

# Pittsburgh

## 2017 INTERIM STATUS REPORT



**PITTSBURGH, PENNSYLVANIA IS ONE OF SIX PILOT SITES FOR THE NATIONAL INITIATIVE FOR Building Community Trust and Justice (NI)**, a project designed to improve relationships and increase trust between communities and the criminal justice system, while also advancing public understanding of the issues contributing to those relationships. In collaboration with the U.S. Department of Justice, the National Initiative is coordinated by the **National Network for Safe Communities at John Jay College of Criminal Justice**, in partnership with the **Justice Collaboratory at Yale Law School**, the **Center for Policing Equity at John Jay College and UCLA**, and the **Urban Institute**.

The National Initiative's work involves trust-building interventions with police departments and communities based on three pillars:

- Enhancing **procedural justice**: the way police interact with the public, and how those interactions shape the public's views of the police, their willingness to obey the law, and their engagement in co-producing public safety in their neighborhoods.
- Reducing the impact of **implicit bias**: the automatic associations individuals make between groups of people and stereotypes about those groups, and the influence it has in policing.
- Fostering **reconciliation**: frank engagements between marginalized communities and law enforcement to address historical tensions, grievances, and misconceptions that contribute to mutual mistrust and misunderstanding and prevent police and communities from working together.

### At a Glance: Key highlights for Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania

#### Procedural Justice

- All 850 of PBP's sworn officers have undergone trainings on the theory of procedural justice ("PJ1") and operational techniques on how to apply this in practice ("PJ2").
- PBP has appointed a full-time trainer (along with an existing part-time training cohort) at the Academy to continue integrating procedural justice into PBP training.
- PBP delivered a customized PJ1 training to more than 20 community groups and neighboring agencies.

#### Implicit Bias

- Approximately 500 of PBP's 850 sworn officers have undergone the 8-hour training on implicit bias (PJ3), and all new recruits will be cycled through as well.
- Pittsburgh was the first city to roll out a community-facing implicit bias training: "PJ3—Community".

#### Reconciliation

- In preparation for reconciliation "listening sessions," PBP has taken a number of steps, including the establishment of: an LGBTQIA Liaison and an LGBTQ Working Group; a Multicultural Affairs Unit, which brings outreach to immigrant communities; the broad-based Civil Rights Working Group; cross-agency engagement with youth through the Downtown Safety Coalition; and coordination with the American Disabilities Association to better serve the needs of people with disabilities.

Pittsburgh was selected as a pilot site for its demonstrated willingness and capacity to engage in the National Initiative's research, intervention, and evaluation process, as well as its jurisdiction size and demographic composition. The National Initiative partners with public safety officials to develop, implement, and assess each intervention, which is tailored to the needs of the Pittsburgh community. The successes and lessons learned in Pittsburgh and each pilot site will set the city on a trajectory beyond the project's formal end date and help to build a base of knowledge, policy, and practice to transform communities everywhere.

This status report comes as Pittsburgh moves into a fourth and final year of work with the National Initiative: moving forward, the Pittsburgh Bureau of Police will take steps to institutionalize each component of the NI to ensure sustainability and longevity.

## Enhancing Procedural Justice

The Justice Collaboratory at Yale Law School and the Chicago Police Department created a comprehensive curriculum on procedural justice (PJ) that was adapted by the National Initiative and the Pittsburgh Bureau of Police (PBP) to address Pittsburgh's unique history and police practices. Research demonstrates that procedural justice can increase public willingness to obey and cooperate with the police ("police legitimacy") and ultimately lead to stronger police-community relationships, increased safety, and reduced crime.

The PJ curriculum includes several modules that do the following:

- Define the concept of legitimacy and highlight ways to increase police legitimacy;
- Explain procedural justice and how it is necessary for advancing public safety goals;
- Review the present-day relationship between the police and the community; and
- Help officers understand the role that history has played—from the Fugitive Slave Act of 1793 through the Civil Rights Movement—in hindering legitimacy in some communities.

The curriculum also features modules that thoroughly explore the real-life application of procedurally just policing principles, thus helping officers to recognize when, where, and how those principles should be applied.

All 850 of PBP's sworn officers have undergone both 8-hour trainings on the theory and framework of procedural justice ("PJ1") as well as operational techniques on how to apply this framework in

practice ("PJ2"). The NI is working closely with PBP leadership to institutionalize the PJ curriculum and sustain it as a core part of PBP's future policies.

These efforts include:

- Appointing Officer Jeff Upson to a full-time position at the Academy to continue shepherding Pittsburgh's procedural justice work for the foreseeable future alongside the existing part-time procedural justice training cohort. PBP and the NI team would also like to extend our thanks to policing consultant Dave Mather for his efforts in improving PBP training protocol and refining departmental culture.
- Continuing to work with the PJ team, Officer Upson, and Lieutenant Matthew Lackner to integrate procedural justice into other departmental trainings and evaluations. For example, some of this early work has involved Sergeant Caytlin Wood in her role as the Field Training officer (FTO) supervisor, as she has worked with Officer Upson to incorporate procedural justice concepts into the FTO program, including incorporating it into evaluations through the Daily Observation Reports (DOR) forms.
- Delivering a customized PJ1 training to more than 20 community groups and neighboring agencies. As a part of this effort, PBP has trained community trainers to co-facilitate delivery of PJ1.

## Reducing Implicit Bias

As part of the National Initiative's work to address and reduce implicit bias, Pittsburgh police trainers worked with NI staff to adapt the implicit bias training developed by the Center for Policing Equity. This training works to ensure that law enforcement is aware of implicit biases Americans hold and how they form, and the circumstances under which implicit biases are most likely to manifest in ways that jeopardize good judgment and safety. With this information in hand, officers and departments are far better equipped to work through police training, policy, and practice to identify and mitigate the scenarios in which implicit bias has significant negative impacts.

Approximately 500 of PBP's 850 sworn officers have undergone the 8-hour training on implicit bias (PJ3), and all new recruits will be cycled through as well.

Additionally, Pittsburgh is proud to be the first NI city to roll out a community-facing implicit bias training. "PJ3–Community," as it's often referred to, helps advance the conversations had in officer trainings by including community members while also developing community awareness and buy-in for PBP's trust-building work. PBP collaborated with the Center for Policing Equity to train community members to co-facilitate and teach these sessions alongside PBP officers. This full-day session, led by Commander Lando and Officer Upson, took place on Wednesday, June 28th, 2017 at the Police and Community Summer Institute.

*If you're interested in attending a training or becoming a facilitator, please reach out to Officer Jeff Upson at [jeffrey.upson@pittsburghpa.gov](mailto:jeffrey.upson@pittsburghpa.gov).*

## Fostering Reconciliation and Building Trust

"Reconciliation" is a process that opens communication between community members and the police, allows both parties to acknowledge past and present grievances, and begin to build (or rebuild) trust. PBP has worked with the NI team to design a robust reconciliation framework that promotes neighborhood policing as well as active outreach to the city's most vulnerable communities.

The process involves facilitated meetings ("listening sessions") between police department leadership and influential leaders from a variety of communities with histories of tension with the police. The meetings introduce the reconciliation process to community members; allow police leadership to publicly commit to the process of reconciliation; acknowledge the importance of overcoming the present state of mistrust; and offer community members an opportunity to respond. Ultimately, lessons learned through these sessions will inform the internal policy review process, in addition to localized operational collaborations to improve public safety.

The NI is working with the PBP to adapt its framework for police-community reconciliation to map out a meaningful rollout. Though PBP has not yet begun the listening sessions, they have made intentional steps to engage and build trust with Pittsburgh's most vulnerable communities through a variety of other avenues, including the appointment of an LGBTQIA Liaison, Commander Eric Holmes, and the establishment of an LGBTQ Working Group; the Multicultural Affairs Unit, whose charge is to build trust with and address issues raised by immigrant communities; the broad-based Civil Rights Working Group, which brings together a diverse coalition of government and community partners to discuss issues like use of force policy; strategic cross-agency engagement with youth through the Downtown Safety Coalition; and coordination with the American Disabilities Association to better serve the needs of people with disabilities.

The following items are examples of recent trust-building work which can be built into a formal reconciliation framework:

- Commander Jason Lando has held focus conversations to listen to the concerns of the city's young people who are so often unfortunately impacted by violent crime, while also promoting dialogue between them and law enforcement. Following enthusiastic conversations between police and local youth in 2016, Commander Lando and the PBP were invited to the Greater Pittsburgh Coalition Against Violence's Anti-Violence Youth Summit in the Hill District on March 8, 2017.

- Connecting with immigrant and refugee communities has also been a key priority for the PBP. As part of the Mayor's Multicultural Liaison Unit, the PBP aims to help educate immigrant communities on their legal rights, personal safety, and effective interactions with law enforcement. Through a newly-established Immigrants Public Safety Academy (to be taught in English and Spanish), the PBP will also take part in a series of listening sessions with immigrant communities conducted by the Multicultural Liaison Unit. The agency has recently issued guidance regarding its immigration status non-inquiry policy.
- To improve interactions with LGBTQIA communities, the PBP is working with the PERSAD Center on collaborative training initiatives, such as the Sexual Orientation Gender Identity and Expression trainings. As part of Working Together LGBTQ+, the PBP has joined various local government agencies and members of the LGBTQ+ community to reform policies at the Allegheny County Jail. ACJ has since updated its policy on housing transgender individuals, and is currently revising its intake questionnaire to better identify LGBTQ+ individuals and address their safety concerns while in custody.
- Pittsburgh trainers have also increasingly been recognized as state and regional leaders in trust-building. The PBP is working with the Pennsylvania Municipal Police Officers' Education and Training Commission (MPOETC) to spread procedural justice training statewide. Within the city, PBP has trained the Port Authority Police Department in PJ1, PJ2, and PJ3.

### **Integrating Policy Recommendations**

PBP has worked with the NI team to develop a policy team and process that will be tasked with considering opportunities for changing policy and practice so that they align with the NI's core principles.

In Pittsburgh, Assistant Chief Larry Sciotto and Officer Heather Bristow-Hart are coordinating policy change efforts. In its initial stages, they are working with the NI team to consider recommendations from the experts in the core NI pillars at the Justice Collaboratory at Yale Law School and the Center for Policing Equity. So far, the policy team has identified 26 department policies to be revised under the

framework of procedural justice, began work to develop a clear and consistent policy and enhanced training on de-escalation, and put PBP on track to have 58 public policies online by the end of 2017. Looking ahead, PBP has expressed interest in finding ways to develop new metrics for measuring police success that are in line with their legitimacy and trust-building goals.

### **Improving Public Safety**

The National Network for Safe Communities (NNSC) has been working with PBP to implement the Group Violence Intervention (GVI), a strategy designed to reduce gun violence by focusing on the people at highest risk for violent victimization and offending. A three-pronged approach involving law enforcement, community partners, and social service providers, GVI aims to improve public safety, minimize arrest and incarceration, foster police-community collaboration, and change the narrative in neighborhoods that may have felt both over-policed and under-protected.

To learn more about how GVI works, [please visit NNSC's website](#) or contact Pittsburgh's GVI Project Manager Cornell Jones at [cornell.jones@pittsburghpa.gov](mailto:cornell.jones@pittsburghpa.gov).

### **Evaluating Progress**

In order to assess whether the National Initiative is affecting community member perceptions of and attitudes towards crime and police, the Urban Institute has been surveying residents in Pittsburgh neighborhoods that have a high incidence of crime.

Their latest round of community surveys will be a follow-up from the baseline survey they conducted in Fall 2015, during which residents expressed overwhelming support for obeying the law and willingness to partner with police to solve crime, but only a third supported the police's actions in the community.

The Urban Institute completed its second round of surveys in August, 2017. Data from those surveys will feed into Urban's final report, which will be a comprehensive assessment of the implementation and impact of the NI and broader trust-building work.

## Looking to the Future

The National Initiative commends PBP's leadership and commitment to a new way of doing business, which has been essential to the significant progress detailed in this status report. Additionally, we would like to extend our thanks to Mayor Bill Peduto and newly sworn in Chief Scott Schubert, who have ensured the sustainability of the NI in Pittsburgh through our continued partnership.

Over the remainder of the project, the National Initiative will continue the rollout and institutionalization of its new curricula; facilitate trust-building efforts through listening sessions; raise public awareness of its activities and increase public engagement; measure the impact of its interventions; and continue to develop local partnerships to sustain and institutionalize this collaborative effort.

*If you are interested in getting involved, or have suggestions, questions, or comments about the National Initiative, please reach out to us at [info@trustandjustice.org](mailto:info@trustandjustice.org) or contact the National Initiative's Pittsburgh Site Liaison, Commander Eric Holmes, at [eric.holmes@pittsburghpa.gov](mailto:eric.holmes@pittsburghpa.gov) or (412) 323-7814. We look forward to hearing from you.*