

CRITICAL ISSUES IN LAW ENFORCEMENT

Decreasing Crime By Increasing Involvement: A Law Enforcement Guidebook For Building Relations In Multi-Ethnic Communities



Portland State
UNIVERSITY



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CONTENTS

| | |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----|
| Contents..... | 3 |
| Acknowledgements | 4 |
| Introduction | 5 |
| Public Perceptions Of Law Enforcement In Oregon | 16 |
| Assesing Readiness For Community Outreach Efforts | 26 |
| Mayoral/City/County Manager And Commissioner/Council Support | 34 |
| The Role Of The Media | 39 |
| Identifying The Populations Of Focus..... | 47 |
| Overcoming/Understanding The Language & Literacy Barriers | 49 |
| Understanding Cultural Norms | 54 |
| Identifying The Best Strategies For Initial Contact/Communication..... | 58 |
| Strategies For In-Depth Conversations And Outreach Efforts With The Community..... | 60 |
| Evaluation Progress | 65 |
| Sample Step-By Step Model For Community Outreach..... | 70 |
| Conclusion..... | 74 |
| Reference List | 75 |

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This booklet is the first “Police-Community Relations” resource that the State of Oregon Law Enforcement Contacts Policy and Data Review Committee (LECC) has undertaken with support from the Criminal Justice Policy Institute (CJPRI) at Portland State University.

As the name of the booklet suggests, it provides practical information and guidance on the most significant barriers facing law enforcement officers: police-community relationships.

This booklet is about issues brought forth by LECC board members, the law enforcement community, prior scholarship, community groups and organizations, and the City of Portland Office of Equity and Human Rights. Numerous communities across Oregon are examining what they need from their police departments and many police departments are looking for strategies to better connect with the communities that they serve.

On behalf of CJPRI and the LECC, I would like to thank all of our members who provided information and expertise for this booklet. All of our efforts depend on the strong support we receive from staff and board members.



Many thanks go to the LECC Board Members and to the following for their work in the development, writing and editing of this booklet: Emma Covelli - Project Manager with CJPRI, Damon Isiah Turner of Know Agenda Consulting, Angie Hedrick - Community Relations Analyst with the Salem Police Department Crime Prevention Unit; and Portland State University CJPRI Graduate Research Assistants Lauren Brown, Jonathan Dabney, and John Lehr. I would also like to thank the numerous law enforcement officers and community members that contributed to this book through interviews and the participation in community meetings. This booklet would not have been possible without the contributions of diverse viewpoints and experiences.

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INTRODUCTION



In 2010, Oregon’s Governor-appointed Law Enforcement Contacts Policy and Data Review Committee (LECC), through its partnership with the CJPRI, formed a partnership with the Salem Police Department to collaborate on creating this guidebook as a resource for Oregon law enforcement agencies. The booklet was created with the realization and understanding that law enforcement agencies have many demands, competing priorities, and limited resources with which to meet their goals. This resource is intended to assist agencies that would like to improve upon their current strategies for connecting with the ethnic communities they serve by providing:

- Information on key elements of improving police-citizen relations.
- Examples of specific Oregon law enforcement agency efforts. (case illustrations are provided throughout this guidebook)
- Information for finding resources for your own efforts.

Why Building Police-Community Relations is Critical for Oregon

The state of Oregon, like its contiguous west coast states, has continued to increase in population decade after decade. While the U.S. population increased by 9% from 2000 to 2010, Oregon's population increased by 12%. Oregon has also expanded steadily in the various demographic categories of race, ethnicity, and national origin.

According to the Oregon Office of Economic Analysis, as of 2010, 11.7% of Oregonians were either Hispanic or Latino and 21.5% of Oregonians belonged to either an underrepresented ethnic group or race. The Pew Hispanic Center lists Oregon and Washington as two of seven states with the largest Hispanic population growth; with each having a more than 130% increase in the last decade. The Coalition of Communities of Color report (2010) states that the 9th largest urban Native American population in the United States resides in Multnomah County. In addition, the Immigrant Refugee and Community Organization (IRCO) states that Oregon is the 11th largest refugee recipient state in the nation, taking in approximately 1,200 refugees every year. While formal counts are unavailable, the Somali Community Services Coalition of Oregon estimates that the Somali population within the state of Oregon has grown to approximately 8,000 and that approximately 2,500 have moved to Oregon within the last two years (2009 – 2011).

Understanding Our History

Oregon has an extensive history of race exclusion in its constitution, laws, and business practices that is not known to many of Oregon's communities and citizens.

A few examples include:

In the 1800s:

- **1844** – Slavery was prohibited by Oregon's Provisional Government; however, the government also enacted measures forcing Blacks to leave the state or be whipped twice a year.
- **1850** - Up to 320 free acres were granted to White males. The enactment prohibited blacks from being granted acreage.
- **1862** - Oregon added an extra tax - the *Annual Poll Tax* - for only residents of color.
- While the U.S. government was implementing laws of equality into the U.S. Constitution, such as the 14th Amendment in 1868 (granting citizenship by birth and ensuring due process) and the 15th Amendment in 1870 (providing all citizens the right to vote), Oregon's legislature refused to incorporate or support this progress towards equal rights.

In the 1900s:

- **1919 & 1923** - Laws and business practices were created to restrict and in some cases prevent people of color from purchasing property. The Portland Board of Realty's Code of Ethics prohibited Portland realtors and bankers from selling property to people of color in neighborhoods primarily consisting of White home owners. First generation Japanese Americans were also prevented from owning land due to the Alien Land Law.
- **1948** - Additional codes for realtors were developed directing realtors to "never introduce into a neighborhood members of any race or nationality whose presence will be detrimental to property values".

While in the late 1900s, Oregon made many great strides in eliminating racial discrimination in its constitution, laws, and business practices, it was not until 1999 when the Oregon state legislature formally acknowledged past discriminatory practices; it was not until 2002 that language universally acknowledged as race- exclusionary was removed from the Oregon Constitution.

It is important to note, that while discriminatory laws were passed by the state legislature, law enforcement was always charged with enforcing those laws. Consequently, much of current suspicion and fear on the part of some community members in regards to law enforcement is greatly impacted by historical policy and legislation. Therefore, although much improvement has been made in recent decades in regards to state legislation, policy, and relations between law enforcement and the communities it serves, what some officers may at times experience when interacting with ethnic communities is a legacy of the feelings and impact generated by a historical legacy of race-exclusionary policy, discrimination, and disparate treatment.

Contextually, although past Oregon legislation and policy may not have been a direct mandate of Oregon law enforcement agencies, past government practices impacted the lives of many still living in Oregon communities today. In turn, this fact can and does impact some individuals' perspectives in regards to the level of trust and confidence in Oregon government agencies and employees in general.

Understanding Our Present

Oregon's evolving demographics provide both opportunities and challenges for all levels of government. One such challenge is the provision of public safety services to populations who may or may not have an understanding of, or trust in, the government (federal, state, county and city) that provides those services. However, law enforcement, and its other partners in public safety, have the daunting task of keeping all communities safe. Community safety includes working with underrepresented ethnic communities that may or may not understand the majority culture's norms, language or the U.S. criminal justice system.

The Law Enforcement Contacts Policy and Data Review Committee (LECC) and the Criminal Justice Policy Research Institute (CJPRI) at Portland State University recognize Oregon's changing climate and the importance of strong collaborative working relationships between community members and the police for sustaining an effective and fair justice system.

The LECC is a statewide committee appointed by the Governor of Oregon that is charged with the duties of assisting Oregon law enforcement agencies with stop data collection and analysis efforts, improving community relations, training efforts, and policy recommendations that pertain to ensuring racial equality in Oregon law enforcement. The original charge of the LECC was based on the legislative finding that state and local law enforcement agencies can perform their missions more effectively when all Oregonians have trust and confidence that law enforcement stops and other contacts with individuals are free from inequitable and unlawful discrimination based on race, color or national origin, and that data collection can establish a factual foundation for measuring progress in eliminating discrimination. The LECC's current efforts focus on providing the Tactical Ethics: Perspectives on Profiling training program to Oregon law enforcement, assisting agencies with stop data collection and analysis needs, monitoring public perceptions of Oregon law enforcement, and researching ways for improving the relations between police and their minority communities. Since 2007, the Criminal Justice Policy Research Institute (CJPRI) at Portland State University has had the role of providing staff administration for the LECC.

The Benefits and Importance of Community Outreach to Underrepresented Community Members

Positive police-community relations are critical for effective crime prevention, case investigation, officer safety, and successful police-citizen interactions. While many police agencies have made efforts to connect with their general community through neighborhood association meetings, citizen police academies, advisory councils, fairs, and public education and engagement programs, such as Neighborhood Watch or National Night Out, specific, targeted efforts need to be made to successfully reach out to underrepresented communities and ethnic communities. Building relationships to these populations, in addition to the public in general, is critical for achieving the following goals of community outreach:

Increase citizen willingness to report crimes to the police. According to the most recent National Crime Victimization Survey (NCVS) data (2008), only 40% of property crimes and 47% of violent crimes were reported to the police (BJS).

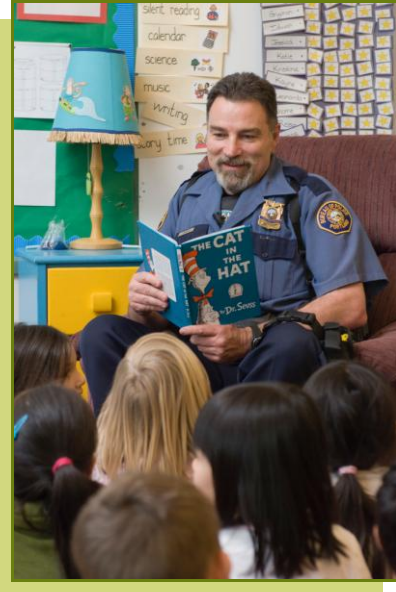
Increase citizen willingness to report suspect information to the police. Of all crimes known to the police in 2008, only 17% of property crimes and 45% of violent crimes were cleared by arrest (UCR).

Build trust and familiarity with community members. A majority of Americans do not have to experience face-to-face interaction with a police officer in a given year. In 2008, it was estimated that only “17% of U.S. residents age 16 or older had a face-to-face contact with a police officer” (BJS, 2011). Therefore, views of, and trust in, the police will also be shaped by other factors, such as the media and vicarious experiences (Weitzer & Tuch, 2005, p. 283).

Create and expand broader opportunities in which to engage community members. Much of citizen contacts with the police occur involuntarily or during times of emotion and need.

Officer Safety. Increased trust can positively contribute to relationships that can provide increased intel that is shared on criminal activity, trends and/or ideas regarding the potential assault or distraction of police, and/or attempts to manipulate the criminal justice system

Community outreach can provide citizens with a different type of law enforcement experience which can facilitate changing citizen perception of police. For example:



- Some of the negative consequences of proactive policing can be offset. Higher concentrations of proactive policing often occur in areas with higher crime or calls for service. Often, these areas also have more people of color, which may lead to increased distrust due to perceived increased law enforcement presence.
 - Long term relationships can develop with important stakeholders. The crisis atmosphere that typically pervades police response to calls for service is not conducive to this.
- History and culture may also lead certain residents to experience police presence as an invasion. This can be changed.

Ensure that your entire community understands:

- The state laws and local ordinances that affect them.
- Their roles and responsibilities in crime control and interacting with the police.
- The services and resources your agency offers – as well as its limitations.
- Any service or budgeting issues or limitations.
- Your agency's policies and procedures, including:
 - Duties and responsibilities of police personnel.

- Policies and procedures for traffic stops, including acceptable forms of identification.
- How to report a crime, file a complaint, or provide an officer commendation.
- The role of your domestic violence advocates

Effective relationship-building can foster an understanding of expectations on both sides and can have the potential of pro-actively addressing potential issues of confusion, misunderstanding, misconception, and rumor.



The Challenges of Community Outreach to Underrepresented Ethnic Communities

While it is clear that both the police and community benefit from having a positive collaborative relationship, efforts for improving these relations can come with some challenges. These challenges may include, but are not limited to, the following:

- **Developing or maintaining clear messaging and communication with the communities that your agency serves.**

- **Differences in languages spoken and varied literacy levels within the community.**
 - **Cultural and ethnic norms that may conflict with behavioral expectations of law enforcement.**
 - **Obtaining resources for developing or maintaining community outreach efforts.**
 - **Planning effective outreach strategies.**
 - **Identifying and collaborating with other stakeholders.**
 - **Public perceptions.**
 - **Lack of public trust in the role and purpose of law enforcement.** Some communities of color may view the role of law enforcement as an instrument for oppressing their community members or as only a service for the dominant racial group.
 - **Misconceptions about law enforcement policies, procedures, and capabilities.**
 - **Fear of law enforcement and local government.** These may be general fears of law enforcement or specific fears, such as having a concern that reporting a crime or seeking public safety assistance may bring attention to their own or family member's immigration status.
 - **Agency organizational culture.** There may be an intrinsic institutional resistance within an agency of viewing community outreach as an essential aspect of the role of law enforcement.



- **Translating the purpose, benefits and strategy to the rest of the agency.** There may be support for community outreach of varying degrees within different elements and ranks of a particular agency. However, there may be challenges of garnering support within some ranks if this value is not instituted from the command staff to all other ranks in a clear, effective, and consistent manner.
- **Attaining support from the local governing entity and the agency.** Agreements may be needed to obtain clear understanding of the benefits to the overall livability and safety of the community.

- **Enhance traditional strategies creatively.** An example of a traditional strategy would be to schedule a presentation at a neighborhood association meeting. However, also consider holding presentations at places of worship that serve underrepresented communities, educational institutions, and non-profits and community groups that serve young people. Be creative about budgetary resources and potential partners with the same relationship-building mission.

Although there are challenges with starting up or re-evaluating community outreach efforts, many departments across the country are recognizing the importance of these efforts and finding ways to surpass these barriers. In addition, regardless of whatever approaches a particular department has attempted in the past, it is important to note that these must be continuing and ongoing efforts. The goal of this guidebook is to assist agencies in confronting and overcoming the challenges of building relations with ethnic communities more quickly, appropriately, and effectively while at the same time conserving individual agency resources.

This guidebook provides information on eleven (11) key components of successful community relations building in Oregon, as identified by CJPRI, Salem PD, and the LECC. These key components are:

1. Understanding Oregon public perceptions of law enforcement.
2. Assessing a department's readiness for community outreach efforts.
3. Having mayoral, city manager, city council, and/or county commissioner support.
4. Having inner department support and organization.
5. Identifying the sub-communities on which to focus.
6. Overcoming and understanding language and literacy levels.
7. Understanding the impact of cultural norms.
8. Identifying the best strategy for initial contact or communication with a particular community.
9. Understanding the role of the media and using media communications effectively.
10. Identifying the best strategy for in-depth conversation or events with a particular community.
11. Evaluating your progress.

This guidebook is intended to be a flexible tool and should not be interpreted as an all encompassing prescription for all agencies or every circumstance. Agencies new to building community relations, specifically with underrepresented communities, are encouraged to read this book in its entirety. Agencies with prior experience and/or who already engage in community relations may wish to read only certain sections.

PUBLIC PERCEPTIONS OF LAW ENFORCEMENT IN OREGON



Acknowledging the public's perceptions, fears, and concerns is a critical first step to building stronger relationships. This can aid an agency in deciding which populations to focus efforts toward, and what strategies to use for outreach. It can be useful for determining whether efforts need to be focused more on public education, an internal review of an agency's practices, or avenues that provide more in-depth dialogue between the police and the community. Law enforcement officers, who often encounter people in stressful or crisis situations, may also benefit from having a broader perspective on the public's perceptions as well as what has shaped these perceptions.

Important to note: While one may not always be able to control public perception of the police in certain communities, if trying to understand the public and these particular communities is a goal, then one cannot simply ignore if a particular perception of law enforcement exists – even if the perception in question one may disagree with. Simply recognizing, and acknowledging this context when engaging in community relationship building efforts can help a great deal.

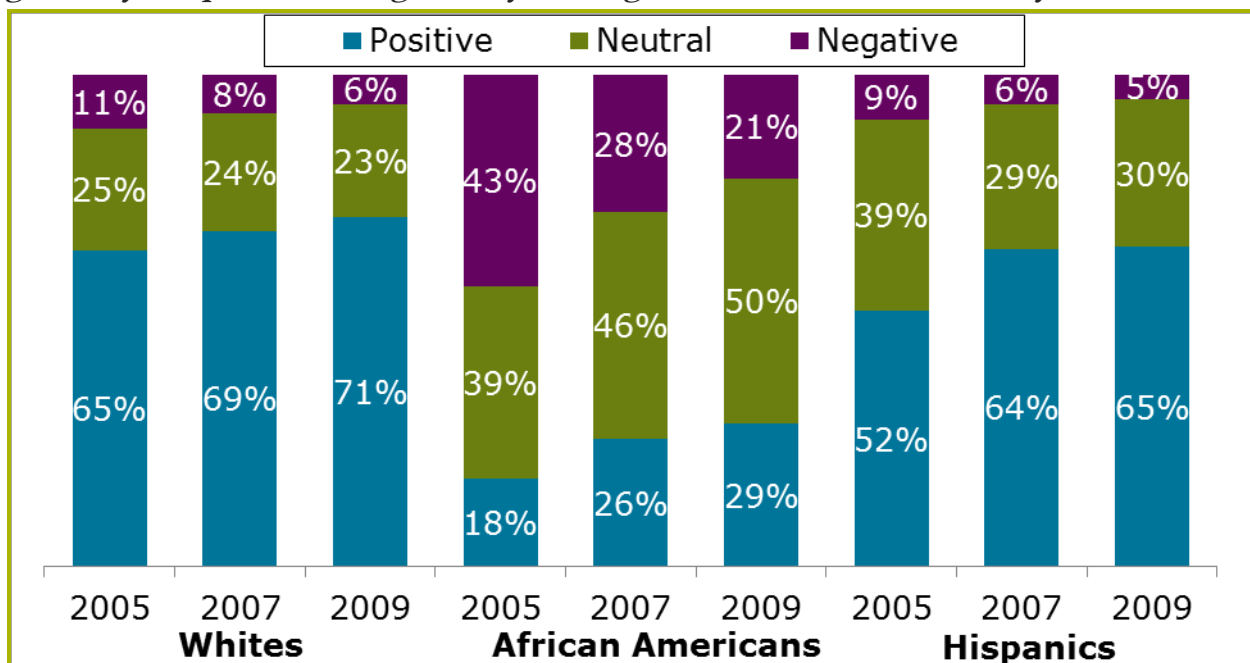
Oregon Public Perceptions of Oregon Law Enforcement

For several years, the Oregon Law Enforcement Contacts Committee (LECC) has been tracking Oregonians' perceptions of Oregon law enforcement through statewide surveys. The following is a brief overview of these findings.

General Feelings about Oregon Police Officers

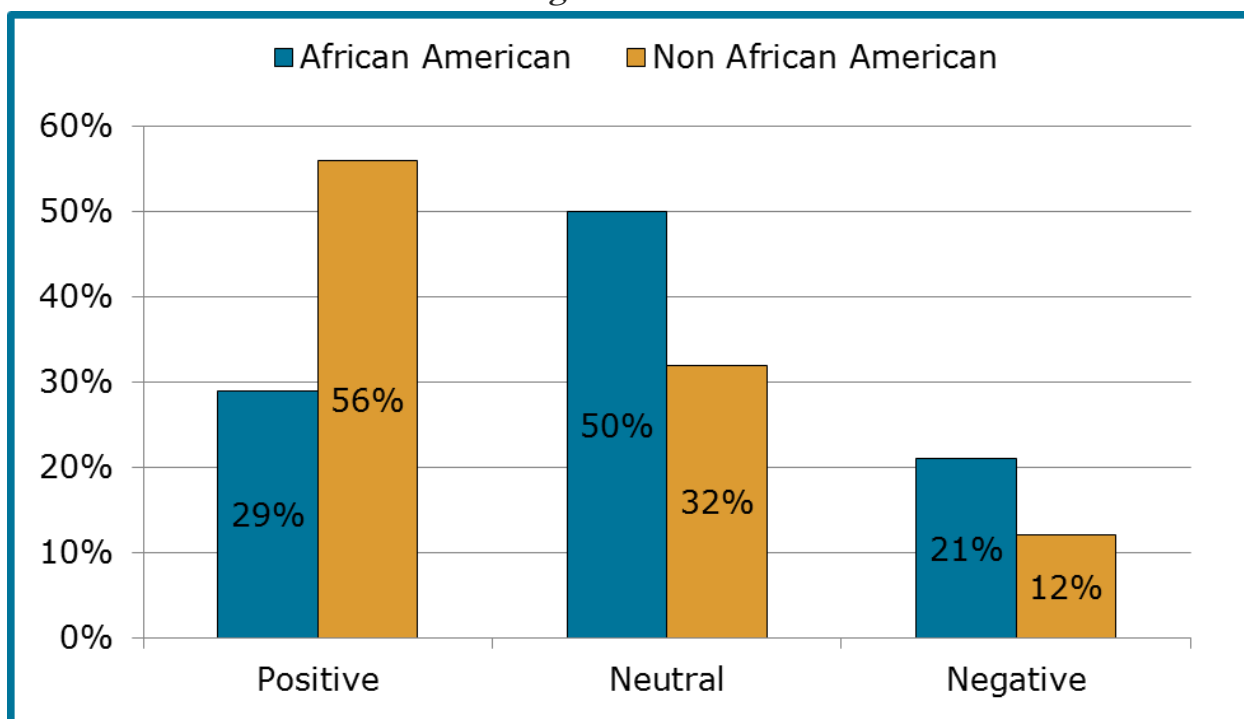
- The majority of Oregonians appear to have neutral or positive general feelings toward Oregon police officers (see Figure 1 below).
- The public's general feelings towards Oregon police officers appear to be improving over time.
- There are some substantial differences in opinions by race/ethnicity.
- For example, in 2009, 71% of Whites surveyed viewed Oregon police officers positively compared to only 29% of African Americans. Conversely, only 5% of Hispanics and 6% of Whites viewed Oregon police officers negatively versus 21% of African Americans.

Fig. 1. "Overall, when you think about Oregon police officers, are your feelings generally positive, generally negative, or are they neutral?"



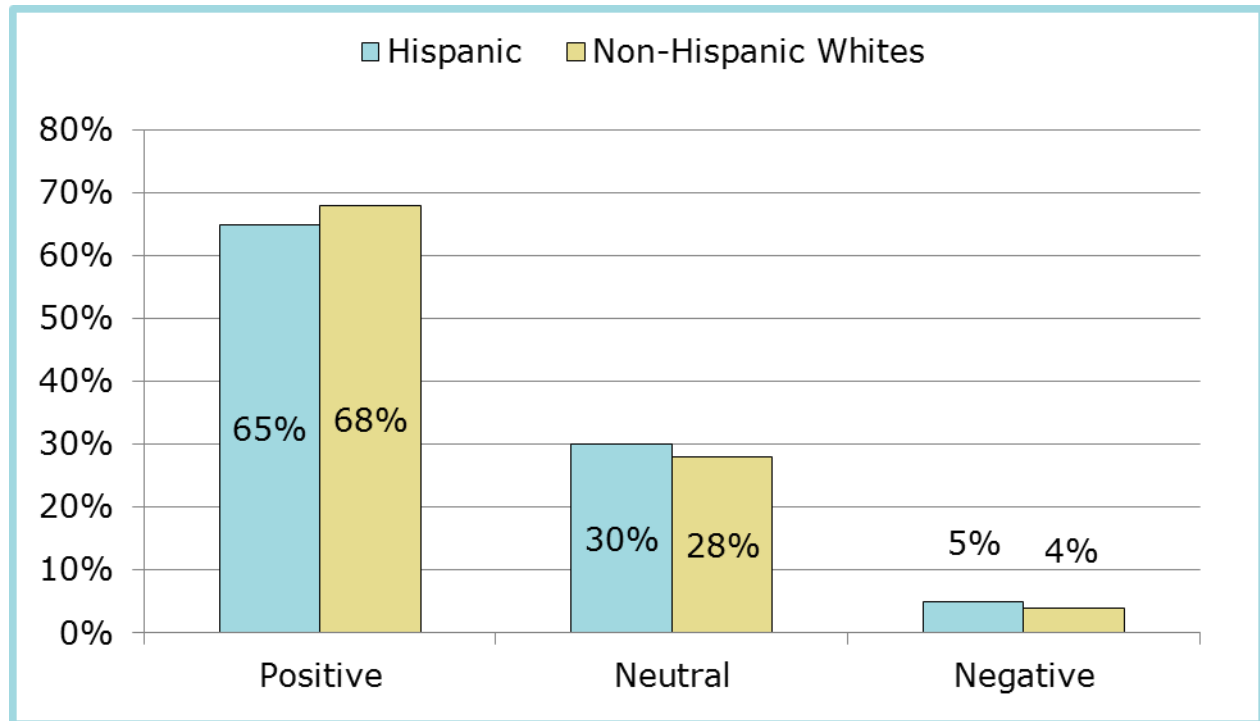
- Closer examination of public perceptions by race reveals significant differences between how African Americans and non-African Americans who live in the same neighborhoods perceive Oregon police officers (see Figure 2 below).
- In 2009, only 29% of African Americans expressed positive views of Oregon police officers whereas 56% of non-African Americans living in the same neighborhoods expressed positive views.

Fig. 2. "Public perceptions of Oregon police officers: African American and Non African Americans from the same neighborhoods in 2009."



- Such variation is not seen between Hispanics and non-Hispanic Whites in their general feelings toward Oregon police officers (see Figure 3 below).
- Not only do Hispanics and Whites perceive Oregon police officers more positively than African Americans, Hispanics and non-Hispanic Whites are also similar in their perceptions of the police.

Fig. 3. "Overall, when you think about Oregon police officers, are your feelings generally positive, generally negative, or are they neutral?"

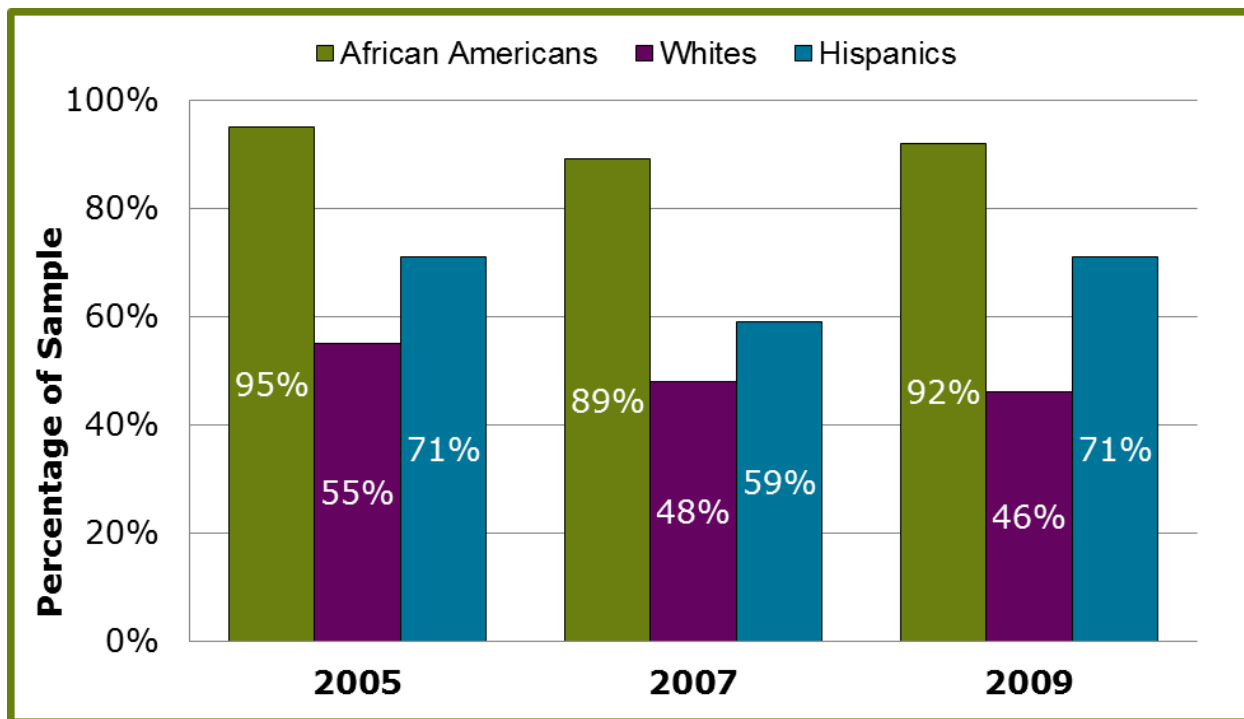


Perceptions of the Frequency of Racial Profiling

While the majority of Oregonians' general feelings toward Oregon law enforcement appears to be neutral to positive, Oregonians do appear to believe that Oregon police officers use race inappropriately at times.

- Survey data reveal that a majority of Oregonians feel that race is used inappropriately by Oregon police officers and these perceptions have remained fairly steady over time (see Figure 4 below).
- Perceptions of the frequency of racial profiling greatly differ by race.
- For example, in 2009, 46% of Whites, 71% of Hispanics, and 92% of African Americans surveyed expressed that they felt race was inappropriately used by Oregon police officers sometimes, often, or always.

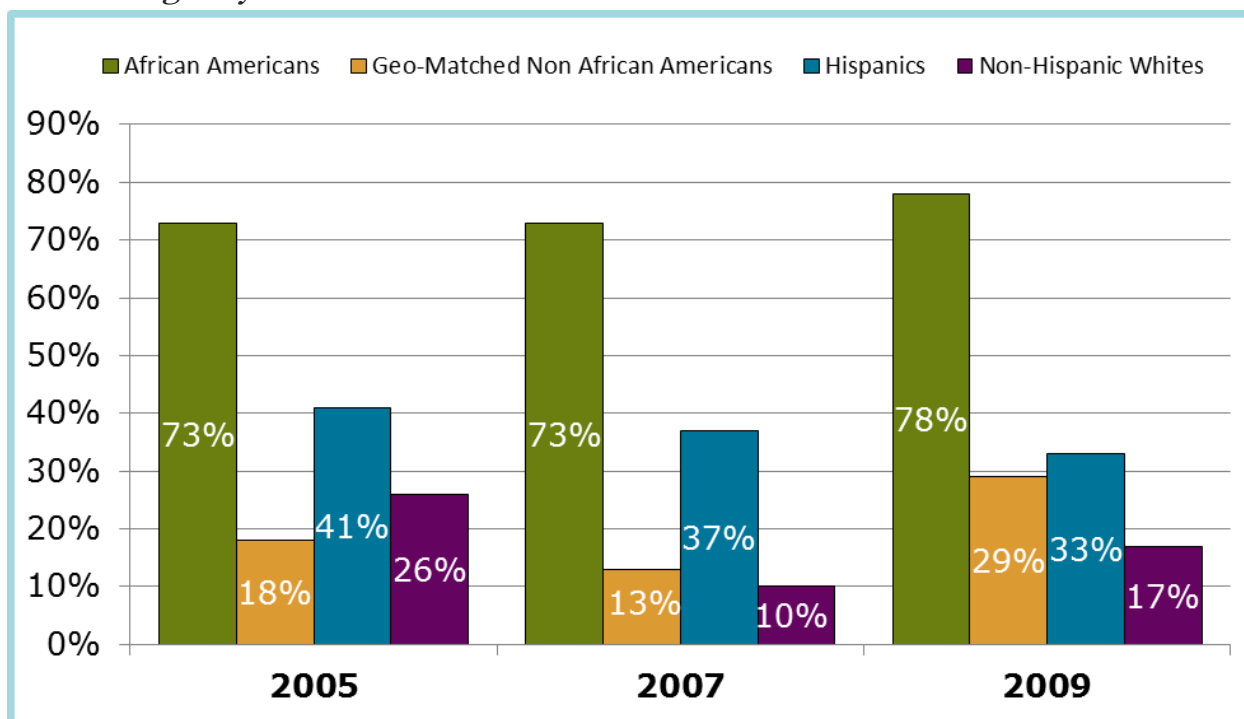
Fig. 4. Respondents who answered either “sometimes”, “often” or “always” to the question “How often, if at all, do you believe Oregon police officers allow a person’s race, ethnicity, or national origin to unfairly influence their decision to stop someone?”



Trust in Oregon police officers

- In 2009, 78% of African Americans, 29% of geo-matched non-African-Americans (those who live in the same geographic neighborhood as the African-Americans surveyed), 33% of Hispanics, and 17% of Whites surveyed who had experienced a police stop in the last year, did not believe that the reason the officer provided for stopping them was the real reason they were stopped (see Figure 5).
- These findings may indicate a lack of trust in Oregon law enforcement, particularly among some ethnic groups.

Fig. 5. Respondents who answered “yes” to the question “At any time during this stop, did you believe the real reason you were stopped was different than the reason the officer gave you?”



How Oregonians View Their Stop Experiences

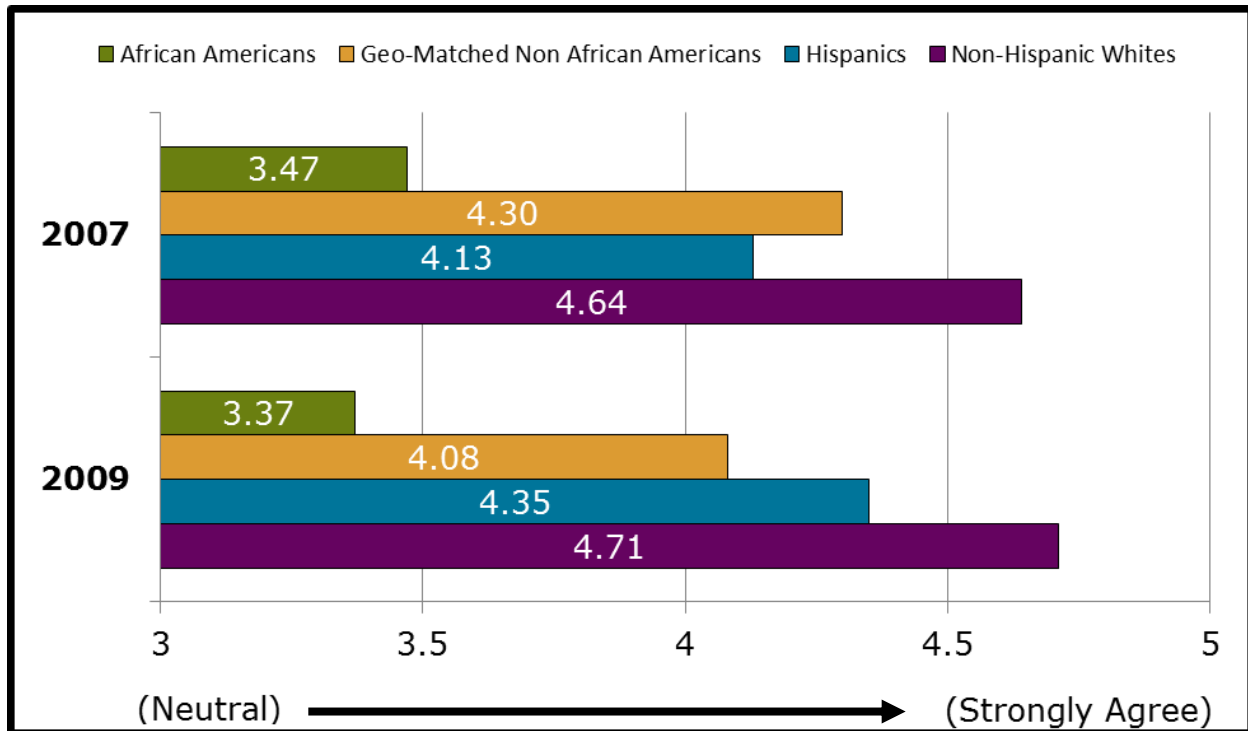
Respondents who had been stopped by an Oregon police officer in the last year were asked to rate their stop experience. Average stop experience was assessed by combining survey respondent answers to the following questions:

- I. The officer clearly explained why you were stopped;
- II. The officer answered all of your questions;
- III. The officer was polite;
- IV. The officer was professional.

All questions were assessed on a five-point scale ranging from 1 “Strongly Disagree” to 5 “Strongly Agree”. As seen in Figure 6, there are significant differences in average stop experience by both race/ethnicity and geographical location. While average stop experience appears to be relatively stable over time ranging from neutral to positive, a statistically

significant difference is found between the perceived stop experience of African Americans and non-African Americans who live in the same neighborhood. A statistically significant difference is also found between Hispanics and non-Hispanic Whites.

Fig. 6. Combined variable of average stop experience.



Summary

While the findings in general suggest that overall most Oregonians feel supportive of Oregon police officers and the stop experiences that they have, they also indicate concern about the frequency of racial profiling and trust in the police. In addition, some of the findings appear to vary drastically between racial ethnic groups and by geographical location. For instance, African Americans report the greatest amount of distrust in the police and rate their stop experiences significantly more poorly than the rated stop experiences for Hispanics and Whites. Whites who are geographically located in the same neighborhoods as African Americans surveyed also report more negative feelings about the police as compared to the statewide findings for Whites.

Specific Concerns among Some Ethnic and Cultural Communities

The perceptions of some ethnic populations are influenced by some or all of the following:

- **Racial Profiling**

- Fear of being treated unfairly based on one's race or ethnicity-may be based on personal or vicarious experiences with the police, or other life experiences related to acts of discrimination.
- In immigrant and refugee communities, the sharing of personal experiences amongst community members regarding interactions with law enforcement can create perceptions – both real, and imagined - within those communities, leaving agencies to deal with the effects of the negative connotations, such as racial profiling.
- For some within immigrant communities, the fear may be that law enforcement does not distinguish between 1st generation immigrants and 2nd, 3rd (or later) generation United States citizens and that treatment by law enforcement may be different (negatively) based upon that perception.
- Often within the Native American community, particularly within metropolitan areas and towns not near reservations, mistaken social identity by law enforcement is often an issue (being mislabeled as Hispanic, White, or African-American).

- **Fear of Deportation**

- While enforcement of federal immigration law is not the responsibility of any police agency in the state of Oregon, certain populations may either not know this or not believe it.
- Approximately 25 states are currently participating in the Department of Homeland Security's (DHS) Immigration & Customs Enforcement (ICE) program known as 287(g). The program, known by its section number in the federal Immigration & Nationality Act, allows a state

and local law enforcement agency to receive delegated authority for immigration enforcements within their jurisdictions. Under Oregon Revised Statute 181.850, 287(g), agreements between the State of Oregon and the DHS are prohibited. The Oregon statute prohibits law enforcement agencies in Oregon from using agency resources to detect or apprehend people whose only violation of law is that they are present in the US in violation of immigration laws. However, the statute does allow police to contact federal immigration authorities if they detain a person suspected of committing a crime or if there is a federal warrant charging the person with a criminal violation of federal immigration.



- **Representation of Law Enforcement**

- For some, a police officer is a powerful individual over the life and freedom of community members. Law enforcement officers are indeed entrusted with powers to preserve life and property and safeguard freedoms; however, some real life circumstances show that those responsibilities also include the taking of freedoms or life. Nevertheless, law enforcement experiences and perceptions of some community members, whether from this country or their country of origin, can be very real and should be acknowledged.
- For some within certain ethnic communities (in particular, but not restricted to, the Native American community, for example) for historical reasons, mistrust of law enforcement is reflective of a larger mistrust of government institutions in general.

- **Real ID Act**

- According to the federal Real ID Act of 2005, all individuals including U.S. citizens may not obtain a drivers license or identification card without submitting proof of legal presence in the U.S. The Oregon Department of Transportation Department of Motor Vehicles defines legal presence as being a U.S. citizen, permanent legal resident or otherwise legally authorized to be in the country. States that have put these standards into practice, may see an increase in fears related to the role of police in deportation and distrust of government entities requiring identification.
- A police officer is a symbolic figure. Interviews reveal that police officers are perceived as authority figures, the most visible members of government, and one of the primary government officials with whom people have any contact. As a result, police officers are an available and tangible avenue for community members to express and vent their frustrations.

- **Police Misconduct**

- The fear of being abused by the police may be based on personal or perceived experiences, the media, or historical events. It is important to remember that some community members may also have experiences with police in other countries.

ASSESSING READINESS FOR COMMUNITY OUTREACH EFFORTS



Community outreach with underserved ethnic communities may pose a formidable change from typical law enforcement services. Therefore, community outreach requires pre-planning and preparation to ensure successful delivery and outcomes.

There are likely a number of obstacles to successful implementation that must be addressed. These challenges can be internal to the law enforcement agency (e.g. management vs. street officers, police culture, union restrictions) and external to the department (e.g. community demands and political pressures).

However, there are often many resources that can help drive change and overcome obstacles (e.g. community support, leadership, proactive rather than reactive efforts, evidence of effectiveness).











Community outreach begins with a three step approach to mapping of the internal and external forces that will help drive change as well as the obstacles or restraining forces that may impede or oppose the effort. Such a mapping has been termed a “Force Field Analysis.”

Force Field Analysis

First, to assess your department's readiness for community outreach your department should begin by answering the following key questions to assess readiness:

- I. **What are your primary objectives for community outreach?**
 - a. Can your agency measure your achievements?
- II. **What are the primary obstacles that will make this outreach effort difficult to implement and achieve long-term success?**
 - a. Which obstacles are most important to address?
 - b. Which obstacles can be addressed quickly and which will take time?
- III. **What are the primary driving forces and resources, and motivations that will make implementation of community outreach successful?**
- IV. **How can your agency leverage your existing resources or gain additional resources to overcome obstacles?**

Second, it may be helpful to visually diagram your answers to the above questions in a "Force Field Analysis." Involving other managers, line staff, and the community in developing this diagram will help to make it more comprehensive and accurate:

| | Driving Forces | Restraining Forces | |
|------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------|
| strength # | 1) Driving force 1  |  1) Restraining force 1 | strength # |
| strength # | 2) Driving force 2  |  2) Restraining force 2 | strength # |
| strength # | 3) Driving force 3  |  3) Restraining force 3 | strength # |
| strength # | 4) Driving force 4  |  4) Restraining force 4 | strength # |
| strength # | 5) Driving force 5  |  5) Restraining force 5 | strength # |

Examples of Driving Forces and Restraining Forces

Every law enforcement agency and community outreach effort will have its own unique set of driving forces and restraining forces/ obstacles, thus it is difficult to provide uniform guidance for all situations. Other sections in this manual discuss some specific types of driving forces or obstacles, such as city manager or commissioner support, and language or literacy differences. Below is a list of common issues that community outreach efforts may face, although it is by no means an exhaustive list:

- **Available Resources.** For example, how many staff, how much time, and other monetary expenses will be needed.
- **Training.** Training may be needed to prepare staff and officers for community outreach efforts. For example, have staff and officers been effectively trained in conflict resolution and racial issues pertaining to police-citizen relations? If not, some community outreach efforts may be ineffective or actually further harm the relationship between the police and community.
- **Language barriers and literacy issues.** Does your agency have the appropriate staff to understand any languages other than English?
- **Vested interests.** For example, are command staff and younger managers (attaining tenure) on board? Are officers that are street-cops getting buy in? Can the agency get buy-in from the unions?
- **Organizational structures and regulations.** Does community outreach fit with performance evaluations, restrictions on patrol duties, and overtime issues? For example, are officers acknowledged for their community outreach efforts equally to their accomplishments in making arrests?
- **Social or organizational trends.** Is community outreach or community policing considered a best practice? If so, efforts may be used in meeting accreditation needs.
- **Political support.** How much community and government buy-in is there?
- **Attitudes of people.** Is community outreach considered a legitimate part of law enforcement's role within the organization? If not, this can be an additional challenge for the staff and officers working on community outreach efforts. Announcements from the chief and command staff that express the need and support of such efforts

may be needed for successful community outreach. Also recognize the importance of buy-in from “unofficial” leaders within the agency.

- **Addressing real or perceived internal issues.** If there has been a known concern expressed by the community (e.g. racial discrimination, too much use of force, the demographics of the department not representing the community served), it may be helpful to review department policies, practices, and performance before approaching the community for more feedback and dialogue. Such actions demonstrate a proactive police department and sincere community outreach. Ensure that this is done expediently. Any perception of any agency “dragging their heels” can be damaging to community perception and can be construed as the agency making excuses, or espousing rhetoric only, and not actual policy change.
- **History of relations with community.** Understanding the history of the general relations and significant events between the police and a community is critical for being successful in understanding the public perspective and for effective dialogue.
- **High profile events.** A recent high profile event (e.g. police shooting) can drastically heighten any tension between the police and a community group. It is critical that successful outreach efforts are in place before these events occur. If the relationship between the police and community is poor at the time of such an event, police-community communication may still be necessary, but it will be imperative to expect frustration and distrust from the public and first focus on listening and empathizing with public concerns. This will better enable the agency to effectively get past the damage control stage regarding a high profile event.

Lastly, once the diagram is created, the next step is to brainstorm action plans to ensure there are enough positive driving forces to overcome any obstacles to successful community outreach to ethnic communities.

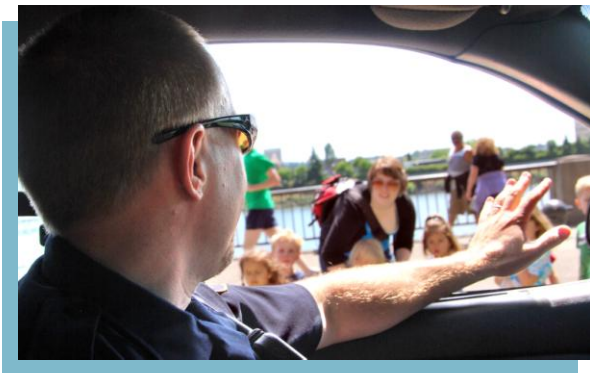
Creating Inner Department Support

Police agencies are in constant review of their policies, strategies and goals which includes the evaluation of current crime trends, budgetary constraints or community needs. It is important for an agency to be inclusive of all of its staff when community outreach plans are being developed. Success is certain when all team members understand the strategy and their roll in its achievement.

Espousing Community Outreach Success

Every law enforcement agency will have its own unique set of cultural norms and community expectations to work with. Generally, successful engagement in multi-ethnic community outreach includes the following:

- I. **Leadership at the top.** The message of support of outreach to communities of color and underrepresented ethnic communities—begins with the chief or the sheriff.
- II. **Mid-level police commanders are key.** Mid-level police commanders who are rising in the administration still have many years left in their career; thus, they have a vested interest in forging long-term positive community relationships through community outreach. Mid-level commanders are most likely to understand the benefits of outreach and the negative result of the long-term consequences of a tainted community image.



- III. **Officer/ Street Cop support.** Officers on the street will have the most direct interaction with various ethnic communities and communities of color and whether a newer officer or a more seasoned one will have the most efficient ability to engage in a

constructive manner to defuse potentially negative situations and to build relationships.

- IV. **Gaining union support.** Multi-ethnic community outreach may require changes to patrol duties, support personnel, training requirements, and performance evaluations. Include union representatives in the goals your agency is pursuing.
- V. **Gaining community support.** Gaining support from the underrepresented ethnic community, businesses, and local government will help reinforce the importance of community outreach.

- VI. **Create a link to department ethics, mission statement, and strategic plan.** Make sure management, officers, and communities recognize the link between multi-ethnic community outreach and the department's ethics, mission statement, and strategic plan. This shows everyone that community outreach fits with your organizational values and goals, and provides a yardstick for assessing progress.
- VII. **Institutionalize outreach or community input.** Some outreach efforts may benefit from a more formal relationship between the ethnic community and the police department. Supporting the development of external committees or task forces that can collaborate with law enforcement over policy and strategic goals may be necessary for success.
- VIII. **Support training for community outreach.** Depending on the direction and scope of community outreach, successful efforts may require additional training for management and officers regarding: real and must be acknowledged, diversity, racial history/stereotypes, inter-group conflict resolution, communication skills, group presentation skills/facilitation, crime prevention, crime analysis, strategic planning, leadership and management development.
- IX. **Create institutional culture where outreach from law enforcement is encouraged.** Multi-ethnic community outreach should be supported through internal and external celebrations like awards, recognition, community gatherings, and media awareness



Case Illustration

A study was undertaken to determine how four law enforcement agencies in California responded to ethnic demographic changes in their respective communities of San Jose, Long Beach, Stockton and Garden Grove.

Citizen Participation

All four departments undertook successful efforts that brought particular professional roles into their agencies at different levels to address outreach: they included civilian community service officer, reserve officer, police cadet, Law Enforcement Explorer, and Police Athletic League programs. Such initiatives provided excellent opportunities for police departments to familiarize citizens with agency operations.

These police departments used a variety of methods for determining the concerns of community members. Forming advisory groups representative of the entire community has proven to be one effective way to establish collaborative relationships with diverse groups. Advisory groups gave residents a voice and helped them ensure that the department understood their unique needs and served them in a professional manner. Such groups also prompted police agencies to be more open and responsive to the community.

In addition to forming advisory boards, departments developed neighborhood groups and solicited information through focus groups and citizen surveys. It was important for the police to try to represent the wide variety of community groups in the ranks of employees and to incorporate the voices of the full range of citizens.

Community Outreach

To respond to the needs of their diverse communities, the police agencies in the study tried a variety of approaches, including police substations, citizen police academies, and youth programs. Many of these initiatives did not target ethnic neighborhoods in particular; instead, they impacted the police department's responsiveness to all community members.

Training

All four police departments conduct training programs to teach employees about the many cultures within their communities. The length of the programs varied tremendously, from a few-hour presentation to a week-long course.

In the two larger departments, San Jose and Long Beach, the programs were components of advanced officer training and were offered only to sworn personnel. The two smaller agencies, Stockton and Garden Grove, provided training to all employees. Most of the programs called on community members to facilitate the training, and the departments have developed rather uncommon approaches to their cultural diversity training.

In San Jose, the police chief sought input from members of the advisory board to design the cultural diversity training program for the department. Based on their suggestions, the training started with a segment on change. It addressed a wide range of concerns relevant to individual and organizational change, including understanding the process of change and overcoming resistance. The initial instruction and the discussions that arose from it helped

to eliminate many of the barriers that often occur when dealing with new issues, ideas, and approaches.

Long Beach PD collaborated with the National Conference of Christians and Jews to develop its 40-hour cultural awareness training course for all department employees. In addition to general topics related to cultural diversity, the program encompassed areas such as Anglo cultures, the police culture, the homeless, and various religions. Long Beach PD also emphasized cultural diversity awareness in its basic recruit training academy. Recruits received 8 hours of classroom instruction devoted to diversity awareness, and then they spent 16 training hours with citizens from the various ethnic groups within the city. Recruits and citizens thus had an opportunity to interact in a non-confrontational, positive way.

In addition to cultural awareness training, all four departments encouraged or provided training in the various languages spoken within their communities. Bilingual or multilingual officers can be very helpful to their departments and their communities. Unfortunately, as communities become more and more diverse, the number of languages spoken increases as well, and it becomes difficult for agencies to cope. Still, by encouraging all officers to learn other languages, departments can facilitate communication with the full spectrum of community members.

Leadership

A common theme became apparent during the study of these four California police departments: Leadership makes a difference. New leaders in each organization led all four departments in making significant strides toward enhanced responsiveness to their communities. Interviews with department members revealed that what distinguished the new leaders from their predecessors was the ability to translate intentions into realities. Given that they could deal effectively with their constituencies both inside and outside the organization, these leaders could turn their visions for their departments into action and reality.

The current leaders recognized the influence of relationships among the agency, the individual employees, and the community members on organizational responsiveness. The leaders first addressed internal issues, given that it is important to attend to employees' needs prior to addressing the needs of the community. Next, they developed strategies for dealing with police-community relationships.

These strategies reflect both a concern for community problems and a social responsibility that goes beyond law enforcement. They include service dimensions that recognize that crime prevention is a community matter and suggest that the police broaden their approach beyond merely responding to crime. The approaches adopted by the leaders of all four agencies recognized that the police must become more problem-oriented; they must scrutinize problems, obtain as much information as possible from everyone involved or affected, and only then develop solutions.

MAYORAL/CITY/COUNTY MANAGER AND COMMISSIONER/COUNCIL SUPPORT



Law enforcement agencies operate under and receive their authority as a part of a larger system of government at the city, county, state, or federal level. As the most visible form of government to the average citizen, law enforcement occupies a unique position. Consequently, the actions of law enforcement agencies, and the police officers that serve within those agencies, have implications for many others - including city, county, state, and federal leaders. For this reason, city and county leaders have a vested interest in supporting efforts to improve police-community relations and creating a dialogue with the community.

Unfortunately, there are times in which a law enforcement crisis occurs before city, county, and state leaders respond in effectively addressing the issue. Examples of times of crisis can include a dramatic increase in crime, a community march on city hall protesting racial profiling that garners wide spread media attention, or an officer involved shooting in which a person is killed during an interaction with police. Yet, regardless of how a particular crisis situation may happen, government leaders must support efforts to create an ongoing dialogue with their community before the potential for these types of crisis situations come to pass.

Whether it is the city manager or county administrator, mayor, city council or county board of commissioners, obtaining the buy-in of these stakeholders begins with educating them about the benefits of increasing public safety by establishing relationship-building with underrepresented ethnic groups. Start by providing city and county officials with facts and supporting evidence of the need and benefits.

Consider the following:

- Assist the aforementioned governmental stakeholders in becoming knowledgeable of the intricacies of the ethnic communities in your area. This may require working with government entities to find and review the following data: local demographic information; population increases, decreases, and residential mobility; and specific data relative to the ethnic communities in your area. Do not assume that national trends and data or characteristics for any particular ethnic group are specific to your particular area, without relevant local data to support it.
- Detail trends in housing, education, job mobility, crime and other relevant data that fully and holistically depicts varied ethnic communities. (Your agency may need to work in conjunction with partner entities, such as the local School system and local universities, to obtain some of this data that may be out of the purview of traditional law enforcement data analysis.)
- Explain the need to the aforementioned stakeholders (city council, mayor, city managers, county commissioners etc.) to collaborate with and engage ethnic communities to accomplish law enforcement goals of decreased crime. This can be done in part by meeting those communities



“half way” in learning from their respective cultural norms as a useful tool of planning for results.

- Explain to the government stakeholders how improving police-community relations with ethnic communities will directly affect their own relationships with those communities, and subsequently potentially have positive impacts in the support and implementation of their own policies and legislation.
- Examine budget needs or constraints which could be agency-related. This may indicate a need to pursue congressional appropriations for crime prevention and criminal justice initiatives. In addition, be certain to also point out efforts that have little to no impact on the budget.



It will also be imperative to keep city or county administrators apprised as the efforts unfold and objectives are met. Their support at the start will lend to the genuineness, sincerity, and legitimacy of the effort which, in turn, are conveyed to and picked up by the community. Just as front-line and supervisory officers cannot be expected to participate in or value improving police-community relations in any meaningful capacity without it being valued from the top down of an agency, so too is the case with city managers and commissioners in the eyes of the community. In addition, city managers and commissioners will reap the benefits of such efforts as well.

Case Illustration

The Seattle Police Department (SPD) received a critical review from the United States Department of Justice (DOJ), which addressed a pattern of excessive force and inferred that there were also issues concerning biased policing within the department. Consequently, City of Seattle leaders and SPD leadership chose to not wait for the DOJ to deliver a list of demands of the department in the form of a legally enforceable consent decree.

Instead, on March 29th, 2012 **SPD 20/20: A Vision for the Future** was announced by Mayor Mike McGinn, Police Chief John Diaz and Assistant Chief of Operations Mike Sanford. SPD 20/20 is a far-reaching list of 20 reform initiatives to police practices, policies, and procedures to be put in place over the subsequent 20 months with the goal of supporting a just and effective police force. The reforms pro-actively and pre-emptively go far beyond a response to the Department of Justice report with a goal of increasing the safety of communities while improving the effectiveness of the SPD at preventing and controlling crime.

The 20 initiatives are:

Protecting Constitutional Rights

1. Modernize Public Demonstration Management
2. Develop Protocols to Prevent Low-Level Offenses from Escalating
3. Address Biased Policing

Training for Seattle's Values

4. Train All Officers on Use of Force Standards Consistent with Seattle's Values
5. Train Officers in Appropriate Search and Seizure Practices
6. Improve Supervision by Creating a Sergeant's Academy
7. Improve Leadership by Creating a Commander Academy
8. Train New Officers to Understand Seattle

Earning Public Trust

9. Improve Review of Uses of Force
10. Develop a Binding, Written Code of Ethics
11. Recruit Great Officers
12. Systematic Enforcement of Professional Standards
13. Enhance Early Intervention Systems

Using Data-Driven Practices

14. Implement a Data-Driven Approach to Policing
15. Work with Major City Police Departments to Develop Best Practices

Partnering With the Public

16. Listen and Explain with Equity and Dignity
17. Provide Better Information to the Public
18. Improve Transparency and Accountability
19. Launch a Community Outreach Initiative
20. Create a Culture of Public Service

Specifically, for initiative # 19, *Launch a Community Outreach Initiative*, the SPD's approach is rooted in the belief that effective policing requires sustained community outreach that is focused on shared values, promoting equity and strengthening accountability and responsiveness to the communities that it serves. The process involves a variety of stakeholders: community organizations, members of the clergy, City and Academic leaders and others to collaboratively address concerns that include, but are not limited to, use of force issues, biased policing, and the training and hiring of officers.

Specifically, the *Launch a Community Outreach Initiative* will:

- Enlist community volunteers to attend and validate/provide feedback related to training classes taught to SPD employees
- Provide opportunities for community members to learn about policing from the police perspective and to share feedback
- Enhance and expand the SPD Citizen's Academy
- Eliminate the "us/them" mentality from our department and seek to eliminate it from our community. We are all one community.
- Continue and increase the "donut dialogue/role reversal" programs with Seattle Area youth, to provide opportunities to interact with SPD in a non-confrontational environment
- Continue and significantly increase the Living Room Conversation Program, where community members and the Officers who patrol their neighborhoods meet and discuss issues in an informal environment
- Implement school based engagement programs, including reading to elementary school students, and coordinating with middle schools to form debate teams.
- Significantly increase both announced and unannounced neighborhood walks involving the Chief and command staff, with special emphasis on hot-spot neighborhoods and businesses
- Create tools and messages that foster and reinforce the "We" message
- Enhance communication and increase interaction by leveraging technology
- Provide survey feedback opportunities for everyone who encounters SPD
- Ensure that community members receive follow-up contact/business cards in every encounter with a Seattle police officer

THE ROLE OF THE MEDIA



Simply stated, the institutional roles of both law enforcement and the media in our society serve very different interests within our varied communities. Broadly, law enforcement officials strive to protect the safety, liberty, and freedoms of all citizens, while the media seeks to demonstrate freedom of speech, inform citizens, and attract viewership.

It is extremely important to recognize that while each institution serves very different societal and community needs, there is much in regards to common ground and a mutually beneficial functioning relationship that law enforcement officials can initiate through the effective use of media. Effective utilization of media outlets and a comprehensive strategy can inform and engage the public, while at the same time strengthening law enforcement's image within varied communities.

Dissemination of information

Over the past decade, the United States has faced tremendous tragedy, and the role of media has played a significant role in shaping a majority opinion during those times. During events of extreme chaos (e.g., 911, Virginia Tech, etc) - especially those events in which law enforcement is highly engaged, citizens seek varied media outlets for updates and information. The varied sources people gather their information from come from popular cable television networks such as CNN, MSNBC, and Fox News, in addition to online newspapers (that people access either by their smart phone or computer), talk radio, and other television programming.

Civic confidence

Citizens have misconceptions about crime and the role of police. A public opinion study conducted by the Criminal Justice Policy Research Institute found that a majority of Oregonians believe crime increased from 2008-2009, while results suggest that crime levels appear to be at the lowest since 1969. Further, the study argued that "there is a significant gap between public perceptions and objective measures of crime... [which can partially be explained by] the influence that media and popular culture have on shaping public attitudes about crime and criminal justice".



Obligation to public

It is possible that police and media relationships are capable of developing into a partnership to improve their images while working to provide community members with the appropriate amount and type of information during critical incidents. Ideally, a well informed and prepared citizenry takes a more active role against crime within their communities. Community members need and demand necessary information for safety and liberty and they expect this to be delivered accordingly. The more information given to citizens, it is highly likely citizens will be more informed and prepared when faced with tragic events. On the other hand, it is imperative law enforcement releases the appropriate amount and type of information to prevent panic and misinformation.

Challenges

Media and law enforcement should collaborate on local, state and national level to develop effective communication strategies to improve relations while increasing public confidence. However, realigning relationships between law enforcement and media presents its challenges. From here, both stakeholders should harness a relationship through a public information officer that seeks to develop strong working relationship, while journalists should develop an awareness of law enforcement culture to collaboratively inform public.

Strategies to improve police - media relationships

Successful police-media relations can improve distrust and skepticism among community members and law enforcement with further training and skill development. This process involves understanding police and media roles, building mutual respect and cooperation, and better communication and preparation. More specifically, this process could foster a positive working relationship between media and law enforcement.

The following are means and approaches to improving police-media relationships:

Share responsibility

- Develop strong, mutually trusting relationships between law enforcement and media.
- Expand on skills, knowledge, authority, and resource.

Maintain legitimate policing through communication

- Establish internal skills to communicatively manage external environment.
- Provide more active, less reactive approaches in building up publicity.
- Direct flow of public conversation about crime in communities.
- Learn the audience and speak directly to them by avoiding “cookie cutter” one size fits all approaches.

Foster favorable police-media relations

- Initiate strategies that allow for stories and reports that promote police images.

Acknowledge that the police-media relationship is a symbiotic "two way street"

- For the public information officer (PIO) within a law enforcement agency, inquire as to how their media partners prefer contact.
- Build trust with media contacts.
- Develop a successful public information program that includes opportunities to:
 - Take hold of opportunities to cast agency in a positive light.
 - Share information equally.
 - Reflect principles of community focused policing.
 - Educate the public and media with accurate data trends to address potential misinformation and inaccurate perceptions.

Strategies to improve police- community relationships utilizing media

In addition, consider the strategic use of the media as an indirect method of contact from which to establish relationships within ethnic communities. Newspaper articles, the radio, and television broadcasts can be an effective way to create some communication with a particular community in a non-threatening manner.

Established and trusted communication mediums may be particularly helpful if you want to increase the public's awareness of current or upcoming outreach efforts, educate the community on crime prevention or interacting with the police, or create opportunities for the public to interact with the police in a confidential manner.



The following are means and approaches to improving police-community relationships utilizing media:

Connect with culturally relevant communities through use of local media that are specific to ethnic communities

- According to a Yankelovich study conducted in 2008, African-Americans are more than twice as likely to really trust Black media (30%) as they are to trust mainstream media (13%).

Seek to understand the demographics and cultural dynamics of the communities you are seeking to establish relationships with through media

- Multicultural public relations means more than just simply understanding the demographics, it essential seeks a holistic view of culture within ones community.

Utilize a variety of media opportunities to connect with ethnic communities

The following are some traditional media sources that were developed specifically for specific ethnic or racial communities throughout Oregon:

Newspapers in Oregon:

- El Hispanic News (Spanish)
- El Centinela (Spanish)
- El Latino de Hoy (Spanish)
- The Skanner (African American)
- The Asian Reporter

Television in Oregon:

- KUNP (Spanish)

Radio stations in Oregon:

Spanish Language Radio:

- KGDD 1520 AM (Portland Area)
- KRYP 93.1 FM (Portland Area)
- KWBY 940 AM (Portland Area)
- KSND 95.1 FM (Willamette Valley)
- KWIP 880 AM (Willamette Valley)
- KZTU 660 AM (Willamette Valley)
- KZZM 101.9 FM (Eastern OR)
- KRDM 1240 AM (Central Oregon)
- KKJX 960 AM (Southern OR)
- KRTA 610 AM (Southern OR)

Native American Radio:

- KCUW 104.3 FM (Eastern OR)
- KWSO 91.9 FM (Central OR)

Adapt/Evolve the Use of Social Media in Community Outreach Efforts

- Social Media such as Twitter, Facebook, and YouTube provides the opportunity for law enforcement agencies to build relationships with the broader public and engage specifically with particular ethnic communities, including young people within those communities
- With the continuous improvement in communication and technological services, many people engage primarily in social media (as opposed to traditional media sources) to obtain information; this provides law enforcement many opportunities:
 - the ability to provide real-time notification/news to the public and keep them connected and informed

- in an era of smart phones, being able to get information out even when there is a power outage where people cannot get onto their computers can be an invaluable resource for law enforcement
- the use of social media to distribute information to the public can cut down on the volume of calls that dispatchers receive; that time that is gained can be utilized elsewhere for law enforcement
- user friendly law enforcement websites can provide the opportunity to more efficiently engage in constituent services, which in turn contributes to positive community sentiment and engagement; (example: the Howell, New Jersey PD is exploring a system on their website where residents could do online reporting allowing them to get a case number that could quickly be applied for insurance purposes)

The following are examples of some additional social media resources that some law enforcement agencies are either utilizing for community outreach or promoting for neighborhood residents to utilize:

- CrimeReports.com - an online crime-tracking website that displays all reported incidents within a given location and timeframe.
- [Nixle](http://Nixle.com) – offers notification services for police departments that allows agencies to send messages to residents via phone, email and the internet. Information is delivered to geographically targeted consumers.
- Nextdoor.com - founded in 2010, a private social network based on neighborhood location (verification of neighborhood residency is required) with a focus of creating softer and safer communities; information shared within the group cannot be accessed by those outside the neighborhood or found via search engine.

Case Illustration

The Utica, New York, Police Department (UPD) serves a population of 60,000 with 180 sworn personnel and 16 civilian staff members. The city is located between Syracuse and Albany in central New York.

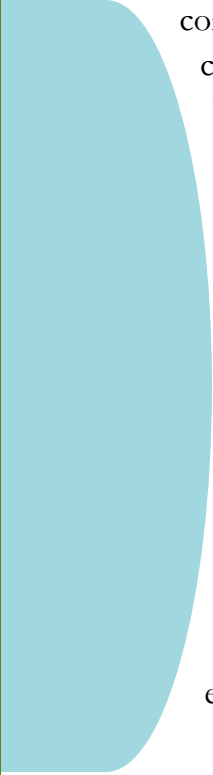
UPD began using Facebook in November 2010 and followed with Twitter and YouTube in January 2011. Chief Mark Williams had some apprehension about using social media in his department until he attended an IACP focus group in late summer of 2010. There, he talked with other law enforcement executives and heard stories about solving crimes and neutralizing inaccurate or negative information on the Internet, all by using social media.

Sergeant Steve Hauck was tasked with running UPD's public information initiatives, including getting started with social media. Sergeant Hauck stated that in the beginning, their goals and objectives were short-term and very broad, as they really had no idea what to expect. Now that UPD has settled into a social media style, he and other UPD staff plan to assess the department's social media strategy each year and adjust accordingly.

In less than four months, UPD has made 11 arrests directly from information posted on the UPD social media sites. The cases included a bank robbery and several grand larcenies. In multiple instances, people turned themselves in, either out of fear that they would be turned in by someone else, or out of embarrassment and wanting their picture or video taken down from the sites. In other instances, people see the pictures and videos and contact the police department with information. Sergeant Hauck says he believes social media empowers the community to get involved in the crime fighting process. Instead the police department putting out sporadic requests for information, there is a sustained level of engagement with social media.

In addition to receiving valuable tips, UPD has received more general feedback from their community. UPD anticipated some negativity when they set up their social media sites and allowed commenting, however, the response has been overwhelmingly positive. UPD is building relationships with their community every day and reaching new segments of their population.

Sergeant Hauck attributes a large amount of UPD's social media success to their



content. UPD's social media sites are updated frequently with current and informative content. They also post a wide array of stories from big to small and good to bad. Using social media gives UPD a voice to speak about all issues affecting the department whether it is an officer's accomplishments or something that has been negatively publicized. This level of engagement and transparency has helped to increase UPD's credibility in their community. It has also created a new relationship between the department and the local media outlets, who now follow UPD's social media streams and are able to pick and choose stories to run.

Chief Williams is impressed with how social media has enhanced relationships with the community members, stakeholders in the city, and the local media. Social media provides the department with a new platform for UPD to reach the community and inform them as well as a forum for the community to communicate with their police department. UPD has made great strides in their social media involvement and they plan on continuing to move forward as the platforms and functionalities grow and evolve.

IDENTIFYING THE POPULATIONS OF FOCUS

Oregon has many different ethnic and racial groups and contains many communities which are rapidly changing in their demographic characteristics. Identifying which ethnic communities to focus on may be quite obvious in some law enforcement communities, yet may require careful thought in other law enforcement communities. Some questions to begin with are:

- **Is there an ethnic community in your area that is new or growing?** (e.g. the growth of Somali communities in Beaverton and Portland, or many Hispanic communities around the state)
- **Are there particular groups in your service area that have voiced any dissatisfaction with the police?**
- **Are there particular groups that officers notice exhibiting signs of distrust of the police?** (For example, seeming particularly fearful, hostile, or refusing to communicate with the police even when there is no evidence of criminal behavior on the part of the individual?)

It may also be helpful to:

- **Review survey findings:** the LECC tracks the perceptions of police among Oregon residents, PEW offers some nationwide survey findings related to perceptions of the police among the Hispanic population, and the City of Portland conduct satisfaction surveys of Portland residents.
- **Inquire with your city manager or county commissioner.**
- **Review citizen complaints:** Are any themes present that would indicate that community relations could be improved with a particular sub-population?
- **Inquire with your patrol officers:** Who are they coming in contact with? What changes are they noticing?

- **Examine the changes in demographics for your area.**
- **Inquire with your local public schools:** they should have a good grasp of the area's demographics based on their interactions with students and parents.

If you have multiple ethnic communities that require intense outreach from your law enforcement agency, it may be wise to start with one first and then expand your efforts to others, unless it is apparent that more than one ethnic community can be easily be reached with a combined strategy or if you have full-time staff devoted to community relations.

Case Illustration

Salem PD makes extensive outreach to their Latino communities, through the use of television, radio broadcasts, newspaper articles, and community meetings. This work began in 2004, when a grassroots organization, No Meth – Not in My Neighborhood, requested collaboration in soliciting community involvement in reducing methamphetamine manufacturing, distribution, and use, within Marion and Polk counties.

The goal was to reach out to as much of the community as possible to educate them how to report and identify suspected drug activity. The primary impact from the increased drug activity was an exorbitant increase in property crime which was affecting all residents, regardless of geographic area or population demographic. Therefore, to reach the majority of the community, Salem PD examined their demographics and determined to successfully educate the community it was necessary to engage both the English-speaking community and their approximately 15-17% Hispanic population

OVERCOMING/UNDERSTANDING THE LANGUAGE & LITERACY BARRIERS



Language barriers pose obstacles for all levels of government that provide services. In order to communicate with some communities, language translation will be necessary and is intended for the ease of both officers and the broader community. Providing translation services for incoming calls, phone messages, forms and brochures, and at community meetings can send a strong message to the community that your agency has a desire to connect with community members.

Whether it is translation at a meeting, a phone tree, or the written translation of forms, it is imperative that the work is done by someone who understands the law enforcement arena and has a strong command of the language needed. If your agency does not have employees able to do this, then professional services should be used for at least the translation of forms and brochures, as well as other circumstances as deemed appropriate. While well meaning community members may offer their assistance, without first knowing their background and level of understanding, misinterpretations from the translation can occur.

When having forms and brochures translated:

- Agencies should ensure that the translated information is accurate and grammatically correct, just as they do, for example, when a form is created or a phone message recorded in English.
- Forms must look identical to the ones in English so that an employee drawing standard information from it does not need their own interpreter.

When addressing issues concerning language and translated phone services:

- If you do not have staff that can speak the language or a subscription to a 24-hour phone translation service, then simply be sure to indicate that in your message. A simple statement indicating the need to provide an interpreter is reasonable and straightforward. Without that indication, a person may infer that there will be staff available to assist in the translated language. If you cannot provide the service in the alternate language, it is best to leave it in English. An agency does not want to infer a service that they do not provide.

When considering translation at a community meeting:

- In some situations, all you may have for translation is a community member or staff from a collaborative partner. Although a certified interpreter is not needed given that these situations are not criminal cases, it is helpful to ensure that the person offering to translate is fluent.
- It is also helpful if the language interpreter or translator is familiar with law enforcement or criminal justice terms. Going over the topic with them in advance can prove advantageous and, perhaps, can be an opportunity to discuss verbal cues or cultural nuances.

Languages Spoken in Oregon

Records indicate that there are at least 136 different languages spoken in Oregon. According to the most recent American Community Survey, in Oregon, nearly 500,000 individuals (14%) aged 5 and over spoke a language other than English at home in 2008. The most common languages were Spanish followed by Russian, Vietnamese, German, Chinese, Korean, Japanese, French, Tagalog, and Arabic.

Primary Non-English Languages Spoken in Oregon Homes

| Language | Number of speakers | Ranking of language spoken |
|-------------------|---------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Spanish | 296,058 | 1 |
| Russian | 20,958 | 2 |
| Vietnamese | 18,999 | 3 |
| German | 17,440 | 4 |
| Chinese | 15,157 | 5 |
| Korean | 12,239 | 6 |
| Japanese | 11,162 | 7 |
| French | 10,687 | 8 |
| Tagalog | 8,018 | 9 |
| Arabic | 5,601 | 10 |

While this may seem overwhelming, most communities encompass only a few languages. Non-English speaking immigrants often live in clusters where there are other immigrants similar to them. These communities serve to provide immigrants with a sense of safety and security, social support, needed resources, and help navigating their new surroundings. With that, we offer some words of caution:

- Be realistic about what services you can provide. For forms and phone translation services, focus your efforts on those populations with the greatest numbers and who are most in need. It is better to do a few things well than many things poorly.
- Do not assume that all racial, ethnic, and language groups are homogeneous. There is a lot of diversity within languages and cultures.

Literacy in Oregon

According to the most recent Nation Assessment of Adult Literacy (NAAL), in 2003, 14% of Americans age 16 and older had below basic prose literacy levels. (Prose literacy measures how well one understands and uses information found in newspapers,, magazines, novels, brochures, manuals or flyers.) While only 7% of Whites were below basic prose literacy levels, 14% of Asian/Pacific Islanders, 24% of Blacks, and 44% of Hispanics were below basic prose literacy levels. Such disparities support the recommendation to use multiple facets of community outreach above and beyond the translation of brochures.

Translation Services

If your agency is looking for translation services in your area, potential resources can be found by considering the following:

- Utilize local educational institutions:

- Third year students and beyond (at the college or graduate school level) may have a good grasp of the language and culture that they are studying.
- Create a minority community relations internship with nearby universities to solicit students who speak languages that suit your agency's needs (many academic programs require an internship or practicum as a part of their degree requirements).
- Solicit help from foreign language professors at nearby universities. Professors at four year universities are often required to perform a certain level of community outreach and service, and can be an excellent resource for oral and written translation.

- Consider translation service businesses.

- Work with your local and municipal courts:

- Court interpreters and volunteers may have a good knowledge of the language and criminal justice procedures.

- Collaborate with other local agencies to pool resources:

Often more than one agency patrols or responds to calls for service in a community. As a result, what one agency does or does not do can have ramifications for the other agencies working in the area. Since these agencies are dealing with the same communities, they are also dealing with the same issues. Collaborative efforts can:

- Reduce redundancy.
- Maximize scarce resources.
- Align agency messages to both officers and community members.
- Spread the burden, responsibility, and accountability.

Case Illustration

Salem Police Department (PD) chose to focus on translating services that were the most common and most important. Since their work began with topics related to the prevention of crime, they started with bilingual public education. For example, suspected drug house identification forms (written, online) were translated and the tips line had a bilingual recording, with an option to leave the tip in Spanish. The department's records section also recorded their telephone line options in English and Spanish.

Salem PD made efforts to communicate with their Latino communities in a variety of formats to reach most of the population. They expanded their communication efforts to television, radio broadcasts, newspaper articles, and community meetings, all in Spanish. Translation services were provided by their bilingual community relations specialist and a bilingual officer.

UNDERSTANDING CULTURAL NORMS



Effective outreach strategies take into consideration the culture of the people with whom they are communicating. Culture is a wide range of learned behaviors that are acquired during childhood and adult socialization, such as religious and social beliefs and norms that impact how individuals interpret and interact with the world around them. As a result, the way one perceives the world, including determining what constitutes appropriate or normal behavior is a product of one's cultural orientation. A lack of understanding of certain cultural norms may lead to misunderstandings and misperceptions about an individual interaction as well as the intent behind law enforcement's community outreach effort.

The following are examples of general cultural norms that may vary by group and should be considered as they may conflict with traditional law enforcement practices and complicate an agency's success in engaging in community relations with varied ethnic communities. Please keep in mind that the list is by no means exhaustive and even within cultures, many variations exist.

- **Comfort with and Interpretation of Eye Contact**

Some cultures interpret a lack of eye contact as disrespectful while others interpret it as a sign of respect or honesty. Eye contact between two males may be perceived as a sign of competition by some and eye contact between a male and female, in some cultures, is considered flirtatious.

- **Comfort with and Interpretation of Close Proximity**

In some cultures, interacting within a close proximity is the norm, while in others that may make people very uncomfortable and seen as being flirtatious or secretive.

- **Verbal and Physical Expressiveness**

Some cultures are much more verbally and physically expressive than many of the dominant white cultures in the U.S. It is important to focus on what the community members are trying to express in these cases, rather than interpret the expressiveness as aggression or disrespect. At times, it may also be valuable to connect with the community at an emotional level before trying to discuss policy and procedures.

- **Family**

Family structures and norms vary between communities and it can be helpful to consider these differences when planning the times, location, and structure of outreach events. For instance, at times it may be important to design an event that is appropriate for children to attend even if your main goal is to connect with the adults in the community. Providing onsite childcare would be another method for providing cultural accommodations for certain members.

- **Food**

Within almost any culture, some community events, may be more well received if food or some refreshments are provided. If you are conducting outreach to a particular ethnic group, providing food common in their culture or using vendors from their community can help demonstrate a desire to connect. It can also be helpful to be mindful of what foods the community you are reaching out to avoids. For example, if providing food for members of a Somali community, it may be helpful to take into consideration that many are Muslims, which frequently do not eat pork, follow kosher (hallal) guidelines, or are vegetarian.

Case Illustration

It is important to keep in mind that while there are differences between cultures, there are also many similarities. Regardless of culture or ethnicity, treating people with respect and dignity, listening closely to the community's concerns or questions, and responding to concerns with empathy and information, will send a strong message of sincerity. When this intent is clear, cultural differences are much easier to overcome and may even become less of a barrier.

At the start of Salem's outreach efforts, a checklist of plan was created to ensure the best chances of success. Details such as meeting name, location, time and format were considered. For example, the meetings were dubbed in *Platica con la Policia*, or translated: Conversation with the Police. In Spanish, the word *Platica* suggests a chat or discussion, while the word for meeting is *reunion* and has a more formal connotation. Also, the hint of alliteration in Spanish made the name catchy to say or to read in print.

The location and time of the meetings were also a large consideration. The goal was to find a site that would welcome the efforts (on a weekday evening), as well as be a location known to and frequented by area Hispanics, yet also convey a sense of neutrality. The local library was selected as the meeting spot with the ultimate objective of having meetings at the police department. The move was slowly incorporated after the first year by integrating a series of department tours as part of the month's meetings. The tours demonstrated the officers were open to the entire community, including Hispanic residents, and reinforced the message that the home of the police was open to everyone. In turn, the willingness on the part of the Hispanic community members to come to the police department showed police station that a relationship was building and the seeds of trust were slowly growing.

Meeting format was also a strategic plan. The idea for the meetings was to pattern them similar to the department's citizen police academy focusing on education about the agency and its various divisions. However, the objective also included providing information about laws, ordinances, and department policies and procedures. The department's citizen police academy runs in a traditional classroom and lecture format.

For the local Hispanic population, evening meetings were must, as well as the ability to bring their entire family to these gathering which included small children and grandparents. It was also important to create an interactive setting and encourage attendees to be part of the experience. These small considerations reaped numerous benefits.

For example, children and teens alike were able to see their parents interact with police officers in a casual, interactive and especially important non-enforcement setting. The outreach and education was breaching generational barriers all at the same time. Additionally, the interactive nature of the classes resulted in great interest. The Hispanic community was very engaged in the learning process and the best example was the presentation on the topic of traffic stops. Through the reenactment of a stop and putting the participants in the role of the officer, residents learned about the confusion and frustration on both sides of the car window. In the meantime, the communication lines were opening - in both directions. The two cultures (Hispanic and police) were gaining insight on one another.



IDENTIFYING THE BEST STRATEGIES FOR INITIAL CONTACT/COMMUNICATION



Having identified a community or population for outreach, what does one do next? While some cities and counties may be fortunate enough to have a department or division akin to an Office of Human Relations or Neighborhood Involvement to assist them with their community outreach to underserved communities, many city and county governments are frequently left to navigate the process of community outreach without an institutional or centralized framework. Below are some basic strategies for creating initial contact with a particular ethnic community when needed. At times, contacts between the police and the community are well established, in which case, this step may be unnecessary.

Strategies for building initial contacts when needed:

- **Attend public community meetings or events.** Just being present at meetings or events can help members of your agency become a familiar face, as well as assist with learning about the community concerns. The small act of being present at functions signals to residents that law enforcement is interested in a relationship. Much can be learned from these opportunities for relationship-building, especially when little may be known about a particular community.

Some sources to consider within your community for getting updates on community events where community leaders can be identified are:

- Public schools
- Community colleges and universities
- Social service agencies, providers, and non-profits
- Religious institutions (churches, mosques, synagogues, cultural, business, or neighborhood associations)

- **Set meetings with community leaders and stakeholders.** Utilize recommendations from community based organizations or city and county council members to identify community leaders and stakeholders. Meetings can be particularly helpful if a particular community group has voiced very specific concerns that your agency would like to address, if tensions are low but your agency wants to start implementing some crime prevention programs in a particular community, or if your agency does not know of any specific community concerns but just wants to initiate or grow mutually beneficial relationships.

Notes to consider:

- If tension between the police and community are high, be especially mindful to choose people with strong conflict mediation skills to represent your agency at these meetings.
- Seek to build relationships with multiple persons, organizations, or institutions within varied ethnic communities. Like any community, ethnic communities can have inter-group conflict or differ in their needs or concerns. As a result, no one person can or should serve as a representative for an entire community. Furthermore, communities are dynamic and ever changing. People move and organizations dissolve. Forming multiple partnerships will help ensure that the appropriate populations and interests are represented in a sustainable fashion.
- **Public Service Announcements.** Utilize community media within your local jurisdiction from which to provide information regarding your law enforcement agency

Case Illustration

When Chief Ron Louie wanted to increase community relations outreach efforts in Hillsboro, the first thing he decided to do was attend community meetings in order to meet people face to face and listen to the community concerns. Chief Louie's efforts allowed his agency to build partnerships and be more prepared for conducting their future community listening sessions.

Salem PD has used radio and television programs to build initial relationships with some of their Latino community members. They have used these programs to deliver public safety and crime prevention education and how to interact with law enforcement when stopped, for example. The radio venue permits residents to call in with questions during the program and communicate with law enforcement in Spanish. The strategy provides a comfortable and confidential way to interact with law enforcement, while providing law enforcement to ability to reach out to community members that may not be willing to show up at a police-citizen event.

STRATEGIES FOR IN-DEPTH CONVERSATIONS AND OUTREACH EFFORTS WITH THE COMMUNITY

After embarking upon the previous step of identifying the best strategies for initial contact and communication with ethnic communities, the next step should be to create sustainable strategies from which to continuously engage varied communities in conversations and community outreach efforts. Budgeting challenges in a constrained economic environment has affected state, county, and city governments, which in turn has affected the resources and staffing of the requisite law enforcement agencies. Consequently, it becomes increasingly important to utilize creative strategies, which may include shifting resources, partnering with local non-profit organizations, other local partnering law enforcement agencies, and applying for federal grants from which to conduct community outreach programs.

The following are examples of models or strategies in which your agency could utilize, adapt, or expand upon as appropriate for the culture of your particular law enforcement agency:

Community Outreach or Engagement Unit. If a budget allows, consider establishing a smaller unit or division dedicated mainly to the facilitation of relationships with community stakeholders, including specific ethnic communities, schools, businesses groups, or any relevant community stakeholder interested in creating meaningful and constructive engagement with the local law enforcement agency. This unit would be appropriate to the size of the particular law enforcement agency in Oregon. With the consideration of budget constraints, the unit could be staffed with both sworn police officers and non-sworn staff, that could work in conjunction with - when relevant or appropriate - the law enforcement unit that analyzes data to determine where outreach may be best effective. (e.g. Crime Analysis Unit, etc.). Record how many community events are attended per year, and record the numbers of contacts that the unit has made in each setting. Consider utilizing those contacts to create a monthly or quarterly e-mail list blast or newsletter, detailing the community outreach activities in which the law enforcement agency has spearheaded or been a major sponsor. A newsletter, in this fashion could allow for the agency to brand itself in a community centric fashion from which to broaden its credibility with historically distrustful or disengaged communities. One approach that this unit could sponsor as a test model within your community could be an:

- **Inter-Group Dialogue Series.** Facilitated focus groups are an opportunity for community members within a particular ethnic community, and police officers that serve that particular community, to engage in a structured, sustained facilitated environment of a weekly dialogue series (6 to 8 weeks). These “Living Room Conversations” consist of the same number of committed individuals from each group (police officers, community members, of 5 to 7 members each - 10 to 14 total per group). The format has proven successful as a community engagement approach for the Cully neighborhood in Portland.

It should be considered that the particular unit assigned to this type of work may need some degree of independence from the rest of the agency in order to (1) be trusted by the community; and (2) be the unit responsible for accessing the agency's community outreach evaluation efforts (see "Evaluation Progress" section) without political or institutional distractions. However, officers from all units should be allowed rotations to engage with these efforts.

If a unit is functionally not feasible for your particular agency, at the very least, consider the following:

- **Assignment of a Culturally Responsive Staff Person.** When working in *very* specific ethnic communities, (i.e. Native American reservations, Eastern European, Asian or other immigrant communities) consider hiring a civilian police coordinator/ staff or sworn officer to assist in the facilitation of issues with that community. Ideally, this person would be a member of the particular social identity group and community and could have the capacity to train officers in issues relevant to that community. If your law enforcement agency serves several different ethnic communities and budget allows, another staff person may be necessary so that the needs of multiple ethnic groups may be addressed. However, budgetary constraints may dictate and partnering with another agency to complement staffing may be an option. For example, the sharing of staff may result in expanding the available experience and training within several ethnic communities. Interagency operations on missions to reduce criminal activity are commonplace and an example of how partnerships can succeed.

Advisory Groups. Consider creating community roundtables, councils, or committees involving both police and members of the broader community that meet periodically for dialogue and strategy. Members can serve two-year or three year staggered terms, with the ability to re-commitment for additional terms only by approval from the Chairs in conjunction with the Chief of Police. There is no monetary compensation made to the members for their service.

Committees could have an ethnic or social identity community focus that addresses specific needs within the communities that your law enforcement agency serves.

Examples could include:

- **African American Advisory Council**
- **Arab and Muslim Police Advisory Council**
- **Native American Advisory Council**
- **Hispanic/ Latino Advisory Council**
- **Eastern European Advisory Council**
- **Asian/Pacific Islander Advisory Council**
- **Sexual Minorities Roundtable**
- **Developmental Disabilities Advisory Committee**

Communities could also include a specific policy or subject area focus in which a cross section of community members (with specific skill sets) could potentially be members in conjunction with law enforcement staff.

Examples could include:

- **Budget Advisory Committee** (if your city or county has these committees that citizen members can join)
- **Crisis Intervention Team** – to advise the Chief and CIT officers on current events involving the mental health community.
- **Precinct Advisory Councils/ Public Safety Action Committees** - These councils promote and improve positive relationships between Police precincts and the community to work on problem-solving activities.

Citizen Academy. Some law enforcement agencies - including police departments and local Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) field offices, have a structured citizens academy held once a year from which to engage community members regarding the functions of their agency. The class is often held from 6 to 8 weeks, once a week, with varied departments represented every week engaging community members in class instruction relative to the different departments of the agency. One element of the class usually involves a gun range practice, and teaching community members the safety issues involved in handling a gun. Another element would include at least one ride-a-long with an officer for the duration of a shift, to give the community members a sense of the different kind of calls and situations an officer can potentially deal with.

Individuals that apply to Citizens Academies tend to be community members who have a natural interest in the role of law enforcement, and consequently are a useful group in which the agency can utilize to engage in community outreach efforts as a part of a larger strategy.

Through the application process, the individuals that are accepted into the academies are taken through a background check to ensure their individual credibility to attend the class. The Citizen Academies can be useful opportunities from which to engage the graduates of this program from year-to-year in community outreach efforts. Some may attend the academies who are considering a career in law enforcement; while others may attend the academy as interested community members due to their professional roles, or in regards to some other capacity. If utilized within a broader community outreach strategy, graduates of these academies can be utilized as community "ambassadors" in which to attend community events in conjunction with police officers, when tabling at events, etc. Specifically, graduates of these academies that may come from specific ethnic communities can prove beneficial as community liaisons at events with police officers.

Youth Themed Activities. Consider a particular program (or combination of programs) aimed at developing relationships with youth within the jurisdiction of your law enforcement agency, regardless of ethnic or cultural background. However, within that broader context, place particular focus of engaging youth from underserved, ethnic communities as a large part of the clients/ constituent base of those programs. Examples of programs are:

- **Cadet Program.** Consider initiating a Cadet program with local high schools as a way to identify youth who may have an interest in law enforcement. In addition, the program can serve as a resource for a more diverse pool of applicants into your law enforcement agency. An institutional relationship with a young person, from ages 15 until the typical high school graduating age of 18, or beyond that age until age 20 (if completing a local associates program with a local community college) or age 22 (if completing a Bachelor's Degree at a college or university) sequentially, can go a long way in maintaining a relationship with a potential next generation of law enforcement officers within your law enforcement jurisdiction. Even if law enforcement is not the goal of some youth attendees, the potential positive peer influence on their friends, and associates, may be quantifiable.
- **Sports Activities.** Consider initiating an informal program (twice a year or quarterly) in which officers engage in a structured athletic activity with local youth (e.g. golf, football, basketball, fencing, hunting, etc.). (Within the Portland Police Bureau, during 2011 10 officers and 10 youth paired for golf practices and a two man wrestling tournament.). A more structured formal program could involve partnering with an organization pertinent to a particular sport such as a professional association, or a business that catered to sports attire, in which the organization could potentially assist in fiscally co-sponsoring a program or youth activities.
- **Police Activities League (PAL).** If your area does not presently have a PAL program, consider creating one in partnership with your law enforcement agency. The first PAL program, founded in New York in 1937 was designed to permit

fellow officers to participate with youth in a supervised place to play. It allowed officers to be mentors and friends, instead of perceived enemies. Today, many PAL programs have been initiated and managed by concerned civic leaders, citizens and officers with a goal of creating solutions to the growing problem of gang involvement and violence among youth. Many PAL programs are year round, and are directed by a committed volunteer Board of Directors and staffed by civilians, law enforcement officers and volunteers. Programs for youth as varied as youth football practices at area parks and schools, evening basketball, and Computer Club Houses (sponsored in part by a computer company). PAL chapters include all types of athletic, recreational and educational activities and are located in over 350 communities nation-wide (including Canada and the Virgin Islands). PAL programs are supported by their local city and police departments with police officers leading their activities and programs.

Case Illustration # 1

In 2012, the Portland Public Police Bureau (PPB) created a Chief's Advisory Panel that will work to improve citywide public safety and community policing processes. Potential Improvements could include broad recommendations and inclusion to the policies and training practices of the Police Bureau.

The member qualifications include having knowledge of public safety and community policing practices, attending and participating in two-hour quarterly meetings (4 per year), and the ability to work collaboratively with people of diverse perspectives and experiences.

Case Illustration # 2

In 2010, the Portland Division of the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) created the FBI Multi-Cultural Youth Leadership Academy Program, in conjunction with the FBI's local Multi-Cultural Advisory Council (MCAC). The FBI MCAC is composed of community leaders from cultural, religious, civic and business backgrounds. The FBI MCAC sought to provide a positive environment for young people to interact with law enforcement. Building upon the program's success of the last two years, the FBI condensed the program into a three day academy.

The program is geared towards developing youth leaders by engaging them in team-building experiences, exposing them to careers in law enforcement, and teaching them to communicate across cultures. Youth have direct interaction with law enforcement officials including FBI Special Agents. Youth applicants are required to attend all three days of the academy.

EVALUATION PROGRESS



Community outreach efforts need evaluation.

Evaluation is the *systematic collection and analysis of data needed to make decisions.*

Why is evaluation necessary?

- **Project Management**: evaluation can help the leaders of ethnic communities outreach efforts keep track of program activities and document the nature and extent of service delivery. Such a record is needed to ensure goals are maintained and on track to achieve desired outcomes. It will also provide evidence and illustrations for others on how the project is progressing. This information, if collected in a timely manner, can be used to make adjustments to the effort as it is developing so that it can stay on track. It is also important information for future program development and determining resource needs.
- **Project Accountability**: evaluation is necessary to ensure community outreach efforts within ethnic communities are working towards desired outcomes and ultimately achieving those outcomes. Evaluation can serve as proof to others that participants and community members find the effort valuable, that progress was made, and tangible achievements and outcomes have occurred.

Two types of evaluation:

- 1) **Process Evaluation**: process evaluation occurs while community outreach efforts within ethnic communities is occurring and developing. It is critical to examine the implementation of community outreach efforts to these communities. Process evaluations entail:
 - a. **Systematic tracking and recording of the nature and extent of services and activities the effort is engaging in.** (e.g. number of meetings, presentations, forums, number of persons in attendance, what organizations were represented, what issues were discussed, were any decisions made, and who is responsible for working on specific issues).
 - b. **Immediate feedback from participants and partners.** Feedback, impressions, advice on the effort should be routinely sought from participants and partners.
 - c. **Outside observations of effort.** Persons not formally associated with the minority community outreach effort, but with substantive knowledge of the issues, should observe daily activities, meetings, events, activities, and provide feedback and descriptive accounts of the effort.

Examples of process evaluation questions are:

- How many community outreach forums focused on particular ethnic (or other social identity groups) were held during the year?
- What was the average attendance at the forums (break out by community members and organizational representatives)?
- Did attendance increase or decrease over time?
- How many new persons attended the forum (as opposed to) the same people?
- What were the demographics of persons in attendance (e.g. race, ethnicity, gender, age)?
- What proportion of participants found the forum valuable? Did this change over time?
- What were the positive and negative opinions regarding the forum?
- How engaged was the dialogue and interaction? What was the tone of the forum?

- 2) **Outcome Evaluation**: Outcome evaluations seek to study the immediate and direct effects and long-term effects of the effort. Expressed another way, outcome evaluations determine what type of *impact* the effort has had on specific individuals, communities, or organizations. A way of thinking about impact is assessing whether the effort lead to positive changes or improvements. For example, did the effort change or improve attitudes, behaviors, organizational structures and outputs, or community structures and characteristics? Outcomes are ideally measured before the community outreach effort begins, referred to as a “baseline measure.” Outcomes are again measured after a specified time when it is logical that some form of change or impact should have happened. Outcome evaluation characteristics should:

- a. **Provide clear definitions of desired outcomes, impacts, or changes.**
- b. **Relate outcomes, impacts, or changes to program goals and the efforts being carried out.**
- c. **Ensure that outcomes, impacts, and changes are measurable.** This is typically the most difficult aspect of outcome evaluations. Some measures are not attainable or create heavy time and resource burdens.

Examples of outcome evaluation questions are:

- Did participant’s attitudes towards the police change after the project?
- Did the community’s attitudes towards the police change after the project?
- Did the police organization change after the project (e.g. new division, new policy, new training)?
- Did aggregate statistics related to the effort improve over time (e.g. crime events, solved cases, stop/search disparities, citizen complaints)?
- Did attitudes of individual officers involved in the project change (e.g. more positive view of community, more confidence in handling situations, better understanding of issue, confidence in working with community)?
- Did behaviors of individual officers involved in the project change (e.g. involvement in meetings/trainings, mentoring other officers, citizen complaints)?
- Did attitudes and behaviors of all officers change after the project?

Three different methods of how process and outcome evaluations are conducted are:

- 1) **Simple Methods:** There are a variety of simple tasks that individuals and organizations can undertake to create data for both process and outcome evaluation purposes. These efforts do not take much time or technical knowledge and should be integrated into the community outreach effort from the start. In some cases these methods may not pass “scientific standards,” but are much better than making decisions or determining conclusions based on no data or intuition. Methods include:
 - a. **Good record keeping system.** For example, keep a log of forum dates in a Microsoft Excel database, pass around sign in sheets that list attendees name and organization or community they represent. Log as much descriptive information on daily activities and events into your database.
 - b. **Comment cards.** Ask participants to fill out simple one page anonymous comment cards and place in a box. Keep questions simple, perhaps only a few open ended questions. Questions can focus on process/implementation issues, outcome issues, or both.
 - c. **Focus groups.** Convene a group of participants and/or community members to discuss how the effort is progressing and what impacts it’s having. Record the answers on a flip chart. Brainstorm with the group potential ways to address identified issues. Having an outside person not connected to the effort conduct the group and providing privacy assurances may be necessary to facilitate forthright and honest discussion.
- 2) **Difficult Methods:** Some techniques for conducting process and outcome evaluations will take more time and resources to implement. These methods may require consultation with persons possessing research skills and knowledge. These more “difficult” methods will create more detailed and accurate data for analysis. Methods include:
 - a. **Hourly or daily logs or data entry.** Hourly or daily logs of activities dedicated to the community outreach effort.
 - b. **Surveys of participants, police organizations, and community members.** Short surveys distributed by mail, email, or at events can ask more detailed questions about the program and measure important theoretical constructs related to issues. In contrast to comment cards, short surveys contain more questions and utilize “psychometric” scales for response options (ideally adopted from previous work on the topic).

- 3) **Complex Methods:** This option is for community outreach efforts that seek to develop process and outcome evaluations based on rigorous scientific methodologies. This will require a significant amount of staff time or paid consulting with a researcher. Methods include:
- a. **Scientific surveys.** Process and outcome surveys would be implemented. Surveys would target outreach participants, whole organizations, and communities if appropriate. Survey development and analysis would require expertise in database management, statistics, existing research on topic, and sampling methodology.
 - b. **Repeated observations of effort.** An observation protocol would be developed to record detailed information on the implementation of the effort. Observations would be conducted by a trained researcher multiple times throughout the effort.
 - c. **Organizational data.** Aggregate organizational data may be needed to assess some types of outcome goals. This will require expertise in database development, data extraction, statistical analysis and interpretation. In some cases new databases need to be created and personnel trained on how to fill out forms or utilize software to systematically record data.



SAMPLE STEP-BY STEP MODEL FOR COMMUNITY OUTREACH

This section is intended as a model for a step-by-step approach to initiating community outreach in a community where none has existed. Many of these six (6) steps have been extensively addressed and defined in previous sections of this guidebook and are summarized below into a three pronged timeline approach.

While many law enforcement agencies may already be involved in community outreach of various types and degrees of commitment, examining these steps may still be beneficial to already established community outreach efforts to assess what was or was not done and whether new activities along these lines could be helpful.

The three pronged timeline approach for the six step-by-step outreach model includes:

I. Pre-Outreach Steps

II. Outreach Implementation Steps

III. Post Outreach Steps

I. Pre-Outreach Steps:

- 1) **Identify the Community of Focus:** Community outreach begins by asking two critical questions - *what* community will be served by the outreach and *why* this choice? The answer to these two questions is critical because it will form the basis for determining the goals of the outreach effort and any unique issues that may impact successful implementation of the outreach effort.

More often than not community outreach is done in response to well known or obvious police-community tensions, incidents, or problems. Thus, community outreach tends to be reactive which requires a full understanding of the history and events that created problems or the perception of problems. It is also important for law enforcement to consider implementing community outreach efforts that can be done to *prevent* possible community tensions or problems in the future.

This will likely involve the following activities:

- a. **Examination of existing data on communities like crime, arrest, use of force, and complaint trends**
 - b. **Surveying the community perceptions regarding law enforcement and public safety**
 - c. **Talking to law enforcement administrators, sergeants, and street officers about potential communities of focus and why.**
 - d. **Talking to community leaders, local business, and other government agencies about potential communities of focus and why.**
- 2) **Develop Plan for Overcoming Obstacles for Successful Community Outreach:** Thoroughly understanding the community of focus in Step 1 and why it was chosen will be critical for assessing Step 2. The goal in Step 2 is to ensure success before outreach is undertaken, which requires a firm understanding of the community you will be engaging and the reasons that compel outreach to this community. Step 2 also requires an assessment and plan to identify and overcome obstacles that may prevent successful implementation.
- Some of these obstacles may be internal to your police organization (discussed in a previous section) or inherent in the reasons for outreach in the first place. Identifying existing strengths, motivations, and resources that will help overcome obstacles is also integral to this important “pre” community outreach stage. Remember your goal should be developing long-term or sustainable community outreach, which requires serious forethought and planning. Community tensions can deteriorate further when community outreach is implemented haphazardly and over a short-term basis.
- 3) **Find Community Partners:** Successful community outreach is unlikely to occur without help from outside law enforcement. More often than not the root causes that drive a need for outreach in diverse communities are multi-faceted and related to important social institutions like government, business/economy, education, faith-based, and criminal justice. In other words, other institutions, not just law enforcement, must bear a responsibility to ensure equitable and trustworthy relations exist between citizens and government, which police represent. Previous sections of this report provide guidance on working with city managers or county commissioner and the media. Those are important partners, but depending up the underlying issues within any community other partners like business, real estate, social work agencies,

probation/corrections, community and faith-based organizations, and schools will be necessary to address underlying community concerns.

II. Outreach Implementation Steps

- 4) **Making Initial Contact**: Once the preparatory work has been accomplished making initial outreach contact with the focus community is the next phase. Previous sections in this manual provide an overview of where initial outreach efforts can take place and guidance if there are language, literacy, and cultural differences. Working through Steps 1 to 3 will give outreach organizers a good sense of where and how initial contacts should be implemented based on the scope and nature of the outreach goals, and the resources and supports available. It goes without saying that being well-prepared for the initial outreach contact is critical. Imagine all the things that can go right *and wrong*, and plan accordingly.

Here are some important considerations:

- a. **Be prepared for community backlash.** You are taking the right step by engaging a community, but do not underestimate the degree to which they feel threatened, disenfranchised, and upset with law enforcement. Everyone participating in the outreach must be aware of this possibility. Don't be surprised if hostilities arise, expect it, and respond appropriately. The most important action you can take in response to community anger is to listen openly and compassionately without bias and defensiveness. You can acknowledge their concerns without assigning blame or fault, but reinforcing the goals of outreach are to work together through listening, dialogue, and problem-solving. Going on the defensive, although a very innate reaction to criticisms will only exasperate problems.
- b. **Do not start by controlling the direction of the outreach.** You may think you know what the major community concerns that spurred your outreach effort are, but once engaged new directions and opportunities may arise. Be prepared to allow the community to play an integral role in shaping the outreach effort, providing too much control may harm the effort. At the same time, some communities may need more direction at first, but as they build confidence they could look to get more involved.

- 5) **Maintenance and Institutionalization**: After the initial contacts, if engagement with the community is maintained and regularized, community tensions tend to lesson over time. This is when deeper dialogues and real problem-solving activities can occur. It is important at this stage to keep expectations realistic. Begin to develop a long-term plan that is sustainable given the context of your organization and community. Law enforcement, community members, and other partners need to develop a mutual understanding of the goals, structure, and longevity of the outreach effort. The more outreach can be institutionalized into policies, organizational structures, and formal agreements among partners, the better chance it has for success and sustainability.

III) Post-Outreach Steps

- 6) **Evaluation and Feedback**: It is vital that some form of monitoring of progress and outcomes occurs during the life of an outreach effort. The process of evaluation is discussed in more depth in a previous section and ideally evaluation is something that should be done throughout rather than reserved as a post outreach step. You may think of evaluation as an attempt to prove whether your outreach was good or bad, but it's better to think of evaluation as a process for keeping your efforts on track and successful. Using evaluation practices throughout an outreach effort will provide valuable feedback to change operations and address issues before bigger problems develop. It's also helpful to think of evaluation as providing a detailed history of the outreach effort. We all know it's inefficient to "reinvent the wheel" and evaluation provides a road map or recipe for future outreach efforts to follow.

CONCLUSION

Thank you for your time and effort in utilizing this guidebook – either in parts or completely in its entirety.

This guidebook - the first “Police-Community Relations” resource that the Law Enforcement Contacts Committee (LECC) has undertaken with support from the Criminal Justice Research Institute (CJPRI) at Portland State University, is one that we hope can be applied to your policing needs in your law enforcement agency’s efforts to conduct effective outreach, relationship building, and crime prevention within your ethnic communities of color.

Our intention is that the guidebook can continue to provide practical information and guidance on one of the most significant barriers facing law enforcement officers: police-community relationships. And we hope that it can provide a framework and specific tools in which your police department can create (or expand) strategies to better connect with the communities that you serve.

The CJPRI and the LECC would like to sincerely thank all law enforcement agencies throughout the state of Oregon in your collective efforts to maintain safe, sustainable and vibrant communities in which all of our residents can thrive. Your work and dedication often goes underappreciated, and please recognize that the efforts in this guidebook are intended to fully honor that work and contribute to it in a constructive and effective manner that resonates with your command staff, officers, administrators, and elected officials in a relevant and responsive fashion.

Criminal Justice Policy Research Institute (CJPRI) &
Law Enforcement Contacts Policy and Data Review Committee (LECC)

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