PEACE OFFICER AND THE PEACE OFFICER PROMISE FAQs

Operationalizing The Peace Officer Promise for an agency and with community stakeholders.

What is the philosophical basis of the Peace Officer Project and the Peace Officer Promise?
The Peace Officer Project and the Peace Officer Promise are founded in the basic tenants of peacekeeping, community policing, constitutional policing, evidence-based policing, procedural justice and medicine's Hippocratic Oath.

Effective, empathetic and just policing, with a focus on the facilitation of community peace and the promise of avoiding community harm while controlling crime, are the key principles involved in The Project and The Promise. The Project is intended to serve as an organization-wide philosophy that helps everyone better understand the true purpose of policing in their community. The Promise acts as a solemn oath the agency and its members make to the community they are paid to protect, similar to the oath physicians take as they vow not to intentionally harm their patients while trying to cure them. The Promise also starts a process whereby the members of the organization come to understand the collateral consequences of the agency's past and current strategies and practices that have resulted in unintentional harm to the very people they are trying to protect.

What other training should we explore as we move forward with the Peace Officer Project?
To use a computer analogy, if you think of the Peace Officer Project and the Peace Officer Promise as the cultural operating system of a progressive policing organization, then several training areas can be thought of as programs that run on the peace officer operating system. Officer wellness, constitutional policing, ethics and the nobility of policing, implicit bias and procedural justice area training areas that help operationalize the Peace Officer Project and anchor its basic tenants to the culture of the organization.

We have done important training like de-escalation, procedural justice, implicit bias, etc. Do we still need to implement the Peace Officer Project?
Yes. These are very important trainings and are part and parcel of the cultural shift toward being a Peace Officer organization. However, depending on how the training is implemented–and by whom –these are programs frequently transactionally-based and intended to give officers important specific skills or knowledge. They do not provide the framework for an organizational culture shift to one that is relationship-based and community-led like the Peace Officer Project.

Is it difficult or costly to implement the Peace Officer Project?
No. It takes work. No meaningful cultural change in any organization is easy. However, the work involved in changing policing culture, and associated training costs, are less involved, less stressful, and less costly than those associated with the ramifications of the tragic incidents involved in controversial use-of-force or bias incidents and litigation.

What is involved in making the Peace Officer Promise to the community?
Policing leaders who are intent on making a public declaration of The Promise should minimally:
- meet with leaders of affected communities to inform them of his/her intent and ensure he/she has an adequate understanding of the community's perception of the harm certain policing practices have inflicted on the community;
- meet with the appropriate elected and appointed officials, and representatives of the workforce, to inform them of his/her intention;
- develop a public information strategy to market The Promise;

- hold a public event/press conference where the rationale for The Promise is explained, examples of past harm are identified and what the agency is going to do to ensure these issues are addressed (i.e., implement the Peace Officer Project, change specific policies, etc.);
- create a community advisory committee to provide advice on the response to The Promise;
- consider holding a series of community listening sessions in which the agency "naively listens" to community members describe their experience with the harm specific policing practices have imposed on them;
- establish a transparency mechanism for communicating to the community the agency's progress on becoming a Peace Officer organization; and,
- develop a public implementation plan that articulates specific, time-bound goals and objectives for becoming a Peace Officer organization and operationalizing the promise.

Will the Peace Officer Project make my community and officers' jobs safer?
Yes. When the police are seen by the people they serve as legitimate and trustworthy the community is safer and officers are safer while interacting with the public. Trust, confidence and a belief that the police are acting in a legitimate manner increases public cooperation with the police and a reduction in tension between the police and the community they protect.

Is the Peace Officer Project soft on crime?
No. It is smart on crime. It is framed around the tenets of evidence based policing and specific policing strategies proven to be effective in enhancing trust and confidence in the police and reducing police-community tension.

Will the adoption of a Peace Officer framework for the police or sheriff's department weaken the influence of the police chief or sheriff?
No. This approach does nothing to minimize the authority, responsibilities or influence of the chief or sheriff implementing the Peace Officer Project and making "The Promise." Just the opposite is true. When community members believe their chief or sheriff are actively listening to their concerns and authentically addressing them, using evidence-based crime control strategies and promise to actively eliminate harm-inducing policing strategies and acknowledge past harm they will be viewed as more trustworthy by the communities they are paid to protect.

How can I, as a community member or policymaker, convince the police chief or sheriff to implement the Peace Officer Project?
First, get more acquainted with the concepts and tools used to implement the Peace Officer Project and the Peace Officer Promise by researching them on the *Police2Peace* website. Then make an appointment to speak with the police chief or sheriff to discuss the concepts. It is important to emphasize the commonality of interests the police and the community have in these ideas. Ask the chief or sheriff how you can support him/her in the move toward implementing this framework.

If the chief or sheriff decline to discuss this, move on to the top elected officials in your jurisdiction that have supervisory responsibility over the chief (sheriffs are elected officials accountable to the voters) and try and gain their support. Finally, cultural change in policing organizations is frequently perceived as slow and can be complicated. Publicly support the chief or sheriff as he/she takes the steps toward implementing this framework. Reward the behavior you want from them by publicly supporting them.

Where can I find more information about the Peace Officer Project and the Peace Officer Promise?
More information on the Peace Officer Project and the Peace Officer Promise can be found on the *Police2Peace* website: www.police2peace.org.