

Fort Worth

2018 INTERIM STATUS REPORT

FORT WORTH, TEXAS 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 Fort Worth, Texas

Procedural Justice and Implicit Bias

- All of FWPD's sworn officers have undergone 16 hours of training on the theory and practice of procedural justice ("PJ1" and "PJ2").
- All of FWPD's sworn officers have undergone the 8-hour training on implicit bias ("PJ3"), and all new recruits have been cycled through as well.
- FWPD hosted its initial Train-the-Trainer for PJ3 with community members on June 23, 2018, joined by PJ trainers from the Pittsburgh Bureau of Police and the Stockton Police Department.

Reconciliation

- FWPD held its first listening session on December 7th 2017 in the city's historically African-American "Stop Six" community.
- In August 2018, FWPD hosted a peer exchange with PJ trainers and School Resource Officers from the Birmingham and Minneapolis Police Departments, on how SROs can leverage PJ and reconciliation frameworks to strengthen relationships and build trust with youth.

Fort Worth 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 works in real-time partnership with Fort Worth to develop, implement, and assess each intervention specifically in accordance with the needs of the Fort Worth community. The successes and lessons learned in Fort Worth 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 Fort Worth continues its final year of work with the National Initiative.

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 Fort Worth Police Department (FWPD) to address Fort Worth'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 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 that help officers recognize when, where, and how those principles should be applied.

All of FWPD'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).

Additionally, FWPD Community Liaison Joycia "Sunshyne" Johnson has worked with FWPD PJ trainers to launch community outreach events with local schools and community organizations to share information and spread awareness about the department's work on procedural justice. These sessions have created a valuable opportunity for dialogue between officers and community.

Reducing Implicit Bias

As part of the National Initiative's work to address and reduce implicit bias, Fort Worth 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.

Fort Worth has completed all PJ3 police trainings within the department, a significant feat given transitions and reduced capacity in the PJ Training Unit. Given their full-time efforts on PJ3 rollout, CPE worked with the department to develop a timeline that staggered PJ3 Community rollout until the completion of PJ3 for officers.

FWPD hosted its initial Train-the-Trainer for PJ3 with community members on June 23, 2018. This event trains community members on the implicit bias curriculum so that they can deliver the training to other interested community members, thus spreading awareness of procedural justice throughout Fort Worth.

Attendees at this training included 14 Neighborhood Patrol Officers, five community members, and two FWPD procedural justice trainers, and they were joined by PJ trainers from the Pittsburgh Bureau of Police and the Stockton Police Department. Going forward, Ms. Johnson will be responsible for providing oversight and management to all training PJ3 Community co-facilitators.

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. FWPD has worked with the NI to design a 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 leadership and 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 FWPD internal policy review process, in addition to localized operational collaborations to improve public safety.

Fort Worth Police Department held its first listening session on December 7th 2017 in the city’s historically African-American “Stop Six” community, where Chief Fitzgerald made an official acknowledgement of harm and 35 community members participated. As a result of the listening session, the Chief agreed to publish their internal discipline process online.

Under the leadership of lead PJ trainer and Head of Recruit Training Sergeant Buck Wheeler, FWPD has also piloted a “Citizens Use of Force Academy”, aiming to increase transparency by educating community members on department policies and training procedures on use of force. Community members have shared positive feedback, stating their new appreciation for the

nuances of policing as a result of the training.

In May 2018, Ms. Johnson collaborated with the PJ trainers to launch “Community Engagements”, which share information about the principles of procedural justice and discuss specific topics of interest to community members with FWPD. May’s event focused on police-youth engagement, and featured nearly 50 community members, including a young women’s group at a local high school. The meetings have so far received very positive feedback and the NNSC is supporting plans for future meetings on other topics related to the National Initiative.

Assistant Chief Charlie Ramirez and PJ Trainer Officer Demetra Bradley traveled to Stockton in July 2018 to observe one of the Stockton Police Department’s trust-building workshops: a hybrid of community PJ training and a listening session. They also met with leaders of the SPD Police Athletic League, Spanish Speaking Citizens Academy, and the SPD Domestic Violence Unit, as well as local youth mentors, Latinx community leaders, and DV advocates, to share best practices for building relationships with these respective communities.

Moreover, the FWPD PJ trainers have developed an innovative program and facilitator’s guide known as “Youth Engagement and Conversations”. The program, which will be led on a volunteer basis by School Resource Officers (SROs) at their schools, is a series of conversations between SROs and youth grounded in the procedural justice and reconciliation frameworks. It includes elements of both processes, such as a modified and condensed youth-facing PJ curriculum, and a listening session. The aim of this program is to strengthen relationships and build trust between SROs and youth. Sergeant Wheeler, Officer Bradley, and Officer Stephen Srein launched training on the guide in July 2018.

In August 2018, FWPD hosted the second SRO training as part of a peer exchange with other PJ trainers and SROs from the Birmingham and Minneapolis Police Departments. The peer exchange discussed how SROs could leverage PJ and reconciliation to strengthen relationships and mentoring with youth. The peer exchange yielded several key takeaways across agencies, such as the importance of introducing SROs to the entire student body and clarifying their role at the beginning of the school year. These insights will be documented in a formal memo later in 2018.

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 Fort Worth neighborhoods that have a high incidence of crime.

Their latest round of community surveys was completed November, 2017. Data from those surveys will feed into the Urban Institute's final report, which will be a comprehensive assessment of the implementation and impact of the NI and broader trust-building work.

CPE will also release a comprehensive report later in 2018 on Fort Worth's policy and PJ training work, as well as the results of its climate survey and attitude and behavior matching studies.

Looking to the Future

Over the remainder of the project, the National Initiative will continue to support FWPD to rollout the PJ curricula; support trust-building efforts; raise public awareness of its activities and increase public engagement; and measure the impact of its interventions.

If you have suggestions, questions, or comments about the National Initiative, please reach out to us at info@trustandjustice.org

For additional information about community events, or if you are interested in getting involved with the National Initiative in Fort Worth, please contact the FWPD Community Liaison Joycia "Sunshyne" Johnson, at thesunshyneretwork@hotmail.com

For all other information, please reach out to the FWPD National Initiative Site Liaison, Assistant Chief Charlie Ramirez, at Charles.Ramirez@fortworthtexas.gov