● Policing 101

According to the FBI, there are more than 18,000 local police departments in the United States.[1] These departments are subject to different state, county, and city laws and codes, and they have different policies, practices, and officer training programs. There is no universal standard for the structure, size, or governance of police departments in the United States. With that understanding, this document only scratches the surface of policing and provides a broad overview of local policing on a variety of topics. It is meant to give community members a better understanding of how a police department may operate. For those who are interested in more detail on the field of policing, several publications are recommended at the end of this guide for further reading.

For many individuals, interactions with the police are rare. Therefore, the average individual may not be fully aware of how a police department functions or the roles and responsibilities of police officers in ensuring public safety. This guide provides information on the following topics:

- Overview of the Criminal Justice System
- Constitutional Policing
- Organization of a Police Department
- Officer Hiring
- Officer Training
- Officer Accountability and Discipline
- Police Unions
- Contacting Your Local Police Department
- Local Policing Priorities
- Standards of Suspicion and Proof
- Police Contacts – What to Expect
- Biased Policing
- Community Policing

These topics were identified by a working group of CRS officials, PERF staff members, police executives, community leaders, and other subject matter experts, to provide community members with a basic understanding of police departments and the criminal justice system.

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1. "Crime in the United States 2013." FBI. https://www.fbi.gov/about-us/cjis/ucr/crime-in-the-u.s/2013/crime-in-the-u.s.-2013/about-cius

CRS is neither affiliated with, nor endorses, the authors of any of the sources or recommended readings in this toolkit. The sources and recommended readings are provided solely for informational purposes.

Overview of the Criminal Justice System

In the United States, the criminal justice system has a number of separate branches with the common goal of public safety. Police departments are a part of the larger criminal justice system that includes prosecutors, courts, juvenile justice systems, and correctional agencies such as prisons and probation and parole departments. The effectiveness of the criminal justice system is determined by many different agencies on the local, state, and federal levels. Police are one of the most visible representations of the criminal justice system in the eyes of the public.

Police departments do not write laws; they are tasked with the responsibility of enforcing laws that are enacted by elected officials in the legislature and that are interpreted by the courts. Enforcing laws is just one of many different roles of the police. Other important roles include working with communities to prevent crimes and solve various "quality of life" problems, maintaining order, and conducting investigations.

Constitutional Policing

Police officials are responsible for performing their various roles and responsibilities in a way that protects everyone's constitutional rights. At its most basic level, constitutional policing can be described as "legal policing." This means that policing must be conducted in accordance with the parameters set by the U.S. Constitution, state constitutions, and the many court decisions that have defined in greater detail what the text of the Constitution means in terms of the everyday practices of policing.[2]

> "What we need to understand is that "constitutional policing" is both foundational and aspirational for the police. The Constitution, in other words, provides both the basic legal framework within which we operate and the larger ethos which we strive to embody."
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> —Policing consultant and retired Police Chief Noble Wray[3]

Police are entrusted with an enormous amount of authority, including the authority to use force, and it is important that the police undertake these tasks in a manner that is legal, and also is respectful to community members and is in keeping with local priorities. (For example, different communities may vary in their approach to certain issues, such as enforcement of federal immigration laws or drug decriminalization or legalization.) Police agencies must also promote transparency and accountability to demonstrate to the community that officers act fairly and impartially, and that there are systems in place to detect mistakes or abuses of police authority. Public trust and cooperation are key elements of effective policing, and are lost when police engage in unconstitutional or unprofessional conduct.

Next is an overview of the basic organization and operational components of a police department, followed by further discussion of the importance of community support and involvement in policing.

Organization of a Police Department

Police departments are organized in a hierarchical structure, usually with the Chief of Police as its executive leader (in some agencies, the top official's title is Commissioner or Superintendent).

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2. Constitutional Policing as a Cornerstone of Community Policing: A Report by the Police Executive Research Forum, April 2015 Office of Community Oriented Policing Services, U.S. Department of Justice: https://cops.usdoj.gov/RIC/Publications/cops-p324-pub.pdf

3. Ibid, p. 3

Depending on the size of the department, the number of divisions and/or units within an agency will vary. Most departments have at least two sections: a patrol side and an investigations side. Typically the public interacts most often with patrol officers.

For departments serving large geographic areas, the service area may be divided into geographic districts, each of which is policed by a number of officers led by a district commander (districts also are referred to as precincts, sectors, etc.). Community members should determine which district their neighborhood is in, and which district commander is in charge of that area. The district commander may be the most knowledgeable police official regarding the details of crime patterns and other issues in a given neighborhood.

Officer Hiring

Police hiring standards vary by state and agency. States typically have minimum standards for their local police agencies, often established by a Commission on Peace Officer Standards and Training (POST) or similar state agency. Usually, all police agencies within the state are required to meet the minimum standards; and some departments may require higher standards than the state minimums.

Basic requirements may include the following: U.S. citizenship, minimum/maximum age (usually the minimum is 21 years of age), education requirements (standards vary from high school diploma or its equivalency to four-year degree), valid driver's license, and/or minimum physical fitness requirements.

Factors that may disqualify an individual from becoming a police officer include: a felony conviction, certain misdemeanors, a conviction that involves domestic abuse or is sexual in nature, illegal drug use, a poor driving record, DWI/DUI conviction, and financial problems.

Officer Training

Generally, police recruits must complete a police academy program, as well as a period of field training (a type of "on-the-job training"), before becoming fully certified officers. Each state or each agency may have different training standards and training curricula. Some police departments also have their own training requirements for new recruits, going beyond the state minimums. Some agencies require officers to be certified before they are hired; other departments will send new hires to be trained. Larger agencies may have their own training academy, while smaller agencies may send officers to regional training academies. Usually, each state's POST or comparable agency establishes minimum training standards, and individual police agencies often provide further training in various topic areas.

On average, new police recruits are expected to complete more than 700 hours or 19 weeks of training,[4] although the actual number of training hours varies widely based on the specific jurisdiction and academy. For the most part, the academy training is classroom-based and excludes field training, which usually occurs after the academy. On average, approximately 60 hours are devoted to firearms training, and self-defense training is approximately 51 hours.[5]

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4. U.S. Department of Justice, Bureau of Justice Statistics. *State and Local Law Enforcement Training Academies, 2006*, by Brian A. Reaves, Ph.D. Revised 4/14/09. http://www.bjs.gov/content/pub/pdf/slleta06.pdf

  While the most recent BJS analysis of training academy data is nearly a decade old, a Police Executive Research Forum survey of police agencies in 2015 found a similar pattern in priorities during basic recruit training. http://www.policeforum.org/assets/ reengineeringsurvey.pdf

5. PERF's 2015 survey found that relatively few of the recruit and in-service training hours dedicated to use of force issues involve training on deescalating potential use-of-force situations.

Community policing training on average includes 11 hours of training on cultural diversity/human relations, 8 hours on basic strategies, and 8 hours on mediation skills/conflict management. Academy class sizes, on average, range from 18 to 29 recruits. Larger state academies have larger classes. State POST academies, for example, range from 25 to 48 recruits. Of the estimated 57,000 recruits who entered academies in 2005, approximately 49,000 recruits completed the course, for a completion rate of 86 percent.[6]

Some academies have a field training component, but training "in the field" is usually handled by individual law enforcement agencies. In this training, recruits are paired with a training officer, whom they accompany on patrol. This training gives recruits the opportunity to see their academy training in real-life situations before they become full-fledged officers.

In addition to recruit training, full-time officers usually receive ongoing training throughout their careers. Roll-call[7] training and in-service training provide officers with policy updates and "refresher" instruction on topics learned in the academy, as well as training on new strategies or topics and updated tactics adopted by the agency. Also, upon promotion, or when officers are appointed or assigned to a specialized position such as narcotics enforcement or sexual assault investigations, they usually receive additional training.

Officer Accountability and Discipline

Police departments should have formal mechanisms through which members of the public can lodge complaints against officers. Once received, complaints are generally investigated by an Internal Affairs Unit or similar entity. In some departments, relatively minor complaints may be investigated by the officer's supervisor. In some situations, an investigation may involve an external investigator.

Depending on the nature of the complaint, investigations can be criminal (if the officer broke the law or violated an individual's rights), administrative (if the officer violated department policy), or both. Upon the conclusion of an investigation, the chief is usually responsible for the final *administrative* disposition of the case. Typically, there are at least four possible outcomes to an internal investigation:

1. If a complaint is determined to be "unfounded," it is deemed a false allegation.

2. If the officer is "exonerated," it means that the act in question did occur, but it was lawful and within policy.

3. If a complaint is "not sustained," it means that that there was insufficient evidence to determine whether the allegation did or did not occur.

4. If a complaint is "sustained," it indicates that there was enough evidence to prove that the allegation did occur.

When a complaint is sustained, it is typically the responsibility of the chief to determine what disciplinary actions to take. Discipline can involve punitive measures or can be addressed through additional training. Employees are able to formally respond to the final determination and/or request leniency at the same time. In some states, laws prevent the police department from disclosing the discipline handed down to an officer to the public.

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6. U.S. Department of Justice, Bureau of Justice Statistics. *State and Local Law Enforcement Training Academies, 2006*, by Brian A. Reaves Ph.D. Revised 4/14/09. http://www.bjs.gov/content/pub/pdf/slleta06.pdf

7. "Roll call" refers to a briefing of all officers with the on-duty supervisor at the beginning of a shift.

In many departments, the police chief's decision to terminate an officer's employment or impose other discipline are not the last word; the chief may be overruled by various oversight boards or arbitration systems. This can be a source of frustration for chiefs, who have ultimate responsibility for officers' actions but do not always have final authority to impose discipline.

Police Unions

As with many other occupations, labor unions are a critical factor to consider when discussing police departments. Through the use of collective bargaining and arbitration, unions play a role in the formation of departmental policies and the disciplinary process, as well as other elements of the operations of a police department, including salary and benefits negotiations.

As noted above, police unions often negotiate rules creating an arbitration process that allows officers to appeal disciplinary actions. In some circumstances, this may result in reinstatement of officers who were fired by the police chief for alleged misconduct.

Contacting Your Local Police Department

Residents often have issues they would like to discuss with their local police department. There are usually multiple ways to contact the local police. For example, police departments often hold community meetings in which the police interact with the public, such as neighborhood watch meetings, problem-solving meetings to address specific community concerns, or general community relations meetings. Additionally, the public can telephone or visit their police headquarters and/or district stations. For the most part, front desk attendants will be able to assist community members or direct them to other resources.

Police Department Websites

A police department's website can be an invaluable source of information about the department. Due to variances in funding and resources, agencies may differ in the amount of information they provide on their websites.

Information provided on a department's website may include:
- Crime data
- Community policing/crime prevention programs
- Community events
- Annual reports
- Department press releases
- Information on the complaint process
- Contact information for various bureaus and police officials.

In addition to websites, many police departments are using social media, especially Twitter and Facebook, to connect with their communities and to disseminate information to the public. Social media accounts can be used to transmit traffic alerts, crime alerts, and other information.

Community Liaisons

Some police departments incorporate liaison officers or units in order to increase the department's outreach to community members, and perhaps to specific populations. Examples of populations that police departments may designate for specific outreach liaisons include youths, seniors, faith leaders,

and African American, Latino, Asian, deaf and hard of hearing, and lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) communities. Liaison officers assigned to these units are usually members of that community, or have a strong understanding of the community's culture, and/or can speak the language if English is not the first language for many members of the community.

Liaison officers can serve many roles in a police department. They are frequently tasked with assisting officers who respond to crimes committed by or against these community members. They can be used as translators if victims, witnesses, or suspects do not speak English easily. These officers may conduct cultural competency and sensitivity trainings during in-service training or to academy recruit classes. They may also conduct awareness training to community members who wish to know more about the police department or crime trends.

Liaison officers can be an important resource for involving residents and business owners in addressing public safety issues in the community. These officers can help build relationships and overcome barriers to trust and communication with community members who would otherwise not be willing to talk to the police.

Local Policing Priorities

Local policing priorities and specific crime strategies can be influenced by several different factors. The police chief and the "culture" of the department can influence patrol and community policing[8] practices. Mayors, council members, community leaders, and other elected officials can also influence what departments consider as local policing priorities.

Ultimately, community members also influence policing priorities. Daily interactions between officers and community members may determine the specific issues that an individual officer pays attention to while on duty. Repeated complaints made by residents to the department could draw attention to a community issue, neighborhood nuisance, or a problem with department policy or practice. Once made aware of a problem, police supervisors can instruct officers to pay special attention to a specific area or issue until the problem is solved. If the problem is related to policy or practice, department leaders can take the steps necessary to address the issue. Finally, different communities often have different views about certain policing issues, such as the extent to which the local police should be involved in addressing quality-of-life issues, or supporting federal agencies with responsibility for immigration enforcement. These differing views can be a point of contention in communities, and sometimes put the police in the middle of various community preferences for police services.

Prioritizing Calls for Service

There are several factors that influence the priority and police response time for emergency calls for service. When someone contacts the emergency dispatch center, a call taker will speak with the individual and try to determine the nature and scope of the emergency. The call taker will try to determine the time, location, and other basic information to identity the type of response that is needed and the priority of the event. Many factors are considered, such as whether a violent crime or a property crime has been committed or is being committed, the seriousness of the crime, whether anyone at the scene is in danger, whether anyone needs medical attention, whether any weapons are involved, whether an offender is still at the scene, whether the incident is domestic in nature, and whether anyone involved is experiencing a mental health crisis. Based on this information, the call taker is

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8. Community policing is a law enforcement philosophy that focuses on community partnerships, problem-solving, and organizational transformation. Community policing is discussed in more detail in the next section. Additional information is also available on the website of the Office of Community Oriented Policing Services, U.S. Department of Justice: http://www.cops.usdoj.gov/Default.asp?Item=34

trained to assign a priority to the call and forward that information to a police or fire dispatcher for the most appropriate assignment.

Emergency calls are not necessarily dispatched on a "first-come, first-served" basis. Police, fire, and medical personnel will be dispatched sooner to an unfolding or more severe incident than to lower-priority incidents, even if the lower-priority incident happened first. Response times are also based on the number of pending calls. Police will respond more quickly to a call for service if there are fewer emergency calls pending. Response time can vary based on the time of day, number of units available, etc.

Standards of Suspicion

The Fourth Amendment of the Constitution of the United States governs the standards for reasonableness of search and seizures. Its requirements have been further clarified by court decisions (case law). Following is an overview of basic standards of suspicion used in policing:

Mere Suspicion: Only a suspicion or "gut feeling" by an officer that someone is engaged in criminal behavior. Any contacts that officers make based on mere suspicion cannot involve detention or custodial arrest. The officer is free to initiate a voluntary conversation and the community member is free to walk away.

Reasonable Suspicion: An objectively justifiable suspicion for believing that a person may be involved in criminal activity. This level must be based on more than just a hunch or gut feeling; it must include specific facts and circumstances that an officer can articulate. Once this level of suspicion is reached, an officer may stop, detain, question, or conduct a frisk of someone for weapons in some circumstances. An officer may not conduct a full search or make an arrest at this level of suspicion.[9]

Probable Cause: Before police can make an arrest, conduct a search in some circumstances, or apply for a search or arrest warrant, an officer must have probable cause to believe that a crime has been committed or a person has been involved in a committed crime. The "totality of the circumstances" must be considered in order to determine if probable cause exists.[10]

Sources of information that police officers may use to satisfy these standards could include information identified in the course of their duties or observations of a person's actions and demeanor; and personal knowledge, training, witnesses, and professional experiences, among other sources.

Police Contacts – What to Expect

As mentioned in the previous section, police officers may initiate an official encounter with individuals based on mere suspicion, reasonable suspicion, or probable cause. The standard of suspicion determines what an officer is legally allowed to do in a police encounter.

When an officer stops a pedestrian, or a driver during a traffic stop, the officer will usually ask the individual for his or her name and a form of personal identification. The officer may use this information to determine whether the person is named as a suspect in a police report, whether there are any warrants for that individual's arrest, or whether the person is a suspect in a crime.

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9. See, for example, *Terry v. Ohio*, 392 U.S. 1, 27(1968) . http://caselaw.findlaw.com/us-supreme-court/392/1.html

10. See, for example, *United States v. Cortez*, 449 U.S. 411 (1981), and *Illinois v. Gates*, 462 U.S. 213, 232 (1983)

To conduct any type of search, the police must operate within the law. This means that an officer must have a warrant, a legally-approved exception to the warrant requirement, or the person's consent. Some of the exceptions for searching community members include obtaining consent to search or searching a person incident to a lawful arrest.

If the police want to search a residence or business, they must obtain the voluntary consent of an individual responsible for the property or the property owner, or must apply for a search warrant, or have a legally-approved exception to the warrant requirement. Exceptions to the warrant requirement may be that there were exigent circumstances that allowed an officer to enter a home or business (hearing a call for help, for example), or that evidence was in plain view of an officer lawfully present inside private property. Search warrants must specify with particularity what the officer will be searching for and its approximate location.[11]

Resources for Additional Guidance

Additional guidance on what to expect during a police contact is available online. For example, the ACLU provides information on basic Bill of Rights protections at: https://www.aclu.org/know-your-rights/what-do-if-youre-stopped-police-immigration-agents-or-fbi

Similar resources are available from other sources, and your local police department may have its own guide to police-community contacts available online or in hard copy.

Biased Policing

In 1994, the U.S. Congress passed a law giving the Department of Justice authority to investigate state and local law enforcement agencies that it believes may have unconstitutional policies or may be engaging in unconstitutional patterns or practices of misconduct that violate federal rights.[12]

Often this takes the form of biased policing, which may include bias based on race, ethnicity, gender, sexual-orientation, and/or national origin.[13] Biased policing often is a key issue in DOJ investigations of local police agencies.[14]

In policing, biases may lead to racial profiling, an unconstitutional practice. According to the National Institute of Justice (NIJ), racial profiling by law enforcement is commonly defined as a practice that targets people for suspicion of crime based on their race, ethnicity, religion, or national origin.[15] When communities perceive the police to be engaged in biased policing behaviors, their trust in the police is damaged.

In an effort to improve relationships with communities and to improve the practice of policing, various agencies and organizations are working to prevent biased policing, especially racial profiling:

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11. See, for example, *Groh v. Ramirez*, 540 U.S. 551 (2004).
12. The Violent Crime Control and Law Enforcement Act of 1994, 42 U.S.C. § 14141
13. "Special Litigation Section, The Department of Justice, accessed on October 26, 2015, http://www.justice.gov/crt/conduct-law-enforcement-agencies
14. *Civil Rights Investigations of Local Police: Lessons Learned*, Critical Issues in Policing Series (Washington, DC: Police Executive Research Forum, 2013), http://www.policeforum.org/assets/docs/Critical_Issues_Series/civil rights investigations of local police - lessons learned 2013.pdf.
15. National Institute of Justice (NIJ). NIJ Homepage. Race, Trust and Police Legitimacy, Racial Profiling. January 10, 2013 http://www.nij.gov/topics/law-enforcement/legitimacy/pages/racial-profiling.aspx

Department of Justice's Civil Rights Division (CRT): When it is likely that a department is engaging in a pattern of practices that constitute violations of federal rights, the Civil Rights Division is able to investigate and pursue litigation. Litigation efforts mandate the reform of the department's policies and practices with the aim of ending the constitutional violations.

Department of Justice's Community Relations Service (CRS): CRS works to reduce racial bias in a variety of ways, including facilitating discussions of perceived inequities and bias-based policing in a community and providing training to police departments on methods of addressing and reducing bias.[16]

The Department of Justice's Office of Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS Office): The COPS Office delivers technical assistance to police departments through its Collaborative Reform program. This program identifies police departments that are in crisis and delivers targeted assistance to improve policies, practices, and community relationships. With this program, the COPS Office can address racial bias within a police department and offer resources to prevent future biased policing and racial profiling.[17]

Training: Many organizations and police departments use trainings to address and prevent racial profiling. Cultural competency training educates police officers on cultural differences and sensitivities to be aware of when interacting with minority and/or immigrant communities.[18] The goal of this training is to provide police officers with information to make interactions with the community more positive and effective. Additionally, training that specifically addresses biases and racial profiling practices has become more common as police departments seek to build better relationships with their communities. "Fair and impartial policing" training uses the science of bias to help police officers identify and overcome implicit, or unconscious, biases that can result in biased policing and racial profiling.[19]

Why Are Police-Community Relationships So Important?

Positive police-community relationships are essential to maintaining public safety and order. These relationships help to reduce fear and biases, and build mutual understanding and trust between the police and community. The importance of police-community relations to modern policing was first articulated with the "Nine Principles of Policing," made famous by Sir Robert Peel and the London Metropolitan Police Department in 1829.[20] These principles are still widely accepted as the foundation for professional policing.

Peel's Nine Principles of Policing

1. The basic mission for which the police exist is to prevent crime and disorder.

2. The ability of the police to perform their duties is dependent upon public approval of police actions.

3. Police must secure the willing cooperation of the public in voluntary observance of the law to be

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16. "Race," The Department of Justice, Community Relations Service, accessed on October 26, 2015, http://www.justice.gov/crs/what-we-do/race
17. "Collaborative Reform," Office of Community Oriented Policing Service, accessed on October 26, 2015, http://www.cops.usdoj.gov/Default.asp?Item=2807
18. Larry E. Sullivan, ed. *Encyclopedia of Law Enforcement*, (Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications, Inc, 2005): 127-130
19. "Fair and Impartial Policing," *Fair and Impartial Policing*, accessed October, 26, 2015, http://www.fairimpartialpolicing.com/
20. Peel's principles reportedly originated with the "Act for Improving the Police in and near the Metropolis," 10 Geo.4, C.44 (1829).

able to secure and maintain the respect of the public.

4. The degree of cooperation of the public that can be secured diminishes proportionately to the necessity of the use of physical force.

5. Police seek and preserve public favor not by catering to the public opinion but by constantly demonstrating absolute impartial service to the law.

6. Police use physical force to the extent necessary to secure observance of the law or to restore order only when the exercise of persuasion, advice, and warning is found to be insufficient.

7. Police, at all times, should maintain a relationship with the public that gives reality to the historic tradition that the police are the public and the public are the police; the police being only members of the public who are paid to give full-time attention to duties which are incumbent on every citizen in the interests of community welfare and existence.

8. Police should always direct their action strictly towards their functions and never appear to usurp the powers of the judiciary.

9. The test of police efficiency is the absence of crime and disorder, not the visible evidence of police action in dealing with it.[21]

Community Policing

Community policing is a policing philosophy based on three core components: community partnerships, organizational transformation, and problem-solving.[22]

The COPS Office describes these components as follows:

- *Community Partnerships*: Collaborative partnerships between the law enforcement agency and the individuals and organizations they serve to develop solutions to problems and increase trust in police;

- *Organizational Transformation*: The alignment of organizational management, structure, personnel, and information systems to support community partnerships and proactive problem solving; and

- *Problem-Solving:* The process of engaging in the proactive and systematic examination of identified problems to develop and evaluate effective responses.[23]

Community policing is more than a program; it is an organizational philosophy that recognizes that the community's support is a critical factor in the ability of the police to effectively address crime. The relationship between the police and the communities they serve determines whether or not police will have community support, and these relations are strengthened or weakened by every police-community interaction.

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21. Sir Robert Peel's Nine Principles of Policing" *New York Times,* April 15, 2014, accessed July 23, 2015, http://www.nytimes.com/2014/ 04/16/nyregion/sir-robert-peels-nine-principles-of-policing.html

22. *About,* COPS Office Website. (2014). Washington, DC: Office of Community Oriented Policing Services. http://www.cops.usdoj.gov/ Default.asp?Item=35

23. *Community Policing Defined,* (Washington, DC: Office of Community Oriented Policing Services, 2014). https:// cops.usdoj.gov/RIC/Publications/cops-p157-pub.pdf

> Policing must be done in a manner that is lawful and constitutional, but also in a manner that maintains the consent of the people. We have to ensure that when we deal with crime and other issues that negatively impact people's lives, we do so in a way that is consistent with the wishes of the people who are most affected by crime.
>
> —Camden County, NJ Police Chief Scott Thomson[24]

Positive police-community relationships contribute to increased community perceptions of the legitimacy of the police to enforce the law.[25] Perceptions of police legitimacy impact the willingness of community members to support policing strategies and cooperate with police directives on a daily basis and during an emergency.

In short, the police need the community's help in maintaining order just as the community needs fair, just, and effective law enforcement. This collaboration and cooperation improve public safety and officer safety.

Since trust and mutual respect between police and the communities they serve are critical to maintaining positive police-community relations, many police agencies establish programs such as ride-alongs or citizens' police academies to facilitate positive interactions with the community.

Ride-Alongs

Police ride-along programs allow civilians to accompany officers during their tour of duty in a police vehicle. Ride-alongs may be of interest to individuals considering a future career as a police officer, or to anyone interested in learning more about law enforcement. These programs give civilians a better understanding of day-to-day police operations.

Citizens' Police Academies

Citizen's Police Academies are another avenue for civilians to learn more about police operations. These courses provide an opportunity for citizens to learn about various aspects of the police department, such as training, policies, investigations, and organizational structure. Citizens' academies allow for interactions between police and the community in a neutral setting, so the police can also gain a greater understanding of the views and concerns of their residents.

The importance of community policing and programs that support this approach to policing are discussed in more detail in other documents in this series, which are available via the CRS Resource Center on the CRS website: http://www.justice.gov/crs/resource-center.

Conclusion

This "Policing 101" guide is intended to provide community members with a broad overview of how a police department operates, the roles and responsibilities of police officers, how police agencies fit into the broader criminal justice system, typical procedures regarding police officer hiring and training, accountability mechanisms and disciplinary procedures, basic legal issues, and strategies for

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24. Ibid, p. 1
25. See "Legitimacy and Procedural Justice: A New Element of Police Leadership." Police Executive Research Forum, 2014. http://www.policeforum.org/assets/docs/Free_Online_Documents/Leadership/legitimacy and procedural justice - a new element of police leadership.pdf

preventing bias in policing. This guide also discusses the importance of close relationships between police agencies and the communities they serve, and other issues.

Community members are encouraged to reach out to their local police departments for information about local community policing initiatives and opportunities for developing or improving police-community relationships.

Resources for Further Reading:

1. Goldstein, Herman. Problem Oriented Policing. New York: McGraw-Hill Inc., 1990

2. Police Executive Research Forum, 2014. "Community Policing: The Past, Present, and Future." *Police Executive Research Forum and The Annie E. Casey Foundation, Washington D.C.*

3. Walker, Samuel and Carol Archbold. The New World of Police Accountability. Second edition. Los Angeles: SAGE, 2014 (See additional work by Samuel Walker at http://www.samuelwalker.net)