



**POLICE  
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PEACE**

# 7 SIMPLE STEPS FOR POSITIVE POLICING TOOLKIT

SPRING 2021





# INTRODUCTION

**The ‘7 Simple Steps for Positive Policing’ is an active conversation for communities across the country to co-produce public safety with their police departments. It is a process where the complexity of police culture, training, hiring and reward systems unique to the police are explained and considered by both parties. The 7 Simple Steps for Positive Policing program provides a six-month, facilitated, 360-degree review of your communities’ relationship with your police department. It consists of individuals from community stakeholder groups who regularly come together to identify tasks and work out solutions,**

**This 7 Simple Steps for Positive Policing Toolkit will help facilitate the following outcomes for your community and department:**

- Improve community-police relations
- Break down longstanding barriers between citizens and officers
- Create new community engagement
- Increase transparency of the department in the eyes of the community
- Build goodwill among community members in advance of future conflicts



# QUESTIONS TO ASK UPFRONT

**When you desire to introduce a ‘new community policing approach’ to your department, there are several questions to ask yourself beforehand which will shape the program and impact your ultimate results.**

**Here are questions to ask yourself as you begin this stage of the process:**

**1. Do you have an existing community engagement program?**

- a. If yes, what’s working and what isn’t working?
- b. If no, why not?

**2. What are your program objectives?**

- a. Greater community engagement
- b. Building public trust
- c. Creating new channels of communication
- d. Establishing new relationships between officers and citizens
- e. Improving transparency in the eyes of the community

**4. What success metrics are essential to you?**

- a. Fewer citizen complaints against officers
- b. Higher levels of public support
- c. Better community support in the aftermath of incidents

**5. What stakeholders will your program be important to?**

- a. Activist community
- b. Faith community
- c. Civic groups
- d. Business community
- e. BIPOP Community
- f. Police department
- g. Other\_\_\_\_\_

**6. How long will your program run for?**

- a. 6 months
- b. 12 months
- c. Other\_\_\_\_\_

**7. What initiatives would you like to include in your program?**

Later on, you will have the opportunity to complete a worksheet where you list them



# ABOUT THE PROGRAM

**In policing today, leaders and their departments are not only subject to rules and regulations, but also subject to the court of public opinion. When incidents occur in a community, police leaders need to respond quickly to re-establish the trust of citizens. The need to take immediate action is crucial, as is the equally important need to furnish the community, elected officials and civic groups with information about what is going on. When police leaders do not take both of these steps, public opinion can quickly turn against a department and create disconnects with the community.**

## **How do we avoid disconnects?**

By changing the lens where policing in a community is seen as unidirectional—meaning officers and police leaders working alone in a silo to address problems—and instead applying the lens of bi-lateral action and communication between police leaders and community members, disconnects can be avoided. The way to do this is for departments to involve community members in a meaningful, productive way before incidents occur.

## **How does that community involvement begin?**

The most important step a department and community can take is to co-create public safety together. While departments are often left alone to craft their approach to public safety, creating a mechanism where police leaders and community members can work together in a transparent way is the place to begin.

This means working together to understand community needs, share input, create a set of mutual values and deliver these shared values in the form of public safety. This is the key to good community engagement and high levels of public trust.

## **How does this greater transparency work?**

When community members are able to see the evidence that police leaders and the department shares their values, the guesswork on the part of citizens which can lead to dissatisfaction is removed. What this takes is an approach which highlights the fact that shared values are guiding the entire policing approach.

## **What forms can shared values and transparency take?**

Forms of co-creation of public safety can include joint policy development, agreements about training and records of police conduct, rapidly releasing body camera footage or



# ABOUT THE PROGRAM

other evidence that the public would use to form opinions.

The 7 Simple Steps for Positive Policing provides a mechanism for an ongoing, facilitated conversation between police leaders and community members where all aspects of policing and civic engagement are considered. It is a 6-month long task force comprised of all stakeholders, police and community alike, where task force members work together on ideas, problems and solutions.

## How does the process begin?

To begin the development of an effective mechanism to co-produce public safety, a community and department would engage in a process of self-review. The self-review is an analysis completed using online surveys to gauge how citizens view the department and its officers, how the officers view community members, and how officers view themselves, their jobs and the department. Once complete, this will reveal the sentiments of community stakeholders. Having this knowledge in advance of convening the task force can help ensure a healthy and robust approach to starting the process of co-producing public safety.



# PROGRAM PLANNING MATERIALS

## Program Setup: 2-4 weeks before the program begins:

- Identify key stakeholders with whom to discuss the program
- Finalize program objectives
- Identify operations points of contact
- Determine timeline for program
- Consider the size of the task force
- Consider the format and venue for meetings, whether in-person or virtual
- Consider the frequency of task force meetings: semi-monthly, monthly, etc.
- Consider the duration of task force meetings: 60 minute, 90 minute, etc.
- Consider the diversity and make-up of the task force which would be ideal
- Consider whether food could or should be served for in-person meetings to create a welcoming environment

## Notes:

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# PRE-CHECK LIST

## Task Force Pre-check List

### Self Review Survey

- Police2Peace schedules introductory calls with researchers
- Introductory calls occur with prospective task force community members, police staff and researchers
- Types of stakeholders to include in surveys are identified
- Survey questions are provided by Police2Peace for consideration of use
- Need for translation of survey questions into additional languages is determined
- Prospective task force members consider available questions and question types for inclusion
- Possible survey question are shared with other key community stakeholders for consideration
- Prospective task force members finalize survey questions for department staff and community
- Prospective task force members determine additional languages needed to be translated
- Police2Peace and prospective task force members agree on method of distribution—online, printed flyers, social media
- Police2Peace has final surveys translated as needed and issues online links.
- Police2Peace prints flyers and develops social media posts
- Start date for self-review surveys is determined by task force
- Police2Peace delivers flyers and/or and begins social media posts
- Self-review survey commences
- Self-review survey concludes once enough responses are collected
- Self-review results are compiled and delivered by Police2Peace



# PROGRAM PLANNING MATERIALS

## Task Force Particulars

Once the self-review process is complete and the results have been delivered, the convening of the task force is the next step

### Task Force

#### Who will serve on the task force?

- What community members remained engaged during self-review process?
- Who were the consistently engaged points of contact from police leadership?
- How large a group of interested individuals is there to choose among for task force members?
- How diverse is the group, in terms of age, race, ethnicity, gender identity, neighborhood, socio-economic background, religion or education?

#### Where, when and how often will people meet?

- Will meetings occur virtually or in-person, or a mix of both?
- Will meetings be held during the weekday, evenings or on weekends for optimal participation?
- Is it necessary to hold more meetings early on to create excitement and engagement, such as weekly to start?
- Once meeting flow has been established, it is optimal to change meeting frequency to fewer meetings spaced further apart?

## Setting the Tone

- Have you considered the formality of the program, and made choices about how formal or informal it should be?
- If using tables for in-person meetings, are you planning to offer pens and notepads?
- Are you considering serving food, which can be an icebreaker?
- When would you serve the food so that it is not a distraction?
- Are people able to comfortably eat where they are seated or do they need to move somewhere to pick up or consume food easily?

## Equipment

- Have you considered what supplies might bring about the best result?
- Do you have access to computers, projectors, smart boards, flip charts, paper and markers?
- Can there be a copy machine nearby, if needed?

## Program Documentation

- Do you wish for the meetings to be memorialized?
- Because it may help lead to further action, how do you plan to document the meetings?
- Is there a participant observer who may be available to record the meetings and then have them transcribed?



# PROGRAM PLANNING MATERIALS

## Program Materials

- Are you planning to review the city and police budgets together?
- Will you be reviewing police policies within the task force?
- Are there other areas of interest on the part of task force members such as training approaches, transparency, hiring goals that you will wish to consider together?

## List of Action Items

Using the information you develop in your task force meetings, make a list of needs and desires that address the issues you care about most, such as:

- How well are the police preventing crime, helping victims and solving problems?
- How respectful, trustworthy, fair and helpful are the police when they interact with the community?
- How transparent is the police budget process and what are the items money is being spent on?
- Could money be moved from one type of response to another type, such as funding the inclusion of mental health professional in police responses?
- What are the policies that the task force members can agree on which match the values of the citizens as well as the mission of the department?

## Share Findings

Once the task force has developed its list of recommendations and findings, be sure to share what has been developed with key stakeholders, such as elected officials, community groups, civic groups, faith leaders and activist groups.

If you need help convening and managing your task force, please reach out to us and we can assist you in your own 7 Simple Steps for Positive Policing Program.



# THE 7 SIMPLE STEPS PROGRAM

## Creating Buy-in

We crafted a set of emails and graphics you can use with your community in order to promote engagement for your 7 Simple Steps for Positive Policing Program.

- **The Program Awareness Email:** Make your organization and community members aware of the upcoming task force program. It is just for awareness, and therefore, shouldn't contain a URL to your program's sign up page.
- **The Community Participation Email:** Entice and excite engagement. This email should be sent to community leaders, stakeholders you identify as potential influencers to consider the task force.
- **The Department Participation Email:** Create excitement among department staff and entice them to support the program
- **The Program Participation Reminder Email 1 and Email 2:** Urge last minute participation to sign up to become a prospective task force member, When you are crafting your message, focus on what is most meaningful for each of the stakeholder groups to take away from the task force.

## How to inspire community members:

- **Inspire!** Explain benefits of the task force
- **Why?** Explain department and program objectives
- **Who?** Key stakeholders and community influencers
- **Goals?** Transparent & clear objectives

## How to inspire department staff:

- **Inspire!** Explain advantages of the task force
- **Why?** Explain organization objectives
- **How?** Confirm the program doesn't diminish any of the work already being done to create community engagement
- **Goals?** Transparent & clear objectives

## The Toolkit

Across the country, departments are bringing police leaders and community members together for productive conversations for the co-production of public safety. This toolkit is a resource for those communities interested in bringing 7 Simple Steps for Positive Policing into their cities. The positive conversation strategies contained in this toolkit provide an overview of innovations and other promising best practices.

This toolkit is a valuable first step in breaking down longstanding barriers between community members and police departments. While convening a successful 7 Simple Steps for Positive Policing task force program can require a time, energy and considerable commitment from a department, the effort is worthwhile. Police leaders and community members alike report that these important conversations were valuable in establishing lasting relationships and changing the courses of community department engagement.

Note that the recommendations contained herein are intended as guidelines, and should be adapted as needed to suit the department and community.



# CONCLUSION

**The ‘7 Simple Steps for Positive Policing Program’ does not end at the last session. To maintain a healthy community policing framework, you will need to continue to use tools at your disposal to stimulate participation and continuing buy-in. In addition, think of ways you can stimulate department and community-wide excitement about the program and its benefits. Emails, newsletters, videos and testimonials are all good ways to maintain excitement.**

You can even follow on the 7 Simple Steps for Positive Policing Program with these other programs to continually generate engagement, such as:

- Peace Officer Identity
- Officer Cognitive Resilience Training
- Police Community Youth Dialogues

And community programs including:

- Community Feedback Loop
- Walk With Us Community Unity

These programs may come in handy when creating a 7 Simple Steps for Positive Policing Program for your department.

**Begin developing yours today!**

You now have the tools, tips and worksheets to consider developing your own 7 Simple Steps for Positive Policing Program

If you have any questions about starting your own 7 Simple Steps for Positive Policing Program using Police2Peace, or enriching your existing program, feel free to visit [police2peace.org](https://police2peace.org) or give us a call at 928.852.4240.

**Engage your community today with Police2Peace.**



Police2Peace is a national, nonpartisan nonprofit organization that is operationalizing a framework of community policing rooted in the idea of police officers becoming peace officers. Police2Peace's mission is to be a trusted source of ideas, strategies, programs and policies for positive change in policing for departments, municipalities, the federal government and civil society. As a solutions-driven organization, Police2Peace brings expertise to departments that are redefining, reimagining and advancing policing in America for the purposes of cultural, procedural and operational change and departmental alignment. Police2Peace is a U.S. domestic nonprofit corporation having a 501 (c)(3) status with the IRS.

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**Phone:** 928.852.4240

**Web:** [police2peace.org](http://police2peace.org)

**E-mail:** [info@police2peace.org](mailto:info@police2peace.org)