U.S. Department of
JUSTICE

U.S. Department of Justice
Washington, DC

The Report of the Department of Justice Pursuant to Section 11(c) of Executive Order 14074:

Guidance for Federal, State, Tribal, Local, and Territorial Law Enforcement Agencies on Best Practices for Planning and Conducting Law Enforcement – Community Dialogues

Guidance for Federal, State, Tribal, Local, and Territorial Law Enforcement Agencies on Best Practices for Planning and Conducting Law Enforcement – Community Dialogues

On May 25, 2022, in Section 11(c) of the Executive Order on Advancing Effective, Accountable, Policing and Criminal Justice Practices to Enhance Public Trust and Public Safety (EO 14074), President Biden directed the Department of Justice to develop guidance for Federal, State, Tribal, local, and territorial law enforcement agencies on best practices for planning and conducting law enforcement-community dialogues to improve relations and communication between law enforcement and communities, particularly following incidents involving use of deadly force.

The Department of Justice, in collaboration with the Divided Community Project at The Ohio State University, developed this guide to provide law enforcement agencies with tools for building trust with the communities they serve through effective law enforcement-community dialogues.

Tools for Building Trust

Designing Law Enforcement–Community Dialogue and Reacting to the Use of Deadly Force and other Critical Law Enforcement Actions

Divided Community Project, Moritz College of Law

COPS
Community Oriented Policing Services
U.S. Department of Justice

U.S. Department of Justice Community Relations Service

The Ohio State University
Moritz College of Law

Tools for Building Trust

Designing Law Enforcement–Community Dialogue and Reacting to the Use of Deadly Force and other Critical Law Enforcement Actions

Divided Community Project, Moritz College of Law

This project was supported, in whole or in part, by federal award number 15JCOPS-23-GK-03990-PPSE awarded to The Ohio State University by the U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Community Oriented Policing Services. The opinions contained herein are those of the author(s) or contributor(s) and do not necessarily represent the official position or policies of the U.S. Department of Justice. References to specific individuals, agencies, companies, products, or services should not be considered an endorsement by the author(s), contributors, or the U.S. Department of Justice. Rather, the references are illustrations to supplement discussion of the issues.

The Internet references cited in this publication were valid as of the date of publication. Given that URLs and websites are in constant flux, neither the author(s) nor the COPS Office can vouch for their current validity.

Recommended citation:
Divided Community Project. 2024. *Tools for Building Trust: Designing Law Enforcement–Community Dialogue and Reacting to the Use of Deadly Force and other Critical Law Enforcement Actions*. Washington, DC: Office of Community Oriented Policing Services.

Published 2024

Contents

Preface

Effective and trusted law enforcement is central to building safe, resilient communities. Whether safely patrolling a neighborhood, investigating illegal drug use, responding to a life-threatening family crisis, or monitoring a public demonstration, working effectively requires constructive, candid, and trustworthy communication between and among community members and law enforcement officers. While law enforcement can enhance trust in a number of ways—through competence, integrity, accountability, and more—one key tool for building trust is engaging in law enforcement–community partnerships that build relationships, enhance empathy, and humanize interactions.

Consistent constructive communication between law enforcement and communities is "akin to making regular deposits into a savings account. Those investments can establish a positive balance of trust and goodwill that one hopes will be sufficient to cover the inevitable moments when a controversial arrest or use of force incident may result in a withdrawal from the account."[1] Research has shown that trust in law enforcement officers increases when law enforcement adjusts its own communication style to make community members feel more welcomed and comfortable.[2] This increased trust, in turn, can lead the public to view officers more favorably[3]—creating a bigger balance in the account.

Public trust and conferred legitimacy have been identified as pillars of 21st century policing—crucial elements to fair and effective policing.[4] The public tends to have more favorable attitudes toward law enforcement and be more willing to defer to legal authorities when they perceive the police as behaving in a procedurally just manner during interactions with them.[5] Decades of evidence support the idea that intergroup (e.g., between law enforcement and community) communication, under prescribed conditions, is effective in reducing prejudice and increasing trust and

---

1. Maguire and Oakley, *Policing Protests,* 68.

2. Scholars describe this concept as "communication accommodation theory," which explores how the adjustments we make to accommodate one another (or not), are fundamental to the success or failure of interactions. In deeply contentious moments (e.g., after a high-profile use of force) successful accommodation can decrease social distance between two groups with salient intergroup histories. Giles, Maguire, and Hill., *The Rowman & Littlefield Handbook of Policing, Communication, and Society.*

3. Giles, Maguire, and Hill, "The Police and Those Policed as Intergroup Par Excellence"; Hajek et al., "Communicative Dynamics of Police-Civilian Encounters."

4. President Obama's Task Force on 21st Century Policing. *Final Report.*

5. See Tyler and Huo, *Trust in the Law*; Johnson et al., "Race and Perceptions of Police"; Maguire, Lowrey, and Johnson, "Evaluating the Relative Impact."

empathy between groups of people with histories of conflict.[6] In essence, positive intergroup contact promotes tolerance and is a promising tool for reducing conflict, even under challenging conditions.[7]

This guide both offers proactive ways to build a bank account of trust and legitimacy through intentional law enforcement–community dialogue and identifies ideas and actions law enforcement might take reactively to draw on that account in the immediate aftermath of a critical law enforcement action. Such actions may be an inflection point for a community or the country;[8] they may include law enforcement use of force incidents that seriously injure or take the life of a community member and other law enforcement actions that are perceived to be excessive or motivated by bias. We define a critical law enforcement action as an act of law enforcement—or a failure to act—that results in an adverse community response and ruptures the conditions necessary for law enforcement–community trust.

Intentional law enforcement–community dialogue has proven to be a promising method to build meaningful relationships and trust between law enforcement and the community. Leveraging a growing set of social science research studies and public illustrations of law enforcement–community dialogue processes, this guide offers ideas for collaboratively designing and developing purposeful and goal-driven dialogue, bringing together law enforcement and community members, and sustaining dialogue and its outcomes. Ideally, intentional dialogue will take place before a critical law enforcement action occurs. Such dialogue is especially important for engaging with groups who have been historically marginalized and disproportionally impacted by law enforcement actions perceived to be excessive or biased. Because, as the saying goes, actions speak louder than words, planning a dialogue in the immediate aftermath of a critical action might be perceived as disingenuous, particularly when trust and legitimacy face a deficit. However, if law enforcement is trusted by diverse segments within the community, and relationships already exist between formal and informal community leaders and law enforcement, those communities impacted will more likely be able to respond to a crisis with resilience and engage in positive and peaceful efforts to make change.

This guide begins with key points regarding *four considerations for the immediate aftermath* of critical law enforcement action perceived by the community as excessive or motivated by bias and then provides greater detail about those considerations. In the

6. Hill, "VOICES," 787; Nuño et al., "Experiencing VOICES," 632–633; Pettigrew and Tropp, "A Meta-analytic Test of Intergroup Contact Theory," 751–752, 765–767.

7. Van Assche et al., "Intergroup Contact Is Reliably Associated with Reduced Prejudice," 773.

8. A critical law enforcement action in one community can impact surrounding communities or others on a national scale and lead to protests about policing locally, nationally, and around the world.

following sections, this guide provides key consideration for leaders planning *intentional law enforcement-community dialogue*, coupled with key design details and short cases studies.

This guide provides process-oriented insights regarding communication and dispute resolution concepts that lay the foundation to enhance trust between law enforcement and the community, particularly in the immediate aftermath of a critical law enforcement action. It is not designed to provide legal advice. We recognize that law enforcement actions present potential criminal and civil legal liability for individual officers and for the communities they serve. In their roles, prosecutors must respond quickly, sometimes publicly, to questions about the criminal legal process for these events. City attorneys are (and should be) called to counsel city, county, and metropolitan government and law enforcement leaders about options and potential liabilities.

We gratefully acknowledge the more than 100 current and former law enforcement leaders; U.S. Department of Justice Community Relations Service (CRS) conciliators; law enforcement union officials; city leaders; facilitation and dispute resolution practitioners; and academics, social scientists, community organizations, advocacy leaders, and law students who contributed to this guide through their review of drafts, participation in a two-day symposium, or conversations about this project. We also thank in advance the collaborative teams across the nation that will plan, work with us, and test the law enforcement–community dialogue guidance in this publication in the coming years. We look forward to sharing our research on the outcomes.

Letter from the Director of the COPS Office

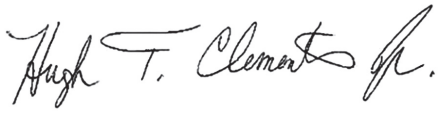
Colleagues:

In the pages that follow you will read about the importance of police-community partnerships and the essential role of communication at times when these relationships are strained, often following a use of deadly force or other critical police action. We recognize that the process of building trust with a community is continuous, but we also know that intentional and focused communication strategies can help sustain partnerships during times when legitimacy is challenged. This guidance is intended as a resource for those seeking to establish meaningful dialogue between law enforcement and communities, and to do so in a way that prioritizes long-term relationship building and reflects a trauma-informed perspective on historical and existing conflict.

To compile this guide, the COPS Office partnered with the Divided Community Project at The Ohio State University Moritz College of Law and the U.S. Department of Justice's Community Relations Service. The first section offers advice for communicating with the public in the aftermath of a use of deadly force or other critical law enforcement action. Importantly, the lessons contained here come not only from law enforcement professionals, but also from municipal leaders, community members, and dispute resolution experts who have experience with the subject matter. Following this is a more detailed discussion of intentional police-community dialogue. For some in law enforcement, the idea of engaging in intentional dialogue that is carefully designed and independently facilitated is a new one, so we have included examples of where this concept has been used successfully and resources for departments and communities seeking to design and facilitate their own dialogue program.

It is our hope that readers from law enforcement and a broad array of community representation find value in the strategies described and use the ideas within to prevent, prepare for, and react to conflict should it arise.

Sincerely,



Hugh T. Clements, Jr.
Director
Office of Community Oriented Policing Services

Letter from the Acting Director of CRS

As "America's Peacemaker"—a responsibility we have upheld for nearly 60 years—CRS is on the ground in cities, towns, and neighborhoods across America. We have been helping communities address tensions and allegations of discrimination based on race, color, and national origin while striving to prevent and respond to hate incidents.

In pursuit of this mission, CRS plays a critical role in enhancing police-community relations through various targeted programs. One of our key initiatives, Strengthening Police and Community Partnerships (SPCP), convenes law enforcement and community leaders to engage in problem-solving discussions. The objective is straightforward: to improve public safety by enhancing trust and forging strong partnerships. While this program can provide immediate solutions, it also aims to increase local capacity to sustain improved police-community relations.

Our Bias Incidents and Hate Crimes Forum represents another facet of our commitment. This forum brings together stakeholders from various sectors, including law enforcement, district attorneys, civil rights organizations, and community groups to share information on strategies to address and respond to bias incidents and hate crimes.

In addressing the security concerns of faith-based communities, our Protecting Places of Worship forum provides strategies for communities to safeguard these spaces from potential threats. Experts from various law enforcement levels offer information and insights on hate crime laws, active shooter situations, and physical security measures.

Our training programs extend the scope of our work, preparing representatives from government, faith organizations, law enforcement, and civil rights groups to navigate the complexities of community relations with greater understanding and cooperation. Among these, our program on Engaging and Building Relationships with Transgender Communities stands out for its focus on fostering inclusivity and respect for all community members.

At CRS, our commitment is to dialogue as a cornerstone of building trust and partnership between law enforcement and communities. Through these and other programs, we aim to develop sustainable solutions that respect and reflect the diverse needs of the communities we serve.

Sincerely,

Justin Lock
Chief of Staff Performing the Duties of the Director
Community Relations Service

I. Four Considerations for the Immediate Aftermath of a Critical Law Enforcement Action

In the immediate aftermath of a high-profile critical law enforcement action, law enforcement leaders, government officials, advocacy leaders, clergy, and others will face many simultaneous challenges—assuring the community of law enforcement's credibility, legitimacy, transparency, and accountability; responding to the community, including the affected family, quickly, credibly, and with compassion and sincerity; planning for demonstrations; and engaging third parties and other resources to build trust and community support.

In the midst of crisis, preparation matters, especially with regard to trust. Ideally, law enforcement will already have established public trust, and resilient relationships will be in place with broadly diverse community representatives. Intentional law enforcement–community dialogue (discussed in section II) is one building block for enhancing trust and building relationships.[9] We offer four considerations for leaders, with each identified consideration pointing to a more detailed discussion later in this guide.

9. Tension in a community may be too hot in the immediate aftermath of a use of deadly force incident to engage in intentional dialogue. See Section 1, Consideration 3, Consider next steps on page 20 for further discussion.

Four Considerations for the Immediate Aftermath of a Critical Law Enforcement Action

1 Connect with Urgency and Empathy

Provide a point of contact for the family members of those directly impacted.

...

Reach out to city, civic, and known community leaders, as well as the public.

...

Reach out to emerging leaders, advocates, and potential protest leaders who may become more visible.

...

Share basic information and protocols with trusted leaders/organizations; ask them to share this information.

...

Be aware that national groups may also enter the community.

2 Communicate Quickly, Authentically, and Transparently

Communicate within minutes (not hours) and transparently continue to provide updates.

...

Address the community's concerns about accountability and explain existing accountability systems.

...

Offer those who are grieving an opportunity to express their loss.

...

Expedite the release of information. If withheld, explain why.

...

Consider how to address other footage taken by the public.

...

Establish what information about the involved officers can be shared.

...

Correct misinformation and disinformation.

...

Explain how protocols have been implemented.

...

Explain how administrative and criminal investigations are conducted.

...

Consider the agency's history and the role it has played in shaping history.

...

Consider how messages are framed.

...

Acknowledge harm and express empathy.

3 Be Prepared to Respond to Demonstrations or Large Spontaneous Gatherings

Communicate and coordinate with community groups before, during, and after demonstrations

...

Demonstrate law enforcement's commitment to safety and First Amendment Rights

...

Recognize that crowds are not a monolith.

...

Prepare front-line officers for demonstrations.

...

Consider next steps, including a dialogue process and an after-action report.

4 Engage Beyond Your Silo

Avoid consideration of partisan or political affiliations.

...

Activate multijurisdictional emergency protocols and host collaborative command centers.

...

Share resources with front-line officers and civic employees.

...

Consider how third parties like the DOJ's Community Relations Service (CRS) or local community mediation centers can play a role to support your community.

Consideration 1. Connect with urgency and empathy

With the family.

In the case of a death or life-threatening injury, consider providing a liaison for the family. Collaborate with city leaders to provide a clear point of contact to be a conduit for city and law enforcement leaders. This person should be aware of the potential legal consequences of their actions and should treat the family with respect, share information quickly, work to answer the family's questions and provide support, connect the family to resources, and accomplish all these tasks with understanding and compassion. In some situations, sending a sworn officer to the family's home may retraumatize the family or may symbolize and evoke painful memories that further inflame community tension. In others, sending a sworn officer serving in an agency leadership role may signal care and compassion.

Many departments have protocols in place for when a death occurs as the result of the action or inaction of law enforcement.[10] Communities might have civilian or sworn victim assistance or victim services programs that may also offer sustained services (e.g., social workers, support with insurance paperwork, financial assistance, burial services). Consider using alternative government agencies or a trusted community or faith leader to provide support to the family.

In consultation with counsel, officials can weigh how to acknowledge the harm caused to the family and whether to express condolences to the family directly. Officials should be prepared for their efforts or condolences to be rejected.[11] Be transparent with line officers, letting them know how and when the agency will reach out to the family.

With elected and appointed public officials.

These officials have a crucial role to play after a high-profile incident because they may be well connected to constituents and advocates in the community. Keeping them updated may secure their buy-in and support, increasing the likelihood that they will be able to assume leadership or supportive roles in events—calming tensions and reaffirming and strengthening network bonds with the community members they serve.

10. The U.S. Department of Justice provides guidance regarding the notification of deaths that occur as a result of "action or inaction taken by law enforcement actors." U.S. Department of Justice *Guidance for Federal, State, Tribal, Local,* 1.

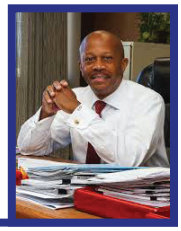
11. See Gasiorek, "Nonaccommodation."

With known trusted community leaders.

Start with those whose groups have been most deeply impacted by the critical law enforcement action, then move on to those leaders who are next on your contact list, and then keep connecting. Individuals and organizations (ranging from faith leaders, nonprofit organizations, advocacy groups, businesses, youth leaders, and others) that have prior relationships with the law enforcement agency are good early external points of contact and communications because known community leaders may have the real-time pulse of the community. If law enforcement agencies share basic information and protocols with these trusted organizations, the organizations might share information with their constituencies and relay a sense of how the information was received.

"Residents might be more inclined to listen to their pastor or a trusted nonprofit leader than a government official. Focus on the groups that resonate in your community and reach out to show concern."

— Norton Bonaparte, City Manager, Sanford, Florida



With emerging community leaders.

New voices may emerge after a high-profile incident. In this digital age, new and informal leaders may rise swiftly, often emerging from unexpected sources as well as from mainstream social media where influencers share information and ideas.[12] Observe how an emerging voice leads by weighing the substance of their actions and their network of trusted community members.

12. Chen, "The Future of Social Media."

With advocates and potential demonstration leaders.

Reaching out to advocates and demonstrators to meet where they are, opening a dialogue, and beginning to develop or to strengthen a relationship can be valuable in helping to shape responses to demonstrations even in the face of low trust.[13] National advocacy leaders may arrive in the community to support local affiliates and amplify their message. Be aware that national leaders often share a different message that could co-opt local community efforts, or that some local bad actors may seek to disrupt or take advantage of circumstances to advance their own agendas.

With the law enforcement community.

Leadership must also be aware of and protect the involved officer's rights and physical and mental health[14] and communicate with all personnel to avoid compounding trauma or increasing tension in a difficult situation. Remind law enforcement that engaging with and expressing empathy for those affected does not mean that leadership is not supportive of the rank-and-file officers, nor is such an expression a judgment of the appropriateness of law enforcement actions.

13. See National Policing Institute and COPS Office, *21st Century Protest Response*, 16–17.

14. For officer safety and wellness recommendations, see National Policing Institute and COPS Office, *21st Century Policing Protest Response,* 48–52. The Law Enforcement Mental Health and Wellness Act (LEMHWA) provides support to "protect the mental health and well-being" of law enforcement officers; see COPS Office, "Law Enforcement Mental Health and Wellness."

Consideration 2. Communicate quickly, authentically, and transparently

Implement an integrated communication strategy that creates an "informed community of public safety advocates."[15] In consultation with counsel and crisis communications officials, take the following steps:

Communicate quickly

Move quickly, in minutes, not hours.

Bystanders may witness and use cell phones to record a critical law enforcement action, so recognize that "the speed of crisis coverage has changed. Incidents that used to take hours . . . now take mere minutes to hit public sources."[16] Traditionally, media waited to gather all facts before publishing; in the age of digital media, it is acceptable for media to release initial information and provide ongoing updates. Consider releasing information to the public as quickly as possible—in minutes, not hours, after becoming aware of the incident. However, this speed must be balanced with the need to ensure that the information conveyed is accurate. Then continue sharing accurate information early and often. The swift and transparent sharing of information by officials about a critical incident may enhance public trust and confidence in local law enforcement because it demonstrates appreciation for the community's sense of urgency and decreases the chances that an inaccurate narrative takes hold.[17]

Focus on accuracy and transparency.

Deliver the who, what, where, and when—and indicate that the why is under investigation. Expedite the first release of information; if information is being withheld, explain why, identify a time for release, and explain what process will determine its release. Consider articulating how officers are trained and your agency's training protocol as it connects to the incident.

---

15. Pal et al., *Strategic Communications for Law Enforcement Executives*, 1.

16. Hsiung, "Three Strategies for Crisis Leadership." Social scientist Tammy Kochel points out "negative social media coverage began within moments of Michael Brown's death," enabling community members to gather at the scene within the first hours after Brown's death; Kochel, *Policing Unrest*, 11, 165.

17. See Pal et al., *Strategic Communications for Law Enforcement Executives*, vi. Note that there may be counterweights that delay the release of information: federal, state, and local law; collective bargaining agreements; the family of the decedent's opposition to the public display of a loved one's death and suffering; or ongoing administrative or criminal investigations. With careful planning, sometimes these counterweights can be resolved through quick consultation.

Choose credible messengers.

To strengthen public trust, law enforcement and community leadership can jointly deliver messages to the community or quote each other's messages. Consider who will assure portions of the community most concerned about the incident that their expressed views have been heard and understood by law enforcement and political leaders. If they are not already included in your communication protocol, you can invite elected officials, union leaders, and diverse community leaders who reflect and connect with the affected community to join law enforcement leaders during a press conference.

Communicate through credible local partners.

Local organizations and prominent local leaders may be willing to share information and resources in the aftermath of a tragic incident. Indeed, local organizations are often focused on concrete, community issues. During a prominent local event that is captured by national news, the message of the local organization may be co-opted by their national affiliate or a prominent national speaker. Third-party conciliators, like those with the U.S. Department of Justice Community Relations Service (CRS), often have relationships with national advocacy organizations that may create another way to engage with national groups. However, working directly with local partners suggests that city leaders hear and recognize the needs and interests of the local community.

Choose multiple effective media platforms.

Relying exclusively on traditional media platforms (newspapers/TV) for messaging is insufficient.[18] San Mateo County Undersheriff Chris Hsiung advises, "Take the time now to invest in your digital community. To develop a foundation for effective digital messaging before a crisis, get to know the community and the social media channels *they* use—and go there."[19] Once the agency breaks the news, law enforcement leaders—particularly those who use social media to share their own leadership values and humanize the department—might use the platform's tools to drive followers to the agency's profile and website for updates.

---

18. In November 2023, Pew Research reported that 30 percent of U.S. adults regularly get their news from Facebook, while 26 percent regularly get news from YouTube; Pew Research Center, "Social Media and the News Fact Sheet." Meanwhile, 32 percent of young adults (aged 18 to 29) get their news from TikTok; Matsa, "More Americans are Getting News on TikTok." Others get their news from local media sources, including local print, radio, and television stations; indeed, youth and activists embed social media into their organization and communication strategies; Gen-Z for Change, "About Us."

19. Hsiung, "Three Strategies for Crisis Leadership."

Communicate Quickly, with Credible Messengers

An illustration from Atlanta, Georgia

During demonstrations following the murder of George Floyd, Atlanta Mayor Keisha Lance Bottoms and Police Chief Erika Shields were joined by human rights activist Reverend Joseph Beazley, attorney (and Martin Luther King Jr.'s daughter) Bernice King, community organizer and former City Council Member Derrick Boazman, and Atlanta rap legends Clifford Joseph Harris Jr. ("T.I.") and Mike Render ("Killer Mike"). Render was initially reluctant to join the press event, then delivered an impassioned speech urging Atlantans to "go home" and organize.* Render explained his rationale for his remarks:

> I didn't want us to destroy what we have because hope exists here. And I wanted the Black officers to be aware that this was in no way unappreciating what they do, but at the same time, I wanted the protesters [to know] that we can do it differently. . . . Black America should treat Atlanta like a land where anything is possible for us. It's not perfect, but anything has proven possible here.†

---

* Atlanta Police Department, "Press Conference – Protest 5-29-2020."

† Ho, "On Colbert: Killer Mike Explains."

Immediately address rumors and inaccurate information.

False rumors spread quickly, especially through social media, where some users "give little consideration to the information consequences of what they share" and often share false news without considering its accuracy.[20] Worse yet, some actors intentionally amplify false information to sow distrust or dissent. Effective agencies will respond immediately and directly to false rumors: "We are hearing XYZ. That is false. Here are the facts, or check [the law enforcement agency's social media site] for the facts."

---

20. Madrid, "USC Study Reveals the Key Reason."

Maintain credibility by clarifying complex processes

Clarify investigative processes and roles.

It is important to address the community's urgent concerns about accountability and transparency by clarifying investigative processes and roles. Create and communicate clear protocols concerning the agency or agencies conducting the investigations into a critical law enforcement action, both administrative and criminal. Determine whether body-worn camera footage or other recordings exist and describe the process for their release. Consider how to respond to other sources of footage, like bystander video, that may become public. Let the community know when and how information will be shared and then implement those plans; if the agency fails to provide updates through the identified sources, it risks significant credibility damage.

Communicate about parallel investigations.

Often several agencies will have a role in investigating a critical law enforcement action. Many agencies no longer conduct criminal investigations of high-profile use of force incidents involving their own officers. Further, separate from any criminal investigation, a law enforcement agency will engage in an administrative investigation. By taking a welcoming approach to an independent investigation, local leaders demonstrate they trust and value transparency. Explaining the different types of investigations that may occur and which local, county, state, or federal agencies will investigate the incident can be helpful. Consider hosting public forums with representatives from each investigating office to explain the differences between the investigations.

Separate complex issues for later discussion.

Law enforcement and legal procedures are complex and often misunderstood (e.g., the potential impact of confidentiality of internal affairs reviews and the limits on disclosure; Peace Officer Bill of Rights or union contract protections; or the risk of compromising ongoing criminal investigations and confidential informants).[21] Consider hosting a distinct opportunity for the community (including members of the press) to learn and ask questions about procedures, agencies, and roles. A conversation might take place via livestream, permitting community members to post questions through comments.

21. IACP, *Understanding How Law Enforcement Shares Information.*

Craft authentic messages that resonate across communities within your community

Recognize the unique aspects of your community.

Every community is unique, and most cities contain multiple communities. What works in San Francisco may not work in Toledo, Ohio; in fact, what works in one neighborhood may not work in another part of the community two miles away. For community members, a critical law enforcement action may not be seen as an isolated event; rather, they will connect it to past events, to the community's history, and possibly to events that made national news.[22]

Humanize your message and avoid demonizing people.

To create the broadest public understanding, avoid law enforcement jargon, abbreviations, and terminology. Avoiding focus on whether the law enforcement action was justified makes it less likely the public will distrust the message as overly defensive, especially as whether the action was justified will be determined by an ongoing investigation. Instead, focus on providing accurate facts with compassion and responding to those affected by the incident as the family and community begin to process the event and loss.

Demonstrators are likely members of the community. Avoid unnecessarily framing their actions as a threat. Finding visible ways to demonstrate empathy and compassion for those affected reinforces that law enforcement is also a part of the community.

"If you walk into a press conference and read the facts you miss an opportunity to connect with the community. When emotions are high, hold space for them. Keep your empathetic antenna up so all voices can be heard."

— Chris Hsiung, Undersheriff,
San Mateo County

22. Pal et al., *Strategic Communications for Law Enforcement Executives*, 1. ("A successful communication strategy takes into consideration an agency's history while defining the truths of the present and the aspirations for the future.")

Emphasizing whether involved persons have a criminal record or are associated with other negative behaviors may be interpreted as an attempt to demonize them and may further anger the community.

Be authentic.

Law enforcement's typical official voice is authoritative. But in this context, authenticity and legitimacy will be judged by the communicator's candor, tone, helpfulness, openness, accuracy, and empathy. Sharing messages with authenticity can usefully convey that law enforcement understands the gravity of and its responsibility concerning a critical law enforcement action.[23]

Frame your message.

High-profile critical law enforcement actions—and the public's response—do not occur in a vacuum. Outward expression of anger and frustration is usually a symptom of a deeper concern. It is important for leaders to look at the external factors that may have contributed to the current sentiment, such as the community's past experiences with law enforcement, the extent and nature of its use of force, and the level of community engagement with police. During a crisis, efforts to define issues broadly may give some portions of the community confidence that their leaders appreciate the depth of their concerns. Conversely, dealing only with the precipitating incident may lead to bitterness for the neglect of a "festering wound."[24]

As your law enforcement community prepares for the public's response, potentially including large crowds or demonstrations, consider language when describing those seeking to exercise First Amendment rights. The terms "demonstration," "protest," "riot," "uprising," "civil disturbance," "unlawful assembly," and "unrest" have unique meanings, and their connotations may differ according to context and community.[25]

---

23. For a discussion of authenticity, see Pal et al., *Strategic Communications for Law Enforcement Executives*, 8–9.

24. Divided Community Project, *Key Considerations for Leaders facing Community Unrest,* 23.

25. International Association of Chiefs of Police (IACP) guidance documents use "civil disturbance," "riot," and "unlawful assembly" interchangeably to mean "[a] gathering that constitutes a breach of the peace or any assembly of persons where there is a threat of collective violence, destruction of property, or other unlawful acts." Conversely, the IACP defines a lawful assembly to include protests, marches, and demonstrations that could "devolve into civil disturbances." IACP Law Enforcement Policy Center, *Crowd Management*, 1.

Frame Your Messaging

An illustration from Kansas City, Missouri

Carefully consider the messages conveyed and the context of the demonstration. Kansas City (Missouri) Police Department (KCPD) communications experts urge "switch[ing] up the message (e.g., from 'rocks and bottles' to 'we hear you') and pair[ing] it with similar actions of de-escalation on the ground to calm tensions." During demonstrations, their messaging began with justifications of police actions, but after significant social media backlash their messaging shifted. The KCPD began highlighting how officers were permitting protestors to march in streets and how law enforcement blocked traffic from interrupting demonstrations. The department began to demonstrate it was listening to resident complaints and illustrated how residents could file complaints.*

* Boyd and Becchina, "No More Rocks and Bottles."

Avoid perceptions of defensiveness.

In the earliest communications, leaders who appear to be defensive can unintentionally hinder effective communication, creating a barrier that makes it challenging for others to hear and understand.[26] Leaders who take immediate, strong defensive positions are often met with strong oppositional demands, as people often react strongly to perceived defensiveness. The community may feel excluded if public statements refer to the police as "we" versus "you" members of the community. Signaling solidarity with the affected community using "we" and "us" will show concern in a time of need. Be prepared to address negative reports or previous incidents concerning the involved officer. Explain the purpose of the administrative investigation or process that will be applied.

Acknowledge harm caused to the community.

One step in creating trust is to acknowledge that distrust between law enforcement and communities is not the result of a single incident, encounter, or tragedy; that some communities have experienced multigenerational, disproportionate impacts, losses, pain, and lack of accountability; and that law enforcement has played a role in causing harm. Many federal, state, and local leaders have acknowledged that painful

26. See Gibb, "Defensive Communication," outlining several communication behaviors that contribute to creating a defensive climate. Recent scholarship identifies "accommodative dilemmas," where group members react negatively when their leader expresses support or empathy for another seemingly opposed group; Maguire, Hill, and Giles, "Caught in the Middle," 489.

Authentic Messaging

An Illustration from Memphis, Tennessee

In her first interview following the death of Tyre Nichols, Memphis Police Chief Cerelyn Davis modeled framing, authenticity, and humanization when she spoke with CNN before the release of the video of the police action:

> About four o'clock in the morning I learned of the incident. It was a strange summary of what occurred on a traffic stop. And I decided to go in the office and meet with the individuals that had information that I could take a look at, even though at that time Tyre was in the hospital and still he had injuries I just didn't understand. It was incomprehensible to me. We came in the office, decided to take a look that Sunday morning. It was alarming. . . .
>
> I was outraged. It was incomprehensible to me. It was unconscionable. And I felt that I needed to do something and do something quickly. I don't think I've witnessed anything of that nature my entire career. . . .
>
> You're gonna see acts that defy humanity. You're gonna see a disregard for life. Duty of care, that we are all sworn to. A level of physical interaction that is above and beyond what is required in law enforcement. I'm sure, as I've said before, that individuals watching will feel what the family felt. And if you don't, then you're not a human being. We all are human beings. I think there will be a measure of sadness as well. . . .*

*Hayes, "Memphis Police Chief Faces Crucial Test."

truth.[27] The deeply meaningful act of acknowledgement, by a mayor or chief, opens the door to dialogue and should be followed with a commitment to address the reasons for distrust.

Demonstrate internal support.

City staff and law enforcement personnel are also under tremendous stress, compounded by understaffing in departments across the country, and these pressures become more intense under media scrutiny and community demands following a critical law enforcement action. A show of support may boost morale for those who are responsible for community interfaces, highlighting their positive engagement with community, while demonstrating that leadership acknowledges the good work of front-line staff and law enforcement.[28]

27. See, e.g., IACP, "Chief Cunningham Remarks;" National Network for Safe Communities, *Police Leaders Acknowledge Past Harm;* Office of the Georgia Attorney General, "Carr's Remarks at Georgia Chiefs of Police Community Trust Initiative in LaGrange."

28. Austin Police Department, *Protest/Riot Event 2020 After Action Report,* 22–23.

Consideration 3. Be prepared to respond to demonstrations or large spontaneous gatherings

Assume protests will occur in your community.[29]

A critical law enforcement action in one community can cause a reaction and public demonstrations, even in other geographically remote communities. In the immediate aftermath of a local or nationally publicized incident, quickly emerging demonstrations catalyzed by the news cycle and social media can accelerate the timeline for law enforcement's efforts to uphold First Amendment rights and maintain a safe environment. Demonstrators take to the streets because they believe they can make change. Proactive planning and action will set the stage for city and law enforcement leaders to establish lines of communication to affected communities and to begin a dialogue.[30]

Consider how to work constructively with demonstrators

"Clear, consistent communication with demonstrators and other community members is key to facilitating public safety and building trust."[31]

Communication is the "principal mechanism through which police can discover" the goals of event organizers and learn how law enforcement might facilitate such goals; further, communication "is also the best way for law enforcement to learn about potential public order or public safety issues and try, together with organizers and participants, to prevent them."[32]

29. National Policing Institute and COPS Office, *21st Century Protest Response*, 23.
30. See Divided Community Project, *Planning in Advance of Community Unrest.*
31. National Policing Institute, *Preparing for and Responding to Mass Demonstrations,* 7.
32. Maguire and Oakley, *Policing Protests,* 13.

Constructive Conversation Team

An Illustration from Charlotte, North Carolina

The Charlotte-Mecklenburg (North Carolina) Police Department (CMPD) Constructive Conversation Team (CCT) makes intentional efforts to build a team of uniformed law enforcement officers to speak with demonstrators during protests, specifically protests directed toward the CMPD or law enforcement generally. CCT members are trained to be empathetic with demonstrators, interrupt emotional cycles, and engage in verbal de-escalation. CCT participants seek to engage demonstrators, thereby affirming their connection with community members and sharing the message that law enforcement is listening.*

*Charlotte-Mecklenburg Police Department, "Constructive Conversation Team." See also Bruner, "After Disgraceful 2020 Protest Response" (discussing the new police dialogue team in Columbus, Ohio).

Proactively engage in dialogue with activists and organizers.

Many law enforcement agencies are in touch with community activists. Those that are not might consider prioritizing making connections as soon as possible, leveraging city departments and agencies with local knowledge, skills, and relationships—because making such connections may be an exceptional challenge while a crisis is unfolding. Open lines of communication between law enforcement and activists might permit conversation about several key considerations if demonstrations are planned as a reaction to a critical law enforcement action,[33] including the following:

- Where demonstrators plan to march and accompanying traffic diversion plans
- The number of demonstrators who plan to attend[34] and the intended composition of the crowd (e.g., is the demonstration youth-led? Is it advertised as appropriate for families?)
- Whether demonstrators anticipate counterdemonstrators who embed themselves in the crowd
- Details about the expected tone of the demonstrators, including toward law enforcement

33. IACP identifies a checklist of information that might be obtained to "allow for more responsive planning." IACP Law Enforcement Policy Center, *Crowd Management: Concepts & Issues Paper,* 3.

34. Agencies may make inaccurate assumptions about the number of individuals planning to attend a protest. See Stott and Kyprianides, *Crowd Psychology, Policing and Interactional Dynamics,* 30 (law enforcement prepared for fewer than a dozen protestors; more than 150 participated).

- Whether organizers have considered safety and support measures (e.g., first aid, water, transportation, toilet facilities)
- How organizers will share information regarding threats and potential violence
- Whether and how law enforcement and local organizers are trained to perform their duties in the context of demonstrations and protests[35]
- The identification of dedicated intermediaries (who are themselves community advocates) who operate within the demonstration and might serve as points of contact for law enforcement[36]
- The identification and contact information of police liaisons who will be responsible for direct communication with demonstration leadership

Continue to assess and reassess the situation in consultation with activists and community leaders. Has the crowd remained peaceful? Have counterprotesters arrived? Do the demonstrators have access to the resources they need to demonstrate safely and peacefully?

Offer demonstrators cooperation and courtesy.

Former Boston Police Commissioner and current Boston College Chief of Police William Evans describes his philosophy as centered on approaching demonstrators with kindness: "You can talk your way out of anything. We don't need sticks out. We don't need helmets on."[37] This motto might apply to those events that are merely disruptive and not destructive. When confronted with passive resistance, police leaders should carefully consider all options before committing to a single plan, weighing potentially competing responsibilities of preserving order and demonstrating discretion in enforcement.

35. One protest guide encourages organizers to "conduct training sessions for all law enforcement that will assist in protecting public safety" at an event; Georgetown Law Institute for Constitutional Advocacy and Protection, "Policing at Protests: Best Practices."

36. Maguire and Oakley, *Policing Protests,* 72.

37. Maguire and Oakley, *Policing Protests,* 70.

Share and demonstrate that law enforcement is focused both on protecting First Amendment rights and on maintaining a safe environment for demonstrators and officers

"Whether demonstrating, counterprotesting, or showing support for a cause, individuals and groups have the right to peacefully gather. Law enforcement, in turn, has the responsibility to ensure public safety."[38]

Indeed, First Amendment and public safety aspirations often compete and conflict, and this conflict can provoke a violent reaction.[39]

In advance of and during demonstrations, law enforcement agencies have the opportunity to affirm, reinforce, and demonstrate their focus on protecting safety while, at the same time, protecting First Amendment rights. Internally, agency leadership should reaffirm their commitment to officer safety and mental health.

Publicize law enforcement's policies, values, and goals.

"Create and make public a written policy that describes how the agency will respond to demonstrations. Emphasize free expression, public safety, and de-escalation."[40] Similarly, sharing information about First Amendment rights and what falls within them and what does not can help both law enforcement and community members understand the legal rights and boundaries of protesters.

38. Global Justice Information Sharing Initiative, *Recommendations for First Amendment-Protected Events*, v.

39. Hunton & Williams LLP, *Final Report: Independent Review of the 2017 Protest*, 65.

40. Policing Project, "How to Police Protests;" see also Policing Project, *Policing Protests to Protect Constitutional Rights and Public Safety*, 2.

Prepare front-line officers for demonstrations

Small choices can have a significant impact on law enforcement's interactions with demonstrators. As discussed in further detail in consideration 4, remind officers that demonstrations are likely the product of broad dissatisfaction about social inequities. In preparing to dispatch law enforcement personnel to a scheduled or emerging demonstration, consider the following:

- In advance of demonstrations, do all involved officers attend a briefing where law enforcement leadership articulates the mission and operational concepts (e.g., preservation of life as a priority, First Amendment protections)?
- How does the agency communicate with demonstrators? Is communication clear and in real time? Is communication directly to leaders or on platforms that ensure the message is received? How has law enforcement communicated the threshold for arrest?
- If officers form a barrier, are they facing alternate directions "so they are not perceived as protecting one 'side' and not the other?"[41]
- Do operational plans identify officers who are responsible for monitoring colleagues' individual stress levels—do they have the agency to tap out officers who might need reorientation or a moment to de-escalate?
- Will equipment be used that may be perceived as militaristic or aggressive when compared to the accustomed police presence? If so, what message to community members is conveyed by its use? If such equipment is on site, is it kept out of sight until necessary?
- Are line officers instructed to make arrests for minor offenses or to maintain focus on safety and crowd facilitation?

41. Georgetown Law Institute for Constitutional Advocacy and Protection, "Policing at Protests: Best Practices."

Recognize that demonstrators are not a monolith

In the first half of the 20th century, many thought that crowd behavior was often irrational because of raw emotions or uncritical social influence and was therefore easily drawn into confrontation.[42] Social scientists today point out that this classical understanding of crowds prompts ineffective interventions to "control" them.

Modern research rejects this classical perspective. Social psychologist Clifford Stott pointed out that the vast majority of crowd members believe they are legitimately exercising their First Amendment rights—and that those who seek to escalate and cause confrontation are seen as outsiders to the demonstration. However, when some members of a demonstration attempt to escalate and cause confrontation, law enforcement—often applying the problematic classical approach—see the need to "intervene forcefully to de-escalate the situation by disrupting the emerging 'mob psychology.'"[43] Although designed to de-escalate, this coercive behavior shifts the "social context for crowd participants" who see such tactics as "unwarranted, dangerous, and illegitimate."[44] This shift can move the focus of the demonstration to the crowd control efforts themselves.

Failing to differentiate between a small misbehaving subset of the crowd and the whole crowd can inadvertently radicalize those who are more moderate participants. Social scientists urge a "differentiated response" designed to "preserve the perceived legitimacy" of law enforcement while reducing the likelihood of defiance when law enforcement "facilitate[s] peaceful and lawful behavior even when taking enforcement action against those who are engaging in violence, property destruction, or looting."[45] A differentiated response focuses on facilitating peaceful behavior of crowd members and ensuring "that only those who are engaged in violent or otherwise unlawful conduct are subjected to police enforcement measures."[46] This "laser-like" focus "on those in a crowd whose illegal actions must be addressed to preserve public safety" aims to "minimize collateral damage, ensuring that whenever possible, police actions impose a burden only on those who are engaged in criminal activity."[47] Differentiating among the goals of various demonstrators can inform the appropriate reaction.

---

42. Stott and Kyprianides, *Crowd Psychology, Policing and Interactional Dynamics*, 8.
43. Stott and Kyprianides, *Crowd Psychology, Policing and Interactional Dynamics*, 9.
44. Stott and Kyprianides, *Crowd Psychology, Policing and Interactional Dynamics,* 9.
45. Maguire and Oakley, *Policing Protests,* 76.
46. Maguire and Oakley, *Policing Protests,* 76–77.
47. Maguire and Oakley, *Policing Protests,* 13, 76–77.

Consider and be aware of legal observers, faith leaders, and third-party neutrals.

Invite "community leaders who have strong credibility among the general public to serve as observers and partners on the streets."[48] Consider partnering with CRS, which can quickly deliver community member–focused three-hour training for event marshals.[49] This training focuses on communication, rumor control, de-escalation, and safety.[50] A variety of organizations provide marshal training; some welcome law enforcement participation, others do not.[51]

Leaders might likewise consider quickly focusing on risk management and contingency planning designed to make demonstrations, rallies, and marches safe and effective. CRS provides "contingency planning" training designed to "[reduce] risk during public events."[52]

Consider next steps

After demonstrations end, conduct an after-action review.

Dozens of communities, including Austin, Texas;[53] Columbus, Ohio;[54] and Seattle, Washington,[55] have conducted after-action reports to assess the law enforcement response to demonstrations during the summer of 2020.[56] An independent academic or community partner may bring credibility to a review that assesses the effectiveness of the response, identifies gaps in law enforcement–community trust, and provides recommendations for next steps.[57]

48. PERF, *Rethinking the Police Response to Mass Demonstrations*, 6.
49. CRS, "Event Marshals: Maintaining Safety During Public Events."
50. CRS, *Event Marshal Guide*.
51. See, e.g., Act UP, "ACT UP Marshall Training;" The Direct Action Movement, "Marshal: For Marches & Other Demonstrations;" Boundless Love Project, "Marshal Training."
52. CRS, *Contingency Planning: Reducing Risk During Public Events*.
53. Austin Police Department, *Protest/Riot Event 2020 After Action Report*.
54. Brown and Stewart, *City of Columbus' Response to the 2020 Summer Protests*.
55. Stott and Kyprianides, *Crowd Psychology, Policing and Interactional Dynamics*.
56. See also PERF, *Rethinking the Police Response to Mass Demonstrations,* 9–10 (identifying 26 after-action reports).
57. See Brown and Stewart, *City of Columbus' Response to the 2020 Summer Protests*.

Consider when to begin planning for dialogue.

In the immediate aftermath of critical law enforcement action, before planning for dialogue, take the temperature of your community; they will signal when the time is right for dialogue. Some communities and residents may need to vent in the days and weeks—or longer—of the immediate aftermath.

- In the case of a death, consider the family's needs and interests: Has the funeral concluded? Has the family had the opportunity to review video footage of the incident? Has the family had time to emotionally process the event?
- In the case of serious injury, have the affected persons been released from the hospital? If so, do the injuries remain potentially life-threatening?
- Take stock of the community. How have demonstrations developed or progressed? Are advocates and community leaders making demands?
- Be mindful that different interests or agendas within the community may generate internal conflict dividing advocates.
- Consider the role of law enforcement and city leadership. How much information has been shared with the community? Are leaders communicating swiftly, and with transparency? How have these efforts been received? Are visible city leaders working with visible community and advocacy leaders?
- Assess progress with respect to ongoing investigations, including how newly-revealed information informs responses from community members.

Effective elected and appointed leaders may become catalysts for bringing law enforcement and community leaders and advocates together. CRS and other facilitators might also play a valuable role. Some community advocates might not engage in a dialogue process; others will. Connect with community partners who have the pulse of the community.

Strengthening law enforcement–community relationships and communication *before* a critical action occurs will facilitate attention to these considerations in the immediate aftermath of one. Section II of this publication describes law enforcement–community dialogue as one important means to build stronger communication and relationships.

Consideration 4. Engage beyond your silo

We recognize that government organizations can be complex and siloed, pocketing expertise in departments with a specific focus (safety, neighborhoods, communications, etc.). In the immediate aftermath of a critical law enforcement action, effective coordination requires leadership to communicate and operate across organizational lines to address urgent and competing multijurisdictional demands from within and outside municipal governance, both elected and appointed, without the friction of factional or political interests. Effective use of diverse resources from outside municipal government will catalyze support, offer solace, and help heal the community.

Host unified command centers

Where possible, coordinate with fusion centers, activate emergency operations centers (EOC), and execute emergency management protocols that call upon neighboring and supportive agencies to prepare for or to respond to demonstrations. While EOCs support and coordinate crisis and incident management responses, fusion centers "empower homeland security partners through the lawful gathering, analysis, and sharing of threat-related information."[58]

Include all supportive law enforcement agencies in unified command centers to avoid delayed communication and miscommunication between agencies and officers working a demonstration.[59] Such command centers might also include personnel from other city departments so that a more diverse group can "identify potential issues and create forward-thinking" response strategies.[60]

58. U.S. Department of Homeland Security, "Fusion Centers and Emergency Operations Centers." For more information about EOC and Fusion Centers, see FEMA, *Considerations for Fusion Center and Emergency Operations Center Coordination.*

59. Hunton & Williams LLP, *Final Report: Independent Review of the 2017 Protest,* 66.

60. National Policing Institute and COPS Office, *21st Century Protest Response,* 10.

Engage third parties to provide mediation or conciliation services, as well as community support and counseling

While bereaved family members, neighbors, community members, and advocates may all feel pain, the depth of loss and grief does not fall equally on all members of the community. A sudden loss may activate new emotions, such as anger and hopelessness. It may compound or retraumatize those who have experienced loss in the past. The event may be grounded in history and context that may lead community members to interpret it, rightly or wrongly, as evidence of racism or discrimination, particularly among communities who have not had access to power and a place to be heard.

At times of heightened scrutiny—and particularly facing the complex challenges following a critical law enforcement action—law enforcement leaders hoping to build trust and engage community constructively should recognize the value of varied independent and experienced resources from outside their community.

From those who have faced similar circumstances.

Look beyond local leaders for ideas, strategy, and resources. Consider reaching out to a fellow law enforcement or civic leader you trust who has experienced a similar situation in their community and obtain their candid advice about what they did, what worked, what went wrong, what they would have done differently, and what they would not do again.

From an impartial third party.

A community-focused civil rights mediator who has worked in a volatile community conflict could provide first-hand experience with communities facing conflict and crisis. CRS is designed to assist communities in this regard; other impartial third-party resources may have the capacity to assist during such a conflict, including local community mediation and conflict resolution centers,[61] academic institution dispute resolution programs like the Divided Community Project,[62] some state agencies, peacebuilding organizations, and civic engagement facilitators. Mediators are trained to keep communications private or confidential, and state law often protects what takes place during a mediation; a federal statute obligates CRS to maintain confidentiality and provides penalties for breaching it.[63]

---

61. The National Association for Community Mediation (NAFCM) is a hub for identifying community mediation centers; NAFCM, "Locate a Member."

62. For example, the Divided Community Project at The Ohio State University Moritz College of Law offers impartial conciliators; Divided Community Project, "The Bridge Initiative at Moritz."

63. CRS, "About CRS."

From those with trauma-informed experience.

A team of diverse and local religious leaders may be more trusted than city and law enforcement leadership. Often better trained and better suited to understand the pain in a community, they create a safe and supportive sanctuary for grieving and angry communities. Likewise, social workers and social service agencies may have more cultural humility, training, and experience than law enforcement or other city personnel and be able to translate that knowledge into care that does not retraumatize those seeking help. Trauma-informed engagement may include the following considerations, as articulated in a recent DOJ Critical Incident Review Report:[64]

- Understanding how traumatic stress may shift the ability to accurately access memory of traumatic incidents
- Avoiding retraumatization
- Recognizing common emotional reactions regarding lived experience
- Understanding how to accommodate distressed emotional responses
- Knowing when to provide or make referrals to mental health support
- Developing capacity (both individual and team-based) to mitigate secondary trauma

Communicate through mediators and conciliators.

If no relationship exists between law enforcement and local organizers, consider working with an impartial third party to open lines of communication. A civil rights mediator from the CRS or another organization may be able to share messages between law enforcement leaders and community activists; so might members from local American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU), NAACP, Urban League, Showing Up for Racial Justice, and community mediation centers.[65] In addition, municipal agencies may play a similar role. While demonstrators might be averse to sharing information directly with law enforcement, they may be willing to share information with CRS, a local human relations commission, or a community engagement program.

64. U.S. Department of Justice, *Critical Incident Review: Active Shooter at Robb Elementary.*

65. While CRS is a primary resource, CRS capacity is limited. Local resources may be able to provide sustained resources for dialogue; national organizations like CRS often provide training opportunities which empower facilitators to lead impactful community dialogue.

Take care of your government's team

For city staff

Permit time and space for staff at all levels to meet and share their thoughts and feelings about the incident. Staff will bring what takes place in the community into city hall. Ask if staff have the resources they need to take care of themselves and their families, and if they do not, connect them to resources. Keep staff informed and up to date on actions being taken by city leadership so they are not distracted by rumors circulating online or in the community.

For law enforcement

As has often been observed, hurt people hurt people. This principle applies broadly during community crises. In addition to the ideas provided for city staff, consider priming law enforcement for the criticism they might face—in the media, online, during their day-to-day duties, and while at demonstrations. They may feel attacked by the community's expression of grief and anger. In this complex context, the pain also is not distributed equally. In the wake of the murder of George Floyd, many Black officers found themselves facing a double bind between loyalty to the Black community and adherence to their professional role against the backdrop of a use of deadly force many viewed as about race.[66]

Work with law enforcement personnel at all levels to appreciate that anger directed at them—at demonstrations or while out on patrol—is, while sparked by a critical law enforcement action, often the result of historic, legal, and policy choices not under their control. Remind law enforcement that it is natural to feel defensive when interacting with people who are critical, but learning to remain calm in the midst of conflicted feelings must be their priority.

Address concerns about digital scrutiny and doxing of staff and law enforcement.

Cybersecurity infrastructure, security audits, collaboration with social media platform administrators, and technology protocols are proactive steps to deter doxing and cyberbullying. Consider rapid response plans and well-defined protocols that include providing immediate support and resources, including access to emotional, psychological, and peer support programs.

66. See Headley, "Representing Personal and Professional Identities in Policing," 406. See also Beachum and Shammas, "Black Officers, Torn Between Badge and Culture;" Jones, "The Experience of Conflicting Identities, 39–43 ("exploring [the] conflict in identities for African American police officers").

II. A Building Block for Trust: Intentional Law Enforcement–Community Dialogue

[R]elationships cannot be built during a crisis; relationships and trust must be built and accumulated over time by facing challenges and successes together.[67]

In section I of this guide, community trust in law enforcement was compared to a bank account. Ideally, the deposits consistently outweigh the withdrawals and the balance remains positive. But in the aftermath of a critical law enforcement action perceived as excessive or motivated by bias, withdrawals can come quickly and be quite large, as members of the community question the legitimacy and necessity of police conduct. It is in these precise circumstances—as the community seeks a reliable source for information, resources, and guidance—that trust is most crucial. Without it, law enforcement leaders will struggle to communicate effectively with those they serve, and their efforts will suffer the most in those communities most closely affected by the event. Like expanding a bank account for unforeseen circumstances, trust-building requires consistent attention.

"Dialogue permits law enforcement and community to understand one another at a core level, to develop a sense of transparency and understanding. An agency's engagement demonstrates a commitment to transparency while developing legitimacy and trust."

— Retired Chief Lori Luhnow,
Santa Barbara, California

67. National Policing Institute and COPS Office, *21st Century Protest Response*, 13.

Potential Outcomes of Intentional Law Enforcement-Community Dialogue

- An understanding of community perspective of law enforcement
- Community input into law enforcement agency goals
- Collaborative planning in advance of community unrest
- Updated policies and procedures
- A collaboratively developed communication plan

Law enforcement agencies have sought to establish trust in many ways. For example, relationship-building initiatives such as National Night Out, neighborhood watch programs, and community walks seek to establish communication and interpersonal relationships based on common goals and shared resources. Civilian police academies and ride-along programs help the community understand police work through a law enforcement lens. Police athletic leagues, cadet programs, and school resource initiatives aim to connect with a vulnerable youth population. Community relations commissions, human relations commissions, community advisory boards, and police review boards are designed to increase transparency and provide accountability—all provide mechanisms for protecting rights and investigating complaints. All of these worthwhile initiatives might bring law enforcement and community members together in one-on-one or small group settings and have the potential to build trust, but their focus is not on dialogue.

The focus of part II of this guide is on a collaboratively designed, goal-driven trust-building process of facilitated communication between law enforcement and community members that we refer to as intentional dialogue.

Defining intentional law enforcement–community dialogue

The form, focus, frequency (one-time or series), and potential outcomes of the dialogue can vary, but the constant in intentional law enforcement–community dialogue, and what distinguishes it from other communication strategies, is a process that

1. is collaboratively designed;
2. is purposeful and goal-driven;
3. brings groups of residents together with law enforcement personnel.

In addition to designing an inclusive, goal-driven dialogue process, this guide also examines methods for sustaining intentional dialogue and implementing its outcomes.

Collaboratively designed

Law enforcement–community dialogue is a collaborative[68] process designed by representatives from law enforcement, advocacy groups, and city leadership, as well as other community members. Those with deep experience planning dialogue suggest dialogue is more effective if it emerges from mutual engagement in planning and implementation between law enforcement and particular communities. Building an inclusive process may take time to meet the needs and interests of those involved; however, an agency's investment will pay dividends in trust-building and, importantly, move toward a more community-centered approach to problem solving.

Purposeful and goal-driven

A purposeful and goal-driven dialogue process emanates from a planning or design group that articulates the goal(s) of the dialogue, identifies who might be invited or recruited, facilitates the engagement of participants in conversation, selects specific topics to address and the structure of the conversation, addresses power imbalances, and considers guidelines for conducting dialogue. Such dialogue, in its design and implementation, should promote trust-building and interpersonal connections.

68. Such collaboration is distinct from the concept of "co-production" where agencies "involve" or permit community members to "actively participate" in the design or implementation of law enforcement agency protocol or services. See National Policing Institute and COPS Office, *21st Century Protest Response*, 14–15. Co-production appears to center the agency; collaboration centers both the community and the agency.

Brings groups of residents together with law enforcement

Intentional dialogue brings groups of residents together to engage with law enforcement. Some intentional dialogue designers pre-define the groups that might participate—e.g., some reach out to members of a particular religious group or immigrant population,[69] some invite all residents from a particular community, and still others invite only representatives of defined community organizations to the conversation. Many dialogues convene in person; some dialogues convene digitally. In addition, some dialogues engage line-level officers, while others engage only law enforcement leadership or a combination.

What is Intentional Dialogue?

Collaboratively Designed

- Determine who should be involved in the design process

Purposeful and Goal-Driven

- Set clear goals collaboratively
- Engage a trusted, independent facilitator
- Select an effective format
- Identify an agenda
- Consider and mitigate power imbalances
- Develop guidance for participation
- Encourage constructive conversation

Brings Groups of Residents Together with Law Enforcement

- Determine available and necessary resources
- Consider logistics and accessibility
- Identify and engage participants

Sustainable in Both Process and Outcomes

- Elicit feedback
- Identify next steps
- Be mindful of other considerations for sustaining dialogue

69. Of course, there are divisions within each community group. No group is monolithic.

Proactive intentional law enforcement–community dialogue

The time to begin intentional dialogue is now—ideally before the next crisis occurs in your community or elsewhere. The goal of intentional dialogue is to jointly create a space where members of a community and law enforcement engage in constructive conversations to learn from and connect with one another and, where possible, attempt to address specific issues or concerns underlying the community's distrust, resentment, anger, or misunderstanding. Intentional dialogue can take multiple forms—small group conversations, large town hall meetings, conversations driven by hypotheticals and simulations, or interactive community events; it can focus on broad topics (building trust in the neighborhood) or narrow subjects ("increase understanding of police practices" or "sharing stories") and be implemented as a one-time or multiple-event gathering.

As stated in section I, dialogue may not be appropriate in the *immediate aftermath* of a high-profile use of force incident the community perceives to be excessive or motivated by bias, particularly in communities with a deficit of trust.[70] If trust is deficient or absent, or if law enforcement seeks dialogue only after a crisis (and not at other times), then building trust likely will require a public acknowledgement of harm by a city or law enforcement leader and a commitment to a collaborative process designed to achieve goals identified by the community as responsive to the need for greater accountability, legitimacy, and trust.

In the sections that follow, this guide highlights design choices for leaders and planners on the design team who initiate and implement an intentional law enforcement community dialogue process. We highlight a variety of dialogue processes and recognize there are many more dialogue models and communities engaged in this challenging work.

70. See Section 1, Consideration 3: Consider next steps on page 20 (discussing the timing of dialogue following a deadly use of force incident).

More detail on the elements of intentional law enforcement–community dialogue

Collaboratively designed

Who should be involved in the design process?

Law enforcement–community dialogue is a collaborative process. It is most effective when it emerges from a mutual planning process that involves law enforcement, municipal leadership, members of advocacy groups, representatives of historically marginalized communities, and other community members who need to have a seat at the table. Building an inclusive process may take time to meet the needs and interests of all those involved, but the investment will pay dividends in trust.

"We took a step aside to permit the community to identify key voices for dialogue. We let the community know, when you are ready, we will be ready to join the dialogue."

— Cecil Smith, Chief,
Sanford, Florida

Collaborative leadership matters.

Law enforcement (likely command staff and potentially union leadership), city leadership (council / mayor / city manager),[71] and community leaders must all be engaged in the design process. Including law enforcement agency leadership in the design process sends a signal to all levels of an agency that dialogue is a priority and a necessary component of the department's community policing strategy. It also signals to the community that the voices of those involved will be heard by individuals with the authority and position to implement change.

71. If public and elected leaders participate, be sure to comply with your state's public records and open meetings laws.

Collaborative team meeting.

Divided Community Project

Regardless of who takes the first step to initiate dialogue, key leaders need to engage collaboratively in the planning process.[72] Open and authentic communication can increase trust and participation in the process by securing thorough feedback on current plans and enhanced understanding of community concerns.[73] Those experienced in conducting intentional dialogue confirm that engaging organizations and individuals with perceived and actual authority enhances both the visibility and viability of the effort.

Representation matters.

To secure credibility with an entire community, the process planners should seek to include credible messengers—advocacy groups representing or aligned with historically marginalized segments of the community. Including known community representatives in the design process increases the potential for buy-in from marginalized community members.[74] Representatives from historically marginalized communities may initially decline an invitation to participate in the planning process; this should not be viewed as a lack of interest but rather as indicative of the gap in trust that currently exists. Reaching out through a trusted intermediary may open a communication channel that establishes enough credibility to bring the needed representatives to the table. Make space at the table for their voices and, throughout the dialogue design process, keep asking what voices are missing.

72. Barnes-Proby, *A Toolkit for Community-Police Dialogue,* 13.

73. One study reports the collaborative design team "share[d] perspectives, acknowledge historical traumas, identify mutual goals and objectives . . . and buil[t] the intergroup trust necessary to support moving forward with the project;" Hill, "VOICES," 790.

74. Hill, "VOICES," 789.

Design to include youth.

Youth are often integral to dialogue. If the design team elects to engage youth, their inclusion in the design process is essential, though it requires special planning as discussed later. Bringing youth into the conversation only after the dialogue has been designed may tokenize their engagement. The same risk occurs if designers do not create youth-focused events or build in opportunities for leadership to directly hear youth voices. While youth are one group within the community, youth are as diverse as the community at large.

Identify the representative leadership group.

Because constructive leadership is so important, regardless of whether dialogue is created by an official act or by consent of the leaders, process planners should organize themselves (e.g., as co-chairs versus multiple chairpersons) with leaders willing to lead collaboratively. This allows distrustful community members to see their leaders, or at least representative diverse leaders, who are equally responsible for design and implementation, accountable to participants to shepherd the process collaboratively, report and speak out consistently, and available to respond to the community's concerns about the process.

Purposeful and goal driven

Considerations for a design team—in advance of dialogue

Intentional dialogue differs from other forms of communication and engagement in that it is purposefully designed to meet a defined set of goals. The design process is driven by the design team, collaborative, and done in advance of the dialogue. Important actions to take in the design stage include setting clear goals, identifying dialogue facilitator(s), determining how to select and invite participants, selecting topics of discussion and structure of conversation, establishing guidelines, and seeking to create a space that feels safe and provides a level playing field to permit full participation in constructive and goal driven dialogue.

Set clear goals collaboratively

The design team should develop a clearly stated initial goal for the planning group and the dialogue process, even if that goal might subsequently shift through the collaborative planning process. A clear goal, collaboratively developed, crystallizes the purpose of collaborating and the general outcomes the team hopes to achieve together. Recent research suggests that law enforcement at all ranks is more willing to

Illustrations | Dialogue Goals

The **U.S. Department of Justice Community Relations Service (CRS) Strengthening Police Community Partnership** (SPCP) program is designed to "engage local law enforcement and community leaders in dialogue to identify issues and solve problems collaboratively, increase local capacity, develop partnerships, and develop local solutions to local problems. The program is also designed to help local leaders address longstanding community distrust and other historical barriers that hinder police-community partnerships and to improve trust and develop partnerships between law enforcement officers and the diverse communities they serve."*

In **Indianapolis, Indiana**, government and community leaders identified two goals for a 2018 dialogue event: "To hear from Indianapolis residents' perspectives about their experiences with law enforcement" and "to gather Indianapolis residents' perspectives about the possibilities for improving the relationship between local law enforcement and the community they serve."†

The **Los Angeles Dinner Dialogue** program identified a series of goals for its 2019 programs, including "facilitate small dialogues with a diverse cross-section of the Black community," "gather experiences, perspectives, and community-sourced recommendations for building trust with the LAPD," "[a]dvise the City . . . of findings and recommendations to inform policy and programming aimed at improving the relationship between the Black community and the LAPD," "[a]ct as a liaison between the LAPD and the Black community," and "[a]lleviate tensions and build trust between the Black community and the LAPD."‡

---

* CRS, *Strengthening Police and Community Partnerships Program in Erie, Pennsylvania*, 10.
† Indianapolis-Marion County City-County Council, *Report on Indianapolis City-County Council Community Conversation*, 1.
‡ City of Los Angeles Human Relations Commission, *Policing and the Black Community*, 1.

participate in community engagement activities when goals are explicitly defined.[75] According to those with experience designing dialogue, an understanding of desired outcomes also increases buy-in from participants.

Dialogue goals can be narrow or broad; they can have a singular focus or multiple priorities. Examples of broad law enforcement–community dialogue goals include unpacking the roots of distrust, breaking down barriers to trust or building trust,[76] or expanding resident engagement.[77] More targeted goals could include focusing on addressing implicit biases, increasing awareness, sharing stories, or eliciting feedback on specific policies or protocols. Many dialogue programs articulate a series of goals.

---

75. Santos and Santos, *Operationalizing Proactive Community Engagement*, 6.
76. CRS, "Strengthening Police and Community Partnerships."
77. Divided Community Project, *Orlando Speaks*, 2.

Engage a trusted, independent facilitator

To secure stakeholder participation in an intentional dialogue, using a skilled facilitator or facilitation team with experience navigating deep conflict is essential.[78] Carefully assess the background and neutrality of a facilitator or a facilitation team. A solo facilitator who is current or former law enforcement, or is a leading community activist, may create a perception of bias.[79] Will a facilitation team, composed of representatives from the community and (perhaps) from law enforcement, be trusted and therefore more effective? Will volunteers—with facilitation skills—be necessary to build out a large facilitation team?[80] A neutral, impartial, and independent facilitator whom the parties can trust to host a balanced and fair process is likely to produce more effective and sustainable outcomes. Indeed, those with experience designing intentional dialogue suggest such a facilitator will enhance the credibility of the process.

Using a conflict resolution practitioner who has mediated or facilitated divisive community or public policy conflicts might be another option. Many such practitioners keep neutrality and impartiality core to their work and have often facilitated negotiations regarding divisive community issues. CRS is designed to assist communities in this regard,[81] as are other community-focused impartial third-party resources (e.g., many community mediation centers).[82] Further, CRS provides facilitator training through its Facilitating Meetings Around Community Conflict or FMACC program;[83] other organizations may also provide facilitator training.

---

78. Barnes-Proby, *A Toolkit for Community-Police Dialogue,* 15–16; see Hill, "VOICES," 791 (discussing the use of a "trained mediator").

79. The VOICES model relied on a trained mediator who was not associated with law enforcement or the community group; Hill, "VOICES," 6. RAND's toolkit for community-police dialogue emphasizes "neutrality" and urges dialogue designers to consider outside organizations when selecting a facilitator; Barnes-Proby, *A Toolkit for Community-Police* Dialogue, 15–16.

80. RAND's toolkit suggests considering university students and faculty, individuals who understand community concerns, teachers, and members of city government when building facilitation teams; Barnes-Proby, *A Toolkit for Community-Police Dialogue*, 16. See also Divided Community Project, *Orlando Speaks*, 2 (using Peace and Justice Institute facilitators); Press, "Using Dispute Resolution Skills," 658 (training volunteer facilitators, most of whom had facilitation or circle experience).

81. CRS's Strengthening Police and Community Partnerships program is one example of the value a third party can provide. CRS provides facilitation and technical assistance at no cost to communities requesting or accepting its services.

82. While CRS is a primary resource, CRS capacity is limited. Local resources may be able to provide sustained resources for dialogue; national organizations might provide training opportunities which empower facilitators to lead impactful community dialogue. The National Association for Community Mediation (NAFCM) is a hub for identifying community mediation centers and may be a resource in your community. NAFCM, "Locate a Member."

83. CRS, "Facilitating Meetings Around Community Conflict: Participant Toolkit."

Select an effective format for conducting intentional dialogue

There are multiple meeting formats to consider—a town hall gathering, formal presentations, small-group conversations, circle processes, or several such styles in sequence. In addition to considering who will facilitate dialogue and how, tie the dialogue format to its goals, agendas, and resources.

Circle and restorative-style processes.

Circles are a facilitated community-based decision-making process where participants are seated in a circle (preferably with no tables) to symbolize equality and shared leadership and encourage them to focus on understanding others' perspectives. Participants address a wide range of issues that are important for understanding (1) what has happened and (2) what should be done. Circle processes are designed to advance constructive outcomes in which the "needs and obligations of the entire community are understood and addressed."[84] Advocates of circle processes stress that "conflicts are openings, doorways to new ways of being together. . . . Perhaps the way things were wasn't entirely working; conflicts invite us to explore how to change them."[85] To achieve this exploration, circle processes make space for every participant's perspectives and feelings. In this way, circles offer "renewed community identity" for their participants.[86] Several studies report on the use of circle- and restorative-style practices as part of intentional dialogue.[87]

84. Van Ness and Strong, *Restoring Justice: An Introduction to Restorative Justice,* 85.

85. Van Ness and Strong, *Restoring Justice: An Introduction to Restorative Justice,* 85.

86. Van Ness and Strong, *Restoring Justice: An Introduction to Restorative Justice,* 85–86.

87. For example, in Falcon Heights, each dialogue session included circle-style processes "guided by restorative values that foster deep, courageous, honest, and self-reflective dialogue;" Press, "Using Dispute Resolution Skills," 658. Dialogue in Seattle used a "restorative framework with an emphasis on strengthening relationships through sharing personal experiences and developing understanding, mutual trust, and respect;" Helfgott et al., *Community-Police Dialogues: 2022 Results*, 5.

Catalyzing dialogue with simulations, scenarios, hypotheticals.

Scenarios and simulations might be used to catalyze conversation[88] or develop empathy for what diverse community members experience during a crisis.[89] It is critical to consider whether using some scenarios might activate emotional or traumatic responses. Some designers choose scenarios based on events that have taken place in communities across the country;[90] others use scenarios that are realistic and relatable but are hypothetical to reduce the likelihood for understandable but polarizing emotional responses.[91] Some dialogue events have also included virtual reality simulations.[92]

Serial testimony.

This dialogue format assigns participants to small, diverse groups that include at least one law enforcement official. Serial testimony permits "participants to share their stories without interruption or comment. Each person is allotted the same amount of time, ensuring all voices are heard equally in the room. No one has to fight to be heard. No one has to worry about getting their fair share of 'air time.'"[93]

Town hall convenings.

Law enforcement agencies across the country host town hall meetings to elicit feedback from residents. New York University's (NYU) Policing Project suggests town hall–style meetings might be valuable to elicit feedback on a specific topic or when an agency seeks to inform the community about a complex subject. A town hall format enables the agency to share information, provides space for residents to share their own perspectives, and concludes by identifying what next steps will be taken.[94]

---

88. Barnes-Proby, *A Toolkit for Community-Police Dialogue,* 19; Hill, "VOICES," 792. See Kang, "Constructing Community Cohesion Organically and Strategically," 142; see Center for Justice Research, "A Conversation on Trust."

89. Kang, "Constructing Community Cohesion Organically and Strategically," 150. See also Barnes-Proby, *A Toolkit for Community-Police Dialogue,* 10, 54 (highlighting empathy, mutual respect, and trust as outcomes of dialogues similar to the RAND model—which includes hypothetical scenarios—and "increases in perceived common ground" as a consistent outcome of RAND's dialogues).

90. Froehlich, Rogers, and Stulberg, *Sharing Dispute Resolution Practices,* 813.

91. Barnes-Proby, *A Toolkit for Community-Police Dialogue,* 19.

92. Center for Justice Research, "A Conversation on Trust," (discussing the use of "police use-of-force situational scenarios using a virtual simulator").

93. Divided Community Project, *Orlando Speaks*, 2.

94. Policing Project, "How to Host a Town Hall Meeting."

Facilitating a community conversation.

U.S. Department of Justice Community Relations Service

Dialogue between "in-groups" and "out-groups."

Many intentional dialogues focus on bringing diverse law enforcement and resident participants together to engage in conversation. Designers might choose to tailor dialogue to focus on specific stakeholder groups. Social scientists explain that the relationship between law enforcement and community is "intergroup in nature," meaning individuals favor people who appear similar to themselves (in-group members) while often developing "unfavorable evaluations of those they perceive to be different" (out-group members).[95] The VOICES model focuses on intergroup communication, bringing together representatives from two distinct groups (law enforcement and a marginalized community group) to build trust, empathy, and enhance intergroup communication.[96] Other models separate participants by stakeholder group for at least part of a dialogue session. For example, CRS's Strengthening Police and Community Partnerships (SPCP) dialogue process starts participants in homogenous stakeholder groups: youth representatives, faith groups, law enforcement, and others. Then, all stakeholder groups come together in heterogeneous small groups to further discuss their ideas and recommendations.[97]

95. Nuño et al., "Experiencing VOICES," 631–632.
96. See Nuño et al., "Experiencing VOICES"; Hill, "VOICES."
97. CRS, *Strengthening Police and Community Partnerships Program in Erie, Pennsylvania*, 5.

Identifying an agenda

Develop an agenda for the dialogue that connects to the dialogue's goals and identifies topics and concerns that participants can address and potentially resolve. To enhance public support and engagement, designers should consider developing two agendas: (1) a public-facing agenda that articulates participant activities and a schedule and (2) a facilitator and staff agenda that identifies logistical matters, substantive questions, and timing considerations.[98]

Public agendas set forth the themes and topics of the intended discussions, together with dates and times.[99] Such an agenda might be used to promote and advertise, as well as recruit participants for, the dialogue session. A facilitator's agenda may include background information that portrays the various activities, events, or concerns that inform the background for convening the conversation, the purpose and goal of the dialogue, logistical considerations, a list of facilitator roles and responsibilities, and concrete tasks and questions.[100] Developing a detailed facilitator's agenda, inclusive of the specific topics and concrete questions for dialogue, may require significant discussion and collaboration among the design group.

Considerations for implementing intentional dialogue

Consider and mitigate power imbalances

Scholars have explained that limiting power imbalances between law enforcement and community members is one of the most significant challenges in the design of dialogue.[101] It is understandable that law enforcement may be reluctant to attend community-connected events where they will be talked at or yelled at. Similarly, community members may be reluctant to participate openly or honestly because of fear or anxiety concerning law enforcement officers' power and authority. Officers are often in uniform, armed, and authorized to limit people's freedom. In this way, an officer can drastically impact the lives of community members.[102]

Care must be taken at each step of the process, from persuading law enforcement and community members to plan together to developing collaborative and respectful relationships. Because power differentials can be such a significant impediment to

98. Barnes-Proby, *A Toolkit for Community-Police Dialogue,* 22.

99. For example agendas, see Helfgott et al., *Community-Police Dialogues: 2022 Results*, 48; Barnes-Proby, *A Toolkit for Community-Police Dialogue,* 46–47.

100. Press, "Using Dispute Resolution Skills," 676–681.

101. Hill, "VOICES," 791.

102. See Ward, "Understanding Bias and Power" ("An officer has the legal authority to vastly change the lives of all persons on a service call"); Greenstein, "Peaceful Communications Between Community Members" ("Citizens often fear that if they disagree with a law enforcement officer or don't comply with the officer's orders, they will be arrested, or even worse, shot and killed").

building trust and encouraging communication,[103] they must be mitigated whenever possible. A design team should consider whether, for example, officers will participate in uniform or plain clothes;[104] armed or unarmed; whether an event will be located in a law enforcement facility or community facility; how all participants will be addressed (e.g., will law enforcement be addressed as "officer," "commander," or informally by their first names); and whether speakers speak from a stage ("above" an audience) or if they are visually on the same level.[105]

The skilled facilitator should also be mindful to ensure that all participants have an equal role in the dialogue regardless of their title, rank, or employer.[106] A recent study suggests ground rules that direct participants to set aside any existing power differentials, value and respect every participant's perspective, and refrain from interruption and monopolization of discussion.[107]

Developing guidance for participation

Consider whether and how to develop participant guidance[108] for intentional dialogue. Guidelines are often used at the beginning of a dialogue session "to facilitate a culture of openness and honesty"[109] or provide participants with "tools for navigating conflict should challenging or potentially inflammatory ideas arise in the room."[110] Guidelines may be useful for framing the focus of the dialogue and should be connected to dialogue goals.

Consider developing guidelines for process, substance, and relationships. Process guidelines might include the amount of time for a particular topic or speaker, confidentiality (discussed further in later sections), or protocols for talking with the media. Guidelines focused on substance might frame the subject matter for the conversation or identify topics that will not be discussed. Relationship guidelines might include language focused on respectful engagement or prohibitions against interrupting other participants.

---

103. Hill, "VOICES," 791.

104. One case study suggests formal uniforms might permit law enforcement to more clearly explain their responsibilities to resident participants; Divided Community Project, *Orlando Speaks*, 4.

105. See generally Hill, "VOICES," 791.

106. Barnes-Proby, *A Toolkit for Community-Police Dialogue,* 34.

107. Barnes-Proby, *A Toolkit for Community-Police Dialogue,* 28.

108. See, e.g., Peace and Justice Institute, *Principles for How We Treat Each Other;* and Helfgott et al., *Community-Police Dialogues: 2022 Results,* 6 (identifying "ground rules").

109. Helfgott et al., *Community-Police Dialogues: 2022 Results,* 6.

110. Divided Community Project, *Orlando Speaks,* 5.

Illustration | Balancing Power and Protocol

Those designing dialogue should carefully consider whether law enforcement participants will participate in uniform or while visibly armed. Department protocol, collective bargaining agreements, or state or local law may provide a clear answer to this question. Safety considerations may weigh strongly in favor of uniformed and visibly armed officer participation. Meanwhile, some may be intimated by officers in uniform and visibly wearing firearms—they may engage more fully if an officer dresses in plainclothes.

One community volunteer of a law enforcement–community task force expressed the power imbalances they experienced when an officer attended conversations in uniform with a visible gun: "It was very difficult in the early days to all be referred to as volunteers while [a lieutenant] arrived in uniform and wearing a weapon. He was clearly on duty and not a volunteer. It was after some time that [the lieutenant] received a different assignment and began to attend the meetings in civilian attire. . . . That was an important shift. Visually, it humanized the law enforcement officer."*

Designers should think carefully about this choice point and others that involve power imbalances. Consider whether participants will feel more comfortable engaged in dialogue, whether all dialogue participants will be known, if the event is open to the public, the size of the dialogue event, and the location. If everyone in the room will understand that the person is an officer and protocols and laws permit, the balance may favor a plainclothes approach.

---

* Sonoma County Community and Local Law Enforcement Task Force, *Final Recommendations Report*, 120.

Guidelines that reference confidentiality should be clearly communicated. Different cultural groups may have varying expectations and values around privacy and confidentiality.[111] Power imbalances and inequities may make it challenging for historically marginalized groups to engage openly with and about law enforcement, particularly without guidelines regarding how their communications will be treated—whether they will be recorded, shared further, attributed to them, etc. Consider also the confidentiality implications of hosting dialogue digitally—e.g., will the session be recorded?

---

111. Historically, many law enforcement community engagements have lacked transparency and trust with the community, and there may be broad systemic trust issues between marginalized communities and police that manifest in how information-sharing and overall privacy is viewed. Factors like power imbalances and societal inequalities may influence cultural expectations and assumptions from the community based on past negative experiences with law enforcement that need to be acknowledged and addressed. See generally Braga, Brunson, and Drakulich, "Race, Place, and Effective Policing" (discussing "race differences in crime and in the criminal justice system," and specific policing policies' efficacy, impact, reasoning, and what it might take to change them).

"Dialogue ground rules give participants a right to share their truth—what happened to you, what you saw, and your recommendations for reform. They give participants and opportunity to speak before others react. They make participants more comfortable addressing their own issues and concerns."

— Cecil Smith, Chief of Police,
Sanford, Florida

Discuss whether to invite participants to agree to guidelines and whether to ask if they would like to propose any additional guidelines. Asking participants to commit to guidelines may secure their buy-in to the process. Asking participants if they would like to develop their own or add additional guidelines may empower participant engagement and choice but may derail a dialogue process.[112]

Encouraging constructive conversation

Set the tone.

The goal and agenda of intentional dialogue will shape the conversations that take place. Develop a facilitator's agenda that includes questions and considerations for collaboratively designed intentional dialogue. Consider how participants will meet one another as well as how to facilitate substantive discussion.

Provide a welcoming environment.

Welcome participants with an agenda and logistical information (food, restrooms) as they arrive. Arrange the space to encourage conversation between participants. A facilitator might be tasked with connecting or redirecting participants who are not engaged or are sitting alone.[113]

112. See Schwarz, *The Skilled Facilitator*, 215–216 (recommending against asking groups to develop their own ground rules).

113. Barnes-Proby, *A Toolkit for Community-Police Dialogue*, 26.

Be prepared.

Particularly with large dialogue groups where facilitation teams may be required, prepared guidelines and questions may be necessary to stimulate conversation consistent with the themes of the dialogue. Facilitators might review ground rules, discuss their role, and frame the conversation as the dialogue begins.[114] Facilitators might engage with participants flexibly to follow their needs and interests.[115] Early questions for dialogue might include simple icebreakers or foundational questions that urge participants to reflect on the goals of the dialogue.[116] As discussed previously, an internal or facilitator's agenda that includes background information, answers to basic questions, and a detailed agenda—particularly when working with facilitation teams—will keep facilitators and participants working in the same direction.

Engage with simulations.

Simulations and hypothetical scenarios might be used to catalyze conversation. For example, a hypothetical might ask participants to grapple with the community's reaction to national events and a local protest.[117] Such a prompt might focus conversation on how a community might respond to unrest, what it might do to prepare in advance to respond, or what might be done to enhance trust and resilience in the community.

Model vulnerabilities.

Design teams might encourage facilitators to examine their own biases and personal concerns regarding law enforcement and community dialogue. Modeling vulnerability "takes an immense amount of personal courage" for a facilitator and "encourage[s] others to do the same."[118]

---

114. See City of Los Angeles Human Relations Commission, *Community Dinner Dialogue Pilot*, 6.
115. See City of Los Angeles Human Relations Commission, *Community Dinner Dialogue Pilot*, 7.
116. See City of Los Angeles Human Relations Commission, *Community Dinner Dialogue Pilot,* 7.
117. See, e.g., Barnes-Proby, *Community-Police Relations: Example Adult Dialogue*, 15–21.
118. Divided Community Project, *Orlando Speaks*, 5.

Illustration | Coordinated Process

Another potential option to take advantage of existing resources is to coordinate parallel processes to produce desired dialogue. For example, following the death of Philando Castile in 2016, the City of Falcon Heights, Minnesota, established an 11-member "Inclusion and Policing Task Force" designed to operate parallel to a community conversation process, so that the task force could both inform and be informed by the community conversation process. This coordinated effort enabled dialogue participants "to see that their input had consequences."*

---

* Press, "Using Dispute Resolution Skills," 652, 666.

Brings groups of residents together with law enforcement

Determine available and necessary resources

To avoid a scenario where a lack of resources reduces community participation and engagement, assess resource requirements at the start. While resource needs vary based on the dialogue design needs of the community, common considerations include the following:

- What compensation will be necessary (e.g., time, travel)?
- What other resources (e.g., meeting space, technology) will be needed?

Consider assessing available and needed resources early in the planning process.

Does the dialogue seek to build on prior or existing processes?

Consider both previous dialogue processes and existing forums and resources and previously tried community processes. If prior efforts were successful, consider what resources they used and how to build on them. If prior efforts produced a glossy report but none of that report's recommendations were implemented, examine what will be different about a new convening and what additional resources will be necessary to insure a more favorable impact. If the ideas generated and effort expended in the last process did not produce meaningful change, consider whether and how prior participants will trust an invitation to a new process and how to design this dialogue for a different result.

What are the costs—time, expenses, and labor?

There are crucial resource needs that must be met in order to secure broad community representation in the dialogue. Many law enforcement agencies struggle to recruit and schedule staff to perform regular law enforcement duties. How will agencies

budget staff time to plan logistics, communicate and support meetings, and enable members to engage in dialogue? Similarly, many community organizations manage complex and multilayered challenges for their constituencies. How will they be able to focus time and attention beyond meeting their basic organizational needs? In addition to finding the time to schedule participation, intentional dialogue initiatives may involve financial expenses connected to facilities, food, supplies, event promotion, child care, and facilitation costs. If basic organizational budgets cannot manage such costs, planners must generate ideas and strategies for securing funding.

Whether to engage experts and supportive resources.

Law enforcement–community dialogues engage diverse constituencies in conversation, often stemming from situations in which both law enforcement and community members have experienced or are experiencing trauma. For that reason, planners should consider the participation of trauma-informed social workers or other specialists who will be available during the dialogue to help participants and facilitators avoid, to the extent possible, unwittingly causing anxiety for some participants and to be available to address behavioral effects if they occur during the events. Planners might also consider inviting historians, social scientists, or other subject matter experts to make presentations, conduct research, or record or report on the process's effectiveness as a means of enriching participants' understanding and insight and strengthening the credibility of the conversation.

Logistical considerations and accessibility

Designers have numerous options with respect to the logistics of intentional dialogue, including sessions' timing, number, length, format, and technology use. Each choice may impact potential participants differently and influence accessibility and trust in the process. City and civic officials respond to choices differently than members of historically marginalized communities.

Length and timing of events.

Dialogue timing and length should respect community participants' schedules and meet their needs.[119] Participants may choose not to attend dialogue if the timing conflicts with religious holidays, community cultural events, or school events or if they lack access to child care services. Community members may not be able to attend dialogue sessions during their working hours. Ask community members for their preferences.

119. Hill, "VOICES," 791.

Number of sessions.

Law enforcement and community leaders alike caution against hosting one-and-done events, particularly those that do not produce any concrete action steps or inform other processes. Engaging in an ongoing community dialogue signals respect for community voices and demonstrates not only that their voices have been heard but also that their voices have had an impact on the trajectory of law enforcement community relations.

Location.

Hosting dialogue in neutral, safe, convenient, and accessible community spaces fosters a positive environment for discussion.[120] Dialogue might be hosted at the facility of a trusted community partner,[121] such as a nonprofit, library, religious organization, or educational institution.

Design for full accessibility and participation.

Consider barriers preventing residents whose input may be particularly valuable from fully participating in trusted communication, including Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) accessibility requirements. If, for example, reaching the physical meeting site involves climbing stairs, elevators or other options must be available.[122] Language differences require adjustments—using English as the presumptive language may warrant providing earpieces and simultaneous interpretation services and translating text-based materials.[123] For dialogues that have participants engage in small group interaction, or if the large group is multilingual, planners might organize one or more small groups by language competencies.[124]

Food and refreshments.

Thoughtfully incorporating culturally appropriate food can increase the accessibility of the event to participants and foster a positive environment for building relationships and open discussion. Food provisions should be respectful of participants' dietary concerns and consistent with the event's timing.[125] Starting with a meal allows participants to engage in informal conversation while eating together before the

120. Barnes-Proby, *A Toolkit for Community-Police Dialogue,* 7, 20–21.

121. City of Los Angeles Human Relations Commission, *Community Dinner Dialogue Pilot,* 6 (referring to the trusted organization as an "anchor partner").

122. See U.S. Access Board, "Americans with Disabilities Act: Accessibility Standards." For technical assistance with ADA guidelines, see also U.S. Access Board, "Technical Assistance."

123. Nuño et al., "Experiencing VOICES," 634.

124. Sonoma County Community and Local Law Enforcement Task Force, *Final Recommendations Report,* 77 (referring to County Wide Engagement Forums).

125. See Press, "Using Dispute Resolution Skills," 670.

formal dialogue begins.[126] Food's ability to create a welcoming environment, serve as an icebreaker, and provide a common shared experience makes it a useful tool for breaking down barriers and beginning to build relationships.[127]

Child care.

A common barrier to participation in dialogues is a lack of available child care. Providing free child care removes one participation barrier for the parents or guardians of children. The availability of free child care should be prominently communicated if it is to effectively break down the participation barrier.[128]

Technology.

Consider whether and how to use technology during dialogue. Its use can both enhance and detract from the accessibility of dialogue; on the one hand, it may permit individuals to participate from the comfort of their own homes who may not otherwise be able to participate at all, while on the other hand it may diminish the possibility of increased understanding and empathy that can arise from engaging in face-to-face conversations and dialogue.

Using technology raises distinctive questions with respect to access, skills, and opportunities for trust. With respect to access, do all residents have access to reliable internet platforms and devices? Will conversations be accessible in multiple languages? Will dialogue be transcribed or otherwise accessible for ADA purposes? With respect to skills, consider whether residents have the skills to use technology in a manner to participate effectively in dialogue. Finally, with respect to trust, social scientists suggest it is more challenging to build trust in online environments than in person;[129] further, while intentional dialogue also permits informal opportunities to build rapport and relationships, digital environments do not permit participants to break bread together or connect with one another between sessions and after the formal event ends.

---

126. Participant "opportunities for interaction can be centered around food and refreshments;" Barnes-Proby, *A Toolkit for Community-Police Dialogue,* 22. Barnes-Proby also recommends, "If the session begins with a meal, you will welcome people and direct them to the food and allow for casual conversations to start on their own;" *A Toolkit for Community-Police Dialogue*, 26.

127. In Los Angeles, "A family-style dinner was provided to create an intimate and casual environment and ensure that participants could comfortably attend during evening hours;" City of Los Angeles Human Relations Commission, *Community Dinner Dialogue Pilot*, 6. Participants were able to eat and engage in informal conversations; City of Los Angeles Human Relations Commission, *Community Dinner Dialogue Pilot*, 5.

128. Press, "Using Dispute Resolution Skills," 670.

129. See generally Ebner, "The Human Touch in ODR."

Hybrid dialogue.

Divided Community Project

Identifying and engaging participants

Identify and focus on the audience that designers are seeking to engage. There are multiple options: Designers may elect to open dialogue events to all community members (inclusive of law enforcement), or all residents of a particular neighborhood, or one historically marginalized group. The recruitment strategies for each style of dialogue are discussed in the following sections. If public and elected officials participate, consult your state's open meetings laws to determine whether and how public notice must be provided in advance of the meeting.[130] Throughout recruitment, be prepared to respond to questions and share key information regarding goals, logistics, and dialogue design.

If dialogue is open to all

Case studies of dialogues that were open to all recommend engaging a diverse group of participants to represent a community. The outreach process and full extent of identification of participants necessary may vary based on the dialogue's design. Consider how many participants the identified space can comfortably accommodate and whether the facilitator or facilitation team has the capacity or skills to effectively engage the expected number of participants.

130. Open meetings and public records laws could create an inherent tension with principles of privacy and confidentiality.

Intentional recruitment is essential to attract participants who represent the community's layers of diversity.

Consider, in addition to reaching out broadly to the community, making particular efforts personally to invite participation by those individuals who do not look like traditional leaders but are respected and supported by particular neighborhood residents.[131] These community members may not readily respond to invitations to participate. Lawanna Gelzer, the president of the Central Florida Chapter of the National Action Network, suggests "inviting activists; locating residents who recently had negative encounters with police; identifying trusted community stakeholders . . . focusing invitations on the community that is 'hurting.'"[132] A partial list of potential groups for recruitment includes local youth, refugees, representatives of faith-based organizations, business and community groups, civil rights organizations,[133] publicly elected officials,[134] business owners, and contributors to neighborhood councils.[135]

Law enforcement participation.

Who the ideal law enforcement participants are is shaped by the goals of the dialogue: Is the dialogue designed to make progress with respect to law enforcement practice or protocol, develop strategy, or engage in planning? With these goals, law enforcement leaders with the authority to make and influence policy might be key participants. However, if the dialogue goals are designed to humanize participants, build relationships with line-level officers, or break down barriers between "out-groups," consider engaging line-level officers.[136] Intuitively, it may make sense to encourage law enforcement community liaisons (or members of the agency who are well known in the community) to attend an intentional dialogue; however, social scientists point out that their participation has not been effective in bridging in- and out-groups.[137]

---

131. See, e.g., Lunkensmeyer, *Bringing Citizen Voices to the Table,* 140–141; Barnes-Proby, *A Toolkit for Community-Police Dialogue,* 17.

132. Divided Community Project, *Orlando Speaks*, 3.

133. CRS, *Strengthening Police and Community Partnerships Program in Erie, Pennsylvania,* 11.

134. Encouraging public elected officials to participate may also be a good idea; see Sonoma County Community and Local Law Enforcement Task Force, *Final Recommendations Report,* 77.

135. Helfgott et al., *Community-Police Dialogues: 2022 Results,* 5.

136. See Barnes-Proby, *A Toolkit for Community-Police Dialogue,* 17–18.

137. Hill, "VOICES," 788 ("Participants need to feel that members of the other group they are in contact with are typical representatives of it and as, as such, any positive reactions to them cannot be discounted or sub-typed to a special group."). But see Barnes-Proby, *A Toolkit for Community-Police Dialogue*, 18 (urging planners to focus on officers who "commonly work" in or around schools if the focus of the dialogue is on youth).

Law enforcement-community conversation.

U.S. Department of Justice Community Relations Service

Proactive community engagement should involve individuals from all levels of an organization, not just those who "happen to be good" at community engagement or those at the lowest ranks.[138]

Agency leadership support is essential for law enforcement engagement.

Regardless of how law enforcement members are identified for recruitment, visible public and private support for dialogue from agency leadership is crucial to its potential success. Agency leaders might support dialogue initiatives publicly through press releases and other public announcements, potentially in collaboration with community organizations. In addition, agency leadership might encourage dialogue internally through formal and informal mechanisms.[139]

Building an outreach plan.

A comprehensive outreach plan is multifaceted and may include flyers, social media, and emails. Planners may want to partner with community leaders, organizers, and community groups to develop and disseminate information about dialogue opportunities. Customizing the means of outreach and the content of the message for the target audience is important.[140] Using social media sites popular in the community provides a method of reaching out to the community without requiring extensive

138. Santos and Santos, *Operationalizing Proactive Community Engagement,* 7.

139. See Divided Community Project, *Orlando Speaks,* 4.

140. See, e.g., Helfgott et al., *Community-Police Dialogues: 2022 Results*, 5, 47.

resources.[141] Insufficient or misleading information may dissuade potential participants from attending and undermine trust in the process. Providing updated information when things change is also critical.

Gaining community trust, confidence, and involvement in the process.

Involving trusted community leaders or established community or business organizations (local or nonlocal) through collaborative efforts or partnerships may be helpful to broaden participation and establish commitment.[142] Such community organizations and well-known leaders may be a good resource for building trust as they may have insight into the community's history and dynamics and the ability to reach out to particular community sectors and establish credibility with multiple segments of the community. Both community members and law enforcement may not initially trust the dialogue, especially when they do not fully understand its purposes and processes. Having respected leaders reach out and explain the process design and purpose can stimulate participation.[143]

Engaging youth.

The inclusion of youth introduces diverse viewpoints, enhancing discussions and fostering innovative, forward-looking problem-solving approaches. Involving youth nurtures their sense of responsibility and leadership skills, cultivating future community leaders who prioritize community well-being. Youth participation encourages meaningful contributions, promoting a culture of inclusivity and active involvement. When youth are engaged, dialogue outcomes are more likely to address the evolving needs and aspirations of upcoming generations, leading to sustainable and impactful solutions.

Nonetheless, engaging youth may require or benefit from separate meetings, not simply setting aside one or two positions for younger community representatives in these intentional dialogues. A better approach may be to hold some separate youth events to hear their voices and obtain youth input on the process. Further, when recruiting youth, consider diversity, including whether and how justice-involved youth are welcomed and engaged in dialogue.

---

141. Barnes-Proby, *A Toolkit for Community-Police Dialogue,* 17 (discussing the use of ads).

142. See CRS, *Strengthening Police and Community Partnerships Program in Erie, Pennsylvania,* 20 ("partner[ing] with New American Council and Erie Asian Pacific American Association to improve communication and trust with these communities").

143. Divided Community Project, *Orlando Speaks,* 4.

Youth-focused dialogue.

U.S. Department of Justice Community Relations Service

Intentional dialogue designed to engage youth and law enforcement likely faces the same skepticism and distrust as adult events and will require the same collaborative planning, attention to detail in execution and evaluation of the event(s), management of expectations, and clarity about outcomes and next steps.

Continue to assess who is engaged—and who is missing—in the dialogue.

When people "are protesting an event meant for them, you invite them in."[144] If you receive complaints or concerns that certain voices are not included in conversation or are excluded from the dialogue, listen carefully and seek out the participation of those not yet invited or engaged participants.

If dialogue focuses on specific groups

Where dialogues focus on specific groups, their outreach methods may also be more focused. Designers and community stakeholders who provide input on process design may formally represent or have deep connections to a particular group. When recruiting participants, in addition to explaining the dialogue process, prospective participants may value explanations regarding why their specific community group was selected for the dialogue. Further, designers should keep in mind how other community groups might react if they learn they were not selected to engage in the dialogue.

It is important to consider the particular situation and history of the community and the individual groups within it. This history can be particularly relevant to marginalized groups and youth participants. Jumping into diverse meetings before community members are ready can be more harmful than helpful; in these cases, it may

144. Divided Community Project, *Orlando Speaks*, 3 (quoting Peace and Justice Institute Director Rachel Allen).

be helpful to have separate meetings with identity-specific groups before entering diverse spaces. It might require some healing and separate meetings before everyone is in the place for a broader meeting to be productive.

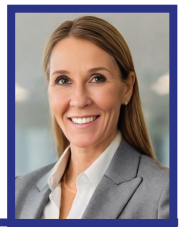
When working with specific community groups, consider meeting with prospective participants in advance of a conversation to secure buy-in and support for recruiting specific audiences.[145] This strategy may be particularly important when working with youth.[146] Hosting pre-dialogue sessions might provide space for community groups to develop a cohesive agenda or identify leadership. Such conversations might permit community groups to discuss challenges with one another (in their in-group) before engaging in conversation with individuals who are not similarly situated (an out-group).

Sustainable in both process and outcomes

Healing "only moves forward at the speed of trust."[147] Meanwhile, law enforcement officers and officials are often moving from one crisis to the next—from a community meeting to foot patrol. Sustained and intentional dialogue and its outcomes take time. One series of dialogue sessions may enhance relationships, break down biases, and begin to build trust, yet one session or series cannot remedy legacies of inequitable treatment or community harm.

"The relationships developed through dialogue gave us the ability to connect, ask questions, and assess the temperature of the community. When tension emerged in the community, we were able to be more proactive by leveraging our relationships in the community."

— Retired Chief Lori Luhnow,
Santa Barbara, California



145. Barnes-Proby, *A Toolkit for Community-Police Dialogue,* 16.

146. Divided Community Project, *Strengthening Communities Project,* 4 (explaining the rationale for working with youth in advance of a community conversation, one dialogue designer recalled youth expressing concerns that adults "have not been helpful" and have not provided quality role models).

147. Sonoma County Community and Local Law Enforcement Task Force, *Final Recommendations Report*, 69.

Process designers understand that a long-term approach to building trust will likely be multilayered. Identifying short-, medium-, and long-term goals might shape efforts to sustain and maintain trust-building activities.[148] Maintaining momentum can be a considerable challenge. Programs intended to continue building trust in the long term can face a number of hurdles, including the following: [149]

- Difficulty maintaining community interest, participation, and attendance
- Difficulty maintaining resources and energy for intentional dialogue
- Changes in agency, community organization, or political leadership;[150] for example, if elections are around the corner, will city leaders have the political will to make change, or sustain the process beyond the current budget or election cycle?
- Perceived success, which may diminish opportunities for securing resources
- Political considerations, which may be a benefit or barrier to implementation; specifically, if funding is required to implement a new program or policy developed through dialogue, how will it be paid for? If legislative action is required on the local level, are the key elected leaders kept informed and supportive of the dialogue and connected proposals?

The short section that follows examines considerations for eliciting feedback, breaking down barriers, and sustaining intentional dialogue.

148. CRS, *Strengthening Police and Community Partnerships Program in Erie, Pennsylvania,* 26.

149. See Skogan, "Prospects for Reform" 387–402 (discussing challenges of sustaining the Chicago Alternative Policing Strategy (CAPS) program, including a decline in crime rates, a recession, leadership turnover, problem-solving efforts shifting to different places, and a lack of officer support).

150. See CRS, *Strengthening Police and Community Partnerships Program in Erie, Pennsylvania,* 25.

Eliciting feedback

Understanding participants' concerns and listening deeply to identify and address their underlying interests is critical to the dialogue process. The information obtained from community input can be invaluable and help to identify potential next steps both for further intentional dialogues and broader community measures.[151] Throughout the dialogue process, community input may take different forms, such as the following:

- Requesting community feedback at the end of each dialogue[152]
- Identifying topics that were not addressed at the dialogue[153]
- Creating an online forum to provide feedback on dialogues and community issues[154]
- Conducting surveys during, between, or after dialogues[155]
- Polling participants for takeaways from the dialogue[156]
- Asking participants for immediate action steps[157]

151. Press, "Using Dispute Resolution Skills," 669–670 (discussing an evaluator's review of feedback and recommended steps for improvement).

152. In *Orlando Speaks*, participants were asked for written feedback about the event at the end of each event; Divided Community Project, *Orlando Speaks*, 3.

153. In Seattle, "At the conclusion of the sessions, participants were asked to raise topics that remained unaddressed for them and their hopes for moving forward;" Helfgott et al., *Community-Police Dialogues: 2022 Results*, 6.

154. Press, "Using Dispute Resolution Skills," 653, 660, 667.

155. Barnes-Proby, *A Toolkit for Community-Police Dialogue,* 22; Hill, "VOICES," 792–793.

156. Barnes-Proby, *A Toolkit for Community-Police Dialogue,* 38 ("[t]akeaways are important for benchmarking the state of the group discussions and identifying areas for improvement").

157. Barnes-Proby, *A Toolkit for Community-Police Dialogue,* 37–38 (explaining participants may be "motivated to pursue" immediate actions steps which they suggest).

Eliciting feedback.

U.S. Department of Justice Community Relations Service

At the conclusion of dialogue sessions, or sometime thereafter, a design team might use short surveys to "monitor participant goals, viewpoints, and the impact of the dialogue."[158] Post-event surveys may include a variety of questions such as whether a session was a "good use of their time," perceptions changed by the session, and open-ended questions about the portions of the experience they found valuable.[159] The COPS Office's Community Survey on Public Safety and Law Enforcement focuses on law enforcement community involvement, safety, procedural justice, performance, and contact and satisfaction.[160] Post-dialogue surveys are also beneficial for dialogues conducted as part of a research study[161] or if the results are released and discussed publicly.[162]

158. Barnes-Proby, *A Toolkit for Community-Police Dialogue,* 23. For example surveys, see Barnes-Proby, *A Toolkit for Community-Police Dialogue,* 56.

159. Hill, "VOICES," 792–793.

160. COPS Office, *Community Survey on Public Safety and Law Enforcement;* see City of Sanford, *City of Sanford: Race, Equality, Equity and Inclusion* (using the COPS Office survey).

161. Barnes-Proby, *A Toolkit for Community-Police Dialogue,* 18 (reminding dialogue designers that research will also require informed participant consent).

162. See City of Sanford, *City of Sanford: Race, Equality, Equity and Inclusion,* 13, 20–21, 26–75 (publicly sharing survey results and discussing how survey data was used to make recommendations about the Sanford Police Department).

A design team might also consider hosting focus groups or interviews with participants to listen deeply for feedback about the dialogue process and to elicit more detail about participant experiences, dialogue outcomes, and next steps.[163] In Falcon Heights, post-event focus groups asked participants to consider why they participated in the dialogue, key takeaways from the dialogue, and a key moment from the dialogue that most impacted them.[164] Participants were also asked if "anything changed" from an individual perspective as a result of the process, and whether the dialogue "made a difference for the community as a whole."[165] In Santa Barbara, social scientists conducted semistructured interviews with participants, ultimately identifying three themes that emerged from the dialogue between law enforcement and Spanish-speaking immigrant community members: The dialogue led both groups to "view the other with greater levels of empathy and mutual understanding" and "led community members to express a greater level of trust in, and empathy for the police." Further, the dialogue "led both groups to believe that VOICES could improve relationships between police and the public more generally."[166]

Identifying next steps—bridges to creating sustainable processes

Next steps may derive from a number of sources, such as the dialogue's outlined goals or feedback gathered during the dialogue. If not all dialogue goals were met, or if feedback after intentional dialogue reveals continuing deficits of trust, then planners might include developing next steps, initiating a formal commission or task force,[167] or issuing a report-out. Other next steps may not be articulated as formal goals but may emerge organically as participants express their concerns.

Clear and concrete steps.

Post-dialogue surveys and feedback from the dialogue sessions may, as discussed in the previous section, help identify action steps to pursue, such as changes in policy or training. Making action steps "specific and clear" and "set[ting] a target date for some of the action steps" may give "the group something concrete to check on to track progress."[168]

163. See Hill, "VOICES," 792–793.

164. Press, "Using Dispute Resolution Skills," 661–662.

165. Press, "Using Dispute Resolution Skills," 662.

166. Nuño et al., "Experiencing VOICES," 639.

167. See CRS, "Strengthening Police and Community Partnerships."

168. Barnes-Proby, *A Toolkit for Community-Police Dialogue,* 38.

Sharing action steps and outcomes.

Consider how next steps and other information gathered during dialogue will be conveyed and how frequently and with whom it will be shared. Consider interim or periodic reports to keep the community informed and feeling heard, particularly if there is an opportunity to report some positive concrete action taken or reform implemented as a result of the dialogue. The audience and goal for sharing this information may affect its format; a report-out might take the form of a general analysis and compilation of community feedback and next steps, or, especially if being sent to a decision-making body, it may take the form of specific recommendations.[169] Focusing on the design team's commitment to transparency, following each dialogue session in Falcon Heights, the conversation notes were analyzed by a social scientist and themes were then posted on the city's public website.[170] The Falcon Heights dialogue sessions informed the work of a formal Inclusion and Policing Task Force, enabling dialogue participants "to see that their input had consequences."[171]

Establishing a formalized process.

Some intentional dialogue processes might articulate developing a formalized process as one goal or purpose of the dialogue,[172] while other processes may recommend a formal process as a next step or outcome. Government infrastructure is one home for a formalized process. Embedding the program in the structure of a public or private community organization can reduce the reliance of the program on a particular leader. Establishing a commission or creating a position whose specific responsibility is following through on trust-building efforts, such as a community relations department or commission, is yet another method for embedding a program in an organizational structure.[173] Regardless of how a formal process is established, an entity charged with sustaining intentional dialogue provides a formal vehicle for continuing the work. Moreover, such an entity—if trusted—may permit community members to come together in the face of future challenges.

---

169. Barnes-Proby, *A Toolkit for Community-Police Dialogue,* 42. For sample after-action report, see Barnes-Proby, *A Toolkit for Community-Police Dialogue,* 51–55.

170. Press, "Using Dispute Resolution Skills," 660.

171. Press, "Using Dispute Resolution Skills," 666.

172. CRS's SPCP dialogue process is designed (in part) to initiate a SPCP council. At the conclusion of the one-day dialogue, individuals are elected to participate on the council, which is designed to meet regularly and discuss issues related to police and community concerns; CRS, "Strengthening Police and Community Partnerships."

173. See Sonoma County Community and Local Law Enforcement Task Force, *Final Recommendations Report,* 78 (urging the hiring of a full-time staff member to "organize, coordinate, and implement future forums").

Sustained Dialogue

An Illustration from Michigan

Michigan's ALPACT (Advocates and Leaders for Police and Community Trust) program is one model for sustaining law enforcement-community dialogue. Initially formed in Detroit in 1999 to address "rising concerns of racial profiling by police" and coordinated by the Michigan Roundtable for Diversity and Inclusion, the model has expanded to more than a dozen communities across the state. Representatives from law enforcement, civil rights organizations, nonprofits, and the community meet monthly to share information, discuss key emerging cases, enhance understanding, and improve accountability for law enforcement. When a law enforcement use of force incident occurs, local ALPACTs provide "a venue for nonviolent dialogue."*

*McQuade, "To Be Effective, Police Must," 56; Michigan Department of Civil Rights, "ALPACT."

Setting goals and tracking outcomes.

Assessing the success of dialogue goals differs significantly based on the specific goal. Gauging the success of goals such as increasing trust and building relationships is more complicated than just seeing whether a specific policy change has been made. Making action steps "specific and clear" and "set[ting] a target date for some of the action steps" may give "the group something concrete to check on to track progress."[174] Working with experts (like social scientists or data analysts) may be another avenue to create appropriate metrics and track progress toward goals and outcomes.

Considerations for sustaining dialogue

Maintaining leadership.

Successful intentional dialogue processes have effective leadership. Care should be taken both to maintain and replenish both the collaborative planning/design team and to ensure that elected officials and trusted volunteer leaders remain committed. Because the individuals in leadership may change over time, particularly if the process lasts for months or years, recognize that it will be necessary to identify successors and recruit new advocates, emerging leaders, and committed volunteers to maintain momentum.

174. Barnes-Proby, *A Toolkit for Community-Police Dialogue,* 38.

Remaining relevant.

Much as interests in any relationship change, intentional dialogue processes of trusted relationships between law enforcement and community members must evolve to continue to serve the mutual interests of both communities. This is a two-way street. If trust exists, intentional dialogue processes open the door to sharing and exploring new areas of concern, to remain continually relevant to participants.

Maintaining resources.

Consider involving potential funders early in the process to help increase buy-in. Consider what public and private resources might be available to draw in for funding. Communities might look to collaborate with local foundations or academic institutions with a stake in the community to provide sustained financial or logistical support. In addition to grantmaking institutions, federal and state agencies might be another funding source for supporting dialogue.

Maintaining energy.

Having other community groups and nongovernmental organizations (NGO) invested in the work, building relationships and trust with those new to the effort, and maintaining open communication during times of law enforcement–community tension are other methods to address the issues that can result from changing community leadership.[175] Consider hosting interactive forums on local media outlets and using social media to engage residents to sustain community engagement.[176]

Celebrating implementation and outcomes.

Community members often express exhaustion with dialogue when action steps agreed to during the dialogue do not lead to *action*. Without implementation, why would a resident attend a future dialogue session? The intent of dialogue must be congruent with its impact. If outcomes have been implemented—for example, new cadets are required to complete a new training or new protocols have been developed—share those results and acknowledge the community's impact in making these advancements.

---

175. CRS, *Strengthening Police and Community Partnerships Program in Erie, Pennsylvania,* 25 ("obtaining buy-in from some groups about the SPCP Council's work, building relationships and trust with new members on the council, and maintaining open communication during times of stress between the SPCP Council, the community, and the police department").

176. Sonoma County Community and Local Law Enforcement Task Force, *Final Recommendations Report,* 78.

Conclusion

The best time to plant a tree was 20 years ago. The second-best is now.

Law enforcement agencies in the United States have experienced how one high-profile use of force in a distant state may send shockwaves across the nation, adversely affecting trust between law enforcement and the communities they serve, even far away from the incident.

Perceptions of the law and law enforcers as instruments of oppression also are deeply embedded by history in some communities. On a daily basis, in the nearly 18,000 police agencies in the United States, each law enforcement–community interaction either increases (deposits into) or depletes (withdraws from) the trust account. For that reason, and particularly if your community has not (or has not recently) experienced a high-profile law enforcement action the community identifies as reinforcing painful historical harms, then the best time to start an intentional dialogue process is now—to bridge any deficit (and make deposits) in trust between the community and law enforcement—so that trust is firmly rooted when your community is eventually tested.

We also recognize that some communities have recently experienced a law enforcement use of force or other conduct the community considers to be excessive or motivated by bias, and that event has corroded trust. Because intentional dialogue processes offer the promise that those communities will benefit from these processes, part I of this guide offers dispute resolution design insights to help law enforcement leaders urgently, empathetically, authentically, and effectively address the community and demonstrations before looking for the "second-best time" to begin an intentional dialogue. We recognize that timing and readiness for dialogue will vary by community in the immediate aftermath of a law enforcement use of deadly force. Nonetheless, even under those circumstances, the time is ripe to do an assessment, to reach out, to acknowledge community concerns, to design collaboratively, and to find the time to launch an intentional dialogue process in your community.

Whether you are one year or 20 years from an event that tears at trust in your community, CRS, DCP, and other resources identified here can help. Indeed, we anticipate working proactively with a handful of pilot communities to design and study intentional dialogue processes.

Appendix A. Representative Illustrations of Dialogue

This section provides select illustrations of intentional dialogue that have been used in three communities: Sanford, Florida; Seattle, Washington; and Falcon Heights, Minnesota. Each case study will provide some demographic information about the community, share key sources, and highlight illustrative aspects of what we defined as intentional dialogue, i.e., dialog that (1) is collaboratively designed, (2) is purposeful and goal-driven, and (3) brings groups of residents together with law enforcement personnel or to address law enforcement in the community (the Falcon Heights dialogue did not include participation by law enforcement personnel), and examines how each dialogue has been sustained or outcomes have been implemented.

Sanford, Florida | Sanford Speaks

Community details

Sanford, Florida, has a population of more than 60,000 residents, of whom approximately 37 percent are White, 25 percent Black, 28 percent Hispanic or Latino, and 10 percent other or multiracial. The Sanford Police Department has 130 sworn officers and 17 civilian employees.

Collaboratively designed

In the summer of 2023, a two-part event was hosted by Sanford's Race, Equality, Equity, and Inclusion (REEI) Committee, a diverse committee composed of community members appointed by Sanford's mayor and other elected officials. The event was developed in collaboration with the City of Sanford and the Sanford Police Department and included a welcome from the mayor and chief of police as well as a report from the Sanford Police Department.

Purposeful and goal-driven

The goal of Sanford Speaks is to help foster trust across cultural, ethnic, and racial lines; strengthen interpersonal relationships; and increase awareness of systemic injustices. Concrete event goals were articulated as follows:

- Establish clear parameters for communication—how we speak and listen to others.
- Strengthen interpersonal relationships through dialogue and trust-building.
- Become personally and culturally aware by recognizing unconscious bias.
- Testify to share your story. Only you can tell what happened and how it impacted you.

The Peace and Justice Institute (PJI) worked with the design team to develop dialogue goals and agendas. In addition, PJI recruited and trained small group facilitators to engage residents and law enforcement in conversation. Conversations were guided by PJI's 13 "Principles for How We Treat Each Other" (see sidebar on page 67).

Brings groups of residents together with law enforcement

Two Sanford Speaks events were scheduled for the summer of 2023. Approximately 90 individuals attended each event, including 20 representatives from law enforcement. Following welcoming remarks from city and law enforcement officials, residents joined law enforcement in small groups of four to five for facilitated conversations. In addition to participants having the opportunity to share their stories and experience regarding law enforcement interactions, the following questions were discussed in small groups:

- What do we recommend the Sanford Police Department KEEP doing?
- What do we recommend the Sanford Police Department STOP doing?
- What do we recommend the Sanford Police Department START doing?[177]

Facilitators tracked responses but did not attribute them to any individual.

Sustainable in both process and outcomes

At the conclusion of each event, participants were asked to complete the COPS Office survey. More than half the participants at each session completed this anonymous survey. Results were collated and made publicly available.

177. City of Sanford, *City of Sanford: Race, Equality, Equity and Inclusion,* 15.

Principles For How We Treat Each Other

Our Practice of Respect and Community Building

1. Create a hospitable and accountable community. We all arrive in isolation and need the generosity of friendly welcomes. Bring all of yourself to the work in this community. Welcome others to this place and this work, and presume that you are welcomed as well. Hospitality is the essence of restoring community.

2. Listen deeply. Listen intently to what is said; listen to the feelings beneath the words. Strive to achieve a balance between listening and reflecting, speaking and acting.

3. Create an advice-free zone. Replace advice with curiosity as we work together for peace and justice. Each of us is here to discover our own truths. We are not here to set someone else straight, to "fix" what we perceive as broken in another member of the group.

4. Practice asking honest and open questions. A great question is ambiguous, personal and provokes anxiety.

5. Give space for unpopular answers. Answer questions honestly, even if the answer seems unpopular. Be present to listen, not debate, correct, or interpret.

6. Respect silence. Silence is a rare gift in our busy world. After someone has spoken, take time to reflect without immediately filling the space with words. This applies to the speaker, as well—be comfortable leaving your words to resound in the silence, without refining or elaborating on what you have said.

7. Suspend judgment. Set aside your judgments. By creating a space between judgments and reactions, we can listen to the other, and to ourselves, more fully.

8. Identify assumptions. Our assumptions are usually invisible to us, yet they undergird our worldview. By identifying our assumptions, we can then set them aside and open our viewpoints to greater possibilities.

9. Speak your truth. You are invited to say what is in your heart, trusting that your voice will be heard and your contribution respected. Own your truth by remembering to speak only for yourself. Using the first person "I" rather than "you" or "everyone" clearly communicates the personal nature of your expression.

10. When things get difficult, turn to wonder. If you find yourself disagreeing with another, becoming judgmental, or shutting down in defense, try turning to wonder: "I wonder what brought them to this place?" "I wonder what my reaction teaches me?" "I wonder what they are feeling right now?"

11. Practice slowing down. Simply the speed of modern life can cause violent damage to the soul. By intentionally practicing slowing down we strengthen our ability to extend nonviolence to others—and to ourselves.

12. All voices have value. Hold the moments when a person speaks as precious because these are the moments when a person is willing to stand for something, is trusting the group, and is offering something they see as valuable.

13. Maintain confidentiality. Create a safe space by respecting the confidential nature and content of discussions held in the group. Allow what is said in the group to remain there.

Prepared by the Peace and Justice Institute with considerable help from the works of Peter Block, Parker Palmer, the Dialogue Group and the Center for Renewal and Wholeness in Higher Education

---

Source: Principles for How We Treat Each Other: Our Practice of Respect and Community Building. Orlando, FL: Peace and Justice Institute, n.d. https://www.peacejusticeinstitute.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/02/PJI-Principles-English-1.pdf

Following the Sanford Speaks Sessions, Sanford's REEI committee analyzed participant survey data and made recommendations for the Sanford Police Department, including the following:

- Create a police force that reflects the community through diverse hiring.
- Begin a "co-patrol" model of policing.
- Develop a trauma-informed police department.[178]

The REEI committee will continue to meet in 2024. The recommendations developed during Sanford Speaks will be a part of its agenda moving forward.

Key resources

City of Sanford: Race, Equality, Equity and Inclusion Committee Final Report. Sanford, FL: City of Sanford, 2023. https://sanfordfl.gov/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/2023-REEI-Committee-Report.pdf.

City of Sanford, Florida. "Community Relations." Accessed February 20, 2024. https://sanfordfl.gov/government/community-relations/.

Principles for How We Treat Each Other: Our Practice of Respect and Community Building. Orlando, FL: Peace and Justice Institute, n.d. https://www.peacejusticeinstitute.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/02/PJI-Principles-English-1.pdf.

Orlando Speaks: A Safe Space for Dialogue. Columbus, OH: Divided Community Project, 2018. https://moritzlaw.osu.edu/sites/default/files/2022-05/DCP-Study-2-Orlando-Speaks.pdf.

Peace and Justice Institute. "Peace and Justice Institute." Accessed February 26, 2024. https://www.peacejusticeinstitute.org/.

178. City of Sanford, *City of Sanford: Race, Equality, Equity and Inclusion*, 8.

Seattle, Washington | Community-Police Dialogue

Community details

Seattle, Washington, has a population of approximately 750,000 residents, of whom approximately 62 percent are White, 16 percent are Asian, 7 percent are Hispanic or Latino, 7 percent are Black, and 9 percent are other or multiracial. The Seattle Police Department (SPD) has approximately 940 sworn officers and 630 civilian employees.

Collaboratively designed

The Seattle University Crime & Justice Research Center has collaborated with the Seattle Police Department (SPD) since 2015 to conduct the annual Seattle Public Safety Survey. This collaboration has developed two forms of community-police dialogue: 1) an opportunity for community members to share feedback about the annual public safety survey; and 2) beginning in 2022, an opportunity to build relationships between new recruits and community members through SPD's "Before the Badge" (BTB) initiative.[179] This case study focuses on the BTB dialogue sessions.

Purposeful and goal-driven

The dialogue sessions were one part of Seattle's BTB program for newly hired law enforcement recruits. The purpose of this annual dialogue program is for community members to "engage in conversation with future SPD personnel," introducing "recruits to the geographical communities they will serve." [180]

Brings groups of residents together with law enforcement

Taking place between February and December 2023, the 19 virtual dialogue sessions brought together a total of 134 community members and 160 law enforcement personnel; many participants participated in multiple sessions. All individuals who live or work in Seattle were eligible to participate in the dialogue sessions. Law enforcement participants included new recruits in the "Before the Badge" program, sworn and civilian personnel, and command staff from across the city. Four of the city's precincts hosted four dialogues each; a fifth hosted three.[181]

---

179. The Seattle Police Department's Before the Badge (BTB) initiative was supported, in whole or in part, by federal award number 15JCOPS-22-GG-04540-PPSE awarded to the Seattle Police Department by the U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Community Oriented Policing Services

180. Helfgott et al., "Before the Badge 2023," 4.

181. Helfgott et al., "Before the Badge 2023," 4.

Seattle University faculty facilitated the dialogue sessions, with the support of graduate student cofacilitators. Using a restorative framework, dialogue focused on the following topics: "what public safety–related circumstances, harms, and needs inform [participants'] perspective about public safety; who is responsible/accountable for public safety; what participants need and how public safety–related harms [can] be repaired; [and] how community members and BTB recruits can work together to reimagine police-community engagement to improve public safety and quality of life at the precinct/neighborhood levels through concrete, creative solutions." Further, community members were asked to consider what they would like to see from law enforcement officers and what they would like to learn from new recruits; BTB recruits were asked to consider what they would like to learn about the communities where they will serve.[182]

Because all conversations took place online, participants were asked to refrain from taking pictures of or recording audio from the sessions, and the hosts did not record conversations. Facilitators identified the following ground rules to "facilitate a culture of openness and honesty":

- Help create a safe space: Use "I" rather than "you" statements, avoid name calling. Allow others to express their thoughts and feelings in the spirit of open dialogue, keeping in mind that there are no "right" or "wrong" feelings.
- Make space for others to speak: Avoid crosstalk and interruptions, and try not to dominate the conversation.
- Maintain confidentiality and privacy: Do not give personal details about yourself that do not have relevance to the seminar discussions; respect the level of disclosure each participant chooses to maintain; respect the privacy of group members—do not screenshot or take a video of the session.
- Commitment: Please commit to participating in the entire session. However, if at any point you feel uncomfortable, feel free to leave the meeting.[183]

The facilitation team took unattributed notes during each dialogue session. Further, each participant was sent a post-event survey designed to elicit quantitative and qualitative feedback on the substantive topics of the dialogue, the facilitators, key takeaways, and topics which were not addressed.

182. Helfgott et al., "Before the Badge 2023," 5.

183. Helfgott et al., *Community-Police Dialogues: 2022 Results,* 6.

Sustainable in both process and outcomes

Seattle continues to engage law enforcement and community in dialogue connected to its BTB program and through its microcommunity policing program (which is not discussed here). Analysis of the project suggests the dialogue sessions offered recruits the opportunity "to be acquainted with community members in the precincts they will be serving and develop personal, lasting relationships."[184]

Key resources

Helfgott, Jacqueline B., Katie Kepler, Brandon Bledsoe, Ashley Dobbs, and Evelyn Madrid-Fierro. *Before the Badge: Community-Police Dialogues: 2022 Results*. Seattle, WA: Seattle University Crime and Justice Research Center, 2022. https://www.seattle.gov/documents/Departments/Police/Reports/BTB-2022-SPD-MCPP-Community-Police-Dialogue-Results.pdf.

Helfgott, Jacqueline B., Ana Carpenter, Zachary Dar, Quinn Priebe, Eden Sedgwick, and Elaria Zakhary. *Before the Badge: Community-Police Dialogues: 2023 Results*. Seattle, WA: Seattle University Crime and Justice Research Center, 2023.

Public Affairs. "2023 Seattle Police Department's 'Before the Badge.' Community-Police Dialogues." SPD Blotter. March 20, 2023. https://spdblotter.seattle.gov/2023/03/20/2023-seattle-police-departments-before-the-badge-community-police-dialogues/.

Seattle University. "Micro-Community Policing Plans." Accessed February 26, 2024. https://seattleux.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_byjfRRKXl0dirRk.

184. Helfgott et al., "Before the Badge," 54.

Falcon Heights, Minnesota | Community Conversation

Community details

Falcon Heights, Minnesota, has a population of approximately 5,200 residents, of whom approximately 67 percent are White, 12 percent are Asian, 10 percent are Black, and 10 percent are other or multiracial. At the time of the dialogue sessions, Falcon Heights contracted with St. Anthony Law Enforcement (a neighboring department) to provide law enforcement services. Ramsey County currently provides law enforcement services for Falcon Heights.

On July 6, 2016, Philando Castile, a 32-year-old Black man, was fatally shot during a traffic stop in Falcon Heights by a St. Anthony police officer. The shooting was live-streamed by Castile's girlfriend and later posted to social media.

Collaboratively designed

Approximately two months later, Falcon Heights Mayor Peter Lindstrom proposed the creation of an Inclusion and Policing Task Force to "articulate community values, identify community needs, and recommend programming and policies to be an inclusive and welcoming place for residents and guests of Falcon Heights."[185] Lindstrom also recognized that the community needed to connect through a method that permitted more engagement than a public meeting. He asked a local professor in a school of public affairs, a diversity consultant, a representative from the state office of dispute resolution, and a representative from a local dispute resolution program housed in a law school to develop such a process. In addition, the design team quickly invited a fifth member—a sociologist at a local public university who was deeply engaged in community activism.

Purposeful and goal-driven

Stated goals included "promoting community healing" and developing "the relationships and will to facilitate the implementation of the recommendations of the Task Force."

The five-part conversation series began in February 2017 and concluded in June 2017. The originally scheduled conversation themes were (1) personal and community values; (2) options for how the city can live out the community's values; (3) reviewing and providing feedback of draft policing policies; (4) what is needed for transformational change; and (5) commemoration of the work.[186]

---

185. Press, "Using Dispute Resolution Skills," 652.

186. Press, "Using Dispute Resolution Skills," 657. The fifth topic was ultimately changed to provide participants space to process their feelings about the acquittal of the officer who fatally shot Mr. Castile. Press, "Using Dispute Resolution Skills," 658.

Each evening began with opening remarks from city officials or task force members. Intentionally organized to promote healing and self-reflective dialogue, the design team used a circle process for a significant part of each dialogue. Some of the dialogue sessions concluded with an opportunity to report out the conversation from each circle.

Volunteer circle facilitators with experience in dispute resolution processes were recruited to "mirror the diversity of the community." Facilitators attended a pre-event orientation session and received a Table Facilitator Handbook in advance of each session. The handbook included background information about the task force and community conversations, a detailed set of tasks for facilitators, and a detailed agenda (including questions to ask participants).

In order to better develop relationships and the will to facilitate and implement the recommendations of the task force, the design team focused on the transparency of the community conversations. To meet this goal, following each conversation, a social scientist analyzed the conversation notes from both the general and small group conversations; themes were then posted on the Falcon Heights website. Conversation participants were also provided with written handouts with draft task force recommendations to elicit feedback and conversation.

Brings groups of residents together with law enforcement

While Falcon Heights is a small community in the center of the Minneapolis–Saint Paul metropolitan area, Philando Castile's death impacted many residents of the metropolitan area, not only those who lived in Falcon Heights, so the Community Conversations were "open to everyone regardless of whether they lived or worked in Falcon Heights."[187] The design team encouraged (but did not require) participants to attend all five sessions.

The design team did not want to discourage any participation and "feared" expectations connected to registration "would suppress participation."[188] This decision (1) required the design team to prepare for more participants than the number of people who attended and (2) created challenges for bringing together the diversity of perspectives represented in the community as a whole.[189]

To draw participants, the design team arranged food and child care for each community conversation. Later analysis suggests that child care was not well promoted and therefore participants made little use of it. Likewise, the analysis suggests that, instead

187. Press, "Using Dispute Resolution Skills," 659.

188. Press, "Using Dispute Resolution Skills," 667.

189. Press, "Using Dispute Resolution Skills," 667.

of sweets, snacks provided could have been healthier, more substantial, and culturally specific. In her analysis of the event, one designer points out that there is a "tension between providing food . . . versus the desire for more time in conversation."[190]

Sustainable in both process and outcomes

Individuals involved with the design team also evaluated the community conversation project through a survey distributed to all 158 participants (39 percent completed the survey), and four focus groups (two for participants and two for facilitators).[191]

Analysis suggests the "coordinated effort" between the task force and the community conversations enabled participants "to see that their input had consequences."[192] This effort was due in part to the willingness and ability of those planning the community conversations and the task force activities to work together.

An analysis further describes how outcomes from the community conversations were sustained and implemented:

> ***"The final policing and inclusion recommendations of the task force, informed by the community conversations, were adopted by the City of Falcon Heights. Beginning in January 2018, the Ramsey County Sheriff's Office took over policing responsibility for Falcon Heights. The contract with Ramsey County included provisions for 'indemnification, data sharing, and personnel,' and the mayor reported, when the contract began, that the sheriff's office is 'open to the recommendations put forth by the Falcon Heights Task Force.'"***[193]

As a result, the five-member city council now includes two former task force members; the city hosts multiple community events cosponsored by the Ramsey County Sheriff's Office; and on July 6, 2019, the remembrance of Philando Castile's death, Falcon Heights held its second annual "Restoration Day" featuring his mother, family, friends, and others.[194]

In partnership with a local mediation center, Falcon Heights hosted a second set of three community conversations between December 2020 and January 2021.

---

190. Press, "Using Dispute Resolution Skills," 670.
191. Press, "Using Dispute Resolution Skills," 660–661.
192. Press, "Using Dispute Resolution Skills," 666.
193. Press, "Using Dispute Resolution Skills," 671.
194. Press, "Using Dispute Resolution Skills," 671–672.

Resources

Press, Sharon. "Using Dispute Resolution Skills to Heal a Community." *Ohio State Journal on Dispute Resolution* 35, no. 5 (2020): 645–704. https://kb.osu.edu/server/api/core/bitstreams/c1d2b873-3121-4cb2-9c2b-d3dac13d4e04/content.

Falcon Heights. "Community Conversations." Accessed February 26, 2024. https://www.falconheights.org/government/our-inclusion-efforts/community-conversations.

Dressel, Elizabeth. *Evaluation of the Falcon Heights Community Conversations Process*. Saint Paul, MN: Minnesota Bureau of Mediation Services' Office of Collaboration and Dispute Resolution, 2017. https://mn.gov/admin/assets/Falcon%20Heights%20Evaluation%20Report_tcm36-390876.pdf.

Harvard Negotiation & Mediation Clinical Program. "Ep3 – Rebuilding After Crisis Community Conversations in Falcon Heights, MN." SoundCloud, 2020. https://soundcloud.com/hnmcp/thanks-for-listening-episode-3-rebuilding-after-crisis-community-conversations-in-falcon-heights-mn.

Press, Sharon. *Reflections: Weaving Threads to Strengthen the Fabric of Our Communities*. St. Paul, MN: DRI Press, 2020. https://open.mitchellhamline.edu/dri_press/11/.

Appendix B. Intentional Dialogue Checklist

This short checklist is designed to provide the busy leader a quick list of questions to consider when designing, hosting, and sustaining intentional dialogue.

Collaboratively designed

- Consider how the process can be led collaboratively.
- Consider how law enforcement (likely command staff and potentially union leadership), city leadership (council / mayor / city manager), and community leaders engage in the design process.
- Consider how to ensure representation in the design process.
    - Is there an advocacy group representing or aligned with historically marginalized community groups that can be brought into the process?
    - Continue to ask, "What voices are missing?"
    - How can dialogue be designed to be inclusive of youth?

Purposeful and goal-driven

- Set clear goals.
    - Do the goals successfully crystalize the purpose of collaborating and the general outcomes the design team hopes to achieve?
    - Have the goals shifted throughout the dialogue process? If so, articulate those new goals for everyone involved.
- Engage a trusted, independent facilitator or facilitation team.
    - What is the background of a facilitator or a facilitation team?
    - Are the facilitators neutral?
    - Do they have experience in navigating deep or historical community conflict?
    - Will they be trusted by the community and law enforcement participants to host a balanced and fair process?

- Identify the dialogue format.
  - What format will most effectively align with the specific goals of the dialogue?
  - What process tools will best align with the specific goals of the dialogue?
  - Consider these options:
    - Circle and restorative-style processes
    - Using simulations, scenarios, and hypotheticals
    - Serial testimony
    - Town hall convenings
    - Intergroup dialogue
    - Focusing on diverse stakeholder groups
- Develop an agenda that connects to the dialogue's goals and identifies topics and concerns that participants can address and potentially resolve.
  - Consider a public-facing agenda (articulates participant activities and schedule).
  - Consider an agenda for the facilitation team and staff (includes logistical matters, substantive questions, and timing considerations).
- Consider how best to mitigate power imbalances between law enforcement and community members.
- Develop guidance for participation.
  - What will be included in the guidelines?
  - Will participants be asked simply to agree, or will they be invited to propose their own additional guidelines?
  - Will the conversation be recorded, and if so, will the recording be made public or remain confidential?

- Encourage constructive conversation.
  - How will you set the tone for the dialogue?
  - How will participants meet one another?
  - How can substantive discussion be facilitated?
  - How can a welcoming environment be created?
  - Consider how to introduce participants to the proposed agendas and logistical information.
  - Consider how to arrange the space to encourage conversation and what role the facilitator might play.
  - How can facilitators model vulnerability for participants?

Brings groups of residents together with law enforcement

- Assess available and necessary resources.
  - Does the dialogue seek to build on prior or existing processes?
    - Consider both previous dialogue processes and existing forums and resources in the community.
    - What worked and did not work in the previous process(es) and what insight can it provide?
  - What are the costs—time, expenses, and labor? Consider for example:
    - What compensation will be necessary (e.g., time, travel)?
    - What other resources (e.g., meeting space, technology) will be needed?
  - Should experts and third parties be engaged?
    - Would the participation of trauma-informed social workers or other specialists be beneficial to assist in avoiding, to the extent possible, anxiety for participants and to assist with any behavioral effects that might occur?
    - Should other experts (historians, social scientists, or subject matter experts) be invited to make presentations, conduct research, evaluate, record, or report upon the process's effectiveness?

- Confirm logistics and accessibility details.
  - Event length and timing
    - How can the length and timing of events be respectful of participant schedules and the needs of community participants?
  - Number of sessions
    - Will it be an ongoing dialogue series?
  - Location
    - Is the location neutral, safe, convenient, and accessible to the community?
  - Accessibility
    - How can the dialogue be designed for full accessibility and participation?
    - What barriers may prevent people from fully participating?
  - Resources for event participants
    - How will handouts, name tags, and other physical materials be provided?
    - Will food and refreshments be provided to increase accessibility and foster a positive environment?
    - Will child care be provided to make it easier for parents and guardians to participate?
  - Will technology be used during the dialogue, and if so, how?
    - Will the use of technology enhance or detract from the accessibility of the dialogue? How will it impact the outcome of the dialogue?

- Identify and engage participants.
  - If dialogue is open to all . . .
    - How can intentional recruitment efforts be used to attract participants who represent the community's layers of diversity?
    - Who are the ideal law enforcement participants, based on the goals of the dialogue?
    - How can agency leadership's support for the dialogue be obtained and communicated broadly to the larger community?
    - How can youth be engaged in dialogue?
      - Would separate meetings be beneficial for youth?
    - Who is engaged—and who is missing—in the dialogue?
      - Are there additional voices to engage since the last time this was considered?
  - If dialogue focuses on specific groups . . .
    - Will the limited nature of the dialogue be explained?
    - How does the individual situation and history of the community and the individual groups within it affect participant recruitment and dialogue design?
  - Build an outreach plan.
    - What partners may be helpful to recruit for assistance in outreach efforts?
    - Is the information provided up to date and sufficient?
    - Are there trusted community leaders or established community or business organizations (local or nonlocal) that would be able to help broaden participation and establish commitment?

Sustainable in both process and outcomes

- Elicit feedback about the dialogue session.
- Identify clear and concrete next steps.
- Make a plan for sharing outcomes and action steps.
- Identify how leadership, participation, resources, and energy will be maintained.
- Celebrate implementation and outcomes.

Bibliography

Act Up (AIDS Coalition to Unleash Power). "ACT UP Marshall Training." Accessed December 18, 2023. https://actupny.org/documents/Marshall.html.

Armaly, Miles T., and Adam M. Enders. "'Why Me?' The Role of Perceived Victimhood in American Politics." *Political Behavior* 44, no. 4 (2022): 1583–1609. https://doi.org/10.1007/s11109-020-09662-x.

Atlanta Police Department. "Press Conference – Protest 5-29-2020." YouTube. May 30,2020. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SN1TxJeFkHs.

Austin Police Department. *Austin Police Department Protest/Riot Event 2020 After Action Report September 16, 2022*. Austin, TX: Austin Police Department, 2022. https://services.austintexas.gov/edims/pio/document.cfm?id=392551.

Barnes-Proby, Dionne, Samuel Peterson, Alexandra Mendoza-Graf, Pierrce Holmes, Danielle Sobol, Nipher Malika, and Meagan Cahill. *Community-Police Relations: Example Adult Dialogue*. Santa Monica, CA: RAND, 2023. https://www.rand.org/pubs/tools/TLA615-1.html.

Barnes-Proby, Dionne, Samuel Peterson, Alexandra Mendoza-Graf, Pierrce Holmes, Danielle Sobol, Nipher Malika, and Meagan Cahill. *A Toolkit for Community Police Dialogue*. Santa Monica, CA: RAND, 2023. https://www.rand.org/pubs/tools/TLA615-1.html.

Beachum, Lateshia, and Brittany Shammas. "Black Officers, Torn Between Badge and Culture, Face Uniquely Painful Questions and Insults." *The Washington Post*, October 9, 2020. https://www.washingtonpost.com/history/2020/10/09/black-law-enforcement-protests/.

Boundless Love Project. "Marshal Training." September 29, 2020. https://www.boundlesloveproject.org/news/2020/9/29/marshal-training.

Boyd, Sarah, and Jake Becchina. "No More Rocks and Bottles: Lessons Learned in Crisis Communication." *Police Chief*. March 3, 2021. https://www.policechiefmagazine.org/no-more-rocks-and-bottles/.

Braga, Anthony A., Rod K. Brunson, and Kevin M. Drakulich. "Race, Place, and Effective Policing." *Annual Review of Sociology* 45 (July 2019): 535–555. https://www.annualreviews.org/doi/10.1146/annurev-soc-073018-022541.

Brown, Trevor L., and Carter M. Stewart. *Research Evaluation of the City of Columbus' Response to the 2020 Summer Protests*. Columbus, OH: The Ohio State University John Glenn College of Public Affairs, 2021. https://glenn.osu.edu/sites/default/files/2021-09/aar-report.pdf.

Bruner, Bethany. "After Disgraceful 2020 Protest Response, Columbus Police Team Now Model for Doing it Right." *Columbus Dispatch*, March 11, 2024. https://www.dispatch.com/story/news/local/2024/03/11/columbus-police-dialogue-teams-mission-more-than-lip-service-ohio-protest-response-willis-johnson/72713478007/.

Carlee, Ron. *Leadership and Professional Local Government Managers: Before, During, and After a Crisis*. Washington, DC: ICMA, 2019. https://icma.org/sites/default/files/19-117%20Crisis%20Leadership%20Report-FINAL.pdf.

Center for Justice Research. "A Conversation on Trust, Accountability, and Community Safety." Accessed March 17, 2024. https://centerforjusticeresearch.org/event/building-bridges-trust-and-two-way-accountability-in-community-safety/.

Chen, Brian X. "The Future of Social Media Is a Lot Less Social." *The New York Times*, April 19, 2023. https://www.nytimes.com/2023/04/19/technology/personaltech/tiktok-twitter-facebook-social.html.

City of Los Angeles Human Relations Commission. *Community Dinner Dialogue Pilot Program Report*. Los Angeles: City of Los Angeles Human Relations Commission, 2019. https://civilandhumanrights.lacity.gov/sites/g/files/wph1421/files/2021-04/HRC%20Community%20Dinner%20Dialogue%20Pilot%20Program%20Report%20Final.pdf.

———. *Policing and the Black Community: Where Do We Go from Here Report Back*. Los Angeles: City of Los Angeles Human Relations Commission, 2021. https://civilandhumanrights.lacity.gov/sites/g/files/wph2271/files/2021-06/Dinner%20Dialogue%20Pilot%20Program%20Final%20Report_0.pdf.

City of Sanford, Florida. *City of Sanford: Race, Equality, Equity and Inclusion Committee Final Report*. Sanford, FL: City of Sanford, 2023. https://sanfordfl.gov/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/2023-REEI-Committee-Report.pdf.

———. "Community Relations." Accessed February 20, 2024. https://sanfordfl.gov/government/community-relations/.

COPS Office (Office of Community Oriented Policing Services). *Community Survey on Public Safety and Law Enforcement*. Washington, DC: Community Oriented Policing Services, 2014. https://portal.cops.usdoj.gov/resourcecenter/content.ashx/cops-w0743-pub.pdf.

———. "Law Enforcement Mental Health and Wellness (LEMHWA) Program Resources." Accessed February 19, 2024. https://cops.usdoj.gov/lemhwaresources.

CRS (U.S. Department of Justice Community Relations Service). "About CRS." Accessed December 18, 2023. https://www.justice.gov/crs/about.

———. *Contingency Planning: Reducing Risk During Public Events*. Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Justice Community Relations Service, 2023. https://www.justice.gov/media/1129486/dl?inline.

———. "Event Marshals: Maintaining Safety During Public Events." Last modified September 5, 2023. https://www.justice.gov/crs/our-work/training/event-marshals.

———. *Facilitating Meetings Around Community Conflict: Case Study Materials*. Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Justice Community Relations Service, n.d.

———. *Facilitating Meetings Around Community Conflict: Participant Toolkit*. Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Justice Community Relations Service, n.d.

———. "Strengthening Police and Community Partnerships." Last modified January 2, 2024. https://www.justice.gov/crs/our-work/facilitation/strengthening-police-community-partnerships.

———. *Strengthening Police and Community Partnerships Program in Erie, Pennsylvania*. Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Justice Community Relations Service, 2022. https://www.justice.gov/crs/file/1208921/dl?inline.

Direct Action Movement. "Marshal: For Marches & Other Demonstrations." Accessed December 18, 2023. https://www.thedirectactionmovement.com/marshal.

Divided Community Project. "The Bridge Initiative at Moritz." Accessed February 19, 2024. https://go.osu.edu/dcpbridge.

———. *Key Considerations for Leaders Facing Community Unrest: Effective Problem-Solving Strategies That Have Been Used in Other Communities*. 2nd ed. Columbus, OH: Divided Community Project, 2019. https://moritzlaw.osu.edu/sites/default/files/2021-07/KeyConsiderations2ed%20%281%29.pdf.

———. *Orlando Speaks: A Safe Space for Dialogue*. Columbus, OH: Divided Community Project, 2018. https://moritzlaw.osu.edu/sites/default/files/2022-05/DCP-Study-2-Orlando-Speaks.pdf.

———. *Planning in Advance of Community Unrest*. 2nd ed. Columbus, OH: Divided Community Project, 2019. https://moritzlaw.osu.edu/sites/default/files/2022-11/PlanningInAdvance2ed%20new%20cover%5B77%5D.pdf.

———. *Strengthening Communities Project: Alleviating Tensions, Strengthening Relationships, and Making Silicon Valley Safer*. Columbus, OH: Divided Community Project, 2018. https://moritzlaw.osu.edu/sites/default/files/2022-05/DCP-Study-3-San-Mateo-Strengthening-Communities.pdf.

Dressel, Elizabeth. *Evaluation of the Falcon Heights Community Conversations Process*. Saint Paul, MN: Minnesota Bureau of Mediation Services' Office of Collaboration and Dispute Resolution, 2017. https://mn.gov/admin/assets/Falcon%20Heights%20Evaluation%20Report_tcm36-390876.pdf.

Ebner, Noam. "The Human Touch in ODR: Trust, Empathy and Social Intuition in Online Negotiation and Mediation." 2nd ed. In *Online Dispute Resolution: Theory and Practice*, edited by Daniel Rainey, Ethan Katsh, and Mohamed S. Abdel Wahab, 73–136. Eleven International Publishing, 2023.

Falcon Heights. "Community Conversations." Accessed February 26, 2024. https://www.falconheights.org/government/our-inclusion-efforts/community-conversations.

FEMA (Federal Emergency Management Agency). *Considerations for Fusion Center and Emergency Operations Center Coordination: Comprehensive Preparedness Guide (CPG) 502*. Washington, DC: FEMA, 2010. https://www.fema.gov/pdf/about/divisions/npd/cpg_502_eoc-fusion_final_7_20_2010.pdf.

Froehlich, William, Nancy Rogers, Carl Smallwood, and Josh Stulberg. "How One Mediator Made a Difference in a Divided Community." *National Civic Review* 111, no. 3 (2022): 30–38. https://www.jstor.org/stable/48696765.

Froehlich, William, Nancy Rogers, and Joseph Stulberg. "Sharing Dispute Resolution Practices with Leaders of a Divided Community or Campus: Strategies for Two Crucial Conversations." *Ohio State Journal on Dispute Resolution* 35, no. 5 (2020): 781–824. https://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=3769236.

Gasiorek, Jessica. "Nonaccommodation." Oxford Research Encyclopedias, Communication. June 28, 2017. https://doi.org/10.1093/acrefore/9780190228613.013.440.

Gen-Z for Change. "About Us." Accessed December 18, 2023. https://genzforchange.org/about/.

Georgetown Law Institute for Constitutional Advocacy and Protection. "Policing at Protests: Best Practices." Accessed December 18, 2023. https://constitutionalprotestguide.org/policing-at-protests-best-practices/#operational-considerations.

Gibb, Jack R. "Defensive Communication." *Journal of Communication* 11, no. 3 (September 1961): 141–148. https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/abs/10.1111/j.1460-2466.1961.tb00344.x.

Giles, Howard, Edward R. Maguire, and Shawn L. Hill. "The Police and Those Policed as Intergroup *Par Excellence*: Current Trends and Future Prospects." *Group Processes & Intergroup Relations* 26, no. 4 (2023): 781–795. https://doi.org/10.1177/13684302221142317.

Giles, Howard, Edward Maguire, and Shawn L. Hill. *The Rowman & Littlefield Handbook of Policing, Communication, and Society*. London: Rowman & Littlefield, 2021.

Global Justice Information Sharing Initiative. *Recommendations for First Amendment-Protected Events for State and Local Law Enforcement Agencies*. Washington, DC: Global Justice Information Sharing Initiative, 2011. https://bja.ojp.gov/sites/g/files/xyckuh186/files/media/document/recommendations_for_first_amendment-protected_events_for_state_and_local_law_enforcement-2.pdf.

Greenstein, Don. "Peaceful Communications Between Community Members and Law Enforcement: When Actions are Perceived Differently." Police Chief. Accessed February 20, 2024. https://www.policechiefmagazine.org/peaceful-communications-community-members-law-enforcement/.

Hajek, Christopher, Valerie Barker, Howard Giles, Sinfree Makoni, Loretta Pecchioni, Joha Louw-Potgieter, and Paul Myers. "Communicative Dynamics of Police-Civilian Encounters: South African and American Interethnic Data." *Journal of Intercultural Communication Research* 35, no. 3 (2006): 161–182. https://doi.org/10.1080/17475750601026909.

Harvard Negotiation & Mediation Clinical Program. "Ep3 – Rebuilding After Crisis Community Conversations in Falcon Heights, MN." SoundCloud, 2020. https://soundcloud.com/hnmcp/thanks-for-listening-episode-3-rebuilding-after-crisis-community-conversations-in-falcon-heights-mn.

Hayes, Christal. "Memphis Police Chief Faces Crucial Test Leading Department Through Tyre Nichols Case." CNN. January 28, 2023. https://www.cnn.com/2023/01/28/us/cerelyn-davis-memphis-police-chief-tyre-nichols/index.html.

Headley, Andrea M., "Representing Personal and Professional Identities in Policing: Sources of Strength and Conflict." *Public Administration Review* 82, no. 3 (2022): 396-409. https://www.ojp.gov/library/publications/representing-personal-and-professional-identities-policing-sources-strength.

Helfgott, Jacqueline B., Ana Carpenter, Zachary Dar, Quinn Priebe, Eden Sedgwick, and Elaria Zakhary. *Community-Police Dialogues: 2023 Results*. Seattle, WA: Seattle University Crime and Justice Research Center, 2023. https://static1.squarespace.com/static/5f63989af47e751ee6b288d3/t/65e267844588f8240af5582d/1709336455047/2023+SPD+MCPP+Community+Police+Dialogue+Report.pdf.

Helfgott, Jacqueline B., Katie Kepler, Brandon Bledsoe, Ashley Dobbs, and Evelyn Madrid-Fierro. *Community-Police Dialogues: 2022 Results*. Seattle, WA: Seattle University Crime and Justice Research Center, 2022. https://www.seattle.gov/documents/Departments/Police/Reports/2022-SPD-MCPP-Community-Police-Dialogues-Results-FinalPDF.pdf.

Hill, Shawn. "VOICES: A Theory-Driven Intervention for Improving Relationships Between Police and the Public." *Policing: An International Journal* 44, no. 5 (2021): 786–799. https://doi.org/10.1108/PIJPSM-09-2020-0154.

Hsiung, Chris. "Three Strategies for Crisis Leadership." LinkedIn. February 11, 2021. https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/three-strategies-crisis-leadership-chris-hsiung/.

Ho, Rodney. "On Colbert: Killer Mike Explains How He Ended Up Making That Powerful Speech Friday." *The Atlanta Journal-Constitution*, June 2, 2020. https://www.ajc.com/blog/radiotvtalk/colbert-killer-mike-explains-how-ended-making-that-powerful-speech-friday/mPssdJw2o2nQ0ItBP28PfN/.

Hunton and Williams LLP. *Final Report: Independent Review of the 2017 Protest Events in Charlottesville, Virginia*. Richmond, VA: Hunton & Williams LLP, 2017. https://www.huntonak.com/images/content/3/4/v4/34613/final-report-ada-compliant-ready.pdf.

IACP (International Association of Chiefs of Police). "Chief Cunningham Remarks." YouTube, October 17, 2016. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1GZDdq7L7ZY.

———. *Crowd Management*. Alexandria, VA: International Association of Chiefs of Police Law Enforcement Policy Center, 2019. https://www.theiacp.org/sites/default/files/2020-08/Crowd%20Management%20FULL%20-%2008062020.pdf.

———. *Crowd Management: Concepts & Issues Paper*. Alexandria, VA: International Association of Chiefs of Police Law Enforcement Policy Center, 2019. https://www.theiacp.org/sites/default/files/2019-04/Crowd%20Management%20Paper%20-%202019_1.pdf.

———. *Understanding How Law Enforcement Shares Information with the Public*. Alexandria, VA: International Association of Chiefs of Police, 2020. https://www.discoverpolicing.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/239752_IACP_SharingInfo_p4.pdf.

Indianapolis-Marion County City-County Council. *Report on Indianapolis City-County Council Community Conversation on Police & Community Relations*. Indianapolis, IN: Indianapolis-Marion County City-County Council, 2019. https://www.indy.gov/activity/city-county-council-reports-and-findings.

Johnson, Devon, David B. Wilson, Edward R. Maguire, and Belén V. Lowrey-Kinberg. 2017. "Race and Perceptions of Police: Experimental Results on the Impact of Procedural (In)justice." *Justice Quarterly* 34, no. 7 (2017): 1184–1212. http://doi.org/10.1080/07418825.2017.1343862.

Jones, Jeremy R. "The Experience of Conflicting Identities Amongst African American Law Enforcement Officers." Minneapolis, MN: Walden Dissertations and Doctoral Studies, 2021. https://scholarworks.waldenu.edu/dissertations/11088.

Kang, Sooyeon. "Constructing Community Cohesion Organically and Strategically." *Ohio State Journal on Dispute Resolution* 38, no. 1 (2023): 139–158. https://kb.osu.edu/server/api/core/bitstreams/e6a8abbc-dcf8-4776-8c67-a877bf742ddc/content.

Kochel, Tammy R. *Policing Unrest: On the Front Lines of the Ferguson Project*. New York: New York University Press, 2022. https://doi.org/10.18574/nyu/9781479807383.001.0001.

Lemmie, Valerie, Kathy Quick, and Brian N. Williams. "Community-Led Efforts to Create Safe Communities: Diversity, Dialogues, and Directors for Moving Forward." *National Civic Review* 110, no. 1 (spring 2021): 6–15.

Lunkensmeyer, Carolyn J. *Bringing Citizen Voices to the Table: A Guide for Public Managers*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass, 2013.

Madrid, Pamela. "USC Study Reveals the Key Reason Why Fake News Spreads on Social Media." USC Today. January 17, 2023. https://today.usc.edu/usc-study-reveals-the-key-reason-why-fake-news-spreads-on-social-media/.

Maguire, Edward R., Shawn L. Hill, and Howard Giles. "Caught in the Middle: Accommodative Dilemmas in Police-Community Relations." *Psychology, Public Policy, and Law* 29, no. 4 (2023): 489–490. https://doi.org/10.1037/law0000399.

Maguire, Edward R., Belén V. Lowrey, and Devon Johnson. "Evaluating the Relative Impact of Positive and Negative Encounters with Police: A Randomized Experiment." *Journal of Experimental Criminology* 13 (2017): 367–391. https://doi.org/10.1007/s11292-016-9276-9.

Maguire, Edward R., and Megan Oakley. *Policing Protests: Lessons from the Occupy Movement, Ferguson & Beyond: A Guide for Police*. New York: Harry Frank Guggenheim Foundation, 2020. https://www.hfg.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/06/PolicingProtests.pdf.

Matsa, Katerina Eva. "More Americans are Getting News on TikTok, Bucking the Trend Seen on Most Other Social Media Sites." Pew Research Center. November 15, 2023. https://www.pewresearch.org/short-reads/2023/11/15/more-americans-are-getting-news-on-tiktok-bucking-the-trend-seen-on-most-other-social-media-sites/.

McQuade, Barbara. "To Be Effective, Police Must Earn Community Trust," in *Building Trust Between Police and Community in Michigan: Lessons for the Nation from the Year 2020*, 55–57. Dearborn, MI: Dearborn Police Department, 2020. https://www.law.georgetown.edu/wp-content/uploads/2021/02/Building-Trust-Report-Full-Report.pdf.

Michigan Department of Civil Rights. "Advocates and Leaders for Police and Community Trust (ALPACT)." Accessed March 12, 2024. https://www.michigan.gov/mdcr/divisions/community-engagement/alpact.

NAFCM (National Association for Community Mediation). *Impact of Environmental Factors on Law Enforcement and Neighborhood Relationships*. Louisville, KY: National Association for Community Mediation, 2017. https://cdn.ymaws.com/www.nafcm.org/resource/resmgr/Environmental_Factors_on_Law_Enforcement_and_Neighborhoods/Environmental_Impacts_on_Pol.pdf.

———. "Locate a Member." Accessed December 19, 2023. https://www.nafcm.org/search/custom.asp?id=1949.

National Network for Safe Communities. *Police Leaders Acknowledge Past Harm*. New York: National Network for Safe Communities, 2024. https://nnscommunities.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/02/Police-Leaders-Acknowledge-Past-Harm-Examples.pdf.

National Policing Institute (as National Police Foundation). *Preparing for and Responding to Mass Demonstrations and Counter-Demonstration in Portland, Oregon: A Review of the Portland Police Bureau's Response to Demonstrations on June 4, 2017, August 4, 2018, and August 17, 2019*. Arlington, VA: National Police Foundation, 2020. https://www.policinginstitute.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/01/NPF-review-of-the-portland-police-bureaus-response-to-demonstrations_20210421.pdf.

National Policing Institute and COPS Office (Office of Community Oriented Policing Services). *21st Century Protest Response: Promoting Democracy and Advancing Community and Officer Safety*. Washington, DC: Office of Community Oriented Policing Services, 2022. https://portal.cops.usdoj.gov/resourcecenter/content.ashx/cops-p459-pub.pdf.

Nuño, Lidia E., Shawn L. Hill, Edward R. Maquire, and Howard Giles. "Experiencing VOICES: Police and Public Reactions to an Intergroup Communication Intervention." *Police Practice and Research* 24, no. 6 (2023): 631–645. https://doi.org/10.1080/15614263.2022.2147069.

Office of the Georgia Attorney General. "Carr's Remarks at Georgia Chiefs of Police Community Trust Initiative in LaGrange." Press release. August 27, 2019. https://law.georgia.gov/press-releases/2019-08-27/carrs-remarks-georgia-chiefs-police-community-trust-initiative-lagrange.

Pal, Judy, Khadijah Carter, Eric Kowalczyk, and Christine Townsend. *Strategic Communications for Law Enforcement Executives*. Washington, DC: Office of Community Oriented Policing Services, 2023. https://portal.cops.usdoj.gov/resourcecenter/content.ashx/cops-r1127-pub.pdf.

Peace and Justice Institute. "Peace and Justice Institute." Accessed February 26, 2024. https://www.peacejusticeinstitute.org/.

———. *Principles for How We Treat Each Other: Our Practice of Respect and Community Building*. Orlando, FL: Peace and Justice Institute, n.d. https://www.peacejusticeinstitute.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/02/PJI-Principles-English-1.pdf.

Pew Research Center. "Social Media and the News Fact Sheet." November 15, 2023. https://www.pewresearch.org/journalism/fact-sheet/social-media-and-news-fact-sheet/.

PERF (Police Executive Research Forum). *Critical Issues in Policing Series: Rethinking the Police Response to Mass Demonstrations: 9 Recommendations*. Washington, DC: Police Executive Research Forum, 2022. https://www.policeforum.org/assets/ResponseMassDemonstrations.pdf.

Pettigrew, T.F. and Linda R. Tropp. "A Meta-analytic Test of Intergroup Contact Theory." *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 90, no. 5 (2006): 751–783. https://doi.org/10.1037/0022-3514.90.5.751.

Pranis, Kay. *The Little Book of Circle Processes: A New/Old Approach to Peacemaking*. New York: Good Books, 2014. Kindle.

President Obama's Task Force on 21st Century Policing. *Final Report of the President's Task Force on 21st Century Policing*. Washington, DC: Office of Community Oriented Policing Services, 2015. https://www.ojp.gov/ncjrs/virtual-library/abstracts/final-report-presidents-task-force-21st-century-policing.

Press, Sharon. *Reflections: Weaving Threads to Strengthen the Fabric of Our Communities*. St. Paul, MN: DRI Press, 2020. https://open.mitchellhamline.edu/dri_press/11/.

Press, Sharon. "Using Dispute Resolution Skills to Heal a Community." *Ohio State Journal on Dispute Resolution* 35, no. 5 (2020): 645–704. https://kb.osu.edu/server/api/core/bitstreams/c1d2b873-3121-4cb2-9c2b-d3dac13d4e04/content.

Policing Project. "How to Host a Town Hall Meeting." Accessed February 21, 2024. https://www.policingproject.org/townhall.

Policing Project. "How to Police Protests to Protect Constitutional Rights and Public Safety." October 29, 2020. https://www.policingproject.org/news-main/2020/10/29/how-to-police-protests-to-protect-constitutional-rights-and-public-safety.

Policing Project. "Policing Protests to Protect Constitutional Rights and Public Safety." Accessed December 18, 2023. https://www.policingproject.org/protests.

Public Affairs. "2023 Seattle Police Department's 'Before the Badge.' Community-Police Dialogues." SPD Blotter. March 20, 2023. https://spdblotter.seattle.gov/2023/03/20/2023-seattle-police-departments-before-the-badge-community-police-dialogues/.

Santos, Roberto, and Rachel Santos. *Operationalizing Proactive Community Engagement: A Framework for Police Organizations*. Washington, DC: Office of Community Oriented Policing Services, 2024. https://portal.cops.usdoj.gov/resourcecenter/content.ashx/cops-r1145-pub.pdf.

Schwarz, Roger. *The Skilled Facilitator*. Hoboken, New Jersey: John Wiley & Sons, Inc., 2017. https://doi.org/10.1002/9781119176572.

Seattle University. "Micro-Community Policing Plans." Accessed February 26, 2024. https://seattleux.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_byjfRRKXl0dirRk.

Skogan, Wesley G. "Prospects for Reform? The Collapse of Community Policing in Chicago." *The University of Chicago Law Review* 89, no. 2 (2022): 383–404. https://chicagounbound.uchicago.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=6284&context=uclrev.

Sonoma County Community and Local Law Enforcement Task Force. *Final Recommendations Report: Volume 1*. Sonoma County, CA: Sonoma County Community and Local Law Enforcement Task Force, 2015. https://sonomacounty.ca.gov/Main%20County%20Site/Administrative%20Support%20%26%20Fiscal%20Services/IOLERO/Documents/Archive/A%20Service/Final-Recommendations-Volume-1-Report.pdf.

Stott, Clifford, and Arabella Kyprianides. *Crowd Psychology, Policing and Interactional Dynamics: Analyzing the Early Stages of the 2020 Protests in the City of Seattle*. Seattle: Seattle Office of Inspector General, 2022. https://www.seattle.gov/documents/departments/oig/other/final_crowd_psychology_report_v1.pdf.

Tyler, Tom R., and Yuen Huo. *Trust in the Law*. New York: Russell Sage, 2002. https://www.russellsage.org/publications/trust-law.

U.S. Access Board. "Americans with Disabilities Act: Accessibility Standards." Accessed February 22, 2024. https://www.access-board.gov/ada/#background

U.S. Access Board. "Technical Assistance." Accessed February 22, 2024. https://www.access-board.gov/ta/.

U.S. Department of Homeland Security. "Fusion Centers and Emergency Operations Centers." Last modified January 11, 2023. https://www.dhs.gov/fusion-centers-and-emergency-operations-centers.

U.S. Department of Justice. *Critical Incident Review: Active Shooter at Robb Elementary School*. Executive Summary. Washington, DC: Office of Community Oriented Policing Services, 2024.

———. *Department of Justice Guidance for Federal, State, Tribal, Local, and Territorial Law Enforcement Agencies on Best Practices for Providing Official Notification of Deaths in Custody*. Washington, DC: Department of Justice, 2023. https://www.justice.gov/d9/2023-05/Sec%2011%28d%29%20-%20DOJ%20Guidance%20on%20Best%20Practices%20for%20Providing%20Official%20Notificaition%20of%20Deaths%20in%20Cu.pdf.

Van Assche, Jasper, Hermann Swart, Katharina Schmid, Kristof Dhont, Ananthi Al Ramaiah, Oliver Christ, and Mathias Kauff. "Intergroup Contact Is Reliably Associated with Reduced Prejudice, Even in the Face of Group Threat and Discrimination." *The American Psychologist* 78, no. 6 (2023): 761–774. https://doi.org/10.1037/amp0001144.

Van Ness, Daniel W., and Karen Heetderks Strong. *Restoring Justice: An Introduction to Restorative Justice*. Waltham, MA: Anderson Publishing, 2015.

Ward, Shaun. "Understanding Bias and Power in Community Policing." Police1. Last modified February 19, 2019. https://www.police1.com/community-policing/articles/understanding-bias-and-power-in-community-policing-yL2xzOtJIDPDDr88/.

White House. "Executive Order on Advancing Effective, Accountable Policing and Criminal Justice Practices to Enhance Public Trust and Public Safety." May 25, 2022. https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/presidential-actions/2022/05/25/executive-order-on-advancing-effective-accountable-policing-and-criminal-justice-practices-to-enhance-public-trust-and-public-safety/

Acknowledgments

This guide is a project of the Divided Community Project (DCP), housed at The Ohio State University (OSU) Moritz College of Law. This project was supported by federal award number 15JCOPS-23-GK-03990-PPSE awarded to OSU by the U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS Office). Additional support was provided by OSU's Mershon Center for International Security Studies, the JAMS (formerly Judicial Arbitration and Mediation Services) Foundation and OSU's Center for Law and Interdisciplinary Policy Studies.

DCP Steering Committee

Chair

Andrew Thomas
Mediator in community conflicts and former Community Relations and Neighborhood Engagement Director, City of Sanford, Florida

Executive Director

Carl Smallwood
Distinguished Practitioner in Residence, at The Ohio State University Moritz College of Law, Columbus, Ohio

Retired Partner, Vorys, Sater, Seymour and Pease LLP

Past president, Columbus Bar Association and National Conference of Bar Presidents

Director

William Froehlich
Lecturer and Langdon Fellow in Dispute Resolution at The Ohio State University Moritz College of Law, Columbus, Ohio

Primary organizer, convenor, and lead writer of this document

Fellow

Benjamin Wilson
Staff Attorney and Fellow at The Ohio State University Moritz College of Law, Columbus, Ohio

Members

Thomas Battles
Former Southeast Regional Director, U.S. Department of Justice Community Relations Service

RaShall Brackney
Distinguished Visiting Professor of Practice, George Mason University

Former Chief of Police, Charlottesville, Virginia

Former Chief of Police, George Washington University, Washington, D.C.

Chris Carlson
Public policy mediator and founding director, Policy Consensus Initiative

Susan Carpenter
Complex public policy mediator, trainer, and co-author of *Managing Public Disputes: A Practical Guide to Handling Conflict and Reaching Agreements*

Sarah Cole
Professor of Law and Moritz Chair in Alternative Dispute Resolution, The Ohio State University Moritz College of Law, Columbus, Ohio

Daphne Felten-Green
Civil rights attorney, trainer, community dialogue facilitator, and mediator with an expertise in community engagement, law enforcement community policing practices, conflict resolution, and diversity, equity, and inclusion

Katrina Lee
John C. Elam/Vorys Sater Professor in Law and Director of its Program on Dispute Resolution, The Ohio State University Moritz College of Law, Columbus, Ohio

Michael Lewis
Mediator and arbitrator, JAMS Foundation's Washington, D.C. Resolution Center

Grande Lum
Senior Lecturer in Law and Director of the Martin Daniel Gould Center for Conflict Resolution, Stanford Law School, Palo Alto, California

Former Director, U.S. Department of Justice Community Relations Service

Craig McEwen
Professor Emeritus, Bowdoin College, Brunswick, Maine

Social scientist evaluating mediation and dispute resolution

Becky Monroe
Deputy Director for Strategic Initiatives and External Affairs, California Civil Rights Department

Former Senior Counsel and Acting Director, U.S. Department of Justice Community Relations Service

Teri Murphy
Associate Director, Mershon Center for International Security Studies, The Ohio State University, Columbus, Ohio

Nancy Rogers
Professor Emeritus, The Ohio State University Moritz College of Law, Columbus, Ohio

Former Ohio Attorney General

Sarah Rubin
Chief Outreach and Engagement Advisor, California Department of Conservation

Andrew Thomas
Mediator in community conflicts and former Community Relations and Neighborhood Engagement Director, Sanford, Florida

Kyle Strickland
Senior Legal Analyst, The Ohio State University Kirwan Institute for the Study of Race and Ethnicity, Columbus, Ohio

Amy Schmitz
John Deaver Drinko-Baker & Hostetler Chair in Law, The Ohio State University Moritz College of Law, Columbus, Ohio

Joseph Stulberg
Professor Emeritus, The Ohio State University Moritz College of Law, Columbus, Ohio

Mediator in community conflicts

Ron Wakabayashi
Former Western Regional Director, U.S. Department of Justice Community Relations Service

Former Executive Director of Japanese American Citizens League

DCP is indebted to Post-Graduate Research Consultants Kitty Sorah and Damini Mohan and to students in the College of Law's Dispute Systems Design workshop, particularly Shelby Daniels, Emma Dennis, Kara Howard, and Madison Weaver. DCP is grateful for the sustained institutional support from the College of Law, including Acting Dean Camille Hébert and Dean Emeritus Lincoln Davies. And DCP is grateful to colleagues and staff at the College of Law and Mershon Center for their support in developing this document and hosting connected events including Lauren Brooks, Kelly Whitaker, Ray Webb, Sara Sampson, Laju Mansukhani, Charlie Owsley, Kyle McCray, Dani Wollerman, Latonga Croomes, Jen Conley, and Nathalie Farmer.

Participants in hybrid gatherings

In addition to the DCP Steering Committee and the Mershon Center leadership and staff, the following thought leaders were featured speakers at hybrid gatherings on November 14 and 17, 2023—events designed to share ideas and support the development of this guide.

Featured speakers

Rachel Allen
Director, Peace and Justice Institute

Norton Bonaparte
City Manager, Sanford, Florida

RaShall Brackney
Distinguished Visiting Professor of Practice, George Mason University

Former Chief of Police, Charlottesville, Virginia

Former Chief of Police, George Washington University, Fairfax County, Virginia

Reverend Richard Coleman
Senior Pastor, Wayman AME Church, North Minneapolis, Minnesota

Kym Craven
Executive Director, National Association of Women Law Enforcement Executives

Chet Epperson
Former Police Chief, Rockford, Illinois

President, Americans for Effective Law Enforcement, Inc.

Shawn Hill
Doctoral candidate, University of California, Santa Barbara

Pardeep Kaleka
Anti-Hate Senior Advisor, Not In Our Town

Tammy Kochel
Professor and Associate Dean, Southern Illinois University, Carbondale, Illinois

Michael Lane
Indigenous Sovereignty Advocate, Indigenous Environmental Network

Justin Lock
Acting Director, U.S. Department of Justice Community Relations Service

Noel March
Former U.S. Marshall for the State of Maine

Director, Maine Community Policing Institute

Chief Strategy Officer, Sigma Tactical Wellness

James McDonald
Professor of Criminal Justice, Valencia College

Former Sergeant, Orlando (Florida) Police Department

Duncan Morrow
Professor, Ulster University, Coleraine, Northern Ireland

Randy Nelson
Founder, 21st Century Research & Evaluations

Dorothy Noyes
Director, Mershon Center for International Security Studies, Columbus, Ohio

Michael Outlaw
Conciliation Specialist, U.S. Department of Justice Community Relations Service

Sharon Press
Professor and Director, Dispute Resolution Institute, Mitchell-Hamline School of Law, Saint Paul, Minnesota

Joe Schember
Mayor, Erie, Pennsylvania

Hilary Shelton
NAACP (National Association for the Advancement of Colored People) National Advisor of Governance and Policy

Daniel Spizarny
Chief, Erie (Pennsylvania) Police Department

Clifford Stott
Professor, Keele University, Keele, England

Sherry Walker-Cowart
Interim Executive Director, Rochester (New York) Police Accountability Board

Brian Williams
Professor of Public Policy, University of Virginia, Charlottesville

Art Woodruff
Mayor, Sanford, Florida

Community and human relations commissions

Beverly Calander-Anderson
Director, Community and Family Resources Department, Bloomington, Indiana

Randy Duque
City of Philadelphia Commission on Human Relations

Isabelle Gunning, Pierre Arreola, Paul Smith, and Robin Toma
Los Angeles County Commission on Human Relations

Shirley Plantin
Miami-Dade County Community Relations Board

Raymond Regalado
Los Angeles Board of Neighborhood Commissioners

Ashley Walkowiak
Pennsylvania Human Relations Commission

Law enforcement leadership

Natalie Ammons
Deputy Chief of Staff, Communication, Fulton County (Georgia) Sheriff's Office

President, Georgia Chapter of National Organization of Black Law Enforcement Executives (NOBLE)

Michael Diekhoff
Chief, Bloomington (Indiana) Police Department

Duane Mabry
Commander, Columbus (Ohio) Division of Police.

Pam Peoples-Joyner
Community Relations Specialist, Winston-Salem (North Carolina) Police Department

Current and former law enforcement union leadership

Gwen Callender
Executive Director, Fraternal Order of Police (FOP), Ohio Labor Council, Inc.

Clay Cozart
President, FOP Akron, Ohio, Lodge

Mike Taylor
Principal, Government Initiatives Group

Former Ohio FOP Legislative Chairman and National FOP Vice President

Mark Volcheck
Senior Counsel, Ohio Patrolmen's Benevolent Association

National law enforcement organizations, researchers, and trainers

Eric Litchfield
Vice President of Standards, Education, & Training, Institute for American Policing Reform

Former Captain, Santa Rosa (California) Police Department

Samuel Peterson
Policy research, RAND Corporation

Nicholas Sensley
Founder and CEO, Institute for American Policing Reform

Former Chief of Police of Truckee, California

Mark Strickland
Project Manager, International Association of Directors of Law Enforcement Standards and Training (IADLEST)

Former Director, North Carolina Justice Academy

M. Quentin Williams
Founder and CEO, Dedication to Community

Mediation, facilitation, and de-escalation thought leaders and practitioners

Lori Dieckman
Mediation Association of Colorado

D.G. Mawn
President, National Association for Community Mediation

Janet Mueller
Dayton Mediation Center, Dayton, Ohio

Lawrie Parker
Piedmont Dispute Resolution Center, Warrenton, Virginia

Jay Rothman
President, ARIA Group, Inc.

Theo Sitther
Policy Director, Bridging Divides Initiative

Shareef Valentine
Facilitator of law enforcement-community dialogue

State officials engaged in de-escalation and community mediation

Charles Schoder and Tiara Yakini
Michigan Department of Civil Rights

Gregory Manna and Marquez Equalibria
Community Conflict Resolution Unit, California Civil Rights Department

U.S. Department of Justice Community Relations Service conciliators and staff

Sean Barrett, Kabrina Bass, Kenith Bergeron, Shanette Hall, Karl Jegeris, Jacob Jordan, James Moon, Denise Nazaire, and Rosa Salamanca

Other contributors

Finally, we thank those who provided feedback on this this report or met with project staff and students in preparation for the November 14 and 17, 2023 convenings:

Kristy Dalton
Founder and CEO, Government Social Media, LLC

Stephen Fischback
Captain, Charlotte-Mecklenburg (North Carolina) Police Department

Charlie Galbraith
Partner, Jenner & Block LLP

Lori Pampilo Harris
Wayfinders Consulting

Former advisor to Mayor Buddy Dyer, City of Orlando, Florida

Jacqueline Helfgott
Professor and Director, Crime & Justice Research Center, Seattle University, Seattle, Washington

Chris Hsiung
Undersheriff, San Mateo County (California) Sheriff's Office

Former Police Chief, Mountain View (California) Police Department

Lori Luhnow
Former Chief of Police, Santa Barbara, California

Rick Myers
Former Director, Major Cities Chiefs Association

Cecil Smith
Chief of Police, Sanford, Florida

Robert Southers
Managing Attorney, Franklin County, Ohio, Municipal Court Self Help Center and Dispute Resolution Department

Adjunct Professor, The Ohio State University Moritz College of Law, Columbus, Ohio

Renata Valree
Mediator, facilitator, and trainer

Adjunct professor, Negotiation, Conflict Resolution and Peacebuilding Department, California State University – Dominguez Hills

About the Divided Community Project

The **Divided Community Project (DCP)** is housed at The Ohio State University Moritz College of Law within the College's preeminently ranked Program on Dispute Resolution. DCP seeks to support community leaders as they identify and address issues tearing at the social fabric of their respective communities. DCP services are informed by conflict resolution, mediation, and dispute systems design theory and practice and grounded in the principle that problem-solving initiatives and resolutions must be informed, shaped, and led by citizens who will live with the outcomes. DCP brings together community leaders, elected officials, activists, law enforcement, faith leaders, and academics to develop guidance for community leaders in facing conflict in diverse community settings. The shared goal is to strengthen local capacity to transform division into collaboration.

The project offers a variety of resources for communities and their leaders, including the following:

- Direct real-time mediation, facilitation, and conciliation services for those facing crisis from The Bridge Initiative @ Moritz, and "office hours" for those engaged in planning in this context, upon request and at no cost to the community.
- Multiday academy training programs for community and campus leadership teams.
- Multiparty real-time tabletop community conflict simulations which permit leadership teams to identify how to hone their preparation in advance of divisive situations.
- Checklists and guides with ideas and illustrations for facilitating potentially contentious meetings; defending democracy; and both responding to and planning in advance of social conflicts in communities and on campuses, such as those arising from the aftermath of law enforcement uses of force, divisive monuments and symbols, racial equity concerns, and challenges to democracy.
- Interdisciplinary research and award-winning academic articles connected to this work.

Winner of the American Bar Association Section on Dispute Resolution's Cooley Lawyer as a Problem-Solver Award. The JAMS Foundation, AAA-ICDR Foundation, U.S. Department of Justice, the Ohio State University Mershon Center for International Security Studies, Kettering Foundation, and the Mellon Foundation provide significant support for the project.

For more about the project, look here: https://go.osu.edu/dcp.

About CRS

The **Community Relations Service (CRS)** is a component of the Department of Justice. As America's Peacemaker, CRS provides facilitation, mediation, training, and consultation services to communities, enhancing their ability to independently address, prevent and resolve future conflicts.

Since 1964, CRS has served as a force for conciliation and peace in communities fraught with racial tension and discord. Over the years, the scope of CRS's work has expanded to address discrimination and hate crimes based on race, religion, national origin, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, and disability.

Our approach, though adaptive to the changing times, remains rooted in our core mission: to resolve conflict by engaging communities in difficult conversations through constructive dialogue. By doing so, we aim to strengthen the nation's resilience in the face of hate and discrimination.

Title X of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 authorized CRS to assist communities facing disputes, disagreements, or difficulties relating to allegations of discriminatory practices based on race, color, or national origin. CRS's mandate expanded in 2009 under the Matthew Shepard and James Byrd, Jr., Hate Crimes Prevention Act to include working with communities to prevent and respond to alleged hate crimes based on actual or perceived race, color, national origin, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, religion, or disability.

CRS is the only federal component dedicated to assisting state and local units of government, private and public organizations, law enforcement, and community groups resolve conflicts based on these aspects of identity.

The goals of all CRS programs are to help parties in conflict learn about different perspectives, share information about resources and best practices, and support communities as they identify and implement solutions.

CRS conciliation specialists are impartial and do not take sides among disputing parties. Instead, those involved develop their own mutually agreeable solutions. CRS's true value is often in its proactive community engagement—communities do not need to wait until a crime has been committed before reaching out for assistance.

While local officials or community leaders request CRS's services by contacting the regional office that supports their state, any community member can request CRS's services. All CRS services are free of charge, confidential, and provided on a voluntary basis.

About the COPS Office

The **Office of Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS Office)** is the component of the U.S. Department of Justice responsible for advancing the practice of community policing by the nation's state, local, territorial, and tribal law enforcement agencies through information and grant resources.

Community policing begins with a commitment to building trust and mutual respect between police and communities. It supports public safety by encouraging all stakeholders to work together to address our nation's crime challenges. When law enforcement and communities collaborate, they more effectively address underlying issues, change negative behavioral patterns, and allocate resources.

Rather than simply responding to crime, community policing focuses on preventing it through strategic problem-solving approaches based on collaboration. The COPS Office awards grants to hire community policing officers and support the development and testing of innovative policing strategies. COPS Office funding also provides training and technical assistance to community members and local government leaders, as well as all levels of law enforcement.

Since 1994, the COPS Office has been appropriated more than $20 billion to add community policing officers to the nation's streets, enhance crime fighting technology, support crime prevention initiatives, and provide training and technical assistance to help advance community policing. Other achievements include the following:

- To date, the COPS Office has funded the hiring of approximately 136,000 additional officers by more than 13,000 of the nation's 18,000 law enforcement agencies in both small and large jurisdictions.
- More than 800,000 law enforcement personnel, community members, and government leaders have been trained through COPS Office–funded training organizations and the COPS Training Portal.
- More than 1,000 agencies have received customized advice and peer-led technical assistance through the COPS Office Collaborative Reform Initiative Technical Assistance Center.
- To date, the COPS Office has distributed more than nine million topic-specific publications, training curricula, white papers, and resource CDs and flash drives.

The COPS Office also sponsors conferences, roundtables, and other forums focused on issues critical to law enforcement. COPS Office information resources, covering a wide range of community policing topics such as school and campus safety, violent crime, and officer safety and wellness, can be downloaded via the COPS Office's home page, https://cops.usdoj.gov.

Public trust in law enforcement and the legitimacy it confers are pillars of fair and effective policing. That trust may be built by consistent, constructive communication; it may be shaken by critical law enforcement actions, such as a use of force or an act or failure to act perceived as excessive or bias-motivated. These critical actions may affect law enforcement–community trust across the country, even in communities far from the originating incident. This guide, *Tools for Building Trust: Designing Law Enforcement–Community Dialogue and Reacting to the Use of Deadly Force and other Critical Law Enforcement Actions*, offers law enforcement agencies proactive ways to build trust and legitimacy through intentional law enforcement–community dialogue and identifies ideas and actions law enforcement might take reactively to draw on that accrued trust and rebuild relationships in the immediate aftermath of a critical law enforcement action. Leveraging social science research and case studies of existing law enforcement–community dialogue processes, this guide offers four considerations for the immediate aftermath of critical law enforcement actions as well as ideas for collaboratively developing and proactive, long-term dialogue and sustaining its outcomes.

COPS
Community Oriented Policing Services
U.S. Department of Justice

U.S. Department of Justice
Office of Community Oriented Policing Services
145 N Street NE
Washington, DC 20530

To obtain details about COPS Office programs, call the COPS Office Response Center at 800-421-6770.

Visit the COPS Office online at **cops.usdoj.gov**.

e022403078
Published 2024