual who triggered an emergency response due to a mental health crisis. The goal is to get the individual's verbal consent to receive assistance from the recovery coaches. After

this step, the liaison officer connects them to the recovery coaches who guide them through treatment options and community resources. The recovery coaches then begin their peer-based coaching work under the supervision of a public health nurse. Thus, the recovery team assists the person in discovering and maintaining their recovery through a peer-based recovery coaching model and creating a direct communication channel between the police and public health workers.

Weekly meetings between the recovery coach, liaison officer, and public health nurses maintain an open dialogue and a forum for providing any necessary updates. CLEAR also has monthly stakeholder meetings with community organizations to address potential upcoming challenges or goals.

The WPD uses police data to determine trends in overdoses to develop strategies to stop future overdoses. As part of their preventive strategies, the recovery coaches meet with eligible prisoners thirty days before their release to provide community-based resources and begin coaching to avoid relapse during this crucial period of societal integration.

Facilitators and Barriers. The CLEAR program owes much of its success to Winthrop's partnerships with the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and the Police Assisted Addiction and Recovery Initiative. These have facilitated public and law enforcement education campaigns that support recovery and prevention strategies as viable long-term solutions. Additionally, since the WPD requires all officers to commit to the IACP (International Association of Chiefs of Police) One Mind Pledge, CLEAR officers had already been trained in mental health first-aid services and crisis intervention prior to the program's formalization. This training expedited CLEAR's ability to effectively respond to calls for service. Programs seeking to emulate CLEAR's success in securing officer support should therefore investigate similar trainings as a way to prime officers to accept and validate its approaches.

CLEAR also benefits from its regional partnerships since these give it access to highly skilled staff trained in crisis-intervention. These partnerships also promote information sharing, shared training, in-patient services, directing limited resources to critical rural areas, and reducing costs. However, the regional crisis response approach could result in lengthy response times or a lack of availability of skilled staff or resources. Thus, CLEAR continues to expand its regional support options to help minimize any drawbacks related to a purely regional approach. Nonetheless, CLEAR has multiple areas that need improvement. For instance, it could provide more access to training by creating pathways for officers to obtain social work certifications, which could serve the dual purpose of cementing officer acceptance of public health-based interventions for public safety while equipping them with the skills to do apply them in the field. CLEAR also continues to work to address other potential barriers to the program's success, including efforts to alleviate the tension between guardianship and law enforcement agencies through educational workshops, shorten response times, and extending resource hours. Furthermore, although support for CLEAR has been maintained in Winthrop, there are few, if any, external metrics available to validate CLEAR's overall performance, making independent evaluation difficult.

Impact, Validation, and Replication

Despite its short history, Winthrop's CLEAR program serves to instruct other towns on the implementation of a recovery model given its demonstration of success in outreach, peer support, and community-

oriented recovery. According to CLEAR, some of its accomplishments include connecting over 80 people to recovery resources since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic, distributing more than 100 overdose survival kits that contain Naloxone and Fentanyl Test Strips, accumulating over 10 referrals per month, and calculating a projected savings of over \$5000 for every emergency medical transportation that is not required because contact and support from the CLEAR teams was successfully implemented. By involving representatives from law enforcement, public health, and recovery communities, CLEAR has made a substantial impact in the region.

CLEAR has also received agency grants amounting to over \$40,000. These seek to ensure its continued success in preventing opioid overdoses. Moreover, the grants establish a collaborative relationship between The National Association of County and City Health Officers (NACCHO) and the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) by requiring monthly meetings with CLEAR's representatives, who share information about community-based best practices that deal with substance abuse disorders.

Additional Resources

- [CLEAR Website](#)
- [National Policing Institute - How Small Law Enforcement Agencies Respond to Calls Involving Persons in Crisis](#)

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Regional Response for Rural Departments

Regional behavioral health partnership for rural communities

Summary

The implementation of new models of intervention for people experiencing behavioral health crises is particularly challenging for rural communities, for whom resources may be limited and a sprawling geography may preclude timely response. Regional response partnerships, which combine the resources of neighboring jurisdictions to minimize expense and maximize impact, have been shown to be effective in bringing the benefits of established and emerging crisis response strategies to areas that would be unable to implement such strategies on their own. Although several such partnerships exist, the partnership between the sheriff's offices in Gallia, Jackson, and Meigs counties (OH) is highlighted here for reference.

History and Development

Of the 12,261 local law enforcement agencies in the United States, half employ fewer than 25 sworn officers, 40% employ fewer than 10, and nearly 25% employ fewer than 5. This means that while the public's understanding of contemporary police departments tends toward an image of its largest and most visible forces, like those in New York or Chicago, the reality is that most towns are policed by modestly sized forces, with nearly 800 departments employing just a single officer.

For many small departments, the adoption of new safety strategies, including those addressing behavioral health crisis, can be difficult or even prohibitive, which can diminish or prevent effective responses for behavioral health crises. Many small and rural police departments serve communities with small populations spread across expansive geographies, including those with terrains that can be difficult to traverse. Further, communities in these areas tend to have few, if any, community assets, like public clinics or community-based organizations, for police to leverage as part of any community-based public safety initiative. To overcome these challenges, small and rural departments have increasingly turned toward creating regional partnerships that combine the resources of multiple departments and local organizations into a more potent and coordinated effort to serve the mental health and substance abuse needs of rural populations.

The partnership of Gallia, Jackson, and Meigs (OH) counties, which occupy a stretch of the Appalachian region at the southern end of the state, comprises the sheriffs' offices of all three counties and a local mental health services provider, Hopewell Health Centers (HHC). By coordinating their efforts and pooling their resources, the collaborators are able to increase the availability of crisis care services to those in need and training services to law enforcement officers who may respond to such calls. The partnership, which was formalized in 2011, serves approximately 86,000 people in the tri-county area.

Implementation

Logistics. The collaboration between the Gallia, Jackson, and Meigs county sheriffs' offices and HHC involves the provision of multiple emergency services, including those addressing crisis prevention,

response, and after-care. These services include mobile emergency services from HHC that are available 24/7 upon request by sheriff's office, crisis intervention training for law enforcement officers, and behavioral health case management for people detained in county jails.

Mobile emergency services are staffed by a combination of crisis intervention team members who are available 24/7 year-round via a dedicated, toll-free crisis line, and mobile crisis team members who respond on-site to provide acute crisis care, including mental health assessment and stabilization. Members of both teams include trained therapists and, for mobile response, can include EMS co-responders and case managers.

Mobile responders coordinate with, and often respond alongside, law enforcement officials from the tri-county sheriffs' offices, who are also typically trained in crisis response, including the use of trauma-informed care and interventions. Representatives from HHC and each sheriff's office convene regularly with one another and with representatives of the tri-county Board of Alcohol, Drug Addiction, and Mental Health Services to discuss service delivery, gaps, achievements, and funding allocation to ensure the partnership's continued success.

Facilitators. As with any other collaboration between law enforcement and health officials, the partnership between the Gallia, Jackson, and Meigs Counties Sheriffs' Offices and Hopewell Health Centers relies on the ability to maintain both the will to continue it and the resources to sustain it. The partnership's focus on utilizing both mental health professionals and crisis-trained officers from all three sheriff's offices to deliver crisis services has helped maximize the availability of at least some kind of trained response to an assortment of behavioral health needs in an area with high rates of substance use and mental illness.

Barriers. The most immediate obstacles for any regional response partnership, like the one in Gallia, Jackson, and Meigs counties, are those that correlate with the circumstances that push for the establishment of such partnerships in the first place: the existence of small, resource-limited public service organizations tasked with service delivery across large but sparsely populated expanses of geography. The local tax bases for such areas are almost always too small to support adequate funding for robust, coordinated services, which makes the development of such services reliant on external funding, either from the non-profit sector or, more commonly, from state and federal grant aid, the availability of which is never guaranteed. Additionally, resource scarcity can exacerbate response times and lessen the availability of trained staff, delaying service delivery.

However, funding needs can be mitigated by first focusing on improved coordination among service providers already present in the community, including those working in law enforcement and community health. The combination and coordination of their efforts can potentially yield immediate benefits without the need for additional outlays of financial support, with further service expansion and investment occurring later once any remaining service gaps are identified.

Impact, Validation, and Replication

The regional response model finds affirmation in its replication across the United States. In a 2020 National Policing Institute survey of 380 police departments and sheriffs' offices employing between 10 and 75 sworn officers, 49% reported participating in a regional crisis intervention team partnership. The

survey further revealed that 27% of agencies had agreements with local health agencies to provide on-site crisis response and 26% had access to regional mental health resources. Among those agencies that participated in a regional partnership, 58% reported that participation in the partnership afforded them access to highly skilled staff to assist with crisis response. Other reported benefits included increased information-sharing, shared training, and reduced costs, among others.

Additional Resources

- [Council of State Governments Justice Center, Law Enforcement Mental Health Learning Sites – Gallia, Jackson, and Meigs Counties \(OH\) Sheriffs’ Offices](#)
- [National Policing Institute, How Small Law Enforcement Agencies Respond to Calls Involving Persons in Crisis - Results from a National Survey \(January 2021\)](#)

Innovations and Emerging Practices

My City at Peace

My City at Peace is a real estate company founded in 1997 in Boston (MA) by Reverend Jeffrey Brown and Thomas Sullivan. The company works to reduce violence in distressed neighborhoods through the investment of resources and programming meant to address such concerns. Its mission is twofold: to reduce instances of violence in communities, thus rendering them safer, while building a viable infrastructure that provides safety, opportunity, and stability to community residents. The company's approach is community-oriented, seeking to develop relationships and partnerships between community members, community organizations, and conflicting constituencies to address the root causes of violence.

My City at Peace utilizes unique approaches to programming and service provision to meet its goals. It implements a system of financing that allows participants to seek means of generating wealth without relying on funding from local government budgets or a finite pool of charity funds. Additionally, the company is organized around three fundamental work areas: development, training, and consultation. These three areas operate in conjunction to address the systemic causes of violence in communities, thereby making local communities safer places to live. My City at Peace also champions a Season of Peace (SOP) initiative that seeks to reduce gang violence, gun violence, and other illegal activity by negotiating an agreement for the cessation of violent activity for a defined period of time.

The Season of Peace (SOP) initiative was created following the success of Boston's Operation Ceasefire, a deterrence initiative focused on arresting and prosecuting offenders who carry and sell firearms, while making others aware of the potential consequences of doing so. Following the implementation of SOP, a Boston district saw a twenty-five percent decrease in monthly gun assaults. This success inspired multiple cities to adopt similar programs since 2015, including San Diego, Chicago, Washington D.C., and Las Vegas.

The development branch of My City at Peace revolves around the construction of housing and commercial spaces that prioritize the generation of wealth in local communities. The company seeks out opportunities for future development that allows for the creation of affordable housing with an emphasis on the attainment of home ownership for locals. Additionally, the company works with local organizations, trades, unions, and investors to improve opportunities for residents to learn and prepare for homeownership, acquire necessary skills, and find suitable employment. Finally, the company seeks to create a safe community in which youth have access to a broad array of opportunities, diverting them away from illegal and violent behavior.

The training and preparation branch of the company provides local leaders with the skills and knowledge necessary to prevent violence in their local communities. This includes training local clergy and community leaders in order to build a team of individuals who can take on the responsibility of walking community streets at night. Thereafter, the team works to engage with individuals who commit acts of violence and to intervene when such acts may be imminent. Additionally, the Season of Peace conference and programming is part of this branch. Among its work, SOP involves local organizations in coordinating agreements to halt violent activity for defined periods of time. This effort requires collaboration from a broad array of entities, including faith and community leaders, law enforcement officials, city officials, and policy leaders.

The consulting work of the company focuses on working with local organizations, developers, and leaders to provide them with advice and information to implement meaningful change. Developers who seek to improve community safety and sense of belonging in residents can reach out to My City at Peace to secure their services. Additionally, My City at Peace provides community diagnostics to local and clergy leadership, preparing them to engage successfully with their communities and the residents who reside within them.

Data shows that the company's initiatives have been successful at reducing community violence levels, and other jurisdictions have sought to implement similar programs. However, the organization still struggles with community and resident buy-in, and the increased real estate development in communities can inadvertently displace current residents and lead to the hollowing out of neighborhoods. Accordingly, attention must be paid to the program's impacts on a wide range of metrics to ensure that a neighborhood's intended beneficiaries are realizing the program's intended benefits.

Additional Resources

- [My City at Peace Website](#)

Atlanta Police Foundation

The Atlanta Police Foundation (APF) is an organization in Atlanta (GA) dedicated to providing programming and resources to underserved communities, as well as specialized training to law enforcement officers, in order to cultivate a mindset of servanthood among law enforcement and create a safer community for residents. Such initiatives range from youth diversion and community policing programs to officer leadership institutes that provide law enforcement officers with the skills necessary to conduct themselves fairly and equitably on the job.

The APF was formed in 2003 as part of a security plan in the Westside area of Atlanta. The Westside area possesses historically high crime rates, making it a prime location for the implementation of the plan. The plan included the installation of cameras and license plate scanners in the area, as well as increasing the assignment of off-duty police patrols and incentivizing police officers to move into homes in local neighborhoods. From this early initiative, the APF was formed, and it has continued to grow and evolve over the past nineteen years. Since 2003, the APF has provided strategic support and guidance to city officials, including the Mayor, the Chief of Police, and the Atlanta Police Department as a whole.

The Atlanta Police Foundation sponsors several innovative programs designed to improve the safety of the City of Atlanta. One program revolves around the provision of services that address youth criminal behavior, with the goal of preventing recidivism. The most prominent program is the At-Promise Initiative, a youth criminal diversion program aimed at reducing recidivism rates and placing young individuals on more productive paths. The creation of three At-Promise Centers provides the youth with safe spaces to seek shelter while cultivating positive relationships with law enforcement. Each center provides essential services and resources to attendants, including clothes, deodorant, and three meals per day. Each center also includes a laundry room and shower. Mental health professionals are on-site to provide counseling

and advice, and each youth attending the Center is assessed and provided with an individualized plan to provide them with the proper resources to thrive, including therapy, educational assistance, tutoring, and recreational activities.

Another program, known as the Secure Neighborhoods program, is a community policing initiative aimed at incentivizing police officers to live and work in the neighborhoods which they patrol. Under the program, police officers may be able to purchase homes or rent apartments at reduced cost if they agree to actively patrol their neighborhoods and participate extensively in community events. Additionally, the APF has invested in the creation of a Public Safety Training Center as part of an effort to reform the goals and mindsets typically associated with law enforcement training and community engagement.

The foundation partners with a host of additional entities that facilitate its programs, including more than thirty social service agencies to implement the At-Promise Initiative. These agencies ensure that the appropriate expertise is being applied to each individual case, thus raising the efficacy of their interventions. APF also partnered with Carter USA to be the organization's pro bono project manager, and APF has raised more than \$7 million dollars for the At-Promise Initiative. The Atlanta Police Department and other city officials routinely collaborate with the APF to facilitate the provision of its Police Leadership programs, with the foundation's Public Safety Training Center resulting from the collaboration of multiple city departments and other agencies.

The results of the Atlanta Police Foundation's programs have been promising. Nationwide statistics show that juveniles who are arrested for some form of felonious activity have a recidivism rate of nearly ninety percent. However, the fifteen hundred youth who enrolled at the first At-Promise Center have a recidivism rate of less than five percent. Since 2017, the Initiative has served more than seventeen hundred individuals. More than one-thousand law enforcement officers have participated in the Atlanta Police Leadership Institute, and the Secure Neighborhoods program has continually placed officers into housing that will allow them to patrol their own communities, with a goal of placing 150 officers in city apartments over the next three years.

Additional Resources

- [Atlanta Police Foundation](#)

University of Southern California Social Work and Public Safety Initiative

The University of Southern California's (USC) Social Work and Public Safety Initiative (SWPSI) is an internship program based at the university's Suzanne Dworak-Peck School of Social Work that focuses on building relationships between the USC student body and law enforcement agencies. Through SWPSI, USC students advise agencies on implementing crisis intervention initiatives, counseling and victim services, officer wellness programs, and peer coaching services, among others.

SWPSI functions as a partnership between social workers and police departments in Los Angeles, San Bernardino, and Orange counties. Its interns are exposed to a multidisciplinary approach that helps them evaluate and address the needs of individuals with mental health issues or crises. Moreover, it teaches

them how to properly conduct interventions to support at-risk youths, victims of domestic violence, and individuals with substance abuse disorders.

Developed by Drs. Rosemary Alamo and Ricardo Ornelas in 2016, SWPSI encourages students pursuing a master's degree in social work (MSW) at USC to work with public safety organizations and legal system professionals. Non-profit organizations, government agencies, and even academic institutions can request the support of SWPSI interns to meet the social needs of their communities.

The program continues to grow its partnership network, which includes public safety providers, students, and community stakeholders. These include the LAPD Hollenbeck Police Activities League, the California Society for Clinical Social Work, the National Association of Social Workers, the California Social Welfare Archives, the University Consortium for Children and Families, the Child Welfare League of America, and the Clinical Social Work Association, among others. Additionally, SWPSI is expanding its services by providing students with a holistic curriculum that educates them on neurodivergent care, crisis intervention, suicide awareness, biopsychosocial assessments, clinical case management, coaching in community networking, crisis intervention data analysis, grant writing, marketing, resource development, victim services, and officer wellness initiatives. Finally, SWPSI's administrative team plans to hire two interns in the fall of 2022 to help further develop the program.

The program begins with an internship placement process. In this stage, incoming students are placed with public safety agencies based on information they provide on a placement form, including their work experience, areas of expertise, personal passions, and the populations they would like to work with. Students with experience in the legal and criminal systems are highly encouraged to apply. Following their acceptance, students receive a list of possible placements with partnered organizations, agencies, and academic institutions.

Second-year students can either reach out to the agencies they would like to work with or wait and be contacted by an organization interested in their skills and background. SWPSI helps organizations determine if its students are a good fit, and vice-versa. Once they have been interviewed and offered an internship position within the agency, students sign a memorandum of understanding, acknowledging their commitment to their agency, which generally lasts for a full academic year. Some agencies hire MSW students after their involvement. These mostly provide case-management services or become consultants or contractors. During this period, interns assist in co-response or co-locating models to support their agency and are awarded a stipend of \$1000 to \$5000 depending on the student's financial need. In the meantime, SWPSI gathers intelligence on the interests and needs of each agency to determine what type of students these agencies are looking for in the upcoming year. This permits the program to customize its services to the agencies' needs.

The program hosts student and public orientations at USC and other schools, teams up with admission officers, and reaches out to public safety organizations to attract potential students. It also cold-calls colleagues, recruits through referrals, uses social media to share qualitative data, promotes marketing strategies that highlight SWPSI's accomplishments, and invites speakers to discuss topics of interest to the program and its participants.

The internship program owes its success to USC's support and the success stories that public safety partners share with other agencies. This creates a reference check for incoming students and other agencies. Despite USC's support, the program faces funding challenges. A potential solution to this

problem would be the distribution of grants. Moreover, even though various agencies are interested in hiring social workers who provide clinical supervision, they do not have the resources to hire all the personnel they would need to respond to unmet social needs.

Due to its short history and shortage in personnel, the initiative has yet to collect metrics that measure its effectiveness and local influence. In the meantime, the program provides qualitative data, that is, it shares the types of services its interns engage in, the populations that they serve, and the issues they address. SWPSI is in the process to capture more data about the time and situations its interns engage in and any challenges they may face. Thus, data is not as detailed as other programs.

According to Drs. Alamo and Ornelas, a similar program has not been replicated yet. However, they have been contacted by at least five other universities who are interested in implementing similar programs. Thus, the emergence of analogous initiatives can be expected.

Additional Resources

- [The Social Work and Law Enforcement Initiative At University of Southern California \(USC\) Suzanne Dworak Peck School of Social Work](#)
- [How Social Workers Improve Relationships Between Police and Communities](#)

IX. Strategies to effectively move law enforcement and the community forward

Introduction

Black and brown communities have, for decades, vociferously denounced racial disparities in America's social structure. However, systemic racial and class inequities have become so interwoven in the fabric of society that they are difficult for some to discern. The murder of George Floyd epitomized and made plain the power disparity between police and communities of color that many have lamented for so long. Protests and demonstrations in the summer following his death were, at least in part, a rebellion against the power inequity experienced by minority communities. Police departments searching for legitimacy to uphold the rule of law have come to the realization that community empowerment and involvement in defining what policing looks like in their communities is a crucial step in gaining equal footing and redefining how communities and police departments work together toward achieving public safety.

To regain that footing, Colorado has called on itself to consider “strategies to effectively move law enforcement and the community forward together by building a shared understanding and identifying common solutions to better protect our vulnerable and underrepresented communities, in addition to those suffering from mental illness or experiencing homelessness through non-traditional policing methodologies.” Research tells us that many agencies across the nation have begun this process by forming partnerships and implementing community-based programs intended to close the gap between police and the communities they serve.

Over the past half-century, community policing has been the overarching framework through which the police and community have made efforts to move forward together. Core components of community policing are community engagement and problem solving with participation of local government, civic and business leaders, public and private agencies, residents, churches, schools, and hospitals.^{clxvi} Sir Robert Peel himself laid the foundation for community policing in his statement, “the public are the police and the police is the public.” Policing's evolution in the early 20th century toward a professionalized, paramilitary model led to a much more siloed institution that separated the community from its police, creating situations in which some communities felt not only separate from those who are supposed to serve them, but utterly disconnected. However, during the civil rights era of the 1960s, a shift in thinking around policing that encouraged a more community-oriented approach began to take hold.

This thinking fostered rigorous research around community policing, leading to several well-known studies, including the [Kansas City Preventive Patrol Experiment](#) in the early 1970s. This field study found that vehicular patrols, whether deployed only reactively in response to reported crime or proactively to prevent it, had limited impact on reducing crime, ameliorating fear of crime, or increasing community satisfaction with police services.^{clxvii} In addition, the [Newark Foot Patrol](#) study showed that in areas where foot patrols were increased by police, citizens believed crime had been reduced. They also reported more positive perceptions of police. “The finding that foot patrol reduced citizen fear of crime demonstrated the importance of a policing tactic that fostered a closer relationship between police and community.”^{clxviii}

This research encouraged agencies nationwide to view policing through the lens of being part of a community collaboration for public safety.

In the 1980s, so-called “Broken Windows” theories drew on findings from the Newark study to posit an alignment between addressing social disorder and neighborhood decline as a means for reducing crime. This shifted the focus further to solving community issues as a way to address crime. This also began the push toward Problem Oriented Policing (POP), a policing strategy that seeks to “resolve problems that are increasing crime risks, typically in areas that are seeing comparatively high levels of crime (e.g. ‘hot spots’).”^{clxix} The Scanning, Analysis, Response, and Assessment (SARA) Model is a basic tenet of problem-oriented policing, and calls for police departments to work with community partners to identify crime threats, develop and implement crime reduction strategies, and assess outcomes. More recently, a 2014 study reviewed the existing research on community-oriented policing to identify effects on crime, disorder, fear, citizen satisfaction, perceptions of disorder, and police legitimacy. Its findings suggested that community-oriented policing strategies have had positive effects on citizen satisfaction, perceptions of disorder, and police legitimacy. However, the findings also indicated that there were little actual effects made on crime and fear of crime with this approach.^{clxx} An approach that combines the benefits of community policing and the POP and SARA models to both address crime and disorder and improve community perceptions of crime is therefore worth exploring.

However, strained relationships between community and police can make realizing the benefits of any such approach elusive. As such, departments and communities must work to first reinforce and sufficiently repair their relationship to render it capable of addressing the conditions that impact, crime, and community perception of safety. For departments, there are many hurdles that must be overcome, such as a nationwide staffing crisis that has left many departments with fewer officers to handle a growing list of responsibilities. These staffing shortfalls prevent departments from deploying officers to walk patrols and spend time addressing community concerns. Many officers in understaffed departments report being required to run from call to call with little time for proactive efforts to connect with the community in non-emergency capacities. Additionally, rotating shifts and patrol assignments and inadequate training in relationship-building skills can render officers ill-equipped to achieve community policing goals, which are most assuredly realized when officers have sustained, positive contact with the communities they serve. Strategies for moving police and the community forward must therefore emphasize these components as core tenets.

What has already been done in Colorado?

Colorado has undertaken varied efforts to strengthen police and community alignment and movement on public safety issues. Among the most common are the assorted community outreach and engagement programs that have become ubiquitous among Colorado's police departments. Departments routinely host community events, solicit community feedback, and provide specialized access services, including for people with limited English proficiency or disabilities, to maximize connection with their constituencies. Additionally, formal and informal relationships between police departments and community groups, including faith-based organizations, local chambers of commerce, and community justice groups, help provide lines of communication between Colorado's police departments and those they serve.

The Colorado Springs Police Department's "Coffee with a Cop" program, for example, intends to familiarize residents with the individual officers who fill the department's ranks, with the ideal effect of correcting misconceptions held by officers and community members alike. Community advisory committees, like the Aurora Police Department's Chief's Youth Advisory Team, help departments solicit input from communities of special interest. Neighborhood Watch programs, like the one sponsored by the Engelwood Police Department, help residents participate directly in local crime reduction efforts. And community-based recruitment programs, like Denver's Police Explorer Program, establish a community pipeline directly into a department's sworn officer ranks.

Colorado's police departments have also actively invited community volunteers to help with various departmental initiatives aimed at enhancing available safety services. The Denver Police Department's (DPD) Volunteer in Police Service Program, for example, invites community members to participate in various assignments within the department, including some relating to crime prevention, community outreach, training, and administrative support. The program has proven popular, with 282 volunteers having contributed 24,761 work hours in 2021, at a value of \$706,692 to the city, or the equivalent cost of hiring 12 full-time employees. Approximately 70 of these volunteers each contributed over 100 hours of their time in that same year. The program also includes a component for teenagers aged 16-19 years who are interested in volunteering during their summer breaks. Activities for teenaged volunteers have included graffiti removal, park clean-ups, and crime prevention education, with opportunities to earn letters of recommendation, gift cards for school supplies, and training certificates. The program has proven to be an effective recruitment tool for the department, as well, with 64 volunteers eventually being hired to civilian staff positions within the department and 17 as sworn DPD officers since 2016.

The Boulder Police Department also coordinates civilian volunteers to assist with the department's supportive services for victims of critical events like crimes, accidents, and natural disasters. Volunteer advocates work with victims to provide information, emotional support, and referrals to local resources that may be available. These volunteers are offered training on crisis intervention, community resources, active listening, and emotional response to grief and trauma.

Volunteer programs like those sponsored by the Denver and Boulder police departments have helped bridge knowledge gaps between police departments and communities by directly involving community members in assisting with the department's public safety response services. This way, community members can participate directly to promote safety alongside the department, and departments can leverage community interest in promoting safety without over-relying on sworn officers.

Overview of Practices Considered

Successfully moving communities and police forward together requires multi-faceted approaches to help build and sustain relationships, address crime, and keep the public safe. These approaches can be articulated as a series of steps, which were used as a framework for identifying the practices to be featured here.

First, the community and police should take proactive steps to developing and institutionalizing meaningful engagement, partnerships, and relationships. Given the current national narrative on policing, it is more important than ever that law enforcement agencies see creating relationships with community members and organizations as a core part of their operations. It is imperative that law enforcement agencies and their leaders know the community landscape that exists and proactively connect with leaders and members to understand their mission and goals, hear concerns, support their work, and communicate regularly.

Second, law enforcement leaders should work with community organizations, through their established relationships, to define public safety priorities together. With open lines of communications, police departments and community organizations and members can identify and support community concerns and needs. Providing a forum for views to be shared can allow the department and community to more easily identify the areas of alignment between each stakeholder's priorities and goals. Exploring ways in which they can work together to reach those goals can be mutually beneficial and allow for those goals to be attained sooner and more efficaciously.

Third, law enforcement and community members should collaborate on building community-centered solutions, including those that deemphasize a law enforcement response in favor of other alternatives. Through sustained relationships and priority aligning, police departments can support community work and projects that increase public safety. This may include providing officers' time and presence at events and efforts to assisting in planning to making necessary connections between stakeholders.

Finally, agencies should prioritize continual analysis, evaluation, and public reporting of impacts and outcomes, both of police and collaborative efforts. This effort not only helps to solidify trust but also provides opportunities for adjustment informed by data and evidence. As an example, publicly providing data and analysis on calls for service, staffing, crime, and arrests can help the public to understand the work that the department is undertaking and how community resources can be deployed to complement police efforts.

The programs and strategies listed in each of these areas are highlighted below as national best practices in moving community and police forward in each of the areas. Those entries featured as best practices include those that enjoy the greatest track record of demonstrated success and that have either been replicated widely or that have served as a model for similar implementations across the country. Those entries featured as emerging and innovative practices include programs that demonstrate considerable promise for achieving their aims but are either too recent to have a sustained track record of success or that, despite being more established, have not been widely adopted or considered for broad implementation. Regardless of how they have been categorized, each program has shown significant

promise in strengthening police and community relationships and efforts to work together to secure public safety.

Washtenaw County (MI) Outreach Worker Program

Sheriff-sponsored peer outreach by formerly incarcerated individuals

Summary

The Washtenaw County (MI) Sheriffs' Office (WCSO) is a full-service sheriff's office, including enforcement and detention services, with 425 total personnel, including 120 sworn officers. The department serves a population of more than 350,000 residents across 25 municipalities. The department's mission is to create public safety, provide quality service, and build strong and sustainable communities. To these ends, the WCSO has a dedicated Community Outreach Team that administers the department's outreach worker program. Under this program, the department employs formerly incarcerated individuals to conduct community outreach and serve as a linkage between local supportive resources and individuals in need. Outreach workers are expected to use their experience and credibility to promote pro-social engagement with individuals most at risk of committing and being victimized by crime, and to assist others who are leaving incarceration to reenter their communities. Their employment by the WCSO is also intended to serve the workers' own interests in achieving and maintaining employment as part of their own reentry efforts, with the effect of helping themselves by helping others.

History and Development

Following his election in 2008, Washtenaw County Sheriff Jerry Clayton hired Derrick Jackson, a social worker and youth advocate, to serve as the Director of Community Engagement at the WCSO. As one of the highest-ranking civilians in the department, Director Jackson was the first social worker to be employed in this capacity at the department and arrived at his new position with innovative ideas about how to engage and support the Washtenaw County community, particularly those involved in the criminal justice system.

One of those ideas was for the outreach worker program. The role of the Community Outreach Team is to reduce re-offending and to bridge the gap with those individuals most at risk of offending. Operating since 2009, the program employs formerly incarcerated individuals as outreach workers to assist in proactive strategies that include connecting individuals in the community with resources and assisting them in navigating community supports. The program also serves as a re-entry program that provides formerly incarcerated individuals with training, employment, and life skills to continue to thrive. As experts in their communities, the WCSO asks its outreach workers to use their street credibility, relationships, and trust to help build-up and restore the very neighborhoods in which they were once offenders. In return, workers receive training and support to invest in themselves, reducing the likelihood of their re-offending. Some of the programs that partner with the outreach worker program include the Washtenaw Recovery Advocacy Project (WRAP), Peer 2 Peer, Sisters United Resilient and Empowered Moms (SURE), and Interrupters. The program's goals include reducing re-offense and victimization among program participants, building communities by connecting county residents to services and providing navigation supports, and enhancing problem-oriented policing strategies by building bridges between the community and the county's justice system.

Implementation

Logistics. Outreach worker applicants typically hear about the program either through word of mouth or agency outreach, or by referral. They are required to fill out and submit a 30-page personal history packet that includes short statements, resume, employment and housing history, and all criminal history information. It can take six months to complete the packet, and some OWs report that this step serves as a “cleansing.” This information is used to confirm the applicant’s background and suitability for the position. Suitability is based not only on criteria that may indicate some level of success in the program but also on an assessment of whether their experience will make them effective community liaisons. While applicants await completion of the process, they begin training and volunteering to provide them with a solid understanding of the department, the role of the department’s outreach workers, and the community they would serve if hired. This process also helps the outreach program team determine if the individual would be a good fit for the program. Finally, the applicant meets with a WCSO investigator to shore up their package to be submitted to the selection committee, which makes final employment decisions.

Originally, the program intended for outreach workers to each serve for one year. However, following the program’s implementation and success, the department shifted toward a tiered system that allows for highly skilled outreach workers to stay on for longer periods of time and contribute to more specialized programming with even broader reach. This shift has enhanced the long-term sustainability of the program.

Facilitators. The outreach worker program’s success owes a tremendous credit to the WCSO’s leadership, especially the Sheriff himself. It is difficult to conceive of the program’s development, implementation, and sustainability without the consistent and full support of the Sheriff and those tasked with overseeing it. This support has helped ensure that the program is adequately resourced and that there is sufficient follow-through to establish and maintain a robust community engagement effort.

Barriers. Even with the support of agency leadership, creating and sustaining the outreach worker program has not been without its challenges. Legal and policy hurdles had to be carefully reviewed and managed, including those relating to hiring, information and data access, and logistics, requiring some changes before the program could move forward. Further, the program’s extensive background check can also be prohibitive for many potential applicants who cannot forgo paid employment for long enough to complete the process. Accordingly, many applicants drop out before their background checks are completed. Streamlining this process as much as possible while maintaining operational integrity should therefore be a critical priority for those seeking to replicate the outreach worker program.

Impact, Validation, and Replication

While the WCSO has not conducted a full-scale impact analysis of the outreach worker program, it has collected some impressive data since the program’s implementation. According to Washtenaw County, of the total 17 outreach workers hired since the beginning of the program, only 6% have returned to jail, compared to the 63% recidivism rate of the general jail population. Additionally, 88% have remained

substance free and 94% have retained stable housing after the program. Seventy-one percent (71%) of outreach workers have moved on to higher education and, to date, 94% remain gainfully employed.

Additional Resources

- [Washtenaw County Sheriff's Office Community Outreach Team](#)
- [Vera Institute of Justice, Case Study of the Washtenaw County Sheriff's Office](#)
- [Center for Court Innovation, Report on the Washtenaw County Sheriff's Office](#)

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Austin Community Immersion Program

Police immersion program in local communities

Summary

Critics of the police contend that departments are not sensitive to cultural differences within their communities and do not communicate well with some community members. The police counter that minority communities are reluctant to interact with the department, making it hard to work together. In an effort to make headway on their cultural engagement efforts, the Austin (TX) Police Department (APD) developed the Austin Community Immersion Program, a seven-day (56 hour) program designed to develop a cultural understanding and forge relationships between the police officers and citizens to provide better community service. The program “requires participants (officers) to immerse themselves in a portion of the community, engage in dialogue with members of that group, learn about these individuals’ motivations and values, and then teach what they have learned to their peers.” Similarly, departments in Los Angeles (CA), Chattanooga (TN), New York and New Jersey, as well as Victoria in Canada, use police department cultural training programs to move community and police departments forward together. These programs are designed to increase police officers’ knowledge on cultural similarities, differences, and bias and increase their overall cultural awareness and appreciation.

History and Development

Originating as a pilot project in 2003, Austin’s Community Immersion Program began out of a need to ensure that incoming police officers in Austin were aware of and ready to respect and serve the diverse population of the city. Prior to the program’s development, the APD sought cultural awareness training programs from external source but found the available options to be limited in both content and training method. At the same time, the Austin community conveyed to APD leaders that it wanted to be more involved with the department, form stronger bonds, and help the department to learn about the community. The APD recognized that its officers could perhaps best learn about the Austin community by hearing directly from community members, leading to the establishment of the department’s own immersion program.

Implementation

Logistics. The 7-day immersion program is incorporated into the police training curriculum for police cadets. The first day of the program begins with classroom training on stereotypes and biases, ethnicity and culture, and building trust. During this portion of the training, police cadets participate in discussions, group exercises, and learn from film and video simulations to complement their instruction.

The next four days of the training consist of the program’s field work component, whereby cadets are assigned to interview residents from various ethnic and cultural groups. The goal of these interviews is to learn both about Austin’s cultural communities and what these communities expect from their public servants in the police department. Cadets are broken up into groups to conduct these interviews and work together and are provided with camcorders and microphones. They are also given a rubric to follow when conducting interviews. The rubric includes suggested topics to cover, tips on conducting interviews, and

explains how cadets will be graded on each aspect of the project. The rubric also prompts cadets to learn about and experience Austin's culture, to teach others about it, and to learn that everyone has value. Following their fieldwork, cadets are required to report on their findings during the program's final two days.

Cadets must also submit a college-level paper and a professional group presentation. The paper and presentation must include interviews from two community leaders and four street interviews that the group conducted. The APD rents a large venue and invites fellow cadets, staff, invited guests, and the public to learn from the cadets' reports, using community outreach and advertisements to publicize the event. The community has the opportunity to provide feedback on the presentations and have generally been extremely supportive of the program overall.

Facilitators. The Austin Community Immersion Program enjoys strong support from APD Leadership, training staff, and the Austin community. This helps to drive the program and continue creating the learning environment that the training works to create. Community support and involvement is critical in that community members serve as the teachers for the program. Their desire to help the department learn about the diversity of the Austin community continues, helping to maintain the program's forward momentum.

Barriers. The program, however, has faced some obstacles. For example, recruits are broken up into groups to conduct interviews of particular minority populations in Austin, and some smaller recruiting classes can find it difficult to cover all the minority community groups in a timely manner. The fewer number of cadet groups, the fewer number of community groups they are able to research in the field. As a result, the program may have to pick and choose which community groups to include, which could lead to other groups feeling excluded from the process. Another issue in implementation is getting all cultural communities to participate in each cohort of the program. If communities are unwilling to participate, officers are not as readily able to engage with their members, resulting in lost opportunities for engagement and requiring further efforts to generate support from those communities.

Nonetheless, Austin's Community Immersion Program has generally been well received. APD continues to report that the program improves relationships for officers and the Austin residents. It also serves to improve the community's perspective because they can see that the department cares about the city's diverse cultures and is willing to take the time and invest the resources necessary to improve their outreach efforts. APD's program has received national recognition by the Federal Bureau of Investigation as well as numerous other local law enforcement agencies.

Impact, Validation, and Replication

Similar programs have been established by other police departments across the nation who want to better educate their officers about cultures within the communities that they serve. The Los Angeles (CA) Police Department (LAPD) is one example of this. The LAPD developed a Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Plan that incorporates focus groups, community surveys, and community meetings for officers to learn about the community's needs beyond what is taught at the academy. Through this plan, LAPD also promotes cultural and heritage months within the department and conducts roll call training for officers to promote cultural competence and inclusiveness.

The New York (NY) Police Department (NYPD) has also implemented a similar model to APD's Community Immersion Program, called Multicultural Immersion Training. In this program, NYPD recruits undergo a four-day training to help them understand and empathize with the communities they serve. Community members also work with NYPD leadership to inform the new recruits about the city's different ethnic and religious groups, sexual orientations, and youth perspectives. The Chattanooga (TN) Police Department has also created a community immersion training program similar to Austin's. Their program incorporates a poverty simulation exercise into the training that helps cadets better understand the challenges of those who live in poverty. The exercise is designed to build empathy and understanding of this segment of Chattanooga's community.

Additional Resources

- [Austin Community Immersion Project Cultural Awareness Lesson Plan](#)
- [Los Angeles Police Department Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Plan](#)

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Micro-community policing plans / neighborhood-driven policing

Hyper-local public safety snapshots and strategies

Summary

In large cities such as Seattle (WA), neighborhoods experience and perceive crime differently. To successfully police a diversity of neighborhoods, police departments must account for these differences. The Seattle Police Department (SPD) has established Micro-Community Policing Plans (MCP) to assist in this endeavor. MCPs consist of individual neighborhood snapshots that combine criminal data, like offense and arrest rates, with feedback from public safety surveys submitted by community residents. These snapshots serve as a resource for both police officers and residents to understand hyper-local policing trends more holistically. Data from the MCPs is continually analyzed by the SPD to track progress in addressing both criminal offense and local public safety sentiment. The plans also help police to direct services that address the individual needs of each neighborhood within the city.

History and Development

Under the leadership of former Seattle Chief of Police Kathleen O'Toole, Micro-Community Policing Plans were developed to assist the department in gaining an accurate picture of the concerns of the communities they serve. MCPs were developed in 2015 from the bottom up, through input from officers on the street and the people who live and work in each of Seattle's distinct neighborhoods. The MCPs aim to provide a picture of public safety that goes beyond what the department could learn by tracking crime statistics alone. Through a partnership with Seattle University, the SPD has been able to conjoin the department's data on criminal offense with survey data from residents of each of Seattle's various neighborhoods. These surveys comprise qualitative and quantitative data at a hyper-local level to capture and trace sentiment among and within Seattle's micro-communities, capturing feedback on residents' perceptions of crime and safety, police legitimacy, and social cohesion and disorder, among other areas.

Implementation

Logistics. A first critical step in the development of SPD's MCP program was to divide the city of Seattle into its constituent micro-communities. To do this, the SPD engaged directly with community residents through neighborhood meetings, focus groups, and surveys, soliciting input on how they might define the identity and boundaries of their neighborhoods. The SPD further relied on the intimate knowledge that its own officers had on the geographic and cultural make-up of the areas they patrolled, adding further depth to the data collected from the public. The result is a [neighborhood map](#), published on the SPD's website, that defines the geographic boundaries of each MCP and then color codes them by their corresponding SPD precinct.

With the micro-community map created, the SPD then turned toward the process of soliciting, collecting, and assessing data from the community on their perceptions of crime, policing, and safety. For this, the SPD partnered with Seattle University, which conducts independent community surveys annually for residents in each defined micro-community. Surveys can be conducted in-person or electronically and are available in multiple languages to help secure a broad snapshot of each micro-community's residents.

Seattle University also hosts focus groups in each micro-community to capture data or sentiments that may be missed by the survey. Community data is then combined with crime data for each micro-community, and the combined dataset is posted to a public dashboard on the SPD's website, which displays survey and crime information for each individual micro-community as well as citywide aggregates.

The dashboard's publication helps promote transparency with the community and helps the department track the department's efforts to address community concerns. Using the dashboard's data, SPD develops problem-solving strategies to address the concerns that were raised by residents of each micro-community. These plans are made public on the SPD's website and through bulletins posted to the Nextdoor social networking service. Since 2015, data collected by the MCPP program has indicated that car prowls and a lack of police capacity have remained the top two issues raised by the community citywide. Survey results from 2015 to 2019 have also shown that trust in the police department remained higher for the city of Seattle compared to the nationwide average.

Facilitators. As with any effective community outreach effort, the successful implementation of the MCPP program was buttressed by the sustained efforts of SPD leadership in following through on its design and rollout. Implementation was further supported by a grant from the U.S. Department of Justice Office of Community Oriented Policing and by funding from private foundations like the Seattle Police Foundation, which have helped defray the program's costs.

Barriers. Funding reductions can endanger the sustainability of the program, particularly given its reliance on the administration of annual surveys of city residents across multiple hyperlocal districts, which can be costly. And although Seattle University's implementation evaluation highlighted the MCPP's value as a tool for collecting and synthesizing holistic public safety data, changes in leadership can erode the internal perception of the program's utility, especially if the community sentiment tracked by it fails to change according to improvements in crime rates and departmental performance. Accordingly, unsupportive department leadership can point to the program's cost and logistics as a justification for the program's discontinuation.

Impact, Validation, and Replication

In 2018, the Seattle University Department of Criminal Justice published an implementation evaluation of the SPD's MCPPs. The evaluation noted the MCPP's evolution from a "ground-up initiative to an institutionally integrated structure for using police-community engagement and data on crime and residents' perceptions of public safety to direct police resources and services at the microcommunity level." Although the evaluation noted that it was too early to fully assess the MCPP's overall effectiveness, it did state that "[d]ata collected through the MCPP initiative provide a comprehensive picture of the nature of crime, which helps meaningfully address public safety in Seattle by directing resources and services to target the unique needs of Seattle microcommunities."

The microcommunities model utilized in Seattle's MCPP also carries the potential for expansion, both within policing and to other areas of application. For example, a locality could apply the microcommunities model for tracking other metrics, including those relating to public health, social services, and education, allowing municipalities to gain better insights into the needs and perspectives of individual communities

on a host of issues. Further, municipal departments, including police departments, could assign local liaisons to serve as intermediaries and ambassadors between the departments and the microcommunities to which they are assigned, facilitating regular and mutual information exchange. Although some police departments already have community liaisons at the precinct level, doing so at the microcommunity level can help reveal a clearer image of a department's service population, allowing for greater fine-tuning of departmental policies and practices.

Additional Resources

- [Seattle Police Department Micro-Community Policing Plans](#)
- [Seattle University Implementation Evaluation, Seattle Police Department's Micro Community Policing Plans](#)
- [MCPD Map, by precinct](#)
- [MCPD Survey Results Dashboard](#)

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Kansas City No Violence Alliance

Public partnerships to reduce violence through focused deterrence

Summary

The Kansas City No Violence Alliance (NoVA) is a collaboration between local, state, and federal agencies and assorted community organizations in Kansas City (MO) that uses a focused deterrence approach to reducing violence. Focused deterrence aims to reduce crime by increasing the swiftness, severity, and certainty of punishment for a targeted group of individuals while offering them opportunities to engage with supportive services to minimize or eliminate their need to offend. Adopting strategies successfully deployed elsewhere, like through Operation Ceasefire in Boston (MA), NoVA seeks specifically to reduce the incidence of violent crime among chronic violent offenders, who share a similarly high likelihood of committing violent crimes and being victimized by them. As such, NoVA seeks to serve the mutual interests of the communities in which violence most often occurs and those most likely to participate in it.

History and Development

The Kansas City NoVA originated around 2012, spurred by the collective interest among prosecutors, law enforcement, and community stakeholders in reducing homicide in the city, which had recently spiked. Agency partners included, and continue to include, local and federal prosecutors' offices, local and federal law enforcement, and the state probation and parole board, with community partners including the University of Missouri-Kansas City and local organizations committed to crime and violence reduction. After an initial implementation period spanning over a year, during which participating agencies developed and strengthened their coordination efforts, the NoVA reached operational maturity in 2014, with agencies regularly sharing actionable information on individuals primed for violence intervention and partner social service organizations providing interventions as needed.

Implementation

Logistics. The Kansas City NoVA effectively amounts to an inter-agency information-sharing effort with coordinated agency responses by and among agency partners. These partners include the Kansas City Police Department (KCPD), the Jackson County (MO) Prosecutor's Office, the U.S. Attorney's Office, the Missouri Board of Probation and Parole, the Federal Bureau of Investigation, and the U.S. Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms, and Explosives. Information-sharing, which has become routinized and, where feasible, automated, primarily centers on the development and dissemination of actionable intelligence on violent criminal organizations within Kansas City, including their activities, membership, and social structure as well as their actual and likely targets for violent offense. Management of this information is handled by a Violent Crime Intelligence Squad housed within the KCPD's Violent Crime Division. The squad comprises senior police officers and data analysts to collect and validate the information it receives and share it with partner agencies, who each have staff designated to serve as NoVA liaisons.

When likely violent offenders are identified, intervention efforts are commenced, with agency and community partners meeting individuals at their homes, in police stations, or at probation and parole

meetings. During these interventions, NoVA staff plainly explain the law enforcement consequences for continued violent offense and the social service alternatives available to facilitate abstention. This strategy is commonly referred to as “pulling levers”, whereby individuals who are targeted for intervention have the option of pulling various “levers,” ranging from severe law enforcement sanction to sustained social service support. Individuals are also encouraged to adopt nonviolence on its own merits and to exit the circumstances that led them to participate in violent conduct. Offenders who accept supportive services are connected to community organizations and state resources, while those who decline them and elect to continue participating in violent acts face swift enforcement and criminal sanction.

Facilitators. Kansas City’s implementation of a focused deterrence program was supported by the sustained commitment of effort by a multitude of local, state, and federal partners, with the participation of each being critical, if not necessary, to NoVA’s early and continued success. Each agency’s investment of resources and staffing allowed NoVA to develop into a fully realized collaboration whereby logistics could be determined, information shared and vetted, and problems troubleshoot. Each agency’s continued participation in the Kansas City NoVA has led to its becoming a routine and integrated part of each agency’s business. As such, it has advanced from the periphery of each agency’s operations to their core, solidifying the alliance’s prospects.

Barriers. The difficulties of operationalizing focused deterrence across multiple agency partners can pose a significant barrier for other potential coalitions that are unable to sustain their interest and coordination. The development of the Kansas City NoVA’s implementation plan spanned over a year and involved missteps, like failures to adequately share information within agencies about when and how to share information with others, and continual self-assessment and correction to improve the program’s performance. Further, developing internal protocols for developing actionable intelligence about individual drivers of violent crime is a challenging task, especially when no prior intelligence-gathering infrastructure exists. Agencies seeking to contribute to any coordinated focused deterrence collaboration must ensure they develop internal capacities to do so. These logistical hurdles are not insignificant and can easily derail lesser efforts.

Impact, Validation, and Replication

In August 2015, researchers at the University of Missouri-Kansas City Department of Criminal Justice and Criminology published an impact report assessing NoVA’s early implementation of focused deterrence. It found indications that implementation of the Kansas City NoVA corresponded with significant reductions in homicide rates in 2014—to their lowest levels in decades—during NoVA’s first full year of operational maturity. The impact of focused deterrence was strongest in the months immediately following NoVA’s full implementation, though its impact appeared to wane more substantially after 12 months, with violence rates eventually returning to pre-focused deterrence baselines, a trend experienced by other cities with focused deterrence programs. Although the causes of this regression to baseline are not fully understood, one theory suggests that violent offenders become inured to the effects of focused deterrence despite persistent outreach. However, research is ongoing, and a consensus has not been reached among researchers.

Additional Resources

- [Kansas City No Violence Alliance](#)
- [University of Missouri-Kansas City, Measuring the Impact of Kansas City's No Violence Alliance](#)
- [Center for Evidence-Based Crime Policy, Focused Deterrence Strategies](#)

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Juvenile Detention Alternatives Initiative (JDAI)

National juvenile detention reduction effort

Summary

The Juvenile Detention Alternatives Initiative (JDAI) was started in 1992 by the Annie E. Casey Foundation as a nationwide effort to reduce juvenile detention. The initiative recognized the significant negative impact of detention of juveniles sought to reduce unnecessary overreliance on detention for juveniles who posed no threat to public safety. It has expanded over the last three decades to advocate for reforms on the front end of the system as well, using many of the same strategies it used to pursue its original mission.

There are eight key strategies for the JDAI initiative: interagency collaboration; data-driven decision-making; objective admissions policies and risk assessment instruments; community-based alternatives to detention; expedited case processing; improving conditions of confinement; and reducing racial disparities.

The current role of the Annie E. Casey Foundation in the Initiative is to provide training and technical assistance, including the JDAIconnect free online resource available to all interested jurisdictions. In addition, the Foundation publishes practice guides and analyses of JDAI's programs. The Foundation also funds learning labs in the counties of Bernalillo (NM), Cook (IL), Multnomah (OR), and Santa Cruz (CA), as well as in the state of New Jersey, for other jurisdictions to visit and learn about how to replicate JDAI. In addition, the foundation hosts convenings to bring together experts and practitioners.

JDAI has been lauded for changing norms around juvenile justice and for developing new standards of practice for juvenile detention, and JDAI programs across the nation reach almost one-third of the total U.S. youth population. However, despite the far-reaching replication of JDAI in localities nationwide, statewide adoption has been less common. New Jersey, however, has successfully demonstrated the viability of statewide adoption of the JDAI model, spurring other states to follow.

History and Development

JDAI started 30 years ago by the Annie E. Casey Foundation. At the time of its inception, there was significant focus on youth crime, and detention centers were overcrowded and in poor condition. Case processing times were slow and decisions about which juveniles warranted admission to juvenile detention centers were subjective rather than based on objective standards or risk assessment instruments. Resistance to reforms around juvenile detention also posed challenges, leading to persistent rates of detention despite lowered rates of arrest by the mid-1990s.

Some of the earliest innovations around juvenile detention took place in Broward County (FL) with the help of the Annie E. Casey Foundation. A combination of juvenile detention reforms in Broward led to a reduction in the detention population by 65% without a decrease in public safety. The Broward initiative included increased research, collaboration between agencies, the addition of objective screening procedures, faster case processing, and the availability of community-based alternatives to detention. Rather than increasing public expenditure, the Broward initiative saved taxpayers over \$5 million.

Inspired by the results in Broward County, the Annie E. Casey Foundation started JDAI, with a demonstration project inviting five localities to pilot the JDAI reforms: Cook County (IL), Sacramento (CA), Multnomah (OR), Milwaukee County (WI), and New York City (NY). The pilot sites received planning grants and up to \$2.25 million over three years to implement reforms and reduce their juvenile detention populations. By the end of the demonstration project, New York City and Milwaukee County lost their funding due to failure to make progress and lack of political backing. The other pilot sites, however, were successful in safely reducing juvenile detention. The first two replication sites after the initial five pilot sites were Santa Cruz County and Bernalillo County, and they were able to use the JDAI strategies to safely reduce their detention populations as well, adding to the early successes of the program.

After these early successes, JDAI began replicating its model across the country, offering training and technical support to jurisdictions interested in implementing JDAI strategies. Since its inception, JDAI has expanded to over 300 jurisdictions in 40 states and the District of Columbia, making it the most widely replicated juvenile justice initiative in the nation. In 2004, the Annie E. Casey Foundation selected New Jersey to be one of the first states to replicate JDAI statewide.

Implementation

Logistics. JDAI's replication in New Jersey started with five sites in 2004, and then expanded to 10 sites in 2006. Within a decade thereafter, it had expanded to all counties, becoming the first state to achieve statewide implementation of JDAI. Since reaching that milestone, New Jersey has significantly reduced juvenile detention statewide, leading to the closure of many of the state's juvenile detention facilities.

The lead agency running the JDAI replication in New Jersey was the New Jersey Juvenile Justice Commission (JJJ). At the start of the process, JJC convened a meeting of approximately 30 leading juvenile justice officials in the state, including judges, prosecutors, defenders, youth commissions, and others, and got them to agree to support the efforts around JDAI in the state. After that initial meeting, New Jersey received \$200,000 per year in grant funding for the JDAI initiative.

At its earliest stages, New Jersey established a state-level steering committee. The leaders of the reform efforts also selected local steering committees in the initial five pilot counties and hired and trained "detention specialists" to analyze detention data and develop strategies for reducing juvenile detention.

The first reforms undertaken by New Jersey focused on reducing detention for failure to appear in court or probation violations; expanding alternatives to detention; and improving case processing times. To reduce failure to appear in court, some of the counties set up telephone notification systems and ended automatic use of detention for failure to appear in court. Some counties also changed procedures for probation violations to reduce overreliance on detention. In expanding alternatives to detention, counties developed electronic monitoring programs, new community supervision programs, and evening reporting centers. To address case processing issues, counties created new policies where juveniles could be placed directly into programs without needing to first be admitted to detention, as well as hiring expeditors to move cases more quickly through the system.

The early reforms led to a significant drop in detention and were quickly expanded beyond the initial sites to other counties throughout New Jersey. JJC and the court system worked to embed JDAI into the New

Jersey Justice system by developing a statewide risk screening tool for detention decisions and creating dedicated funding to support the ongoing work of detention specialists.

New Jersey continues to be a leader in statewide juvenile detention reform and regularly publishes reports showing their continued success. Representatives from states across the nation travel to New Jersey to learn about its JDAI model and enhance their own efforts to develop similar reforms.

Facilitators. New Jersey's success as the nation's first statewide replication of JDAI has been attributed to the active state leadership and buy-in from all stakeholders; the pace of achieving success in initial pilot counties before spreading to more locations; and the development of a strong infrastructure to continue the replication statewide. From the JJC's inception, stakeholders throughout government and juvenile advocacy convened to discuss their goals, concerns, and solutions for simultaneously reducing juvenile detention and maintaining public safety. Their work to develop and implement JDAI statewide was supported by the state's rigorous data systems and data analysis; assistance from JDAI experts; a structured process for replicating JDAI after the completion of the pilot; the development of a statewide risk assessment instrument; financial support from New Jersey's legislature; and regular statewide JDAI conferences to track and publicize the effort's progress.

Barriers. Until New Jersey was able to successfully replicate JDAI, states faced significant barriers when considering expansive JDAI replications. In most states, detention for juveniles is a local function, and states have generally not played a big role in overseeing detention beyond licensing of local facilities, leaving a gap for states in expertise on detention policies. As a result, states have also lacked experience in training and technical assistance for local detention reform, which is a key strategy for the JDAI initiative. There has also not traditionally been any interagency oversight body leading juvenile detention reform at the state level. Another barrier for states succeeding at statewide replication has been a lack of data systems tracking detention indicators. These barriers have made it difficult for JDAI to expand in many states. However, the successes in New Jersey have spurred more states to overcome their challenges, particularly by ensuring that proper leadership, infrastructure, and strategies are in place to support statewide expansion efforts.

Impact, Validation, and Replication

JDAI has become the most widely replicated juvenile justice initiative in the nation and is now in 300 jurisdictions in 40 states and the District of Columbia. The Annie E. Casey Foundation collects data and puts out reports of the progress of the various sites implementing JDAI principles across the nation. In its 25-year report, the Annie E. Casey Foundation recounted the sustained significant reductions in juvenile detention across JDAI sites. Before the implementation of JDAI, sites reported logging an additional 1.4 million days of detention each year. By the 25-year mark, JDAI sites across the nation cut juvenile admissions by half – approximately 90,000 admissions per year. The report also pointed to the significant reduction in juvenile crime across JDAI sites, of more than 40% on average, in 2016. However, the report did note continued racial disparities in the juvenile justice system despite the success of the reforms to date, and the need for further work to reduce these disparities.

New Jersey's success as a model site has been well documented. When compared to the year before JDAI began in each site in New Jersey, the average daily population in juvenile detention had decreased by 72.5%

in 2019 and there was a 77.9% decrease in juvenile detention admissions. New Jersey also saw significant cost-savings after implementing JDAI. The 17 detention centers in New Jersey were reduced to 8, and counties entered into shared-services agreements with other counties to house detained youth, resulting in approximately \$21 million in annual cost savings. Commitments to state custody have also been substantially reduced, down 84.4%. Juvenile arrests in New Jersey were down 74.4% in 2018 compared to the year before JDAI began in each site and arrests for more serious index crimes were down 73.6%.

The successes of JDAI sites nationwide, and of New Jersey's statewide JDAI expansion, have supported ongoing efforts across the country to continue to reduce juvenile detention and reform the juvenile justice system.

Additional Resources

- [Juvenile Detention Alternatives Initiative \(JDAI\), The Annie E. Casey Foundation](#)
- [Overview: The JDAI Story Report, 1999, The Annie E. Casey Foundation](#)
- [Two Decades of JDAI Report, 2009, The Annie E. Casey Foundation](#)
- [JDAI at 25 Report, 2017, The Annie E. Casey Foundation](#)
- [State of New Jersey Department of Law and Public Safety, Prevention and Early Intervention: Juvenile Detention Alternatives Initiative \(JDAI\)](#)
- [New Jersey Juvenile Detention Alternatives Initiative \(JDAI\) 2019 Annual Data Report](#)
- [JDAI Sites and States, An Evaluation of the Juvenile Detention Alternatives Initiative: JDAI Sites Compared to Home State Totals, Berkeley Law, Chief Justice Earl Warren Institute on Law and Social Policy \(2012\)](#)

Multi-Agency Resource Center (MARC)

Single-point resource center for youth and families

Summary

Calcasieu Parish (LA) established a drop-in resource center for youth in need of support services, called the Multi-Agency Resource Center (MARC). The center is geared towards juveniles aged 6-17 and seeks to divert at-risk youth from the juvenile justice system and connect them quickly to supportive services.

The MARC was established in 2011 and was initially geared toward police officers as an alternative to local jails as a drop-off location for juveniles involved in criminal activity. Eventually, the MARC became a resource for families in need of services for at-risk youth, and between 2012 and 2015 there was a 150% increase in family walk-ins to the center without any police involvement. For those that do arrive with police due to involvement in criminal activity, there is a secure intake area, and the process is significantly shorter than going through the juvenile justice system. There is also a concerted effort at the MARC to avoid the juvenile justice system whenever possible.

The MARC serves as a centralized location for local organizations and agencies to provide resources for juveniles. This centralization significantly reduces the amount of time that it takes to connect youths to services. After juveniles at the MARC are initially assessed, they may meet with a counselor, submit to drug testing, or be referred to a more in-depth assessment and planning process.

History and Development

Prior to the establishment of the MARC, Calcasieu Parish underwent years of reform locally, including developing interventions for system-involved youth and adopting the national Juvenile Detention Alternatives Initiative (JDAI) model. However, despite these efforts, the number of youths referred to court or detention did not decrease, and services were either not provided to the kids in a timely manner or provided at all. Accordingly, Calcasieu Parish determined that gaps in support for its youth remained.

After an 18-month planning process, the MARC was opened in 2011 in a combined effort of the Calcasieu Parish Police Jury and the Calcasieu Parish Children and Youth Planning Board, housed under the parish's Office of Juvenile Justice Services. The purpose of the MARC was to provide a single location and coordinated approach for services for parish youth.

The MARC was funded by a grant from the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation as part of the foundation's Louisiana Models for Change, a reform initiative to make juvenile justice systems fairer and more effective, and the services offered through the MARC are funded by a property tax.

Implementation

Logistics. There are two main paths for accessing services at the MARC. The first is through a law enforcement request for services and the second is through families seeking support through the center. When the process is initiated by law enforcement, police bring youth involved in criminal activity to the MARC and the youth's parents are notified. Custody is transferred swiftly (the goal is in under 12 minutes)

in a secure intake area and the case is staffed by the District Attorney. The juvenile is interviewed and undergoes a Juvenile Inventory for Functioning (JIFF) assessment to determine proper diversion options. If the family consents, the case moves forward with diversion, otherwise formal charges may be brought.

Juveniles brought by family members also undergo a JIFF assessment and are referred to and connected with service providers. The MARC is also able to offer the Families in Need of Services (FINS) program for families that need greater oversight of youth who commit misdemeanor crimes, assigning a probation officer to the juvenile.

For law enforcement, the MARC provides a place for fast custody change and reduces recidivism by addressing root causes of criminal activity. For the community, it provides faster processing times, evidence-based programming for youth, and the convenience of centrally-located service providers.

Beginning in 2018, the MARC expanded its hours to Monday through Saturday from 8am-12am. Those hours have continued to be expanded as the need for later hours has become clear and it is now operating on Sundays 1pm-11pm, Mondays and Tuesdays 8am-2am, and Wednesdays through Saturdays 8am-4am. One benefit of the extended hours was that it provided a location for police to take youth who violate curfew or who are involved in criminal activity later at night. The services offered at the MARC range from crisis intervention, shelter care, and employment to family therapy, substance abuse treatment, and more.

In addition to the overall coordination for the MARC between the Calcasieu Parish Police Jury and the Calcasieu Parish Children and Youth Planning Board, other partners include the 14th Judicial District Court's Family and Juvenile Court Division; the Calcasieu Parish District Attorney's Office and Public Defenders' Office; and the Calcasieu Parish School Board.

Facilitators. Much of the success of the MARC has been attributed to the range of agencies that collaborate and coordinate services under the MARC's roof. Having everything co-located and immediately available has proven to be an efficient and effective way to connect youths and families to needed services. It has also greatly benefited the police by freeing up resources for them and giving them an additional option for addressing criminal activity by juveniles. Furthermore, the city has saved money by functioning more efficiently at one location that houses multiple services.

Barriers. The Vera Institute of Justice conducted an outcome evaluation for the MARC in 2013 and recommended that the center improve its data collection in certain areas to facilitate ongoing tracking and analysis of the program. These recommendations included improvements to data on service provision and the creation of a complete record of the referral decision-making process. Without improved data collection, efforts to measure impacts and outcomes are diminished, precluding effective evaluations of the center and its programmatic offerings.

Another noted area of improvement involved the matching of services to youth assessment recommendations. The MARC used the JIFF assessment instrument for identifying the needs of the youth it was trying to serve. However, there appeared to be a gap between the needs identified by the JIFF assessment and the services ultimately received by the juveniles. Vera recommended taking a closer look at the use of JIFF as an assessment tool and the subsequent recommendations of services to see if service matching could be improved.

Impact, Validation, and Replication

Since launching in 2011, over 11,000 youth have been served by the MARC, providing 31% with immediate support, diverting 82% presented for formal processing, and keeping 27% from justice system involvement entirely. The MARC has found that juveniles involved in the diversion program have a 98% successful completion rate.

Prior to the MARC, the process for youth brought in for formal processing took approximately 48 hours. Whereas, police are now able to drop off a juvenile at the MARC in 12 minutes on average, and the whole process for the juvenile takes only 2-3 hours.

The Vera Institute of Justice conducted an outcome evaluation in 2013 and found that case processing decreased from 17 days to 3.9 days; re-offense likelihood decreased from 26% to 12%; and FINS referrals decreased. Vera also found the diversion model practiced at the MARC to be successful as measured by fewer referrals to the juvenile justice system and longer stretches of time without system involvement for juveniles involved in services at the MARC. There was also no evidence of a net-widening effect from the MARC. Accordingly, the MARC has served as a model for other municipalities looking to establish similar one-roof resource centers for juveniles.

Additional Resources

- [Calcasieu Parish Government Website: MARC Overview](#)
- [Calcasieu Parish Government Website: MARC Mission](#)
- [Calcasieu Parish Government Website: MARC Benefits](#)
- [Calcasieu Parish Government Website: MARC Procedure](#)
- [MARC Program Architectural Floor Plan](#)
- [Multi-Agency Resource Center Slide Presentation](#)
- [Vera Institute of Justice - Outcome Evaluation of Calcasieu Parish's Multi-Agency Resource Center \(MARC\)](#)
- [Vera Institute of Justice - It Takes a Village: Diversion Resources for Police and Families](#)
- [Results for America Collaboration Case Study: Preventing youth from entering the justice system through a Multi-Agency Resource Center \(MARC\) and early intervention approach](#)

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The San Francisco Police Department (SFPD) CIT Liaison Program

Crisis response by police and non-police specialists

Summary

Established in 2016 by the San Francisco (CA) Police Department (SFPD), the Crisis Intervention Team Liaison Program (CITLP) expands crisis intervention training to patrol officers. Due to its partnership with the city's Department of Public Health (DPH), crisis specialists are available 24/7 to respond to and assist police officers with incidents requiring crisis intervention. Because of CITLP, all ten district stations operate as subordinates to a main CIT Unit. Each station identifies subjects who may engage in a crisis within their jurisdiction. Simultaneously, CIT Liaisons notify DPH's crisis specialists regarding appropriate services and referrals to minimize patrol responses. In this way, intervention strategies are improved, and the most vulnerable individuals receive proper attention. Consequently, CITLP boosts the SFPD's ability to engage in crisis-related incidents that occur throughout the city's patrol districts.

History and Development

In 2016, the San Francisco Police Commission adopted the SFPD's General Order (DGO) 5.21, *Crisis Intervention Team Response to Person in Crisis Calls for Service*. It described the department's CIT training and administrative structure and required the drafting of a quarterly data report that would inform the city's Police Commission on how the SFPD was responding to calls for service related to mental health crises. The data showed that the police addressed a large-volume of crisis-related incidents in that year. The data also reflected how critical first responders are in the immediate resolution of crises. Therefore, CITLP was created to cultivate long-term strategies for crisis resolution by encouraging first responders to effectively connect San Francisco residents with the mental health services and programs to properly handle and resolve crisis situations.

Implementation

Logistics. As per the DGO, all district stations throughout San Francisco must gather patrol intelligence and have designated CIT Liaisons specialized in crisis intervention. Each Liaison must be familiar with district concerns pertaining to CIT's practices and principles, know the districts' most concerning subjects, conduct de-briefings, contact mobile crisis services and the DPH to coordinate outreach as needed, document police activity in CIT logs, and notify psych liaisons regarding higher-risk subjects. Over twenty CITLP officers function as patrol officers to support crisis intervention efforts in the city. Because CITLP is patrol-focused and is based on the Memphis Model of Crisis Intervention Team training – which emphasizes de-escalation skill training by granting time and space to mentally ill persons – it emphasizes responsible policing that helps the most vulnerable individuals in the city.

Additionally, CITLP teams, which comprise one officer and one sergeant, use patrol data to represent their district station in crisis intervention matters. The program maintains maximum participation from CIT Liaison officers by offering multiple incentives. These include increasing officers' safety and comradery between sergeants and officers, an officer's ability to become more qualified for a promotion with the

CITPL certification, access to career-development training, increased pay, and opportunities for overtime compensation.

SFPD officers and DPH/Mobile Crisis personnel collaborate to provide effective crisis intervention that protects the city's communities. Hence, CITPL broadens the interconnectedness of SFPD personnel and DPH Crisis Intervention Specialists. Due to their field engagement, officers and DPH personnel develop close working relationships that facilitate crisis intervention efforts.

CITPL prepares its officers with a 40-hour Crisis Intervention Certification course certified by the California Commission on Police Officer Standards and Training, and provides its patrol, investigative, and administrative units a 10-hour CIT Field Tactics Course. With this crisis intervention training, the patrol unit has officers who are equipped to engage in responsible crisis intervention.

The SFPD recognizes officers who demonstrate excellence in the use of CIT principles. The CIT Unit and community stakeholders participate in a CIT Working Group to review nominated incidents and recognize officers for their exceptional engagements with subjects in crisis. By awarding officers for their crisis intervention work, the SFPD helps foster a culture of reverence to those who apply crisis intervention skills within the scope of their law enforcement duties.

Facilitators. CITPL's owes its success in substantial part to its partnerships with the National Alliance on Mental Illness, the National Health Association of San Francisco, the DPH, the U.S. Department of Veteran Affairs, the University of California San Francisco, the City and County of San Francisco Mayor's Office on Disability, and the CIT Working group. The CIT Working group works with CITPL to discuss CIT goals and improve crisis intervention efforts. Moreover, the DPH/CIT partnership evaluates crisis negotiation and assessment outcomes, case management services, referrals to long term care, and trends in crisis contacts.

Barriers. Despite its accomplishments, CITPL faces similar challenges to other programs of the same nature. For instance, the SFPD does not have the infrastructure to respond to all calls for service. It is estimated that from 6000 calls a month, only 96 individuals were connected to mental health services in 2020. Furthermore, psych and CIT liaisons may not make correct assessments of high-risk individuals and consequently, law enforcement may end up inappropriately dealing with a crisis. Likewise, mental health facilities become easily full in the area. Despite the fact that officers are permitted by law to detain and involuntarily commit dangerous individuals to a mental health facility for a psychiatric evaluation, clinicians lack a similar authority, requiring them to rely on law enforcement for such commitments.

Impact, Validation, and Replication

CITPL's direct impact on San Francisco's calls for service for lower-level offenses is evident. Out of 47,000 such calls in 2021, 22,000 calls were a person undergoing a mental health crisis. Of these calls, the use of force occurred only 44 times. Regarding offenses, the SFPD works with public defenders to identify justice-involved and mentally ill individuals. When these individuals commit a misdemeanor, the public defenders request mental health treatment rather than prison time. Of the 47000 calls, less than 150 were arrested or indicted.

The SFPD's crisis intervention training and approaches have attracted interest outside of the department. SFPD trainers have shared their expertise with outside groups, including the California Highway Patrol, the San Francisco Sheriff's Department, the Golden Gate Bridge Patrol, the San Francisco Fire Department, the San Mateo Police Department, the San Diego Police Department, the San Francisco City Attorney's Office, and the San Francisco County Public Defender's office.

CITLP has also received several awards and recognitions, including the 2019 California Police Officer's Association Award of Distinction. The CITLP team presented to the California Crisis Intervention Training Association (CACITA) in Sacramento in 2018; the American Psychological Association (APA) in May of 2019; the International Association Chiefs of Police (IACP) in Chicago in October 2019; and the California Association of Hostage Negotiators (CAHN) Conference in January 2020 in Garden Grove (CA).

Additional Resources

- [San Francisco Police Department CIT](#)
- [Crisis Intervention Team Liaison Program Brochure](#)
- [SFPD CIT Annual Report \(2021\)](#)

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Innovations and Emerging Practices

Reconciliation

Reconciliation is a method of facilitating genuine engagement between the police and communities that have been harmed. These engagements allow police and communities to address grievances and misconceptions and allows for relationships to be rebuilt. The goal of reconciliation is to face difficult truths through open and honest dialogue so that meaningful change can be achieved. The National Network for Safer Communities (NNSC), an internationally recognized research center at John Jay College of Criminal Justice that provides evidence-based violence reduction strategies to communities across the country, has developed an approach that allows communities and police to name the harms that have been done, encourage those who caused them harm to acknowledge and commit to repairing those harms, and give voice to the harmed.

NNSC's Police-Community Reconciliation framework is an approach to building common ground. The framework was adapted from transitional justice processes like the Truth and Reconciliation Commission in post-Apartheid South Africa. The South African Truth and Reconciliation Commission was established in 1995 to "help heal the country and bring about a reconciliation of its people by uncovering the truth about human rights violations that had occurred during the period of apartheid." The South African reconciliation model emphasized fact-gathering from those who experienced harm and those who caused it, and deemphasized formal prosecution as a means for confronting and rectifying the harms at the center of the commission's work.

The NNSC reconciliation process features several basic building blocks. The first is acknowledgement of policing-related harms by law enforcement leaders and other relevant public officials. This is done through listening sessions during which the police collect narratives and hear directly from the harmed communities about their personal experiences. Then NNSC recommends a fact-finding process to establish a record of the harms that were reported by the communities. From this process, a commitment to ongoing change should be reached between the police and the community, including next steps for addressing the identified harms. Although this framework will differ in each community where it is applied, its essential elements will remain the same.

One of the communities that has implemented the NNSC reconciliation process is Stockton (CA). In July 2016, following a national outcry against police involved shootings, Chief Eric Jones of the Stockton Police Department (SPD) apologized to the community of Stockton and recounted historical injustices imposed by police in Black and brown communities around the US and specifically in Stockton. Since then, SPD has continued to make strides in changing departmental norms and breaking down barriers by holding a series of dialogues and workshops with community members that build on this conversation. The goal of these workshops is to repair the fractured relationships with the community and rebuild trust with the department.

While successes have been well documented, reluctance remains among some police officials and community members to acknowledge each other's grievances or to recognize the harms they have caused the other. Political divisiveness around racial injustice and a persistent lack of resources can also hamper

the reconciliation processes that depend on sustained, open, and informed dialogue between police and community. Lack of fidelity to the reconciliation model can undermine its outcomes.

The reconciliation process has demonstrated some impressive success. A study by the Urban Institute showed that among neighborhoods with the highest rates of crime and adversity, which historically views policing as less legitimate than in areas with less crime and reduced poverty, residents' views of the police and conditions of their neighborhoods have improved significantly since 2015 in the cities in which reconciliation efforts have been made. As a result of their improved perception of policing, these communities were also more willing to cooperate with police on addressing neighborhood problems.

The reconciliation process has been replicated in communities around the country. In Birmingham (AL), for example, community members and the police partnered with the Birmingham Civil Rights Institute and the University of Alabama at Birmingham to create a training for new officers around the local history of the area. As a result of the listening sessions that were held, the need for a new Special Victims Unit was realized. The listening sessions also resulted in updating the protective order policies of the department.

Among cities that attempted reconciliation methods, including Birmingham and Minneapolis, Stockton has shown the greatest improvement in their relationships with the community.

Additional Resources

- [National Network for Safe Communities, Police-Community Reconciliation \(Issue Brief\)](#)
- [Urban Institute, National Initiative for Building Community Trust and Justice](#)
- [Urban Institute, Implementation Assessment Findings from the Evaluation of the National Initiative for Building Community Trust and Justice](#)

CS360

Evidence has shown that police departments that collect and use data to make informed organizational and operational decisions about police and public safety strategies can better move community and police forward together. This approach allows departments to be informed and responsive to the needs of their specific communities and departments.

CS360 holds this notion at its core. The system is an evolution of the more traditional Compstat system used by many police departments to track crime and evaluate police responses. Whereas Compstat relies almost exclusively on criminal offense and arrest data to map crime trends and identify potential police-driven strategies for addressing those trends, CS360 takes a more comprehensive approach to data collection, analysis, and decision-making. Data considered within CS360 includes not only conventional crime data, but also information provided by external sources, including members of the communities in which problematic crime trends have manifested. The CS360 model takes a proactive and problem-solving approach that emphasizes community collaboration, responsiveness, strategic problem solving, and community satisfaction. CS360 has been credited with improving police-community relations by providing

community members with direct opportunities to collaborate with police officers and make informed decisions about public responses to crime, departing from the more siloed approach of traditional Compstat models that typically exclude external input and participation.

CS360 originated in 2016 as a collaboration between the National Policing Institute and the Vera Institute of Justice. The project's goals are to "leverage the strengths of the traditional approach to Compstat while developing a more advanced management tool that collects the data most important to law enforcement agencies and the communities they serve." Unlike legacy Compstat models, CS360 was designed specifically to emphasize community collaboration as a core component of its operation, with a dual focus on police effectiveness and community satisfaction.

CS360 was designed along a three-dimensional conceptual framework for quality policing, with each dimension defined by its own set of specified goals. The first dimension, which borrows from traditional Compstat models, is to prevent, interrupt, and solve crime. A primary goal within this dimension is to "implement and assess promising and evidence-based practices." The second dimension calls for integrating community and governmental partners, with the goals of enhancing trust and equity and sharing responsibility over outcomes across all participating stakeholders. The final dimension strives for maximum organizational effectiveness, with the goals, among others, of ensuring officer satisfaction, safety, and wellbeing and providing them with the necessary resources to ensure their success.

Police departments seeking to implement CS360 are encouraged to conduct an evaluation of the perspectives of internal and external stakeholders, including officers and community members, on various public safety-related topics. These topics can include the stakeholders' general views on public safety, their safety-related concerns, and the information they believe is relevant for identifying safety issues and potential solutions. After this evaluation is completed, departments are advised to designate a group, consisting of either members of the department or a mix of departmental personnel and external representatives, to assess the findings from the collected stakeholder perspectives. These findings will then be used to identify and prioritize public safety problems and the areas where those problems are manifest.

Once problems are identified, the CS360 model calls for the establishment of a problem-solving team (PST) that comprises police and community members who share responsibility for developing police- and community-based strategies for addressing their assigned problem. PSTs then oversee the implementation of the solutions they identify, including tracking and continually assessing their efficacy. This oversight requires the PST to articulate metrics for evaluating each solution's success, including those relating to criminal offense and response and community outreach and engagement. Among the stakeholders who may be considered to participate in CS360 are representatives from other governmental agencies, like fire and emergency medical service departments, and community groups, including those that provide social services or advocacy support. Technical assistance support is available from the National Policing Institute, which is supported by grant funding intended to minimize or eliminate the cost of such assistance for participating police departments.

Implementation of CS360 requires a substantial investment of time and effort by participating agencies, including, most importantly, police departments. Accordingly, implementation can be greatly facilitated or impeded by police leadership, upon whose shoulders CS360 ultimately rests. Although CS360 is intended to foster a collaborative and equitable relationship between police and community

representatives, who share responsibility for achieving the model's goals, the program's administrative logistics, including comprising its membership, organizing meetings, and collecting and assessing program data, fall primarily on police departments. Departments that understand and appreciate these responsibilities will therefore be better positioned for successful implementation than those that do not. Relatedly, programmatic timelines can be prolonged given the exigencies of conducting external outreach; comprising the program's membership; collecting their input; erecting a data infrastructure that collects and analyzes a mix of police and external information; identifying safety problems; and overseeing police and community development and implementation of proposed solutions. As such, CS360 should be understood as a deliberate effort and that cannot be hastily pursued. However, the availability of technical assistance from the National Policing Institute, supported by external funding that minimizes costs for departments, can help ease implementation and provide a structure for commencing and completing the CS360 startup process.

The development of CS360 was grounded in a multitude of research by leading law enforcement and public safety experts. Each of the model's conceptual dimensions, including the goals they articulate, were developed to reflect the latest in theoretical and empirical understandings of how crime and safety trends are identified and tracked; who, from a legitimacy standpoint, should participate in the development of proposed solutions; and how police resources should be deployed in service of communal public safety goals.

For example, in creating the model's dimension on preventing, interrupting, and solving crime, the developers of CS360 referenced leading research on legacy Compstat models, which found that police-only implementations of Compstat programs over-rely on crime rates and under-rely on other relevant public safety information, including 911 calls, victimization data, and diversion rates.

To develop the model's dimension on organizational effectiveness, the developers cited research relating to the policing profession's high rate of both mental and physical unwellness and the perception among officers that departments overemphasize quantitative metrics, like arrest rates, over qualitative metrics like those pertaining to relationship building and community engagement. They further referenced research demonstrating that officers who receive training and detailed intelligence from their superiors on crime trends perform better than those who are left unequipped with either.

Finally, the model's emphasis on community and police integration is informed by research on the legitimating effects of transparency and public participation in decision-making that is oftentimes reserved exclusively for police department personnel. Sustained collaborative interactions between community members and the police are correlated with higher public satisfaction, greater community cohesion, and improved accountability, and the model takes these trends into account. As such, CS360 was constructed from the ground up to provide a data-informed structure for making data-informed policy on public safety.

Additional Resources

- [CS360](#)
- [CS360 Basics](#)
- [CS360 Process and Implementation](#)

- [CS360 Research and Development](#)
- [CS360 Basics](#)
- [National Policing Institute, CS360 One-pager](#)
- [National Policing Institute, CS360 Project Publications](#)
- [Police Data Initiative](#)

Independent Third-Party Oversight

Accountability is one of the fundamental pillars of policing. Without it, and without the transparency it requires, police departments are bound to lose legitimacy with the communities they serve. In many municipalities across the country, jurisdictions have adopted some form of independent oversight of policing to assure accountability to the community. In some jurisdictions this oversight takes the form of a civilian commission. Other jurisdictions have turned to professionals in the private sector, who are hired by the jurisdiction to serve as independent auditors, reviewing and publicly reporting on a department's internal investigations and disciplinary process.

In the most extreme examples, independent oversight comes about not through a jurisdiction's own volition, but rather through an investigation by the U.S. Department of Justice or a state attorney general and ends in litigation resolved through a consent decree with the jurisdiction, mandating a variety of different reforms to be overseen by an independent consent decree monitor chosen from the private sector.^{clxxi}

In 2016, in a first-of-its-kind endeavor, the University of Cincinnati proactively initiated a deep-dive investigation of its university police department (UCPD) similar to those conducted by the Department of Justice or a state attorney general prior to pursuing a consent decree. The investigation, which was spurred by a fatal officer-involved shooting that resulted in a criminal indictment against an officer, culminated in a report containing 278 recommendations for improving the department and how policing was administered university-wide. After the investigation was complete, the university commissioned an independent body to oversee implementation of the recommended reforms. This "voluntary monitorship" aimed to help repair the significant deterioration of trust caused by the shooting among university faculty, staff, students, and the university's surrounding communities. For both the investigation and subsequent monitorship, the university hired a private sector firm^{clxxii} that reported not to a federal or state judge but to the university's Board of Trustees ("Board").

Implementation of the report's recommendations was overseen by the firm, which served as Monitor. Through a collaborative effort between the monitoring team and the UCPD, not only were all reforms implemented, but they were implemented ahead of the three-year deadline that had originally been agreed upon. The Monitor issued both quarterly updates and bi-annual reports to update the Board and the public of the progress of the UCPD in the implementation of the reforms.

Overall, the process worked exactly as intended. The UCPD aligned itself with best practices policing and training, and the Monitor's independent oversight helped rebuild community trust by ensuring quality implementation of the investigation's recommendations and by holding the university accountable for

failures to meet implementation deadlines. Most importantly, by entering a voluntary monitorship, the university demonstrated to the community its dedication to improving its policies, procedures, and practices and to be transparent with the community in its efforts to do so.

While there have been more than forty federally initiated consent decrees, and a handful of ones initiated by states, not all of them have been successful. This imperfect record owes itself to the nature of externally imposed monitorships, which can often lead to resentment and resistance to change by police departments and other public officials. Because the most significant factor in determining the success of a consent decree is a police department's genuine commitment to reform, this resentment and resistance can severely undermine a monitorship and delay—or preclude—its success.

In comparison, a voluntary monitorship can blunt resentment and resistance by rooting itself in a self-initiated process of introspection. Inherent in this process is a recognition that reform is necessary and that a department must hold itself accountable to itself and to those it serves for achieving those reforms. When initiated in earnest, voluntary monitorships can thus be a powerful tool in aligning the police and the community by unifying the two behind the shared goal of purpose-driven improvement. Moreover, independent oversight in any of its forms can be a valuable tool in providing assurance to the community that its police department is operating in accordance with the profession's best practices.

Additional Resources

- [University of Cincinnati Police Department Independent Monitorship](#)

Debriefing after violent arrests

In 2022, the Los Angeles Police Department (LAPD) adopted an informal initiative to build trust between officers involved in violent arrest incidents and the community members who witness them. The concept of the initiative is simple: after an arrest involving police violence or use of force is completed, an LAPD officer stays at the scene to engage with witnesses to the arrest about what happened during the incident. The officer may, for example, answer questions, discuss the actions of responding officers, and explain the departmental protocols officers were following in carrying out the arrest. Although there are limitations on what may be shared, the officer may nonetheless be able to explain policies, practices, and officer conduct in a way that can help demystify their actions and address concerns about how they handled their response. This initiative remains in its early stages as of the publication of this report and has yet to be formalized by the LAPD. However, it remains a noteworthy example of how proactive information-sharing by the police can help assuage community concern in the field and in a time and place close to where incidents occur.

Place Network Investigations (PNI)

Place Network Investigations (PNI) is a holistic public safety model that aims to reduce gun-related violence by identifying, targeting, and reducing those areas in cities that facilitate crime. The model rests on evidence that indicates that persistent crime patterns and hot spots of violence in a city are reliable indicators for the existence of crime-place networks, which are extensive networks of interconnected sites that combine to create an optimal location for illegal activity. Offenders most frequently utilize the infrastructure provided by these crime-place networks to operate illicit markets and engage in frequent, violent interactions.

Under the PNI model, an “all-city” team, called the PNI Board, is created. This team is composed of representatives from city and county departments that work together to equitably resolve frequently-occurring crime trends. PNI investigators identify city locations that experience frequent violence and work to identify crime-place networks in the area. They then work to build cases against individuals who own and operate network locations. Simultaneously, city departments and nonprofit organizations work to address the root causes of criminal behavior and the infrastructural flaws that lead to the existence of crime-place networks. As such, the goals of this multifaceted program go beyond the simple targeting and arrest of criminal offenders. Instead, PNI seeks to also provide consistent and meaningful changes to city infrastructure and culture that works to reduce the occurrence of future violence.

Although the PNI model is fairly new, the concepts behind the model have been utilized for decades. During the 1980s, for example, the city of Minneapolis (MN) began an experiment to reduce crime by targeting areas with the highest number of calls for service, eventually totaling 110 address clusters. PNI can find its roots in these kinds of early efforts, which first tie certain criminal offense trends with particular locations.

The first robust iteration of PNI began in Cincinnati (OH) in 2016. Called the Place-Based Investigations of Violent Offender Territories (PIVOT) model, the program utilized a new scoring system to identify and flag micro-locations in a city in which chronic violence occurred. The PIVOT model has since been reworked and adapted into the PNI model, which has since been adopted in Denver (CO); Harris County (TX); Las Vegas (NV); Philadelphia (PA); Tucson (AZ); and Wichita (KS).

The first element of PNI involves identifying crime-place networks and the various sites that comprise them. Four types of locations create a crime-place network. First, there are “crime sites,” which are specific places where crimes frequently occur and that facilitate interactions between offenders and their targets. Second, there are “convergent settings,” which are defined as public locations where offenders frequently congregate. Such locations may include parks, public intersections, and bars. Third are “comfort spaces,” defined as private locations that are under the control or ownership of offenders and are used to meet, stage crimes, or store illegal goods. Such locations may include apartments, garages, and other private locations. Finally, “corrupting spots” are local businesses that support area crime. They can do so by selling, purchasing, or distributing stolen goods or by assisting in laundering the proceeds of illegal conduct. Designating a location as a crime-place network involves identifying all four types of locations within a region and connecting them to gain a more substantive understanding of the criminal operations in that region.

To gain information on the above locations, PNI investigators employ a variety of techniques. For example, analysts utilize calls for service data and crime incident reports to identify crime sites. For other types of locations, investigators gather intelligence by surveilling areas, including potentially installing cameras and monitoring devices to learn which locations are frequented by offenders and where crime may be occurring. Additionally, investigators meet with individuals in the community and work with patrol officers to develop an understanding of local experiences and trends.

Following the identification of a crime-place network, the All-City Team reviews and pools the collected intelligence and prioritizes the utilization of city resources to eliminate the network. Police officers then employ traditional law enforcement strategies to undermine the network. They may, for example, utilize controlled drug buys, execute search warrants, issue fines to businesses that violate laws, and make related arrests. Simultaneously, city departments and nonprofit organizations may rely on environmental and management or use alterations to eliminate crime opportunities, thereby eliminating the crime-place network. Such techniques involve redesigning streets, adding fencing, redeveloping neighborhoods, engaging in more robust code enforcement, and participating in extensive community outreach and human relations. Efforts are also taken to reduce disorder by removing graffiti, trash, abandoned vehicles, and weeds/brush. These combined efforts reduce the opportunities for crime, thereby eliminating the crime-place network and bringing down crime rates in the area.

The Place Network Investigations model possesses several elements that speak to the program's qualities and facilitate its implementation. The model's most notable element is its holistic, city-wide approach to crime prevention. The formation of an "All-City Team," incorporating a diverse group of representatives from a wide variety of city and county departments, allows for the leveraging of multiple city resources. Additionally, the types of interventions employed by the Team's various members greatly, allowing the model to address a broad range of criminogenic causes.

However, because the model emphasizes the places where crime occurs rather than directly targeting offenders themselves, it risks being overly broad and capturing information that is then improperly construed by investigators and analysts as relevant. Additionally, the heightened security and monitoring that is necessitated by the model has drawn criticism and concern.

Nonetheless, a fair amount of evidence demonstrates the efficacy of the PNI model. Cities in which PNI models have been implemented have seen offense rates in high-crime areas reduced by more than eighty percent. Within some communities, PNI has also reduced the number of intense and aggressive crime suppression tactics utilized by police, thereby reducing harm and increasing community trust. The elimination of crime-place networks has also improved neighborhood stability and security, promoting further development that, in turn, suppresses the re-emergence of crime-place networks. Additionally, the use of a broad array of city resources prioritizes the provision of aid to disadvantaged peoples and populations. Such strategies reduce the risks to police officers in violent locations while simultaneously reducing the time that officers must spend responding to repeat calls.

However, evidence regarding PNI's effectiveness largely remains anecdotal. Although several studies have been released highlighting the program's effects on criminal behavior, little has been done to review the effect that PNI-based initiatives have on community residents and whether outcomes are equitable. As such, implementations of PNI should involve the collection of a broad array of data and feedback so that outcome evaluations can be properly conducted.

Additional Resources

- [Place Network Investigations Initiative](#)
- [University of Cincinnati Center for Police Research and Policy, PNI Slide Presentation](#)
- [University of Cincinnati Center for Police Research and Policy, PNI Overview and Evidence Base \(Slide Presentation\)](#)

X. Innovative approaches to officer mental health, recruitment, and retention to address trauma and ensure officer preparedness for community engagement

Introduction

Officer wellness can be promoted and supported in a variety of ways. However, achieving officer wellness broadly within a department is not as simple as offering a particular service or creating a single wellness program. Wellness is ultimately a reflection of an officer's complex work-life experience. As such, achieving wellness requires a broad and sustained approach that addresses multiple determinants of an officer's mental health. Additionally, because wellness intersects with many of the challenges facing law enforcement today, including officer recruitment, retention, readiness, and performance, departments have increasingly prioritized wellness as a matter of operational necessity.

Despite this attention, officer wellness remains an evolving field. As the profession's understanding of officer wellness grows, aided by scientific research and study, so do its approaches to enhancing officer health. Innovative methods therefore work alongside more established interventions to achieve and maintain the profession's wellness goals. The common denominator across all successful wellness efforts is the cultivation of a departmental culture that emphasizes and enables officer wellness. Departments with committed wellness cultures adhere to a philosophy that consistently signals and demonstrates to their officers a sustained and earnest investment in their wellness.

Recognizing these hallmarks of an effective departmental wellness regime, the practices featured in this section reflect the kind of widespread commitment necessary to effectively promote officer wellness and reap its individual and collective benefits. These benefits could not come at a more critical time given the current state of policing. Nationwide, departments are facing recruitment and retention challenges, with high turnover outpacing new hiring of police recruits in many areas. Further, the profession is experiencing a generational shift, with younger officers placing a greater emphasis on work-life balance and overall quality of life. Finally, the demands placed on police officers have continued to grow, with calls for additional training, oversight, and accountability. Accordingly, burnout is high within the profession. Officer performance can suffer as a result, either through diminished commitment to service, reduced ability to function, or an increased likelihood to escalate situations through the unnecessary threat or use of force.

While many of the policing profession's common stressors have historically been disregarded as unavoidable occupational hazards, the effects of these stressors, including increased rates of suicide, have become too severe to ignore. The growth of peer support interventions within policing reflects both the profession's desire to address these problems and a recognition that many of the most effective solutions will come from within its ranks. Although peer support has been utilized by mental health practitioners for decades, their formal use within police departments, including those in [New York \(NY\)](#), [Los Angeles \(CA\)](#), [Denver \(CO\)](#), [Indianapolis \(IN\)](#), and [Nashville \(TN\)](#), is a much more recent, and promising, development.

Department-wide peer support initiatives have served to destigmatize utilization of mental health resources, and sustained messaging by police leaders on the importance and availability of mental wellness resources has normalized officer wellness as a value, not a liability. Departments are thus encouraged to develop policies that promote wellness and emphasize departmental support of officers who seek wellness services, and to consider wellness when setting departmental goals and priorities. The inculcation of officers on the merits of mental wellness should begin at the academy and continue through their terms of service. Doing so will lay a proper foundation for establishing and maintaining the practices and interventions featured in this report.

What has already been done in Colorado?

Advocates in Colorado have taken seriously the considerable task of improving police officer wellness, propelled by the dual motivations of improving officer quality of life and minimizing the negative impacts that poor officer wellness can have on justice outcomes.

The Peace Officer Standards and Training (POST) section of the Colorado Attorney General's Office offers information on its website for officer wellness resources, including information regarding mental health providers who identify as offering specialized care for first responders. While not endorsing any of the providers listed on its website, POST maintains its provider directory as an easy reference for officers considering or seeking treatment.

Among Colorado-based organizations that offers support services for first responders is Badge2Badge, which first offered services in 2015. The organization provides confidential support services to officers experiencing post-traumatic stress, grief, substance use issues, and other mental wellness problems. These services are offered free of charge to participating officers and include weekly support meetings hosted by the Fraternal Order of Police (FOP) as well as Alcoholics Anonymous meetings for emergency responders.

In addition to their work with Badge2Badge, the FOP offers behavioral health services to members through a partnership with FHE Health, whose Shatterproof program specializes in treatment for police officers and other first responders. Shatterproof utilizes multiple wellness approaches, including evidence-based therapies, to address wellness issues that are commonly experienced by officers, like trauma and self-medication. Health management and long-term recovery are two of the program's aims for participating officers, with FHE's care providers tailoring their treatment regimens to the individual needs of their patients. Aside from individual care, FHE offers peer support interventions to help officers become accustomed to sharing and processing their experiences as part of their wellness program. Shatterproof emphasizes job security as a component and benefit of wellness interventions to assuage concerns that considering or using their services will undermine an officer's employment or standing within their departments.

Individual departments have also initiated their own wellness programs. The Resiliency and Wellness Program within the Denver Police Department (DPD) takes a holistic approach to officer wellbeing, with components that address mental health and physical fitness through education, training, and support. The program seeks to proactively inoculate officers from the detrimental effects of the stressors officers commonly face while also making resources available to officers when they do experience those effects, including anxiety, trauma, and stress.

The program's efforts include a specialized Administrative Fitness for Duty Assessment, which is designed for officers experiencing alcohol and prescription pill abuse or who have indications for depression or suicidal ideation. A critical feature of the assessment is that it is non-punitive and non-disciplinary, which permits participating officers to focus on their betterment without worry of adverse professional consequences. By participating in the assessment, officers receive a treatment plan that addresses their particular needs, which are determined in part by evaluating the officer's level of substance abuse. Depending on the assessment's results, an officer may be connected with in-patient or out-patient

treatment as well as support care through groups like Alcoholics Anonymous or those that cater to first responders experiencing unwellness. Participating officers are also paired with a Peer Sponsor Officer, who has firsthand experience with both unwellness and recovery. The comprehensive approach of DPD's Resiliency and Wellness Program has contributed to the program's impressive 70% success rate.

In addition to mental unwellness, DPD sponsors a physical therapy clinic for its officers, whereby in-house physical therapists create and administer recovery plans for officers who are injured on the job. The program has demonstrated considerable success at helping officers return to work after experiencing injury, with departmental data revealing that officers who participate in the in-house clinic return to work 21 days sooner than those who receive treatment from outside providers. The DPD's physical therapy model has been replicated in other departments, including by the Aurora Police Department (APD), which hosts its own in-house clinic at its headquarters. Although APD's clinic currently only treats injuries occurring while on duty, the department hopes to expand the clinic so that it may treat all injuries, regardless of source. Rounding out its wellness offerings for officers, the APD also provides unlimited and free mental health services to its officers and certain family members. These services, which have been offered for approximately 5 years, have seen annual usage increases since they were first provided, indicating a strong and growing interest among officers.

Overview of Practices Considered

Officer wellness has been a concern for many police departments for decades. However, recent interest in officer wellness, including attention raised by alarming rates of officer self-harm, has spurred calls for departments to do more. Accordingly, departments have started expanding their wellness resources and dedicating more departmental resources to invest in supportive services for officers and department staff. This expansion has led to the development of new wellness programs that seek to take the mental health field's most effective interventions and adapt them for police officers.

However, any review of the most promising officer wellness practices would be incomplete if it focused only on therapeutic prescriptions for dealing with officer mental health problems. To be truly comprehensive, a review must also consider the structural and cultural barriers that have undermined the promotion of officer wellness despite the availability of resources and supports. The practices and programs featured here merge effective therapies and wellness resources with concerted efforts by departments to challenge longstanding stigma surrounding mental health problems. They demonstrate the importance of departmental leadership on achieving officer wellness and acknowledge that institutional wellness and officer wellness are inextricably linked. Accordingly, the entries feature discussions of how institutional factors influence the achievement of a department's wellness goals for their officer ranks, and how officer perspectives are shaped by the cultures and environments of their departments.

Although the entries featured here may discuss specific wellness initiatives by individual states or departments, each entry is intended to highlight a broader strategic approach for improving wellness. The purpose is not necessarily to feature a particular program as being the best iteration of that strategy, but rather for the program to serve as an illustration for what a successful implementation of the broader wellness strategy looks like.

As with other sections, the strategies featured here as best practices include those that enjoy the greatest track record of demonstrated success and that have either been replicated widely or that have served as a model for similar implementations across the country. Those discussed as emerging and innovative strategies have demonstrated considerable promise for achieving their aims but are either too recent to have a sustained track record of success or that, despite being more established, have not been widely adopted or considered for broad implementation. Nonetheless, given the importance of wellness in achieving so many other aims in policing and the ongoing wellness crisis within the policing profession, all entries should be considered seriously.

Despite the attention wellness has received within the policing profession, it is an area that continues to evolve. As the profession's understanding of wellness grows, aided by scientific research and study, so do its approaches to enhancing officer health. Innovative methods must therefore work alongside more established interventions to achieve and maintain the profession's wellness goals. The common foundation across all successful wellness efforts is—and must continue to be—the cultivation of a departmental culture that emphasizes and enables officer wellness as both a central value and aim. Departments with committed wellness cultures that adhere to a philosophy of sustained and earnest investment in wellness will, with little doubt, reap the greatest benefits.

In-House Mental Health Professionals

Internal departmental support for officers and families

Summary

A critical addition to any police department officer wellness program is the employment of dedicated, in-house mental health professionals (MHPs) who can play an invaluable role in developing effective wellness policies and delivering supportive services to officers. Unlike peer mentors, whose role is limited to providing informal, non-clinical support to other officers, MHPs have the qualifications to coordinate and provide direct clinic mental health services to officers. Additionally, MHPs can help departments identify and evaluate existing and emerging wellness interventions to ensure that departmental wellness policies are evidence-based and developed in accordance with best practices. They can also serve as a resource to guide, train, and oversee and complement other departmental wellness resources, like peer mentors.

The Metro Nashville (TN) Police Department (MNPDP) has utilized in-house MHPs to promising effect and provides one of the most comprehensive in-house mental health services programs in the country through its Behavioral Health Services (BHS). A unique aspect of BHS is the broad nature of its programming, which began with youth services in the 1970s, was expanded to include victims of crime support services, and then added officer mental health support services (now within the department's Professional Wellness Section (PWS)) in the 1980s. The development of MNPDP's BHS demonstrates the recognition within the department and city leadership of the need to invest in crisis intervention support systems for officers, victims of crime, and even potential perpetrators of crime. It further indicates a recognition of the impact that these investments have on the culture of both law enforcement and the community. This has led to officers becoming better equipped to respond to people with mental health issues in public safety setting as well as the needs of crime victims and the community following traumatic events.

History and Development

MNPDP launched a Youth Guidance Program in 1970 and then began a proactive victim intervention program (VIP) that focused initially on rape victims in 1975. Thereafter, the Police Advocacy and Support Services (PASS) program began in 1986 to provide behavioral health services to police officers, nonsworn employees, and their immediate families. From its creation, PASS, which preceded the PWS, enjoyed strong support from the Fraternal Order of Police, the department, and the city. A complementary peer support program also began at the same time. The department sought grant funding to expand its victim support services, eventually adding domestic violence counseling in 1994. To support the successful incorporation of these services within the department's operations, BHS worked with officers and provided them a platform to receive training trauma to better understand the needs of victims. This training would also lay a foundation for priming officers to utilize the BHS's mental health programming for officers, given the officers' awareness and understanding of trauma's impact in the victim service's context. A chaplain program was added in 1996 and was expanded to include a volunteer chaplain program in 2005. Eventually, the department created full-time police crisis counselor positions in the Professional Wellness Section. The PWS currently has a staff of five counselors, three chaplains, and one

lieutenant, one sergeant, and one police officer. It is housed in a separate location to provide a greater level of privacy and confidentiality to personnel as they use services.

Implementation

Logistics. MNPD's BHS, primarily through the PWS, provides services to officers and their immediate families, including counseling and advocacy services such as individual, couples, and family counseling; critical incident stress debriefing; support and therapy groups; training and education; and mental health response for major disasters. Through their services, the PWS addresses a wide range of issues such as substance and other types of addictions, post-traumatic stress, depression, grief and loss, and marriage and family difficulties.

When a critical incident or trauma occurs, the PWS's clinical staff members provide employees and families with individual, family, and couples therapy on a voluntary basis. Through its chaplain program, chaplains provide faith- and spiritual-based services including death notifications, guidance, and grief counseling to assist in the PWS's trauma response efforts. In addition to its response and intervention services, the PWS also provides proactive and preventive officer wellness services and outreach.

Moreover, the PWS conducts mandatory annual wellness checks for employees who work in high-risk divisions that face frequent exposure to graphic and traumatic experiences, with support groups scheduled as needed. The PWS also recently added mandatory annual wellness checks for all members of the department's investigative units.

MNPD's efforts to prime officers to take wellness seriously begin early in each officer's career in the department, with new police recruits undergoing more than 40 hours of wellness-related training. Topics covered in the department's training include how officers can take care of themselves from hiring to retirement, how they can keep their families healthy, how to manage stress and anger, and wellness resiliency. Officers' spouses can also participate in a variety of family readiness programs including Wives 5-0, Women Behind the Badge, and other support groups that mobilize support for families, like providing meals during and after critical incidents. PWS staffers also provide annual in-service training for counselors, peer supporters, and volunteer chaplains, as well as for command staff and the department's Citizens Police Academy. Retirees and former employees and their families also have access to PWS services.

Mandated counseling services are also provided upon referral from supervisors or arising from disciplinary proceedings. Referrals may also originate through the department's Early Warning System, which flags for intervention officers whose misfeasance, like chronic lateness, absences, or generation of multiple citizen complaints, indicates the potential for more severe adverse behavior. Among the interventions available for officers who are flagged by the EWS is referral to the PWS for additional support, with mandatory PWS referrals occurring in about 8% of cases.

Facilitators. The PWS enjoys strong buy-in at every departmental level from uniformed staff to the chief to the mayor. This has resulted in continuity and commitment to sustain the same level of effort even in tough economic times. The PWS's emphasis on the importance of confidentiality has been essential to maintaining the trust of officers and employees, with the MNPD having invested resources to establish trust and familiarity early in the careers of the department's ranks. MNPD's experience has confirmed

that if a recruit meets the PWS's mental health team in the academy and is trained on how to manage their own stress and mental health, they will be more likely to access the services when needed.

MNPD also educates, engages, and supports families as early as possible. This begins in the training academy. The PWS has succeeded in incorporating officers into their training by using an officer safety and wellness panel where officers themselves share their experiences with one another. The PWS also sponsors a Family Day before graduation for family members of recruits to orient them on what to expect from having a police officer in the family as well as sharing available resources and proactive strategies with families.

As a further effort to secure officer trust in their wellness services, the MNPD contracts with external psychologists to conduct psychological evaluations for employment screening and outsources fitness-for-duty determinations to an outside firm, believing that conducting these functions internally would compromise the trust and confidence that officers have in the PWS. Separating these functions from the PWS's in-house services allows the PWS to maintain its role and reputation as a supportive wellness resource for officers and not as a potential adversary.

Active involvement by the Fraternal Order of Police (FOP)—the police officer's union in Nashville—in the PWS's wellness efforts has also been central in generating and maintaining officer buy-in. The FOP was a strong supporter from the beginning of the program and has served as an influential advocate within the department's ranks to promote service access and utilization. The current FOP president serves as a peer member within the PWS's peer support group, and his predecessor was supportive of the PWS's outreach and work. Union leadership has also hosted PWS training, which further signals its endorsement of the PWS's wellness initiatives.

Finally, the PWS connects with new supervisors and participates in their early training so that they know how to refer officers that need help. Just as training at the police academy is intended to foster a wellness culture within the department's newest members, so too is this early training for supervisors intended to foment a wellness culture within the department's management. The PWS is so proactive in this effort that it trains the first 30 to 40 supervisor candidates even before they are officially selected for promotion.

Barriers. It must be noted that any effort to employ in-house MHPs will have to contend with various potential challenges. First, departments may lack funding to hire a critical mass of MHPs at a salary commensurate with their qualifications or experience level. Also, the high demand for MHPs in other sectors can shrink an already limited pool of MHP candidates. Finally, evaluating the work or effectiveness of MHPs may be difficult for departments who lack independently verifiable metrics for doing so.

The totality of these challenges can preclude a department from hiring a critical mass of MHPs to maintain an efficient ratio of MHPs to officers, which could in turn impair the ability of an MHP to offer individual services to officers or peer mentors. Accordingly, departments seeking to include MHPs as parts of their wellness initiatives should ensure they have appropriate funding and hiring support to achieve and maintain adequate staffing levels of qualified MHP personnel. To alleviate some of the cost considerations, departments can explore using retirees or volunteers to help supplement their wellness offerings, particularly its peer support services.

Impact, Validation, and Replication

Twice annually, the MNPd distributes a satisfaction survey to all members who have used the PWS's counseling services, permitting them to collect feedback on the strengths and weaknesses of the department's wellness resources. The department strives for continuous improvement of its wellness program, and these surveys are a key component of achieving that ongoing improvement. The responses from these surveys, and the department's own self-evaluation, indicate that the PWS has been successful in responding to their officers' wellness needs, though the department continues to develop its proactive work, including using therapy dogs, to ensure that interventions are offered and utilized before the need becomes urgent or severe.

Additional Resources

- [Metro Nashville Police Department Professional Wellness Section](#)
- [Metro Nashville Police Department Behavioral Health Services Division](#)

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Police Organization Providing Peer Assistance (POPPA)

Peer support for officers, by officers

Summary

A primary method for improving wellness outcomes for police officers relies on the development and availability of networks of peer support among police officers themselves. When implemented properly, peer support programs can improve wellness outcomes through a variety of strategies, including crisis prevention and response and post-crisis support. The hallmarks of an effective peer support program include voluntary participation by officers; comprehensive, ongoing training on peer support methods; independent peer mentors who enjoy centralized support from departmental management; and robust confidentiality protections for participating officers.

One of the most established peer support programs in the country is Police Organization Providing Peer Assistance (POPPA), which serves police officers in New York City. With a base of more than 300 volunteer peer mentors, POPPA offers services for officers of all ranks, including a 24-hour helpline. The availability of POPPA to officers has helped anchor officer wellness as a professional value, which has helped counter cultural stigmas against seeking mental health services. A combination of departmental and peer support for wellness efforts has worked to assure officers that their efforts to improve their own mental wellbeing will not result in estrangement or reduced status, either officially or interpersonally. Improved access to, and utilization of, mental health support services through POPPA has, in turn, yielded improved officer performance and better outcomes for officers and those with whom they interact. POPPA's success is evidenced in part by the substantial waiting list it maintains of officers seeking qualification to serve as a peer mentor.

History and Development

POPPA originated in the 1990s as a collaboration between the New York Police Department (NYPD) and external partners to respond to an alarming suicide rate among NYPD officers. Although its development was initiated with substantial support from the NYPD, POPPA operates independently of the department and serves to complement other departmental wellness services for officers. Its design as an independent organization outside of the NYPD serves to encourage participation among officers who, out of a fear of adverse professional consequences, may be reluctant to seek help directly from the department. In addition to serving active-duty officers, POPPA has, since 2006, supported retired officers through its Retiree Support Program, which seeks to meet the needs of former officers who continue to feel the impact of their careers in law enforcement.

Implementation

Logistics. Police peer support programs like POPPA are premised on the idea that mental health outcomes for police officers can be improved through the cultivation of interpersonal networks of like-minded professional peers who share an interest in promoting, providing, and utilizing mental health support services. As such, POPPA recruits experienced police officers to act as volunteer peer mentors—referred to within the program as peer support officers (PSOs)—for officers of similar rank. Currently numbering

over 300, POPPA's PSOs offer informal counseling to other officers to help them identify, assess, and mitigate occupational and personal stressors that, if left unchecked, can severely erode officer wellbeing and performance. PSOs also serve as conduits for connecting officers with professional therapeutic counseling and other mental health support services.

POPPA PSOs receive an initial 5-day intensive training with frequent follow-up trainings to adequately prepare them to serve as peer mentors. PSOs are assigned to work specific shifts and carry beepers to let them know of any request for assistance that might be coming through. PSOs can meet in person with officers or remotely and can also call upon licensed mental health professionals for additional support.

In addition to its peer mentorship program, POPPA maintains a referral network of approximately 120 clinicians who have experience working with officers. The clinicians' specialized experience in working with police helps address the stigma that clinicians are unable to understand or appreciate the unique experiences of law enforcement personnel. POPPA also maintains a 24-hour helpline that connects officers directly with a PSO to discuss anything affecting the officer's wellness, including personal and professional issues.

Facilitators. POPPA's efforts are buttressed by the policing profession's increasing focus on officer wellness as both a strategy for improving officer wellbeing and for improving outcomes for those receiving policing services. The adage that healthy officers make good officers has been a pithy tagline for the officer wellness movement, and newer generations of police officers have come of age and entered service at a time when seeking mental health services is increasingly accepted as an indispensable part of general health maintenance. These developments have made it easier for POPPA's outreach to succeed and for officers to feel comfortable seeking wellness support. Additionally, support for officer wellness initiatives from policymakers, researchers, and the public have converged to drive momentum toward the development of new peer support interventions and the expansion of incumbent programs like POPPA.

Barriers. Persistent cultural issues within the profession remain barriers to overcome. A general distrust of mental health professionals, disbelief in wellness methodologies, and ostracization of those seeking or promoting mental health services persist within some officer ranks despite changing professional norms around mental health. Further, because peer mentors form the backbone of POPPA and similar peer support programs, finding a critical mass of officers willing to serve as peer mentors is both a priority and potential challenge. Even with the substantial level of interest that NYPD officers have exhibited in serving as PSOs, POPPA is careful to screen out prospective mentors who are not intrinsically motivated to serve in a mentorship capacity. Specifically, those seeking to participate only for the purposes of career advancement or financial benefit are avoided in favor of selecting those who are motivated specifically by the mission of promoting and improving officer wellness. This approach, while critically important, reduces the pool of potential mentors. Additionally, because selection prioritizes veteran officers whose experience can serve to inform their counseling efforts and signal their credibility to other officers, the pool of potential mentors is limited even further by the exclusion of more junior officers.

Also, although POPPA benefits from the volunteer status of its PSOs, there is still a substantial cost associated with training and coordination, including the costs of maintaining the program's helpline. POPPA's peer mentorship model can also make it difficult to develop and track metrics for evaluating the program's performance, especially given the informal and confidential nature of its counseling services.

Finally, reliance on outdated technologies like beepers for notifications to PSOs can reduce timely connection to peer support services, with updated technology potentially adding to program costs.

Impact, Validation, and Replication

Research has continued to support peer mentorship as among the most effective methods for delivering and promoting wellness services among police officers. In a 2018 survey of 8,000 active and retired police officers conducted jointly by the Fraternal Order of Police and the news organization NBC New York, 90% of respondents reported stigma as a barrier to seeking mental health treatment, while 73% of respondents who reported having utilized peer support services viewed them as the most helpful of the treatments available to them.

Recognition of the efficacy of the peer support model has spurred police departments across the country to cultivate their own peer support networks like the one at the foundation of POPPA. Some programs, like those in Chicago (IL) and Arlington (VA), are operated by individual departments and provide services exclusively for internal personnel. Others, like the Connecticut Department of Public Safety's Law Enforcement Peer Program, consolidates and coordinates resources to enhance peer support resources among multiple departments and to promote peer support programs to departments that lack them. Some departments, like the Springfield (IL) Police Department, maintain a high ratio of peer mentors and client officers, with approximately 30-40 mentors—consisting of a mix of both active duty and retired officers and sergeants—supporting a department of about 210 active-duty officers.

Aside from serving the NYPD, POPPA has supported officers in other cities, including offering services in New Orleans (LA) after Hurricane Katrina, Boston (MA) after the Boston Marathon terror attack, Baltimore (MD) after a series of incidents of unrest in 2015, and Texas after Hurricane Harvey in 2017.

Additional Resources

- Police Organization Providing Peer Assistance (POPPA)
- Report on FOP/NBC Survey of Police Officer Mental and Behavioral Health
- The International Association of Chiefs of Police, Peer Support as a Powerful Tool in Law Enforcement Suicide Prevention
- Law Enforcement Mental Health and Wellness Programs: Eleven Case Studies – The Office of Community Oriented Policing Services, the U.S. Department of Justice
- The International Critical Incident Stress Foundation

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The American Foundation for Suicide Prevention Interactive Screening Program

Anonymous self-harm screening and support

Summary

The purpose of the Interactive Screening Program (ISP) from the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention (AFSP) is to identify individual police officers who possess unrecognized and untreated mental health conditions and to reduce barriers that prevent those officers from seeking help. The primary tool used as part of the Screening Program is the “Self-Check Quiz”, an evidence-based questionnaire that is designed to screen for select mental health conditions, like depression and anxiety, and suicidality. The quiz is anonymous, takes less than ten minutes to complete, and is administered through a secure, confidential website that is maintained separately from the agency’s IT system. The program has been adopted by a number of police agencies and organizations, including the Chicago (IL) Police Department, the Boston (MA) Police Department, and the Massachusetts Coalition of Police.

The program is committed to the principle of officer anonymity. The only identifying information that is collected through the “Self-Check Quiz” and the screening program website is the participant’s email address and/or phone number, which the participant has the option to provide if they would like to receive automated email and/or text message alerts to return to the website. Additionally, the program is committed to reinforcing personal contacts between officers and a Program Responder through interactive engagement. Instead of computerized feedback, officers receive a personal response from a Program Responder regarding the results of their Quiz. Responders and the officers then work together to alleviate any concerns the officer may have about seeking services, with the responders focusing on relating directly to the officers’ lived experiences, rather than merely resorting to suggesting diagnoses or emphasizing a general “need” for treatment.

History and Development

In 2012, the Director of the Boston Police Department’s (BPD) Peer Support Program, who had a personal history of overcoming mental illness and substance abuse issues, discovered that the AFSP offered an online quiz, first developed in 2001, that was meant to screen college students for suicidal tendencies. Working directly with the AFSP, the Director worked to transform the test into a quiz that would be applicable to police officers by utilizing measures that reflected fundamental elements of policing culture. The ISP was thereafter launched in 2012 in Boston and was funded from the department’s Peer Support Program budget. The program is particularly suited to support law enforcement officers, who have heightened barriers to seeking help and face a formidable combination of increased stigma and greater exposure to traumatic experiences than the public at large. For AFSP, its collaboration with the BPD marks yet another successful effort to promote wellness and peer support, which it has undertaken jointly with other law enforcement agencies as well as universities and private workplaces. ISP’s development included extensive legal review with experts in suicide prevention and is designed to follow best practices and guidelines for anonymous online screening programs.

During the first training academy held after the ISP was fully implemented, the program’s details were explained to each of the department’s four unions and their members to establish trusting relationships. The element of confidentiality formed the backbone of the conversation, with the Peer Support Program’s

Director emphasizing that the ISP did not constitute an emergency platform. Even if an officer admitted suicidality in their quiz responses, those reviewing the quiz would not be able to personally identify the individual unless the officer chose to make their identity known. The Director's outreach to the unions helped assure them of the ISP's security and confidentiality, and helped further solidify the trusting and collaborative relationships the unions had with the Director. During the Program's first year, sixty police officers took the exam voluntarily. Of those sixty, six reached out for help from the Peer Support Program, including a military veteran struggling with suicidal ideation and alcoholism, with at least some cohort of the remaining 54 officers having potentially sought aid from outside the department's network.

The ISP has also been made available to Massachusetts Coalition of Police (MassCOP), the largest statewide law enforcement union in the state with a membership of approximately 5,000 officers primarily drawn from smaller police agencies. MassCOP's program has been in effect since 2015, with approximately one hundred of its members voluntarily using it per year.

Implementation

Logistics. Each implementing agency is responsible for providing the personnel who internally oversee their agency's ISP. The total timeline of implementation typically takes 3-6 months, which includes developing a customized ISP website for the agency, developing a promotion plan for the program's rollout, and ensuring an adequate peer support capacity. Agency ISP personnel include staff responsible for reviewing responses received through the ISP, engaging with individuals submitting responses, and setting up additional mental health support as requested. MassCOP contracts with retired law enforcement peer support members to oversee their version of the ISP and to respond to participants when necessary.

The process begins when an officer voluntarily goes to the ISP's website (masscoppeersupportquiz.org) and takes the "Self-Check" quiz. The quiz contains twelve pages of questions and takes approximately ten minutes to complete. The questions examine whether officers have recently experienced upsetting or traumatizing events both related and unrelated to their job, and measures how frequently officers are experiencing symptoms of depression, anxiety, and suicidal ideation. Additionally, the questionnaire inquires as to whether officers are engaging in harmful behaviors, including overindulgence in alcohol, substance use, or suicide attempts.

Upon submission of the test, the platform screens the respondent's answers to identify potential mental health concerns, scan for critical incidents, and assess the level of risk to the individual. If multiple critical incidents are identified, the platform identifies the individual as being high risk, though the individual submitting the test is not informed of what risk level has been assigned to them. When the platform completes its analysis of the respondent's answers, it sends a notice to a peer supporter who then reviews the results of the quiz. Using a chat dialogue box within the ISP's website, the peer supporter uses a pre-set response template, along with some individual personalization, to reach out to the individual and share contact information and information about available service options. It is then up to the individual officer to engage further. If the officer chooses to contact the peer supporter, either through the website's dialogue box or by utilizing the responder's contact information, the peer supporter can then continue corresponding with the individual assisting them with seeking help for the issues identified by

the quiz. Follow-up support can include locating a local clinic, treatment center, or mental health professionals near the officer and facilitating connections to those care providers.

Facilitators. The MassCOP ISP benefits from substantial outreach efforts conducted by various MassCOP entities. Flyers are created for distribution, and newsletters are posted in police stations. Additionally, the Massachusetts Municipal Police Training Committee developed a twenty-minute mandatory training video that every police officer must view, which includes information on the ISP. Further, the quiz has been made available to officers outside of MassCOP's membership, though efforts by officers to have the quiz made available to family members have been deemed infeasible given the ISP's tailoring to the user's experience as a police officer.

The ISP's operation through MassCOP, as opposed to through individual police departments, has also been seen as a critical contributor to the program's buy-in among officers. By avoiding direct departmental channels, officers can feel more secure when utilizing the service that their confidentiality will be maintained and that the information they submit will not adversely impact their employment. However, none of this is to say that agency leadership has not also substantially contributed to the program's success. In fact, the support of departmental leaders has been critical in encouraging officers to participate in the program and in ensuring that officers' anonymity will be maintained should they choose to do so. Further, as with any departmental wellness effort, agency leadership can be supportive by continually raising awareness of available resources for mental health and suicide prevention and by fomenting a workplace culture proactively centered on wellness.

Furthermore, officers' sense of security is heightened by utilizing program directors and peer supporters who have lived experience and personal histories with mental illness. This feature is key in assisting police officers with overcoming barriers to aid and allows the peer responders to assist officers from a place of empathy and first-hand understanding. Officers using the service can also be confident that they are receiving appropriate service recommendations since recommendations are offered to providers from a vetted clinician network. For agencies with employee assistance plans (EAPs) or peer support units that provide benefits officers' families, the agency ISP may also be made available to those individuals as a supplementary resource.

Barriers. Certain obstacles limit the practical success of the ISP. Although the voluntary nature of the program helps reinforce officer trust, the fact that the quiz is not mandatory means that there are likely some individuals who would benefit from the service but are not accessing it. Additionally, the agency must pay a licensing fee to access the service, adding to the program's operation costs, which include approximately one-thousand dollars per month to hire a single peer support officer to be on duty twenty-four/seven. Additionally, the AFSP charges five-thousand dollars annually for site upkeep. Finally, the Program is directly connected to police agencies' Employee Assistance Program (EAP). As a result, any existing issues or stigma associated with the EAP may extend to the ISP by association.

Impact, Validation, and Replication

The AFSP is open to working directly and collaboratively with agencies to implement and personalize the ISP to the individual needs of each agency. This has been demonstrated by the successful implementation of the ISP in multiple police departments and organizations both inside and outside of Massachusetts.

Furthermore, the program's success is reflected in its longstanding operation, with its earliest implementations having endured since the program's inception in 2012.

The ISP's benefits are similarly demonstrated through the anecdotal success stories that have been shared by and among officers who have chosen to speak about their experiences with the program and their own wellness experiences. Because mental health issues do not always manifest themselves visibly, tools like the ISP that allow for appropriate screening and detection can prove highly valuable.

Additional Resources

- [Chicago Police Department Interactive Screening Program](#)
- [Massachusetts Coalition of Police Interactive Screening Program](#)
- [American Foundation for Suicide Preventing Interactive Screening Program](#)
- [Police Executive Research Forum, As Occupational Risk: What Every Police Agency Should Do To Prevent Suicide Among Its Officers](#)

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New Jersey Resiliency Program for Law Enforcement

Statewide resiliency training for all officers

Summary

To combat the policing profession's high rates of depression, substance abuse, and suicide, the New Jersey Attorney General issued Directive NO. 2019-1 in 2019, entitled "Promoting Law Enforcement Resiliency." This Directive created a program called the New Jersey Resiliency Program for Law Enforcement (NJRP-LE) and set the parameters for its implementation. The overall goal of the program—the first of its kind in the nation—was to provide resiliency training to every single law enforcement officer in the state to equip them to adequately handle the daily stress of police work, cope with the difficult requirements of their jobs, and seek further resources and aid when necessary. By the end of 2022, it is mandatory that all sworn personnel be trained in the content of the NJRP-LE.

History and Development

In response to the ongoing problem of law enforcement officers experiencing high rates of depression, anxiety, PTSD, suicide, and other forms of stress and trauma resulting from the highly difficult nature of the profession, in August of 2019 New Jersey Attorney General, Gurbir S. Grewal, issued Directive NO. 2019-1: "Promoting Law Enforcement Resiliency." The Directive created the New Jersey Resiliency Program for Law Enforcement (NJRP-LE), a training program which, in the words of Attorney General Grewal, was meant to "give law enforcement officers the tools they need to cope with their difficult jobs." It was the belief of the Attorney General that protecting the mental health of law enforcement personnel was just as important as protecting their physical health. Furthermore, the goal of the program was to create a culture within the policing profession that encouraged communication about wellness issues and offered officers the freedom to seek additional help and resources when necessary. To support this goal, the program heavily emphasized confidentiality. As such, all communication between program trainers and individual officers are confidential unless individual police agency policy directs otherwise.

As part of the Directive, it was stated that a Chief Resiliency Officer (CRO) be appointed to oversee the entirety of the program in the state, with the responsibility of ensuring that the mandates of the Directive are followed and that all subordinate trainers have the proper knowledge and skills to meet the program's requirements. In 2019, Robert Czepiel, the Chief of the Prosecutors Supervision and Training Bureau in the New Jersey Division of Criminal Justice, was appointed to be the first CRO of the NJRP-LE. Upon Mr. Czepiel's retirement, David Leonardis of the Prosecutors Supervisions and Training Bureau was appointed as interim CRO.

The Directive also calls for the establishment of trainers at the state and county level, known as Master Resiliency Trainers, who receive their training from the CRO and are then responsible for training individual Resilience Program Officers (RPOs) on the NJRP-LE at the agency level. The goal of the Directive was to have all state and county RPO Trainers receive their training before December 31, 2020, a goal that was met. The responsibility now falls to the trained RPOs to provide the training to all officers within their respective police agencies. The goal is to have all law enforcement officers in the state trained on the NJRP-LE by December 31, 2022.

Implementation

Logistics. The NJRP-LE is a two-day training session, developed by experts in academia, the military, and federal and state law enforcement, with a goal of instilling a positive culture for law enforcement officers that allows them to successfully cope with the stressful elements of their jobs. To that end, the training program consists of twelve lessons: (1) Resiliency Overview; (2) Counting Blessings; (3) Accomplishing Goals; (4) ABC Model; (5) Check your Playbook; (6) Balance Your Thinking & Instant Balance Your Thinking; (7) Capitalizing on Strengths; (8) Acceptance Strategies: Mindfulness & Meaning Making ; (9) Spiritual Resilience; (10) Physical Resilience; (11) Interpersonal Problem Solving; and (12) Good Listening and Active Constructive Responding (ACR).

To efficiently provide this training to all law enforcement officers within New Jersey, the NJRP-LE utilizes a “Train the Trainer” model, whereby a single subject matter expert develops a training module that they then teach to sub-trainers who then become responsible for instructing others on the training’s substance.

Under the NJRP-LE’s implementation of this model, a Chief Resiliency Officer (CRO), who must be a detective or Deputy Attorney General assigned to the Division of Criminal Justice, is responsible for overseeing the statewide implementation of the Program and the Division’s efforts to strengthen law enforcement resiliency among state, county, and local law enforcement agencies. The CRO must also ensure that all law enforcement officers have access to the latest resources and trainings. Following the appointment of the CRO, the head of each law enforcement agency in New Jersey must appoint one or more Resilience Program Officers (RPOs) for their agency. RPOs are responsible for providing training in the NJRP-LE to officers within their respective agencies, while also serving as a resource for those officers if they should request additional aid in finding outside services. The name and contact information for all RPOs is provided to the state, which then compiles and disseminates the information to all law enforcement officers statewide. Under the NJRP-LE, any officer may reach out to any RPO regardless of at which agency the RPO is located.

Following these preliminary steps, each county prosecutor’s office and state law enforcement agency is required to appoint an RPO trainer, known as a Master Resiliency Trainer (MRT). County MRTs, who are first trained by the state Division of Criminal Justice during a two-day “train the trainer” program, are responsible for training the MRTs from the local law enforcement agencies within their county. These agency MRTs, in turn, are responsible for training all law enforcement officers within their agency.

Facilitators. There are several distinct advantages to the program that lead to its projected success. First, due to the statewide nature of the program, there is a vast network of trainers whose knowledge and skill can be drawn upon to cast a wide net. Additionally, due to the universal nature of the program allowing any officer to contact any one of the hundreds of RPOs, there are numerous options and resources available to any officer who is seeking aid, regardless of the size or location of their agency. Furthermore, the large network allows for the rapid dissemination of information. Having every law enforcement officer in the state be trained in the program by the end of 2022 is a lofty goal, but one made possible by the significant investment of resources and staffing that have been dedicated to the endeavor. Early data demonstrates that the trainers who go through the process possess strong feelings of satisfaction and

fulfillment, and the short two-day nature of the training does not create a high bar to entry to those who wish to become involved in the program.

Barriers. There are some indications that aspects of the NJRP-LE may need remedial attention. First, an initial review of trainers' satisfaction levels revealed that satisfaction with the program was highest at the MRT levels and lower at the RPO and officer levels. Additionally, the train-the-trainer model can hinder communication and comprehension of the core training materials, since the more individuals that the training must pass through before reaching its intended target, the more complex the relay process becomes. It has also been anecdotally noted by some that it is difficult to teach the content of a subject while simultaneously instructing individuals how to adequately train others on the subject.

Additionally, a 2021 dissertation report reviewing the progress of the NJRP-LE noted additional concerns. First, the selection criteria for RPOs is vague. Although agency directors are told to consider several factors when selecting RPOs—including the specific needs of the agency and an applicant's qualifications, years of experience, past and current work assignments, interest in the position, and relevant training—there is no criteria given for determining when to accept and when to deny individuals for the position. Furthermore, despite the program's commitment to confidentiality, the fact that individual agency policy can override the confidentiality of law enforcement officers' communications to RPOs harms this fundamental feature. Since RPOs can be contacted by any officer from any agency, it is unreasonable to assume that officers seeking aid from an RPO at a different agency would have knowledge of that agency's policies, potentially compromising an officer's trust that their outreach to an RPO will be maintained in confidence.

Impact, Validation, and Replication

The NJRP-LE is a relatively new program and is also the first of its kind in the country. Additionally, the program's training remains ongoing, and its training deadline has, as of the publication of this report, yet to pass. As such, it is too soon to conclusively assess the program and validate—or invalidate—its success at improving officer wellness.

However, currently available data present both an encouraging and cautious picture. A dissertation completed at Seton Hall University in 2021, "Evaluation of the New Jersey Resiliency Program for Law Enforcement," provides an initial look at the validity of the New Jersey Attorney General's endeavor. By surveying current trainers in the program, the author establishes that the majority of trainers feel interested in serving their agencies as RPOs, that their own knowledge has been bolstered by going through the training, that the training materials are appropriate and helpful, and that they have learned enough about the program to adequately teach the information to others. However, the evaluation also revealed large numbers of trainers who feel that the program could be improved. Respondents pointed to the complex nature of the program, stating that the concepts were too advanced and clinical. Additionally, others have conveyed that some of the training materials were unhelpful, and that the lessons could have been condensed to be more comprehensible and more easily disseminated.

Nonetheless, early indications support a case for optimism about the prospects of the NJRP-LE as an effective wellness-enhancement effort for law enforcement.

Additional Resources

- [New Jersey Office of the Attorney General, Officer Resiliency Program](#)
- [New Jersey Attorney General Law Enforcement Directive No. 2019-1](#)
- [Frank Sutter, Evaluation of the New Jersey Resiliency Program for Law Enforcement \(Seton Hall University Dissertation\)](#)

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Innovations and Emerging Practices

Investing in excellence in first-line supervisors

Many departments have early warning programs, sometimes referred to as early intervention programs, that allow departments to track officer conduct and identify patterns that indicate the potential for future misconduct. These programs allow departments to intervene and provide remedial instruction, counseling, or supervision to either address any actual misconduct or reduce its likelihood and are intended to be proactive efforts to stop misconduct before it occurs. Most programs are intended to be effective in identifying behaviors that truly indicate a likelihood of future misconduct while also being careful to not falsely flag an officer whose potential for misconduct is minimal.

As such, most systems rely on behavioral metrics that clearly tend to indicate the need for intervention, such as civilian complaints of excessive use of force. Officers flagged by an early warning system therefore may be labeled negatively by their peers, which shifts the perception of the program toward being disciplinary in nature rather than remedial. This perception tends to contradict departmental messaging around these programs, which tries to characterize them as corrective rather than punitive. Nonetheless, officer wariness of early warning systems and the implications of being flagged by one largely persists. Moreover, because these systems typically trigger interventions after the occurrence of multiple incidents, rather than being “early” the response may, in fact, be late.

A better approach is the implementation of a true early warning system providing and ensuring enhanced supervision through review of critical incidents and random review of officer performance. This enhanced supervision permits front-line supervisors to review and monitor officer performance along multiple metrics, not just negative behaviors. The system would incorporate not just negative actions or behavior but would also identify situations in which officer wellness might be implicated. Similarly, it would identify incidents in which exemplary conduct was observed and allow for appropriate commendation and use of such situations in training.

Under this approach, available interventions would include those that are intended to correct sub-standard tactics or behavior, commend exemplary conduct, and promote officer well-being. With respect to promoting officer well-being, in-house psychologists and mental health professionals could also be integrated into the early warning response process, allowing for the program to address not just actual field performance but also officer readiness.

Organizational wellness

Wellness in the policing profession cannot be achieved through a singular focus on officer wellbeing. Improving the quality of life of a department’s members of service demands efforts to improve the institutional wellness of the department itself. Although the wellness goals of most police wellness initiatives pertain to individual outcomes, like minimizing self-harm and self-medication and improving stress rates and work-life balance, few of these outcomes can be reliably achieved if an institution does

not foster a culture of wellness normalization. Failure to foster this kind of culture can halt a department's wellness efforts and make officers even more reluctant to prioritize personal wellbeing or encourage others to do the same.

Departments can promote a culture of wellness in two key ways: by offering meaningful wellness resources and consistently providing messaging to officers about their availability and utility, and by adhering to the organizational tenets of procedural justice, which promotes the institutional qualities necessary to earn credibility within officer ranks. By coupling an agency's messaging and investments in wellness with practices centered on fairness, voice, transparency, and impartiality, departments can simultaneously demonstrate their commitment to fostering work environments that value officers and generate confidence among officers in the department's leadership on wellness issues. All of these efforts can substantially reduce the stigma and skepticism that have become attached to officer wellness issues, and reassure officers that prioritizing wellness can enhance their individual wellbeing without sacrificing their professional standing.

Although the tenets of procedural justice can run into the conventions of the paramilitary hierarchy of most police departments, the two are not incompatible. Departments would still retain operational and managerial control over their officers and staff; procedural justice would only serve to inform a department's subordinates of not only the decisions of their superiors, but also the considerations that inform departmental decision-making. Further procedural justice allows for integration of officer feedback on departmental decision-making, improving information exchanges and allowing departments to leverage the vast collective experience of their workforces. Each department's path toward achieving organizational wellness may be different, but the fundamental guiding principles and values are the same, as are the intended results.

360 Review

Past research has shown that police subordinates tended to give their immediate supervisor a high rating based on how frequently the supervisor was perceived to engage in supportive actions for his or her subordinates. Whether the supervisor was seen to offer too much or too little direction was also a significant factor, albeit not nearly as strong. The research of eight different police organizations has further demonstrated that organizations where supervisors enjoy the confidence of their subordinates, those subordinates tend to perform better than those who lack confidence in their leaders. The powerful effect of social relations-oriented leadership in the views of police subordinates in this sample was consistent with a large body of research on leadership and management in general.

It may then be fruitful for police departments to seek ways to bolster the abilities and inclinations of their supervisors to provide such social support by examining the department's efforts at recruitment and selection of officers, training, and performance appraisal. The study also shows that providing more task-oriented direction was a significant, though less strong, influence on subordinates' ratings of their boss. Finding ways to enhance this aspect of police supervision will also have payoffs in these departments.

One approach to getting an accurate picture of supervision is through what is commonly known as 360-degree review process where individuals receive feedback from multiple people at multiple levels in a secure way. There is a variety of software available that provides this kind of review, like Beyond 360, an online software program offered to police departments in the United Kingdom by the country's College of Policing. The program can be customized and provides numerous reporting mechanisms and the ability to develop personal development planning. Such software can be a tool to help identify areas of strength and development for officers and departments alike, serving to embed the spirit of continuous improvement both individually and collectively.

Additional Resources

- [Stephen D. Mastrofski et al., Police Supervision: A 360-Degree View of Eight Police Departments](#)
- [James M. Fico et al., Intelligence-Led Leadership Selection](#)

Reforming Police Officer Shifts

More than 90 percent of law enforcement officers report experiencing routine fatigue, with 85 percent reporting that they have driven while drowsy. Although fatigue is commonly understood as a single condition, the reality is that it can present itself as a range of symptoms that include exhaustion, depression and other mood disorders, and reduced mental and physical capacity. These conditions can lead to memory impairment, irritability, and stress, and can also manifest themselves physiologically, including through obesity and hypertension. As stated in a [study](#) published by the National Institute of Justice, fatigue “degrades officers' cognition, reaction time and alertness and impairs their ability to protect themselves and the communities they serve.” The complex pathologies of officer fatigue can make developing interventions challenging, but one approach carries promise: reducing the frequency of police officer duty shifts.

In a typical week, police officers work one 8-hour shift each day for five consecutive days. Most commonly, these shifts start either in the early morning, late afternoon, or around midnight, and can extend past their designated end points whenever an officer performs overtime, including after making an arrest or being assigned to a special duty. Officers may also work multiple shifts in a row to help alleviate staffing shortages. Despite being the norm for decades, these practices are increasingly being revisited, particularly as a way to reduce officer fatigue.

Many departments are experimenting with having officers work longer shifts over fewer days. For example, an officer may work four 10-hour shifts or three 12-hour shifts over a 7-day period, rather than the conventional five 8-hour shifts. Although more research is needed, early findings indicate that officers working on modified shift schedules reported higher quality of life than those who worked conventional schedules. Additionally, departments with officers who worked modified schedules reported reduced overtime rates, which could help substantially curb personnel costs, making these alternatives further attractive.

Additional Resources

- [John Violanti et al., An Exploration of Shift Work, Fatigue, and Gender Among Police Officers](#)
- [Beth Pearsal, Sleep Disorders, Work Shifts and Officer Wellness](#)

XI. Recruitment and qualifications standards for entry-level police officer positions

Introduction

The foundations of strong police agencies must be rooted in their diverse and qualified workforces, but recruiting such a workforce can be challenging. Doing so requires agencies to remove unnecessary barriers, ensure fairness in the recruitment process, and avoid cumbersome hiring practices. The task is made more difficult by the ever-evolving qualifications and expectations for employment as a police officer. As demonstrated by a recent posting from the city of Boston (MA) in its search for a new police commissioner, local police departments need leaders—and by extension, officers—capable of serving during a “new era for public safety,” one defined by the “demands for racial and social justice” that were sparked by the “unjust killings of Michael Brown, George Floyd, Breonna Taylor, and many others.” Those who elect to serve in this modern era of policing must possess a formidable set of skills and exhibit a principled dedication to their profession’s continual improvement, as well as their own. However, finding candidates of exceptional qualification at a time of diminished interest among prospective applicants has brought the policing profession to the most difficult recruiting crisis it has felt in over a generation.

Overcoming these recruitment challenges will force agencies to revisit how they attract applicants, establish employment qualifications, make hiring selections, and support police recruits through their training. Further, the structure and curriculum used to teach officers the fundamentals of policing must build and support the skills and values to which officers are expected to commit themselves. In short, departments must strive for broad improvements across their entire ecosystems to ensure that they can attract and retain the best of the best. If they fail to do so, police agencies can expect little change or progress and will fail to keep pace with the public’s demands and expectations for modern policing.

Policing’s recruitment and retention crisis has affected agencies small and large and from coast to coast. With fewer people expressing an interest in a career in policing, including from traditional sources like the military, applicant pools have declined significantly, resulting in smaller classes of new officers. Further, veteran officers are choosing to leave their hiring agency or the profession entirely before they reach retirement age, resulting in staffing deficits that diminishing recruitment classes cannot fill.

Compounding the recruitment challenges facing police agencies is the changing nature of police work itself. Policing no longer merely consists of law enforcement, and the reality of day-to-day police work is growing increasingly complex. Individually, officers today are expected to possess and utilize a growing skillset outside the realm of conventional command-and-control tactics like arrest and use of force. Collectively, the police are expected to participate in coordinated responses with other agencies where their command-and-control function is increasingly secondary to the functions of other responders, like paramedics or mental health specialists. The reality of policing has thus become unfamiliar to many within its ranks and to those who may have otherwise answered the call to service. The changing dynamics of policing have the potential to deter or attract potential candidates, depending on how departments respond to the evolving nature of the policing profession. Many departments realize this and are being deliberate in their responses, including by adopting new recruitment strategies, revisiting entry level

requirements, and streamlining the recruitment process in the hopes of simultaneously replenishing their diminished officer ranks while reconstructing new recruitment classes capable of handling a job whose evolution continues.

What has already been done in Colorado?

By Colorado law, an individual must complete certain baseline requirements before they may serve as a peace officer in the state. These requirements include graduating from a basic training academy certified by the Colorado Peace Officer Standards and Training (POST) Board, passing a POST certification examination, successfully completing a physical and psychological examination, and a being vetted through a background check. There are twenty-five POST certified academies across the state. Although several cities and the state police run their own academies, most academies are regionally run or are certified programs at local community colleges. There is no online certified POST academy, but provisional certification is available for out-of-state officers applying for a lateral position in-state.

In addition to the Colorado POST Board's minimum requirements for employment, each agency may impose additional requirements. Colorado POST requires applicants to be 21 years old by the date of hire as a peace officer, hold a high school or general equivalency degree, and hold a Colorado driver's license or state-issued ID card. Colorado also requires a fingerprint-based criminal history check and prohibits hiring any person previously convicted of any felony, any domestic violence offense, or certain misdemeanors. The hiring agency has the latitude to determine the scope of the examination and evaluation for physical and psychological exams, as well as determining the standards of acceptability of such results.

Recruitment efforts of officers and deputies in Colorado are left up to individual agencies and these efforts vary widely. Most agencies in Colorado follow traditional methods of recruitment such as giving an entry level exam periodically, leaving it to the prospective applicant to learn about vacancies through advertisements and notices, and reaching out to the agency for an application.

The Colorado State Patrol has made significant efforts to address recruitment challenges. As a state patrol agency, they face special challenges such as a mandatory residential academy and statewide assignments that often require relocation. In 2019, they commissioned a study by the RAND Corporation to evaluate their department's efforts, although as of the date of this report, they have not implemented the changes that were recommended and are planning follow-up review. Some of the recommendations that are under consideration include implementing a year-round, rolling application process and shortening the current 9-month period from application to hiring.

Several other departments in Colorado have made strong efforts to expand their recruitment efforts as well as entry-level requirements. Several examples are:

- The Denver Police Department (DPD), which has increased their online recruiting efforts in addition to the traditional application process. They have also started a women's community academy to encourage women's involvement in the policing workforce. DPD has also added character screening questions to their entry-level requirements to measure congruence with DPD's core values, emotional intelligence, and awareness of one's implicit biases.
- The Aurora Police Department (APD), which promotes career enhancement mentoring as a recruitment and retention incentive. This process involves enhancing the abilities and skills of department members while in their current positions to prepare them for career advancement.

- The Fort Collins Police Department (FCPD), which, through its Explorer Program, provides interested teens and young adults with classroom instruction, hands on practical exercises, and real-world experiences in law enforcement.
- The Thornton Police Department (TPD), which offers officers and recruits multilingual pay incentives to appeal to potential recruits with that skill set.

Other departments across Colorado are making efforts to speed up the time from initial application through the evaluation process and hiring decision. Some departments are even offering immediate employment of accepted applicants in civilian jobs within the department until the academy commences, which helps ease the financial burden of continuing through the application process and familiarizes recruits with the department and vice versa.

Overview of Practices Considered

Because officer recruitment has become a concern for departments nationwide, departments have looked to one another for guidance on how to overcome their recruitment challenges. As such, many departments have followed in the footsteps of other departments and have implemented new outreach programs, revisited departmental requirements for employment eligibility, and established new recruitment pipelines. Accordingly, it can be difficult to identify departments whose efforts truly stand out among those of their peers. Nonetheless, two considerations helped inform the selection of the efforts featured here: longevity and impact.

The most ideal recruitment programs are the ones that enjoy long track records of demonstrable success, as reflected in both the quantity and quality of the recruits they attract. The programs featured here as best practices come closest to achieving this ideal. Given the profession's ongoing efforts to not only adequately staff its departments but also to attract candidates reflective of the communities they serve, these programs have also demonstrated their efficacy at attracting the kinds of diverse recruits that departments are actively seeking. The entries discuss not only programmatic offerings but also changes to departmental operations and protocols that are undertaken to reduce the barriers of entry into the policing profession. In sum, the entries featured here reflect those efforts that are the most comprehensive in nature and that view recruitment as a holistic endeavor requiring earnest effort by departments to attract the best recruits they can.

However, the emerging and innovative practices included in this section recognize that more can still be done to improve recruitment and hiring in the policing profession. These entries, many of which stand as calls for future action rather than as descriptions of current efforts, question some of the fundamental approaches to recruitment and hiring that have persisted over decades but that, in light of policing's recruitment crisis, merit revisitation and reconsideration. However, because the profession has yet to undertake the self-reflection called for in these entries, they are offered here as innovative and emerging practices that should be considered as part of a longer-term strategy for improving police recruitment and hiring broadly.

Boston Police Cadet Program

Recruitment effort directed at homegrown candidates

Summary

The Boston (MA) Police Department's (BPD) Cadet Program seeks to recruit police cadets from across the city of Boston as part of the department's efforts to ensure its officers reflect the communities they serve. The program does so by employing young adults aged 18-25 years as cadets with full-time paid employment within the police department in the period between their high school graduation and their attainment of the age of eligibility to join the police academy. The program was created to attract and retain applicants from communities in and around Boston that are underrepresented in the BPD's ranks and has succeeded not only at attracting recruits to the department, but also at developing eventual departmental leaders, including two prior BPD Commissioners who started their careers as cadets.

History and Development

The Boston Cadet Program originated in 1979 as an effort to establish new pathways to employment as a sworn police officer within the BPD. The program was intended to attract a wider pool of candidates who might be interested and prepared to successfully apply for admission to the police academy. The hope was that new recruits would, over time, improve racial and gender diversity within the BPD, which was predominantly white and male.

The program operates to give participants, known as cadets, a hiring preference similar to the preference enjoyed by military veterans. Cadets are employed full-time within the department as uniformed civilians, with salary and benefits provided. In addition to receiving skills training, cadets are exposed to the work of the department, offering both cadets and the department an opportunity to familiarize themselves with one another and to ensure that cadets will be comfortable assuming the responsibilities expected of sworn officers. Cadets are required to make a two-year commitment to the program, though may remain in it for longer, up until they reach the age of 25 years.

Although the program was first created over four decades ago and has enjoyed substantial interest from potential police recruits, it has languished periodically due to periods of inadequate funding and staffing. However, the program has been renewed over the past six years and currently receives between 300-400 applications for each entering class, which consists of between 30-40 cadets. Since 2016, 132 cadets have been hired, with nearly every cadet successfully completing their two-year commitment.

Implementation

Logistics. The Boston Police Department solicits applications to the Cadet Program through an open process that is advertised on the BPD website. The department does not issue a formal notice calling for applications, nor are there any regularly scheduled entry examinations. Instead, the department informally recruits prospective applicants through its outreach at schools, job fairs, and community centers, including posters advertising the program, and by word of mouth among current and prior applicants. Cadet classes are assembled and organized as needed once a year, with class sizes varying

from between 5 to 45 cadets but averaging at about 30 cadets. Applicants must have maintained Boston residency for the five years prior to their enrollment and are required to have a valid driver's license. Prior to being admitted to the program, applicants are formally interviewed, undergo a background investigation and drug screening, and submit to medical and psychological examinations. This process mirrors the process required of sworn officers.

The program is administered through the Boston Police Academy and begins with a four-week training and orientation session. During their training, cadets are issued uniforms, complete a physical fitness regimen each morning, and are familiarized with BPD's rules and regulations. Cadets receive training on various components of BPD's operations and administration, including using the department's computer system, completing paperwork, writing tickets, administering CPR, driving emergency vehicles, and conducting community outreach.

Upon their completion of the four-week academy orientation, cadets rotate through a series of assignments within the BPD to expose them broadly to the department's work. Each assignment lasts six months, during which time cadets are instructed on community policing practices, with the goal of refining their maturity, responsibility, team ethic, and comfort with the department's culture. For cadets who are pursuing post-secondary education concurrently with their employment as a cadet, or who have family obligations that limit their availability, the department offers flexible work schedules, including limited hours.

Cadets who successfully complete their two-year commitment and pass the required civil service police examination receive preference on the list of eligible candidates for an incoming police recruitment class, with the BPD Commissioner exercising ultimate say over a cadet's entrance into the Police Academy. The overwhelming majority of cadets—85%—successfully complete the program and join either the BPD or another police department within the state as a sworn officer.

Facilitators. The success of the BPD's cadet program derives from the significant investment of time, staffing, and funding from the department and city leadership generally. Accordingly, the BPD Commissioner and mayor of Boston are owed substantial credit for helping to revive the Cadet Program over the past few years.

Barriers. Although administration of the program does become easier after its logistics are established and operationalized, the start-up effort to create the program in the first place can be considerable.

First, given the status of the cadet as a paid employee of the department, the program must navigate any applicable civil service considerations, including the creation of a defined job description and assurances that the position's responsibilities do not violate the terms of any collective bargaining agreement that may apply to unionized police personnel.

Further, the department must dedicate staff to oversee the program's administration, including advertising and recruiting prospective cadets. Finally, the cadet position must be integrated into the department's operations, including training them adequately for the responsibilities they will undertake during their terms of service and rotations through the department. Accordingly, setting up a cadet program, and maintaining it long-term, is a significant undertaking.

Impact, Validation, and Replication

The BPD's Cadet Program has met with overall success, with minority cadets comprising more than half of each class over the past six years and women cadets comprising over 20% of each class in the same period. More than 90% of cadets successfully complete their two-year commitment to the program, and 85% eventually achieve employment as sworn officers either in Boston or in other police departments in Massachusetts. It is worth noting, however, that cadet classes may constitute relatively small portions of each graduating class of Boston's Police Academy. For example, of the 111 total academy graduates in 2021, only 8 were cadets; in 2020, only 19 of the graduating class's 94 members were cadets. Nonetheless, the program has seen many of its members achieve senior command positions within BPD's leadership, including two of whom who eventually served as BPD Commissioner, one of whom was BPD's first Black commissioner.

Additional Resources

- [Boston Police Department Cadet Program](#)
- [Cadet Program Brochure](#)

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Law Enforcement Exploring Program

Career exploration program for youth interested in policing

Summary

The Law Enforcement Exploring Program is a career-oriented program that gives young people aged 14-20 years the opportunity to explore careers in law enforcement by working directly with local law enforcement agencies. Founded as part of the Learning for Life program of the Boy Scouts of America, the Exploring Program is open to men and women and offers participants insights into law enforcement careers while emphasizing the importance of higher education, self-discipline, and respect for diversity and human dignity. The program operates locally with coordination and support from the national Learning for Life program, which retains its affiliation with the Boy Scouts of America.

History and Development

The Law Enforcement Exploring Program originated as a part of the larger career education Exploring Program of the Boy Scouts of America. The program, which was created in part to connect business and professional and trade organizations with high school students interested in pursuing careers in specialized fields, eventually expanded to include women and participants as old as 20 years of age. The Law Enforcement Exploring Program was created to help coordinate a national program for young people interest specifically in policing. The national program is overseen by the Boys Scouts-affiliated Learning for Life program, which hosts the bi-annual National Law Enforcement Exploring Conference. However, the program is administered largely at the local level by individual police departments that operate local explorer posts. These local posts must adhere to standards and requirements established by Learning for Life and are overseen by regional councils.

Implementation

Logistics. Local exploring programs are established at the initiative of individual police departments, which serve as the hosts of local exploring posts. Departments seeking to participate in the program must submit a letter of intent signed by their department head and must designate police staff to administer the post and a committee to plan and support the post's work. This committee typically comprises community volunteers and department staff, all of whom are required to be cleared by national and state background checks. The committee then elects a Post Advisor who is responsible for ensuring that the program is meeting its objectives and adhering to applicable requirements, including that the department contribute adequate funding and facility space to enable the post's programming. Once all requirements are met, the post can then seek official approval from Learning for Life to open and function as an established Law Enforcement Exploring Post. In all, the planning and approval process can take several months.

Once established, posts begin recruiting and selecting youth participants, who undergo an orientation to introduce themselves to one another and to the program's staff. Local posts are provided with a national curriculum to consult for ideas on training sessions that can be augmented with locally designed classes, activities, and community service programming. Activities may include classroom instruction, police ridealongs, training on first aid and CPR, visits to criminal justice agencies, and physical fitness programs.

As youth participants advance through the program, they may be promoted to leadership positions to handle some supervision and planning responsibilities.

Facilitators. Local departments looking to participate in the Exploring Program can benefit greatly from the resources made available through Learning for Life. The provision of standard curricula can help nascent posts get their programming off the ground, and the coordination of national conferences serves to bring together representatives from local posts, creating a national community that can be drawn from for support and dialogue. Learning for Life also publishes a guide on how individual agencies can establish a local post, with step-by-step instructions on how to implement the exploring model, including how to staff the program and recruit youth participants. The program's longevity, with roots stretching back decades, also offers a historical blueprint that can be referenced and used to inform implementation efforts. The presence of local posts across the country can also help new posts model themselves on their peers, factoring in size, location, and agency composition into their own implementation.

Barriers. Despite the program's resources, developing and implementing a local explorers post nonetheless carries some cost considerations. For example, Learning for Life requires participating departments to submit an annual registration fee of \$75 for the post and \$45 for each participating youth, which may not be inconsiderable costs for smaller departments or departments hoping to field larger participant classes. There are also the associated costs of dedicating departmental staff to the program's administration. Some departments can support a full-time position, others can only support a part-time or overtime position, and others still rely on volunteers. Although community benefactors can help defray some of these costs, there is no guarantee of outside financial support for efforts to establish a local post.

Impact, Validation, and Replication

The Law Enforcement Exploring Program has demonstrated considerable success in achieving its mission of exposing youth to law enforcement careers and fostering spirit of service to the community within its participants. Learning for Life has overseen the establishment of thousands of local posts nationwide, including in small and large departments alike, and thousands of youths have participated in the program, with many having pursued careers in law enforcement. The program has earned a highly trusted reputation among communities and police departments and continues to help bridge connections between the two to aid in police recruitment efforts nationwide.

Additional Resources

- [Law Enforcement Exploring Program](#)

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LAPD Pledge to Patrol and Recruitment Strategy Overhaul

Comprehensive review of departmental recruitment and hiring

Summary

With an eye toward increasing its applicant pool and achieving greater diversity within its ranks, the Los Angeles (CA) Police Department (LAPD) initiated a comprehensive study and analysis of its hiring practices to identify and implement improvements to its hiring process. Seeking to, among other things, develop better communication with young adults to foster within them an interest in pursuing a law enforcement career, the department contracted with an outside consulting firm and collaborated with other city departments to aid in its effort. Among the results of these efforts are the LAPD Pledge to Patrol program, which combines employment, mentorship, and training to link high school graduates to a recruitment pipeline that leads directly to the department, and changes to the department's overall recruitment strategy intended to make the process easier to complete and more transparent.

History and Development

Pledge to Patrol was designed to offer an apprentice-like experience for prospective police recruits recently out of high school. Starting in 2017, the program began hiring youth adults to serve as Associate Community Officers (ACO) while also pursuing higher education. ACOs are exposed to the work of the department while developing relationships with officer mentors. The program specifically intends to improve diversity within the department, and most of the program's participants have come from underrepresented communities.

The department worked with the Los Angeles Innovation team, an in-house consultancy within Los Angeles government, to enhance and broaden their recruitment and hiring strategies for the program. These enhanced recruitment initiatives included a more robust social media campaign and the creation of an online candidate portal. These initiatives also included text message and email reminders to applicants to encourage them to complete the recruitment process and to improve transparency about the application process generally. Overall, these efforts have combined to increase the number of applicants to the LAPD and to reduce their attrition during the application process.

Implementation

Logistics. ACOs work for 20 hours per week and assist sworn officers with certain investigations. This schedule is intended to permit ACOs to pursue college studies during their term of employment while still allowing them to get first-hand experience doing law enforcement work. ACOs are assigned mentors from within the department and receive training to help them gain eventual employment at the LAPD upon becoming eligible to serve as sworn officers at age 21.

As an augment for encouraging applications to the department's academy, the LAPD worked with the Los Angeles Innovation Team to develop a series of interventions rooted in behavioral science that are intended to improve the academy's application rate. These interventions included using "nudges", or behavioral triggers intended to encourage applicants to commence or complete the application process.

These nudges included text messages and emails that updated applicants on their application status and offered information on next steps. For example, an applicant may receive the following notice: “We noticed you missed your exam. Here are additional dates and times that the exam is being offered” or “You have passed your background investigation. You will now be moving on to the medical exam. Here is where you can find the details for that next step.” These messages, while substantively informative, also served to remind applicants to continue with the application process or encourage them to move forward by providing them with positive reinforcement, like good news regarding their successful completion of one of the application’s requirements.

The LAPD also created a candidate portal that allows applicants to track their progress and complete parts of their application online. This portal features a chatbox called Officer CHIP, which is capable of answering questions from potential recruits 24 hours per day. This chatbox functionality has helped reduce the volume of phone and email queries received by the department and helps applicants receive necessary information in a timelier fashion. The portal also allows applicants to request a mentor who can provide guidance to the applicant throughout the process or answer applicants’ questions about service as a sworn officer.

Facilitators. The LAPD’s efforts were aided by the availability of free assistance from the Los Angeles Innovation Team, which serves as an in-house consultancy within Los Angeles city government to help design and implement data-driven innovations throughout the city’s departments. The Team reviewed the LAPD’s application process and the systems used by applicants to determine areas for improvement, and their help came at no additional cost to the department.

Barriers. Implementation of the Los Angeles Innovation Team’s recommended changes can carry costs, including the design and development of new systems and processes for receiving and tracking applications. Additionally, programs like Pledge to Patrol require significant investment of staffing and resources to support its operation. These investments include not only funding the participants’ paid employment, but also the costs and logistics associated with providing participants with training and mentorship.

Impact, Validation, and Replication

The LAPD’s combined efforts have yielded impressive fruit. The Pledge to Patrol program has created a pipeline of applicants that is helping the department meet its recruitment goals. Considering the strong representation of underrepresented groups among the program’s applicants, including recruitment classes that are more than half women, Pledge to Patrol is also serving to help the LAPD achieve its diversity goals.

The department’s embrace of behavioral nudges has also helped the department realize significant improvements to its application rates. Since it began incorporating reminders into its application process and using its new application portal, the department has seen the number of candidates who attended a physical training program increase by 58%. Those applicants were also 39% more likely to complete their applications within two weeks. The number of applicants who provided completed background check forms also grew by 15%, and the use of simplified language on application materials facilitated faster response rates, with applicants being 40% more likely to submit their forms within two weeks, compared

to applicant pools who applied before these changes were made. Applicants also praised the ability to track their progress through the application portal, a feature they often cited as helping to sustain their interest in pursuing employment with the department.

Additional Resources

- [Los Angeles Innovation Team, Redesigning LAPD's Recruitment and Hiring Strategy](#)
- [LAPD Applicant Mentorship Program](#)

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Tucson 30x30 Initiative

Local and national police recruitment effort for women

Summary

Facing a low and declining rate of interest among women with joining its ranks, the Tucson (AZ) Police Department (TPD) joined the national 30x30 Initiative, which comprises a coalition of police leaders and professional organizations seeking to increase the representation of women in police agencies across the United States. Availing itself of the Initiative's resources, including best practice guidance and technical assistance, the TPD kicked off a substantial recruitment effort that included targeted advertisements, appearances at local colleges and job fairs, open house events, and a new online application process that has helped it realize significant improvements in attracting women to the department.

History and Development

Across America's police departments, women constitute only about 12% of sworn officers nationwide and 3% of departmental leadership. In Tucson, the numbers are only marginally better, with 15% of its police force consisting of women officers. To improve and reinvigorate its recruitment of women into its ranks, the TPD joined the 30x30 Initiative, which seeks to improve representation of women in departmental ranks to a minimum threshold of 30% nationwide by the year 2030. Founded in 2019, the 30x30 Initiative seeks to implement the findings of the Research Summit on Women in Policing, hosted by the National Institute of Justice in 2018. These findings, which were published by the NIJ in a 2019 special report titled *Women in Policing: Breaking Barriers and Blazing a Path*, include guiding principles, a research agenda, and promising practices and next steps for those seeking to improve the representation of women in the law enforcement profession. These findings create the foundation for the work of the Initiative and, by extension, its participating members, including the TPD.

Implementation

Logistics. The TPD's efforts consist of a variety of interrelated outreach to generate interest in policing careers among women applicants. For example, the department hosts open house events 2-3 times per year that are catered specifically to women applicants, with opportunities to meet current women officers. Each event draws an average of 20-30 prospective applicants, and recent open houses, which have drawn closer to 100 prospective applicants, have been held at the police academy to help demystify it. These events include representatives from the TPD's specialized units and its communications and support staff, all of whom are available to answer questions and provide guidance. Contact information for prospective applicants is collected so that recruiters and outreach staff can remain in close contact about future recruitment opportunities.

Applicants are informed of various employment opportunities within the department, including as a Community Service Officer (CSO). CSOs are full-time employees who carry out many of the same functions performed by sworn officers, including completing accident reports, fingerprinting arrestees, conducting traffic enforcement, and engaging in community outreach. The department, which presently employs about 70-80 CSOs, plans to expand their ranks to over 300. Many CSOs eventually elect to move on to

sworn positions within the department. Considering that the majority of TPD's CSOs are women, their ranks can be a significant source of women officers for the department. To facilitate their transition into sworn officers, the department intends to implement a police recruit academy for interested CSOs by 2023. As designed, the academy will consist of a 40-week part-time academy where CSOs work 30 hours per week in their assignment and spend Fridays at the academy. This schedule would provide CSOs with the requisite 400 hours of instruction required by Arizona's Police Office Standards and Training curriculum. Once this instruction is completed, CSOs would commence a second, 10-week module at the academy, where they would complete another 400 hours of training to receive their police certification. The CSO's academy, totaling at 800 hours of instruction, allows for a shorter period of academy instruction while still satisfying the requirements for becoming a sworn officer, which otherwise requires 1,100 hours of academy instruction for non-CSO recruits.

The department also changed its intake process for applications, creating a simplified online process intended to make it easier for applicants to complete and submit their applications. The improved online site allows applicants to navigate it on their smartphones and submit answers to required background check questionnaires. The department also actively analyzes trends among sought-after recruits, including minorities and women, to track potential barriers to their successful completion of the application process and identify solutions. These solutions include targeted messaging that encourages applicants to complete the process and mentoring from department recruiters, who can offer applicants opportunities to go on ride-alongs to give them some first-hand experience. Other solutions include replacing the pre-academy physical fitness test with volunteer workout opportunities and basic nutrition plans. Once a contingent offer of admission is made, candidates are then offered additional physical fitness sessions to help ensure their success during the academy.

Finally, the department offers police recruits and CSOs who are accepted to the academy full-time employment prior to their matriculation. This includes rotations within the department's various units and outside partners, like the courts, victim advocacy groups, and the county attorney, and helps keep recruits engaged and informed while offering them a salary to ease financial hardship.

Facilitators. The Tucson Police Department's varied efforts are supported by a number of partnerships. Foremost, TPD's participation in the 30x30 Initiative supplies them with resources on how to develop and implement recruitment efforts targeted toward women. These resources include a research guide on practices that have proven to be effective and materials on how to create a supportive environment for women. Although the Initiative's work is ongoing, it has already established itself as a clearinghouse for information specific to achieving greater gender diversity in policing, and the TPD has availed itself of this brain trust when developing its own recruitment strategy.

Other partnerships have been instrumental as well. For example, the TPD enjoys existing partnerships with local school districts, which help the department host specialized recruitment events, and which share recruitment materials with students interested in policing careers. Some schools even participate in more robust recruitment efforts, having sponsored recruitment classes to feed into the department's CSO and officer ranks.

Barriers. Funding for TPD's more robust efforts has finished, highlighting the precariousness of their continued viability. Although its external partnerships can serve to minimize costs by leveraging the resources of other organizations, the success of such partnerships ultimately depends on the TPD's ability

to keep its core 30x30 efforts moving ahead. To alleviate cost concerns and revive 30x30 to full implementation, the department is exploring the possibility of additional funding commitments, including with potential federal grants, though access to such funding is not guaranteed.

Impact, Validation, and Replication

Part of an agency's participation in the national 30x30 Initiative includes committing itself to investigating new strategies and evaluating their impact. Because the initiative remains nascent, these investigations are ongoing and have yet to conclude. Accordingly, little data exists on how recruitment efforts are progressing, particularly given the pandemic-related difficulties of the past few years. However, the strategies that TPD implemented based on guidance from the 30x30 Initiative enjoy a substantial basis in available research. This research, which is collected in the Initiative's [Research Guide](#), has found, for example, that fitness requirements can be unduly restrictive, artificially reducing the pool of prospective women applicants. The Initiative's advocacy additionally calls for greater attention to, and investment in, research on women representation within the policing profession, including relating to recruitment of women into the county's sworn officer ranks.

Additional Resources

- [The 30x30 Initiative](#)
- [The 30x30 Initiative Research Guide](#)
- [The 30x0 Initiative - What Works](#)
- [National Institute of Justice, Special Report - Women in Policing: Breaking Barriers and Blazing a Path](#)
- [Institute for Excellent in Government, Recruiting for Diversity in Law Enforcement: Selected Recent Research Insights](#)
- [Police Executive Research Forum, The Workforce Crisis, and What Police Agencies Are Doing About It](#)

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Innovations and Emerging Practices

Revisiting Officer Recruit Qualifications and Standards

One of the most important aspects of maintaining and operating a police department is guaranteeing that the officers who are hired to staff the department are sufficiently qualified and skilled to fulfill their important responsibilities. In their effort to hire such individuals, departments maintain policies that list minimum qualifications for being a police officer. As a complement to these minimum qualifications, departments frequently list disqualifiers, or qualities that render applicants ineligible for hire. Disqualifiers can include prior or current drug use, a documented criminal history, or failure to meet certain education requirements, among others.

Recent struggles to fill police department recruitment classes can be connected, in part, to the large number of applicants who are eliminated according to these disqualifiers, as well as the unwillingness of some potential candidates to apply in the first place because of the difficulty of completing the hiring process. Similarly, a lack of diversity within officer recruitment classes has been attributed to the outsized impact that certain disqualifiers have on applicants from minority backgrounds.

To address these issues, departments throughout the country have revisited their minimum qualification requirements, their lists of disqualifiers, and how qualifying and disqualifying traits are considered. In particular, qualifiers and disqualifiers in four areas have received renewed attention: marijuana use; the prior commission of minor offenses, including traffic violations; minimum education requirements; and having tattoos.

Marijuana Usage.

Over the past few years, state legislatures have increasingly legalized or decriminalized the recreational use of marijuana, with at least nineteen states having done so as of June 2022. As a natural result of this shift, greater numbers of police applicants have backgrounds that include the recreational use of marijuana. Accordingly, department hiring policies that penalize the prior use of marijuana have disqualified more applicants than ever. To combat this, departments across the country have taken steps to adjust their policies to better reflect the new social and legal landscape.

Changes to departmental marijuana usage policies range from minor modifications to complete policy abolition, though some departments have opted to make no changes whatsoever and continue to exclude applicants fully or penalize them heavily for their prior marijuana use. Departments with these kinds of zero-tolerance policies are typically in states where the recreational use of marijuana remains unlawful, like Louisiana.

Other departments, even in states where marijuana use remains illegal, have relaxed their policies to be more flexible. In Baltimore (MD), prior policy disqualified any applicant who had used marijuana more than twenty times, or more than five times since turning twenty-one years old. However, the Baltimore Police Department shifted its policy from using hardline numeric disqualifiers to using more flexible timeline disqualifiers. Under the new policy, applicants are disqualified from being hired only if they have

used marijuana within the three years prior to submitting their application. Other, more lenient departments have experimented with shorter timelines. Following the legalization of recreational marijuana in Washington State, for example, the Seattle Police Department changed its policy to disqualify applicants only if they had used marijuana within one year prior to applying, and Metro Police Department in Washington (DC) disqualifies applicants only if they have used marijuana within the three months prior to their application.

Some departments have removed their marijuana use disqualification entirely. For example, the Springfield (MO) Police Department's original policy required an applicant to have abstained from marijuana use for three years prior to applying. However, its current policy reduces that waiting period to one year for applicants who are coming from a state in which marijuana remains illegal; for applicants coming from a state where marijuana has been legalized, the waiting period is abolished entirely.

As more states legalize recreational use of marijuana, and with potential federal legalization, this minimum qualification should continue to be re-visited by departments. The collateral issue of discipline for off-duty marijuana use by sworn officers is one that, although not considered here, will challenge law enforcement agencies in states where recreational legalization has occurred.

Misdemeanor Offenses/Traffic Violations

Many departments require that applicants not have prior criminal histories or negative driving records that demonstrate poor judgment. These conditions are viewed as highly important elements of determining applicant quality and departments, by and large, are hesitant to relax these standards. For instance, a prior felony conviction is typically viewed across the board as an automatic disqualifier. However, departments differ on whether offenses of lesser severity will automatically disqualify an individual from being hired.

For example, the Baton Rouge (LA) Police Department automatically disqualifies any applicant who has a conviction for any misdemeanor. In Dallas (TX), police applicants may not have been convicted of a misdemeanor following their seventeenth birthday. In Washington (D.C.), police applicants are disqualified for a misdemeanor conviction only if the offense involved violence, perjury, sexual misconduct, civil rights violations, theft (if committed as an adult), DUI, a firearm, or bias.

Departments similarly differ on how they consider traffic violations. In Washington (DC), an applicant is disqualified if they have developed an "unacceptable driving record" within the five years prior to their application, as indicated by two negligent collisions or a revocation or suspension of their license. In comparison, the Dallas Police Department requires that individuals not have any outstanding traffic warrants or pending citations, and that the individual have not been convicted of three or more "hazardous traffic violations" within the preceding twenty-four months.

However, while offense-related disqualifiers largely remain strict, some departments utilize a more holistic approach to applicant consideration and disqualification that offers greater hiring flexibility. The purpose of this approach is to eliminate automatic disqualifiers and to instead consider the totality of an applicant's life circumstances. For instance, rather than automatically disqualifying a candidate for having a poor driving record, hiring officials will consider the record alongside the candidate's other

qualifications. If the candidate has an otherwise stellar record, hiring officials may overlook the driving record.

The Richmond (VA) Police Department has relaxed its minimum qualifications and removed questions relating to prior misdemeanors or driving records from their initial application. Instead, such details are examined during the background investigation stage of the hiring process. As a result, individuals are not automatically disqualified at early stages of the process and can progress to more subjective stages of the hiring and review process. During the background investigation stage, an applicant is probed about their past offenses, prior drug use, and other potential disqualifying elements. Such information is compiled and sent to hiring officials, who make a decision on the applicant's candidacy based upon the totality of the gathered information.

In Colorado, all applicants are required to be certified by the Colorado Peace Officer Standards and Training (P.O.S.T.) Department to be eligible to be hired as a law enforcement officer. As part of its qualifications, P.O.S.T. states that an applicant may not have been convicted of a felony. However, P.O.S.T. has relaxed this requirement by allowing individuals to apply for exemptions. Each exemption application is reviewed on a case-by-case basis, in which reviewing officials base their decision upon the individual's unique circumstances and the details of their prior conviction. These exemptions typically apply when the prior felony conviction has been expunged or was the result of a deferred judgment. Between 2010 and 2016, one hundred and seventy individuals received exemptions through this process.

Education

Recent data has shown that many police departments struggle to employ a diverse workforce. Some departments have attributed this deficit to hiring policies that require applicants to possess a college education. Such departments note that recent data indicates that education requirements can be obstacles to underrepresented applicants. To remedy this, some departments have modified or eliminated their college education requirements.

For departments with college education requirements, the norm is to require applicants to possess two years, or sixty credit hours, of college education. Some departments have departed substantially from this norm. The Chicago (IL) Police Department recently waived its college credit requirements for incoming recruits who possess two years of military or prior police officer experience, or three years of experience in corrections, social services, health care, certain trades, or education. However, individuals without such qualifications must still complete the sixty credit hours. Both Louisville (KY) and New Orleans (LA) have dropped their college education requirements entirely. Those jurisdictions now only require a high school diploma or the equivalent.

The response to such changes has been mixed. While efforts to improve diversity have been applauded, critics are concerned that relaxing the minimum qualifications too much will result in a subpar workforce. However, data on the impact of modified educational requirements for police officers is lacking, with more research needed to evaluate any effect on officer performance.

Tattoos

Many hiring policies forbid police recruits from having visible tattoos on their bodies. However, such policies are increasingly being revisited and modified. For example, the Springfield (MO) Police Department's original policy disqualified applicants with visible tattoos. However, the department has since changed its policy to allow officers to have visible tattoos as long as the tattoos are not present on their faces or necks. The Orlando (FL) Police Department holds a similar policy, with tattoos permissible as long as the tattoo ink does not go above an officer's collar bone or below their wrist. Additionally, tattoos deemed to be inappropriate or to contain explicit or offensive material remain prohibited.

Holistic Review of Applicant Qualifications

Efforts to modify certain application qualification requirements often involve some kind of holistic review of applicants' backgrounds and characters. This method, also referred to as a "whole person" approach, eliminates the traditional method of considering applicants along individual qualifications and then rejecting the applicant a singular qualification is not met.

Instead, under a holistic review model, hiring officials review each applicant on a case-by-case basis and consider all elements of an applicant's background before deciding whether the applicant qualifies for the position. Isolated violations of hiring policies—like past marijuana usage—may be overlooked if candidates otherwise meet the standards for application. Accordingly, this model centers on the exercise of substantial discretion by hiring officials, and provides greater flexibility and fairness in reviewing the backgrounds of applicants who, despite not fully meeting a single hiring criterion, may otherwise make for promising candidates.

In 2008, The Bureau of Justice Statistics of the U.S. Department of Justice surveyed more than three-thousand law enforcement agencies about their hiring practices. The study found that 84% of responding agencies had a policy that allowed for applicant screening criteria to be relaxed at the discretion of hiring officials. Under these policies, violations of the qualification criteria could be flexibly assessed based on the severity of the violation, the frequency of any violation, and the amount of time that had passed since the most recent violation.

Most agencies reported being willing to consider applicants with a prior misdemeanor conviction, 40% were willing to consider applicants with prior-driving related offenses, and nearly half reported being willing to accept applicants who had a history of marijuana usage. This data demonstrates a degree of longstanding willingness by departments to relax their screening criteria and exercise discretion in reviewing applicants as a whole rather than along individual qualifications. Some departments, like the Wichita (KS) Police Department, have restructured their selection processes to comprehensively consider all elements of an applicant's life, knowledge, and skills before making decisions on their qualifications, and it is likely that such initiatives will continue to develop among departments nationwide. This trend represents a promising path toward increasing the numbers of high-quality candidates who undergo and complete the entry-level hiring process.

Reimagining Law Enforcement Officers – Community Service Officer (CSO) Programs

A community service officer (CSO) program is a program designed to train and instruct non-sworn, unarmed law enforcement agents to respond to low-priority calls for service that do not require a response from armed police officers. Community service officers are also assigned a host of enforcement-related responsibilities, including crime prevention, investigation, and response.

CSOs, who lack the authority to make arrests, can be either commissioned peace officers or civilians. CSOs are also typically unarmed, though some jurisdictions provide CSOs with less-lethal weapons such as tasers, pepper spray, or batons. To equip them for their responsibilities, CSOs receive specialized training in criminal law, evidence collection, accident investigation, first aid and CPR, self-defense, and more.

The types of calls to which CSOs are authorized to respond differ among jurisdictions. Most commonly, CSOs are authorized to conduct routine traffic and civil regulation enforcement. Such duties include controlling traffic at emergency scenes and public events, issuing parking tickets, providing emergency animal control, and receiving reports for violations of civil ordinances. Additionally, CSOs may act as investigators for certain offenses including burglaries, petty theft, vandalism, and auto theft. Finally, CSOs may be employed as security officers at important locations, including airports, schools, municipal buildings, and in public transit.

Three current trends have led to the expansion of CSO programs and their adoption by more police departments. First, budget constraints have forced departments to do more with less. Second, response times to emergency calls have remained stubbornly high in many areas. Third, communities have demanded more equitable forms of police response that minimize reliance on armed responses for calls that do not warrant them. For many departments, CSO programs address the concerns associated with these trends, and more. Accordingly, more departments have CSO programs than before, including those in Jacksonville (FL), San Jose (CA), and Fremont (CA).

Under the CSO model, CSOs are recruited and hired directly from the communities in which they will serve. Once hired, CSOs undergo basic academy training to provide them with the necessary skills to perform their duties. Training includes instruction in criminal law and investigations, evidence collection, first aid and CPR, report writing, accident investigation, vehicle operations, public relations, and self-defense. Following their training, CSOs assume the basic duties and responsibilities of their positions, including routine patrol in the community. They are assigned uniforms and vehicles which identify them as law enforcement, but that differentiate them from sworn police officers. When an incoming call for service is identified by dispatch as falling within the purview of the CSOs, one will be dispatched to respond. Additionally, while on patrol, CSOs regularly engage with individuals in the community with the goal of developing meaningful relationships, a practice that adheres closely to the community policing model while leaving armed officers available for response.

Some critics of the CSO model argue that their effectiveness is limited because CSOs are unarmed, which can present risks of violence or harm to both CSOs and others. However, anecdotal evidence speaks to the efficacy of these programs. Further, CSOs lessen the response burden of sworn police officers, allowing those officers to respond more quickly to emergency calls for service, including those involving violence. To the extent that a CSO needs the assistance of an armed officer, such back-up would be just as it would be for an armed officer who needs additional support. Despite this anecdotal support, a more

comprehensive review of existing programs is warranted to evaluate their impacts, including their successes and shortcomings.

Additional Resources

- [San Jose \(CA\) Police Department Community Service Officer Program](#)
- [Fremont \(CA\) Police Department Community Service Officer Program](#)
- [Newington \(CT\) Police Department Community Service Officer Program](#)
- [New Britain \(CT\) Police Department Community Service Officer Program](#)

Redefining Police Officer Career Paths – Policing for America

Police work has long been viewed as a lifelong career. The convention has been to hire young recruits, retain them for 20 to 25 years, and then have them retire with a pension and benefits. And unlike other professions, which have balanced both career professionals with itinerant employees, policing has few, if any, opportunities that are specifically designed to be short-term in nature. This has resulted in a profession that is uniquely insular, with little cross-pollination with other fields. This does not need to be the case, and models exist for developing substantive but short-term opportunities for people to participate in policing while pursuing interests in other fields.

Programs like the Peace Corps, AmeriCorps, and Teach for America place people into short-term, community-oriented employment opportunities that allow them to answer a call to service while ultimately pursuing careers in other fields. Participants in these programs, who are typically at the early stages of their careers, then serve as ambassadors for the fields in which they were temporarily employed while benefiting from the experiences they gained during their short-term commitments.

One could imagine a similar program for policing, whereby people serve as police officers or in related law enforcement capacities for shorter periods than typical, gaining experience and training before leaving to pursue another profession. This model could not only embrace those at the beginning stages of their careers, but also those at other stages. Such an approach can help address recruitment shortfalls while avoiding the long-term cost of maintaining and supporting an officer base of eventual retirees. Although no such programs currently exist, the idea is compelling, particularly given the proofs of concept that already exist in other fields.

Technology-Enabled Solutions to Improve Recruitment and Hiring

Recruitment and hiring is a difficult process, both within policing and in other fields. Departments must parse through applications to determine which candidates proceed through the hiring process and must categorize, organize, and maintain files on each prospective candidate. As application pools grow, so does the complexity of this administrative process, making recruitment and hiring a potentially labor- and resource-intensive endeavor. Luckily, new policing technologies exist to alleviate these challenges, and have been used successfully in other fields.

New online systems allow employers to digitize and automate substantial parts of the recruitment and hiring processes. By using automatic screening systems, centralized digital information storage, and an interconnected network of applicant profiles and information, recruiters and hirers can quickly gather, organize, and access data to make their hiring decisions more efficiently. Additionally, centralization of digital information facilitates engagement with recruits, allowing hiring officials to contact applicants quickly and efficiently about the hiring process, including upcoming deadlines, applicant requirements, and the applicant's status. Such engagement improves recruit retention and increases the likelihood that candidates will successfully complete the hiring process.

Four main types of technology-enabled solutions exist for more efficiently administering the recruitment and hiring process. The first is candidate screening software, which can help employers substantially reduce the burden of screening applications to ensure that applicants meet baseline qualifications for the position. Such systems save recruiters from personally screening each application to make such determinations, allowing them to simply set objective standards for review and allow the system to conduct the actual comparison of a candidate's qualifications to the designated standards for employment and automatically reject them or allow them to proceed to the next stage of the process.

Some software can be fine-tuned and customized, allowing, for instance, applicants to be ranked according to how closely they meet the designated hiring standards rather than rejecting any outright. Using algorithms and artificial intelligence, the software can screen incoming applicants for traits, skills, knowledge, and other features that have been shown to be indicative of high-quality employees, as well as those standards and requirements which applicants may have or have not met. The software then ranks the candidates accordingly, allowing employers to quickly identify and select for advancement the most promising candidates for the recruited position. Care, of course, would need to be taken in assuring that whatever characteristics were being utilized were fair and without disparate impacts amongst protected classes.

The second types of technology are applicant tracking systems (ATS). ATSs are robust, online tools that assist recruiters and hirers in organizing, maintaining, and utilizing applicant data while keeping track of each candidate's progress through the hiring process. By utilizing an ATS, information on each candidate is collected in a central database, with such information including the applicant's resume, application materials, test scores, background information, contact information, demographic information, and more. This information is then compiled into a singular profile for the applicant, which is maintained throughout and after the conclusion of the hiring process.

With this information readily accessible, hiring officials can quickly search for and reference candidates' information, create unified candidate profiles, and automate outreach. By creating a centralized database

of all recruits, engagement with prospective hires is bolstered and communication is streamlined. Employers automate outreach to candidates through the ATS, allowing for helpful and meaningful contact more frequently. Using ATS software, employers can send messages to applicants about the hiring process including deadlines, expectations, requirements, timelines, and other useful information.

Furthermore, ATS software typically includes features that allow for the easy aggregation and analysis of critical data. Such data includes how applicants, both individually and collectively, are faring at each stage of the process; which stages of the hiring process are particularly difficult for applicants to overcome; and the demographic profiles for applicants at each stage of the process. Along these same lines, ATS software is particularly useful for reporting and analyzing diversity, equity, and inclusion statistics. Some versions of the software allow recruiters to create customized applicant surveys through which they can share assessments of the process's fairness and obstacles. In addition, some versions of ATS software include online data dashboards curated to collect information and provide insights into the diversity of applicants.

A third type of technology includes digital filing and organization tools that facilitate the hiring process. For example, online tools exist that allow recruits to submit necessary files and materials that are then compiled and sent to hiring officials. These tools can be particularly useful in the context of background investigations, where timely and secure submission of documents by the recruits significantly reduces the potential for delay and improves the accuracy of the review process. Further, these tools allow for easier storage, organization, and maintenance of crucial documents.

Finally, self-assessment tools can increase application completion rates by assisting recruits in meeting the requirements of the hiring process. Self-assessment tools track all hiring requirements and inform applicants on whether they are on track to meet those requirements and complete the hiring process. If applications are incomplete, applicants can easily see what more needs to be done to complete the process. For instance, if a self-assessment tool reveals that an applicant's credit score is not high enough to pass the background check, the recruit can make efforts to improve their score prior to the start of the official background check process, improving the applicant's chances of passing the background check process when it officially commences.

These four technological tools can greatly facilitate the recruitment and hiring processes and improve the application experience for recruits. They can facilitate engagement with recruits and improve transparency, increasing the likelihood that they will complete the application process. For employers, these technologies allow for easier aggregation and analysis of data on both the hiring process and the recruits, giving employers crucial insights into their applicant pools, individual candidates for open positions, and the hiring process overall. With this information, employers can make informed hiring decisions and identify areas for improvement for the hiring process.

However, implementation of these tools is not without cost. Additionally, although automation improves efficiency and saves resources, it can also reduce subjectivity and employer discretion. When an algorithm is given the responsibility of screening applicant profiles, the nuances of each applicant's background and circumstances may be lost. As such, departments seeking to leverage these tools must work to ensure that the tools help them meet their recruitment and hiring goals without undermining other aims.

XII. Police officer support for best practices policing

Introduction

Fomenting officer support for best practices policing has become an increasing priority for departments and local leaders eager to implement change. Although some may presume that the top-down hierarchical structure of most police departments should help to make police officer support either easy to achieve or irrelevant, the reality is that police officer buy-in is critical and achievable only through concerted effort. Officer support cannot be achieved simply by issuing commands from on high, and the failure to generate earnest buy-in from officers can doom even the most promising and necessary of the profession's best practices.

To understand how officer support can be earned, it is important to understand what it means for police to have buy-in for a given practice or intervention. This buy-in—or the lack thereof—can take multiple forms and manifest itself in ways that are both consciously deliberate and subconsciously inadvertent. At its simplest, buy-in can mean an active belief in the value of a proposed practice, manifested by a proactive willingness to follow the practice and to encourage others to do so. In contrast, officer opposition can mean that officers question the value or even view something as detrimental to their interests, with this opposition expressing itself through intentional non-compliance. However, officer buy-in also manifests itself in less obvious ways. For example, an officer may exhibit a high level of moral support for a new tactic, but if the officer is not adequately trained to implement it, then buy-in will remain elusive. Buy-in, therefore, must be evaluated not only as a measure of support, but also as a measure of capability to translate support into corresponding action.

The considerations discussed in this section illuminate the myriad factors that impact officer buy-in, including how moral support can be generated and how officers can conform their performance accordingly. These considerations explore buy-in through multiple lenses, including institutional, cultural, and instructional factors that affect how police officers understand and respond to proposed change. In their sum total, these considerations can help departments and advocates map out strategies for ensuring that their efforts to adhere to policing's best and most promising practices enjoy stable and meaningful support from the officers tasked with implementing them in the field.

Organizational Leadership

Perhaps the most important facilitators of the development and implementation of new practices in policing are departmental leaders, from police chiefs and commissioners to field supervisors. Departmental management has the authority to set departmental priorities, create and repeal policies, and oversee compliance with new departmental mandates. These powers can help ensure operational fidelity to the design and intent of best practices policing. At the same time, deficiencies in organizational leadership can undermine reform efforts and devalue investments in innovative practices.

The best practices featured in this report reveal consistent departmental actions and initiatives that increase officer buy-in. These include:

- Adhering to the precepts of organizational justice, which demand that departmental leadership be transparent with and responsive to the officers they command,
- Communicating consistently and backing departmental messaging with direct action,
- Placing an emphasis on confidentiality to maintain the trust of officers and employees,
- Championing and developing clear policies with easy-to-understand instructions and transparent expectations,
- Equipping officers with the tools and oversight they need to successfully implement departmental initiatives, and
- Holding officers accountable for acting in accordance with policy changes

Police executives and scholars agree that strong, authentic organizational leadership that champions particular changes and effectively communicates the impetus behind those changes to the line level can facilitate buy-in for organizational changes. These steps can help engender credibility and trust between departments and line officers, which can in turn lead to increased support—or, inversely, reduced opposition—to new policies, practices, and protocols. Officers who feel as if they are being heard and considered in departmental decision-making, and who are continually reassured that the department is acting in their best interests, express greater confidence in their departments than officers who feel unseen and unsupported by their superiors. Having a supportive leadership structure in place can, therefore, boost departmental adherence to best practices policing greater than perhaps any other individual factor.

Departmental Culture

One potential obstacle to implementing change, even when effective organizational leadership is in place, is departmental culture. Although organizational structure can influence a department's culture, it cannot singularly control it. Culture derives from the complex interplay of expectations, training, experience, and informational exchange between and among officers and their superiors. Culture is reflected in the traditions of a department, its rituals, and its histories, and can shape departmental protocols as much as departmental protocols shape it. And cultures can be critically effective at both sustaining change or hindering it. Accordingly, any implementation strategy for best practices policing must contend with this formidable factor.

Daunting as the challenge of influencing culture may be, an adverse departmental culture is neither insurmountable nor immune to change. The practices featured in this report reveal important strategies for changing departmental cultures that may resist change or view it skeptically. These include:

- Explaining the purpose and goals of proposed changes to department policies and protocols,
- Clearly describing the features of any proposed change, including the advantages the change has over previous iterations.
- Recognizing officers' field experiences and knowledge but simultaneously reinforcing that officers' skills can always be improved to better respond to interactions with the public,
- Fostering open and candid discussion of any questions or concerns held by officers,
- Responding directly to those questions and concerns, and

- Equipping officers through training, instruction, and supervision so they can properly and efficaciously incorporate new policies and protocols into their field operations.

These strategies are employed by multiple departments. For instance, police departments in Rhode Island, Massachusetts, Missouri, and Indiana have adopted the SHIELD (Safety and Health Integration in Enforcing the Laws on the Drugs) program, which focuses on explaining the benefits of changes in department policies and new training for officers (for example, improved officer safety and increased civility during interactions) by centering on how better, more accurate training ameliorates officer stress, burnout, and exposure to health risks. Additionally, the Los Angeles Police Department has launched initiatives like the Mental Evaluation Unit (MEU) that promote open dialogue and feedback from officers. In this case, four senior MEU lead officers hold weekly discussions with team members regarding concerns and satisfaction with the program, providing the department with feedback on areas of success and needed improvement.

Overcoming cultural barriers requires recognition that, like any other social construct, officer culture is malleable and can be shaped and reshaped through concerted effort. Further, departmental cultures may not be monolithic, with different social groups within the department expressing different views and adhering to different norms. This can both complicate and facilitate efforts to align cultures with new expectations and demands of officers, either by necessitating different strategies to address different cultural factors or by allowing departments to focus their efforts on more amenable groups before engaging with more recalcitrant ones. Either way, taking the effort to engage directly with officers, solicit and consider their input, respond with further information, and equip them to meet new expectations by training, instructing, and supervising them all stand as critical and indispensable steps toward aligning officer culture with best practices policing.

Training, Instruction, and Supervision

If organizational leadership and departmental culture set the context for implementing best practices policing, then training, instruction, and supervision are the mechanisms for actually doing so. However, not all training, instruction, and supervision is equal, and careful thought must be made to ensure that officers are effectively equipped to operationalize new policies and protocols using the most effective instructional and supervisory methods. Failing to do so will disconnect officer performance from expectation, ultimately diminishing the investments of time and resources that departments expend to improve critical outcomes.

The collective experience of police departments in implementing important reforms, like those relating to use of force, is instructive on what can be done to ensure that new practices are effectively incorporated, and old practices discarded. This experience has yielded important lessons for how to realize the promise of best practices policing. These lessons include that:

- The commitment to new training must be clearly articulated by the executive level and senior staff must embrace the tenets of training. Establishing buy-in at the supervisory level is critical for enhancing training receptivity at the line level.
- The executive staff should be trained first to allow them to understand the curriculum from which officers will be instructed and consider how the tenets of training can be embedded throughout

the organization. This approach enhances supervisors' specific knowledge to allow them to more authentically model and champion the training curriculum for others in the organization.

- Framing new training in a way that speaks directly to the values and interests of police officers, which means that buy-in is engendered simultaneously with the training of officers in new techniques and strategies. This approach contributes to the durability of training and increases the likelihood that officers will utilize innovative strategies. For instance, for officers participating in the CAHOOTS program of Eugene (OR), buy-in was generated not by calling for the elimination of police officers but by focusing on how new training would improve officers' wellbeing and effectiveness and by sharing information on the program's positive impacts with officers.
- Officers often find scenario- and practice-based training to be much more effective than lecture-based training. Particularly for best practices that require officers to change how to respond in the field to calls for service, simulations that allow officers to develop new skills firsthand are better than training sessions that rely primarily on describing new techniques without the opportunity to practice.
- Effective instruction often requires a mix of different methods of teaching the same material. For example, instruction can include lecture, scenario-based role play, group discussion, and interactive lessons all on the same subject matter. This can serve to teach the subject in a variety of ways, with each approach highlighting different facets, including theory, skills, and impact. For example, Project ABLE (Active Bystandership for Law Enforcement), developed by the New Orleans Police Department and Georgetown Law School's Innovative Policing Program, focuses on enhancing officer buy-in through a combination of informative PowerPoint lectures, classroom discussion, individual and small group learning exercises, and scenario-based role playing, each of which plays a role in instructing officers and highlighting the benefits of the project's techniques and protocols.
- Retention of training material is just as important as training, and achieving retention requires its own concerted effort. This effort consists of follow-up instruction and supervision, with a clear articulation of the consequences to be faced by officers for failing to abide by expectation. Instruction, including repetition of new mandates during roll calls and follow-up training sessions, is ideally offered using simplified, direct language that clearly articulates the mandate and how officers are expected to carry it out. Supervision should involve personalized feedback from superiors that highlights areas where officers are both meeting and failing to meet expectation, how they are doing so, and how they can improve.

Officers have expressed that they favor policies and protocols that respect and reaffirm their discretion to make important decisions in the field, especially when those decisions directly implicate their safety and the safety of others. Importantly, it is in the exercise of this discretion where an officer's training and supervision most crucially come into play. Developing instructional and supervisory initiatives that account for how officers best learn and incorporate new knowledge into their practice is therefore imperative in a world where officers will continue to wield significant discretion in how public safety is administered on the ground.

XIII. The Importance of Strategy

Whether implementing individual practices or undertaking a comprehensive effort to implement the fundamental recommendations offered in this report, it is critical to first develop a public safety strategy that identifies objectives, considers facilitators and barriers, maps out logistical steps, and lays out the metrics by which success—or failure—will be evaluated. Below are critical steps for developing this strategy.

1. Answer key foundational questions.

Establishing a strategic baseline requires findings answers to key questions, including:

- What are the desired outcomes, and how will they be achieved?
- What structures must be in place to successfully implement best practices, and which need to be changed or removed?
- How do you ensure design fidelity and maximize impact as intended?
- Whose participation is critical to achieving success, and what role do they need to play?
- How will problems be troubleshoot and how will fixes be incorporated?
- How will success be identified, and to whom will there be accountability if an initiative fails?

The answers to these questions will ultimately determine not only how stakeholders collectively undertake the effort of implementing the profession's best practices but will also inform the substance of the next critical step in developing a sound public safety strategy.

2. Foster a common public safety mission.

No public safety strategy can succeed without the fostering and reinforcement of a public safety culture that holds the pursuit of continual improvement as a core principle.

The development of this culture requires the completion of three critical steps: fostering a common public safety mission, defining public safety goals, and identifying the metrics by which success will be measured. Understanding these steps will help policymakers and advocates develop plans that go beyond logistics to serve as true reflections of a collective public safety endeavor.

These steps may seem intuitive, if not obvious. After all, any collective endeavor presumes the existence of a common mission, particularly when stakeholders come from a variety of backgrounds and experiences. However, many efforts fail precisely because they never took care to articulate a clear, consensus mission behind which they could unite and coordinate. Dedicating time to this important step will help engender a sense of unity that elevates participants to partners, which in turn helps build trust and improves both individual and collective productivity.

3. Set logistical objectives

Once a mission is articulated and agreed upon, specific logistical objectives must be developed. Whereas a mission statement may lay out a strategy's underlying philosophy, defining specific objectives fleshes the mission out and sets, in real terms, the aims to be achieved in pursuit of the mission. Objectives can, for example, include improving certain measurable outcomes or meeting productivity goals. However, they should all be understood as being relevant to the mission and necessary for advancing it.

4. Identify metrics for success

Finally, qualitative and quantitative metrics must be identified for determining whether objectives are being met and the mission fulfilled. Sometimes, groups will succeed in defining their mission and articulating goals but fail to define metrics for evaluating success. This can lead to uncertainty around the entire endeavor, including whether progress is being made or whether desired outcomes are being achieved. Defining metrics also necessitates an understanding of how they will be collected, including by whom, and how they will be analyzed. The spirit of partnership among stakeholders that propelled the first three steps must also pervade the evaluation of metrics for defining programmatic success. Informational parity among stakeholders must be a priority, with data shared openly and equally so that all are equipped to contribute their own answer to the question of whether the collective public safety mission is succeeding.

Following these basic steps will help ensure that the endeavor to promote best practices policing gives itself the best opportunity to succeed.

XIV. Conclusion

This report was prepared to offer guidance on how to make policing more fair, equitable, and effective. However, it goes further, and seeks to propel the profession forward so that it can holistically improve itself both from within and through sustained partnership with the communities it serves. And although the report recognizes that the policing profession continues to confront multiple challenges on multiple fronts, there is little reason to believe that these challenges are insurmountable.

In fact, this report should plainly demonstrate how those challenges can be—and have been—overcome. Simply, policing’s continual improvement must be understood as a moral imperative, and the efforts to bring policing closer to its ideals must befit the importance of this indispensable public safety function. Anything less will bring lesser results when we can ill afford to accept anything but true progress for all.

In developing this report, we have kept in mind in equal measure the officers who swear their oaths of service and the constituencies on whose behalf they fulfill their duty. We have spoken to police and community leaders, government officials, and advocates of all backgrounds, and the commonality of their mission is striking. We stress this commonality again to highlight that far more unites us than divides us in the quest for fairness, equity, and effectiveness in policing, and that progress can move ahead more assuredly when pursued as a united front.

We thank everyone who lent their insights in earnest to bring this report to fruition, and we look forward to the continued evolution of policing in Colorado and beyond.

XV. Appendices

A. Scope and Structure

HB21-1250 calls for a study of evidence-based best practices in seven distinct subject areas. Accordingly, our final report is organized to report on these areas, or “workstreams,” each of which has a team member dedicated to it. The workstreams are:

- I. Use of force
- II. Crime and community harm reduction
- III. Community-based public safety initiatives
- IV. Alignment of law enforcement and community approaches to public safety
- V. Police officer support for best practices policing
- VI. Recruitment, retention, and wellness, and
- VII. Employment standards and training

For each workstream, this final report offers a discussion of existing and emerging best practices for policing that hold the greatest promise for achieving meaningful change. In the sections for all but two workstreams—use of force and police officer support for best practices policing—individual programs are featured and discussed at length, including their histories, logistics, and impact, among other important information.

For the use force section, rather than featuring the efforts of individual departments in dedicated entries, the report offers broader overviews of specific use of force practices and related training across multiple departments. This is done to discuss the practices and trainings themselves more effectively rather than their specific implementations within specific departments, for which information is less available or incomplete.

Further, the section on police officer support for best practices policing compiles information taken from throughout the report and discusses the considerations and factors that contribute to officer buy-in for adoption of new practices and programs. Again, the focus is on the considerations and factors themselves rather than the individual experience of particular departments so that common themes are identified and assessed.

B. Acknowledgments

We would like to thank the innumerable partners who helped bring this report to fruition. Of particular note were our partners within the Colorado Department of Local Affairs, including:

- **Rick Garcia**, Executive Director
- **Chantal Unfug**, Director, Division of Local Government
- **Dave Bowman**, Deputy Director, Division of Local Government
- **Bruce Eisenhower**, Legislative Liaison
- **Cynthia Thayer**, Local Government Services, and
- **Mark Radtke**, Project Manager

And those throughout the state with whom we spoke, including:

- **Leo Alirez**, Executive Director, Life-Line of Colorado
- **Abron Arrington**, Care Manager, Second Chance Center
- **Meghan Dollar**, Legislative and Policy Advocate, Colorado Municipal League
- **Senator Bob Gardner**, El Paso County, District 12
- **Gerald Hamel**, co-Founder, Make a Chess Move
- **Rep. Leslie Herod**, Denver County, District 8
- **Chief Maris Herold**, Boulder Police Department
- **Chief Matt Packard**, Colorado State Patrol
- **Henry Price**, Justice-Involved Engagement Coordinator, Colorado Criminal Justice Reform Coalition
- **Sgt. Rob Pride**, National Trustees Chairman, Fraternal Order of Police
- **Sheriff Justin Smith**, Larimer County
- **Jason Vitello**, President, Colorado Public Health Association

C. Approach and Methodology

For each workstream, this report employs a consistent evaluative methodology to determine which strategies and approaches are highlighted as best practices. Those that have met the requisites of the methodology are featured accordingly.

First, we follow a clear definition of what constitutes a best practice, which we define as a process, intervention, or protocol that is shown through competent evidence or compelling analytical reasoning to achieve a desired result or outcome effectively and reliably.

Under this definition, there are three steps to assessing something as a best practice:

1. First, a desired result or outcome must be identified, or a problem for which a solution is sought must be articulated.
2. Second, the process, intervention, or protocol must be described, including the designated roles or responsibilities of any personnel involved.
3. Third, the linkage between the process, intervention, or protocol and the desired outcome must be demonstrated, either through an examination of studied evaluations or through a clear articulation of the basis for which such a linkage can be reasonably anticipated.

We note that the availability of statistical, anecdotal, and theoretical support for established and emerging practices reflects the state of investment in policing research and scholarship, which, unfortunately, has not always kept pace with the urgent level of interest in policing matters. Additionally, particularly for emerging practices or those that remain in their early stages of development, studied evaluations may be unavailable since such evaluations typically require an extended period of observation and assessment.

Accordingly, we note this report's inclusion of two broad categories of best practices. Specifically, there are those whose efficacy is supported by strong statistical evidence and those for which such evidence may be limited or unavailable but for which there is a strong anecdotal or theoretical basis for support. Those practices that are featured despite the lack of available statistical or empirical evidence are accompanied by a detailed discussion of why those practices retain great promise despite the absence of empirical data.

In canvassing for potential best practices, this report considers several factors, including:

1. Support by community members
2. Support by police officers and public safety professionals
3. The logistics and costs of implementation, including:
 - a. Potential barriers, and
 - b. Any requisite participation or support from local, state, or federal agencies
4. Funding considerations
5. Any available case studies

6. Current or past adoption by other jurisdictions, and
7. Any statistical, anecdotal, or theoretical bases of support.

For each workstream, the assigned team lead conducted a preliminary review and analysis of the most noteworthy practices and identified those worthy of consideration for inclusion in the report based on the criteria described above. The IntegrAssure Project Management Office (PMO) then convened regularly to review the identified practices and determine those that are ultimately featured in this report.

The IntegrAssure team also collected written and verbal input and insight from multiple stakeholders on their thoughts and recommendations for each workstream. This collection included virtual meetings with each stakeholder and solicitation of written survey responses. The stakeholder engagement process is described further on page 14.

D. Team member bios

Jeff Schlanger, J.D., the Project Manager, is the founder, and CEO of IntegrAssure, Inc. and is a leading authority on institutional change management with more than four decades of experience at the highest levels of law, law enforcement, independent investigations, and monitorships. Mr. Schlanger, who began his career as a prosecutor in the Manhattan DA's Office, served almost nine years as the Primary Deputy Monitor for the LAPD Monitorship. During that same time period, Mr. Schlanger performed a number of significant independent investigations at the request of large police departments throughout the country, including the Tennessee Highway Patrol (an investigation into corruption in the hiring and promotion process), the San Francisco Police Department (an investigation into an internal affairs investigation probe involving the son of a Chief in the Department), and the Austin Police Department (investigative reviews of two separate fatal officer-involved shootings). He also served on the Executive Committee of the Working Group for National Guidelines for Monitors, which developed the National Guidelines for Police Monitors. In 2014, Mr. Schlanger left the private sector, to re-join the public sector as the Chief of Staff to Manhattan District Attorney Cyrus Vance. In 2015, Mr. Schlanger returned to the private sector and in 2016, assembled and led a team of policing professionals, to review and ultimately monitor UCPD. In 2018, Mr. Schlanger joined the NYPD as Counsel to the Police Commissioner, and then was asked to take on the position of the first ever Deputy Commissioner for Risk Management. This position was the "tip of the spear" in terms of Department improvement efforts. Mr. Schlanger pioneered a true risk management and continuous improvement approach to police re-engineering, re-imagination, and reform, and served in this capacity until March 19, 2021, helping to guide the Department through its most tumultuous period, implementing reforms brought about by both the federal monitorship arising out of stop and frisk abuses and the tragic murder of George Floyd. He served on the NYPD's Discipline Committee, its Force Review Board and established and chaired the Use of Force and Tactics Workgroup.

Erin Pilnyak, Deputy Project Manager, has served in a variety of public sector positions overseeing projects and driving results in each. Ms. Pilnyak began her career at the Manhattan District Attorney's Office (DANY), where she spent 10 years and was a member of the Sex Crimes and Crime Strategies Unit among other units. After DANY, she served as the Deputy Director of Crime Strategies at the New York City Mayor's Office of Criminal Justice (MOCJ) where she oversaw all criminal justice strategies in New York City and devised and implemented criminal justice reform initiatives for the City. During her tenure, she worked closely with senior leadership for the New York State court system, public defenders, prosecutors, NYPD, Department of Correction, other law enforcement partners, elected officials, and community groups to implement major criminal justice reform efforts, such as significant changes to the juvenile justice system, lightening the touch of low-level enforcement, and community-based solutions to reframe the concept of public safety. Ms. Pilnyak left MOCJ to join Mr. Schlanger at NYPD where she served in the two-star position of Assistant Deputy Commissioner at the Risk Management Bureau. She worked with Mr. Schlanger on developing policies and programs to guide the Department on implementing reforms and running the day-to-day operations of the approximately 200-person Bureau. Ms. Pilnyak, who is a graduate of the University of California at Berkeley and Cornell University School of Law, currently serves as the Chief Operating Officer of IntegrAssure.

Brandon Del Pozo, Ph.D., Workstream Leader on Crime and Community Harm Reduction, is presently a postdoctoral researcher in substance use and drug policy at The Miriam Hospital and the Warren Alpert Medical School of Brown University and serves on the Federal Consent Decree Monitoring Team for the Newark, New Jersey Police Department. He has participated as an advisor in multiple efforts in re-imagining the role of the police, including those at NYU Law School and the Yale Law School Justice Collaboratory. He has advised members of the Los Angeles City Council on the feasibility of alternatives to sworn police officers for traffic enforcement, and currently serves as an adviser to the American Law Institute's Principles of the Law and Policing and assists NYU Law School's Policing Project on the ethics of policing and artificial intelligence, community oversight models, and best practices for filming the police. He holds a Ph.D. in philosophy from The Graduate Center at the City University of New York, a Master of Arts in criminal justice from John Jay College, a Master of Public Administration from Harvard, and a bachelor's degree from Dartmouth College. His research is largely rooted in cutting-edge reforms he implemented while he served as the Chief of Burlington (Vermont) Police Department from 2015-2019. As the Chief of Burlington Police Department, he assumed a leadership role in addressing opioid addiction as a public health crisis with important opportunities for intervention by the police officers, which contributed to a 50% decrease in opioid overdose deaths (2017–2018) in a state that saw a 20% increase elsewhere. As part of his innovative approach in addressing the opioid crisis, he created and led the city's multidisciplinary "CommunityStat" approach to the opioid crisis, a model that was shared with many jurisdictions across the country during the opioid crisis. He also designed, procured, and deployed the first Emergency Response Vehicle in Vermont, allowing trained officers to isolate, contain, and de-escalate violent and distressed suspects. He increased inventory of team-based less-than-lethal equipment deployed to the field and implemented a co-response team where police were assisted by a Street Outreach Team of mental health professionals when responding to crisis calls to de-escalate encounters and refer patients to the appropriate services.

Robin S. Engel, Ph.D., the Workstream Leader on Use of Force Strategies, is Professor of Criminal Justice at the University of Cincinnati (UC) and Director of the International Association of Chiefs of Police / UC Center for Police Research and Policy. From 2016-2019, she served as UC's Vice President for Safety and Reform where her administrative duties included oversight of the daily operations and implementation of comprehensive reform efforts of UCPD in the aftermath of a critical incident involving the fatal police shooting of an unarmed motorist. She is a nationally recognized expert in policing research in use of force and reduction of harm to communities by making police-citizen encounters safer with a focus on addressing racial disparities. Dr. Engel engages in police research and evaluation, with expertise in empirical assessments of police behavior, police-community relations, and crime reduction strategies. She has served as Principal Investigator for over eighty research grants, totaling over \$21 million dollars, and has published over 60 research articles, books, and chapters, along with dozens of technical reports for practitioners. She has been consistently ranked among the top academics, and the number one female in the field of criminal justice/criminology based on publications in prestigious peer-reviewed journals. Her work on community violence reduction resulted in several prominent team awards, including the 2008 IACP (International Association of Chiefs of Police)/Motorola Webber Seavey Award for Excellence in Law Enforcement, the 2009 IACP/West Award for Excellence in Criminal Investigations, and the 2008 National

Criminal Justice Association's Outstanding Criminal Justice Program Award. She has served as an expert on policing and violence reduction for panels convened at the White House and 10 Downing Street. In 2017, Dr. Engel was awarded the Distinguished Alumni Award from the School of Criminal Justice at the University of Albany. She currently serves as a governor-appointed member of the Ohio Collaborative Community-Police Advisory Board, and as the co-chair of IACP's Research Advisory Committee. She has served as a consultant to several Colorado police departments on a variety of policing issues, is a consultant on police training for the Ohio Attorney General and serves as a member of NPI's Council on Policing Reforms and Race.

Chief John Thomas, the Workstream Leader on Community Response to Lower-Level Offenses and Calls for Service, is a law enforcement professional with almost 40 years of experience in both urban and university policing. He is currently serving as the Executive Director/Chief of the University of Southern California's Department of Public Safety, a position he has held since 2013. Chief Thomas spent 21 years as a member of LAPD, where he retired at the rank of Lieutenant after serving four LAPD Police Chiefs as their Adjutant. As a member of LAPD, Chief Thomas worked patrol assignments primarily in South Los Angeles in Wilshire, 77th Street, Southwest, Newton Street, and Pacific Divisions, and was assigned to the Department's Gang Enforcement Detail in South Los Angeles where he worked as an undercover narcotic enforcement as a member of the Department's FALCON (Focused Attack Linking Community Organizations and Neighborhoods) Unit. While assigned to FALCON he was awarded the City of Los Angeles' City Angel Award for outstanding community enhancement and the Department's Meritorious Unit Citation. Chief Thomas has been on the Board of Directors for The Challenger's Boys & Girls Club in South LA and has been on the Board of Directors for Los Angeles Police Historical Society since 1999. He has been published and has researched and written extensively on the Early Black History of LAPD and Los Angeles. He is also on the Board of Directors for the Police Officers' Association of Los Angeles County (POALAC) and serves on the Board of Advisors for the University of Southern California (USC) Price School's Safe Communities Institute. He is a member of the International Association of Campus Law Enforcement Administrators, the Police Executive Research Forum, the International Association of Chiefs of Police, the National Organization of Black Law Enforcement Executives, Pac 12 Campus Chiefs' Association, Campus Safety Magazine Advisory Board, California College & University Police Chiefs Association, and the FBI National Academy Associates. Chief Thomas graduated from Crenshaw High School before attending UCLA. He holds a BA in Liberal Arts and a Master's Degree in Executive Leadership from the USC Sol Price School of Public Policy.

Jennifer Zeunik, the Workstream Leader on Strategies to Effectively Move Law Enforcement and Community Forward Together, is the Director of Local Programs for NPI, where she provides leadership and oversight for the organization, as well as project, financial, and staff management. She has extensive experience in public administration, law enforcement organizations and practices, non-profit management, government grants and contracts, and organizational leadership. She is responsible for NPI's portfolio of state and local programs, including critical incident and after-action reviews, organizational assessments and studies, strategic planning, management studies, training and technical assistance, and other organizational change services. Throughout her career, Ms. Zeunik has worked closely with a variety of stakeholder organizations in policing program and policy areas. She works with

federal, state and local executives, law enforcement, and public safety command staff to leverage evidence-based strategies to address critical contemporary policing issues. Her goal is to advance the health, safety and performance of law enforcement officers and organizations and the communities they serve by providing evidence-based, data-supported resources and solutions.

Jeff Thompson, PhD, the Workstream Leader on Innovative Approaches to Officer Mental Health, Recruitment, and Retention, is an Adjunct Associate Research Scientist at the Molecular Imaging and Neuropathology Research Area of the New York State Psychiatric Institute and the Center for the Prevention and Treatment of Depression in the Psychiatry Department at Columbia University Medical Center. His research includes developing resilience and positive mental health strategies, hostage negotiation in terrorist incidents, suicide prevention, psychological autopsies, and the use of effective communication during crisis incidents. His training material has been implemented in police agencies across the United States and across the world. He is an 18-year law enforcement veteran detective with the NYPD and a former hostage negotiator. When the Police Executive Research Forum created the Integrating Communications, Assessment, and Tactics training in 2016 to fill a critical gap in training police officers in how to respond to volatile situations in which subjects are behaving erratically and often dangerously but do not possess a firearm, he was part of the subject matter experts panel that helped develop the training program and a part of the initial train-the-trainer group responsible for sharing it with police agencies nationwide. In his current role at the NYPD, Detective Thompson is the Mental Health and Wellness Coordinator helping conduct research and outreach on the department's suicide prevention and postvention efforts, reducing the stigma associated with mental illness and help-seeking, enhancing resilience through evidence-based practices, and raising awareness of resources available to both police officers and the public. Dr. Thompson is the recipient of the Griffith University Arts, Education and Law's 2020 Outstanding International Alumnus Award and The New York City Police Foundation's 2020 Hemmerdinger Award for Excellence for Distinguished Public Service.

Dean Esserman, J.D., the Workstream Leader on Analysis of Recruitment and Qualification Standards for Entry-Level Police Officer Positions, has more than three decades of experience in law enforcement and is currently serving as the Senior Counselor at NPI. He was the Chief of Police for the M.T.A. Metro North Police Department, headquartered in New York City, serving from 1993 to 1998. In 1998, he was appointed as Chief of Police in Stamford, Connecticut. He was also concurrently appointed, while serving as Chief, by the Federal Courts as the Monitor of the Wallkill, New York Police Department in 2000. In 2002, he was recruited as Chief of Police of the City of Providence, Rhode Island, where he served 8 ½ years until July 1, 2011. He was also appointed as a Distinguished Professor and Executive in Residence at the Roger Williams University School of Justice Studies. On October 18, 2011, he was recruited as the Chief of Police for the City of New Haven, Connecticut. Upon returning to New Haven in 2011, he was also appointed as a visiting faculty member at both Yale University and the Yale Law School, as well as being appointed as a visiting faculty member and practitioner in residence at the University of New Haven. As Chief in Stamford, Providence, and New Haven, he re-engineered each department to fully implement community policing. He also holds a lecturer's appointment at the Yale University Child Study Center. He has served as a member of the Board of the Vera Institute of Justice, NPI, Police Executive Research Forum, and the Hurricane Island Outward Bound School. Presently, he serves as a member of the Board of the

Local Initiatives Support Corporation (LISC). He is a lifetime member of the IACP and served as the Chair of the Juvenile Justice and Child Protection Committee. He is a graduate of the FBI's National Executive Institute and the Law Enforcement Counter Terrorism Program. He is also a graduate of the Police Executive Research Forum's Senior Management Institute for Police and the United States Secret Service Dignitary Protection Program. He is a graduate of Dartmouth College (BA) and New York University School of Law (JD) and is a member of the New York and Massachusetts Bars.

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clxxi Federal consent decrees resulted from a 1994 law that authorized the Attorney General of the United States to investigate cases involving "a pattern or practice of conduct by law enforcement officers" that violates federal constitutional or statutory rights (42 U.S.C § 14141). Some states have empowered their attorney general to conduct similar investigations. Colorado's attorney general received this authority from the state legislature through SB 20-217 and has since conducted one such investigation. That investigation, of public safety in Aurora, found a pattern and practice of deprivation of rights of Aurora residents by both its police and fire departments. IntegrAssure, the author of this report, was selected as the Independent Monitor for the City of Aurora by the Colorado Attorney General and the City.

clxxii The Advisory Group of Exiger LLC, led by its then-president, Jeff Schlanger, was the private firm selected to perform the review. Mr. Schlanger was supported in the review by an extensive team including two members of President Barack Obama's Task Force on 21st Century Policing. Mr. Schlanger was subsequently engaged as the

Monitor to oversee the recommended reforms. Mr. Schlanger is currently the president of IntegrAssure, LLC, the author of this report.