



OC Human Relations

Building community by fostering respect, resolving conflict and pursuing equality
Serving Orange County since 1991

Building Trust & Legitimacy Guidance & Support

Be Educated. Be Informed. Be Safe!

1.1 Recommendation: Law enforcement culture should embrace a guardian mindset to build public trust and legitimacy. Toward that end, police and sheriff's departments should adopt procedural justice as the guiding principle for internal and external policies and practices to guide their interactions with the citizens they serve.

1.2 Recommendation: Law enforcement agencies should acknowledge the role of policing in past and present injustice and discrimination and how it is a hurdle to the promotion of community trust.

1.2.1 Action item: The U. S. Department of Justice should develop and disseminate case studies that provide examples where past injustices were publicly acknowledged by law enforcement agencies in a manner to help build community trust.

1.3 Recommendation: Law enforcement agencies should establish a culture of transparency and accountability in order to build public trust and legitimacy. This will help ensure decision making is understood and in accord with stated policy.

1.3.1 Action item: To embrace a culture of transparency, law enforcement agencies should make all department policies available for public review and regularly post on the department's website information about stops, summonses, arrests, reported crime, and other law enforcement data aggregated by demographics.

1.3.2 Action item: When serious incidents occur, including those involving alleged police misconduct, agencies should communicate with citizens and the media swiftly, openly, and neutrally, respecting areas where the law requires confidentiality.

1.4 Recommendation: Law enforcement agencies should promote legitimacy internally within the organization by applying the principles of procedural justice.

1.4.1 Action item: In order to achieve internal legitimacy, law enforcement agencies should involve employees in the process of developing policies and procedures.

1.4.2 Action item: Law enforcement agency leadership should examine opportunities to incorporate procedural justice into the internal discipline process, placing additional importance on values adherence rather than adherence to rules.

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People are more likely to obey the law when they believe that those who are enforcing it have the legitimate authority to tell them what to do . . . The public confers legitimacy only on those they believe are acting in procedurally just ways.

Procedurally just behavior is based on four central principles:

1. Treating people with dignity and respect
2. Giving individuals "voice" during encounters
3. Being neutral and transparent in decision making
4. Conveying trustworthy motives

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1.5 Recommendation: Law enforcement agencies should proactively promote public trust by initiating positive nonenforcement activities to engage communities that typically have high rates of investigative and enforcement involvement with government agencies.

1.5.1 Action item: In order to achieve external legitimacy, law enforcement agencies should involve the community in the process of developing and evaluating policies and procedures.

1.5.2 Action item: Law enforcement agencies should institute residency incentive programs such as Resident Officer Programs.

1.5.3 Action item: Law enforcement agencies should create opportunities in schools and communities for positive nonenforcement interactions with police. Agencies should also publicize the beneficial outcomes and images of positive, trust-building partnerships and initiatives.

1.5.4 Action item: Use of physical control equipment and techniques against vulnerable populations—including children, elderly persons, pregnant women, people with physical and mental disabilities, limited English proficiency, and others—can undermine public trust and should be used as a last resort. Law enforcement agencies should carefully consider and review their policies towards these populations and adopt policies if none are in place.

1.6 Recommendation: Law enforcement agencies should consider the potential damage to public trust when implementing crime fighting strategies.

1.6.1 Action item: Research conducted to evaluate the effectiveness of crime fighting strategies should specifically look at the potential for collateral damage of any given strategy on community

1.7 Recommendation: Law enforcement agencies should track the level of trust in police by their communities just as they measure changes in crime. Annual community surveys, ideally standardized across jurisdictions and with accepted sampling protocols, can measure how policing in that community affects public trust.

1.7.1 Action item: The Federal Government should develop survey tools and instructions for use of such a model to prevent local departments from incurring the expense and to allow for consistency across jurisdictions. trust and legitimacy.

“When any part of the American family does not feel like it is being treated fairly, that’s a problem for all of us. It means that we are not as strong as a country as we can be. And when applied to the criminal justice system, it means we’re not as effective in fighting crime as we could be.” ~Barack Obama



1.8 Recommendation: Law enforcement agencies should strive to create a workforce that contains a broad range of diversity including race, gender, language, life experience, and cultural background to improve understanding and effectiveness in dealing with all communities.

1.8.1 Action item: The Federal Government should create a Law Enforcement Diversity Initiative designed to help communities diversify law enforcement departments to reflect the demographics of the community.

Citation:

President’s Task Force on 21st Century Policing. 2015. Final Report of the President’s Task Force on 21st Century Policing. Washington, DC: Office of Community Oriented Policing Services.

Published 2015

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6770.**

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1.8.2 Action item: The department overseeing this initiative should help localities learn best practices for recruitment, training, and outreach to improve the diversity as well as the cultural and linguistic responsiveness of law enforcement agencies.

1.8.3 Action item: Successful law enforcement agencies should be highlighted and celebrated and those with less diversity should be offered technical assistance to facilitate change.

1.8.4 Action item: Discretionary federal funding for law enforcement programs could be influenced by that department's efforts to improve their diversity and cultural and linguistic responsiveness.

1.8.5 Action item: Law enforcement agencies should be encouraged to explore more flexible staffing models.

1.9 Recommendation: Law enforcement agencies should build relationships based on trust with immigrant communities. This is central to overall public safety.

1.9.1 Action item: Decouple federal immigration enforcement from routine local policing for civil enforcement and nonseries crime.

1.9.2 Action item: Law enforcement agencies should ensure reasonable and equitable language access for all persons who have encounters with police or who enter the criminal justice system.

1.9.3 Action item: The U.S. Department of Justice should not include civil immigration information in the FBI's National Crime Information Center database.

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