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# **Community Policing: The Foundation of Trust between Police and Society**

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## **Abstract**

Police officers wear many hats such as protecting people, preventing crimes, and responding to other calls for help. Policing is under a microscope in the current climate of the country with debates about police brutality, body-worn cameras, and the overall trust between police and the public. The most universally accepted way to improve trust between the police and public is through community policing. Studies show the community policing policies have improved community-police relations in the United States. I plan to use this knowledge in my career as a police officer by making sure that every interaction I have with the public is from the foundation of integrity and honesty.

## **Part 1: Career of a Nashua Police Officer**

### ***Introduction***

The job of a police officer encompasses a very diverse career. Police officers wear many hats and no day is ever the same as the one before. Officers are relied on to uphold the law, prevent crime, assist people in need, and to build relationships with the community. On a daily basis for patrol officers, he or she may make an arrest, issue a citation, perform an act of community policing, or check in on someone dealing with a physical or mental issue. Calls for service can range from extremely minor to life and death. An officer must be able to communicate with members of the community and de-escalate situations to the best of their abilities, but also be ready to use lethal force if the circumstances call for it. Being a police officer is a very stressful job and you must be able to perform a multitude of tasks in order to battle through the stress and perform your duties adequately.

The first thoughts that come to mind when people think about cops are issuing traffic tickets and making arrests. Patrol officers are the most commonly seen in-uniform police officers

that are constantly interacting with the public. Patrol officers are mainly responsible for enforcing traffic laws, responding to calls, and starting conversations with the public in order to build a level of trust with the community. A patrol officer must be able to issue a ticket, give medical aid, make an arrest, or chase down a suspect all in a moment's notice. Other units within police departments include undercover or plain clothes units, gang units, narcotics units, and detectives.

I am currently pursuing a career with the Nashua Police Department in New Hampshire. Nashua is a small city with a population of approximately 90 thousand people. It is not a crime ridden place but every city has their share of incidents and the call volume to the police department is high. The Nashua Police Department lists the basic job duties of a police officer as upholding the law, protecting people, and prevention and suppression of crime (Nashuapd.com). It is an extraordinarily hard task to fully explain the complete duties of a police officer in a specific manner but the Nashua PD does an efficient job of portraying the basic functions of their patrol officers. When first hired by any department, you start out as a patrol officer so that is the focus of this paper.

### ***Career Background***

The mission statement of the Nashua Police Department is as follows: "The Nashua Police Department strives to improve the quality of life in its community and to protect people and property in partnership with the citizens of Nashua" (Nashuapd.com). The phrase regarding improving the quality of life for its community is the most important underlying function of any police department. Everything a police officer does on a daily basis is aimed at increasing the quality of life for the overall community in some fashion or aspect. An example of this would be police officers arresting someone for distributing drugs in a neighborhood. The

partnership between the police department and the community is essential to the functioning of the department and its goals. Without trust between the community and the police, the mission of the Nashua Police Department would be difficult to achieve. The mission statement of this department includes all the imperative points needed for the police officers to perform their duties at their highest abilities.

The Nashua Police Department is constructed similarly to other city departments in the United States. The head of the department is the Chief of Police. Under him or her, there are two deputies. Under the deputies are captains, lieutenants, sergeants, detectives, and officers in that rank order. Under the Deputy Chief of Operations are four different bureaus: the Detective Bureau, Services Bureau, Professional Standards Bureau, and Legal Bureau. The Detective Bureau is made up of the Criminal Investigation Division, the Special Investigation Division, and the Narcotics Intelligence Division. The Services Bureau contains the Communications Division, Records Division, and the Community Services Division. The Professional Standards Bureau has the Recruiting Division, Accreditation Division, and Training Division. And the Legal Bureau has the Prosecution Division. Under the Deputy Chief of Uniform Operations there is the Uniform Field Operations Bureau. This Bureau contains the Patrol Division, Detention Division, Special Operations Division, and the Animal Control Division (Nashua PD). Each of these units are made up at least partially of Nashua Police officers. Other city departments may have more units such as an anti-gang unit.

### ***Hiring Process***

I am currently towards the end of the hiring process for a police officer for the Nashua Police Department so I have first-hand experience of all the aspects that play into hiring a candidate. The first step you need to do is make sure you are eligible to apply. There are many

different requirements you must meet before becoming a police officer and there is no reason to take the initial test if you cannot meet the requirements necessary to progress in the hiring process. According to the Nashua PD website, the first main three requirements are the candidate must be a US citizen, must have zero felony convictions (including juvenile felonies), and cannot have any Driving Under the Influence convictions within the last ten years (Nashuapd.com).

There are a plethora of other requirements as well. Applications must live in the United States and possess a valid driver's license, be 21 years or older, have proportional height to weight ratio, have a high school diploma or the equivalent, and "excellent" health, hearing, and vision (Nashuapd.com). When I applied in September 2021, the department's tattoo policy was you cannot have any tattoos from the sleeve down or neck up. However, the policy has since changed and you may now have tattoos in those areas if approved by the Nashua Police Department's Professional Standards Bureau through a currently subjective process. You cannot have tattoos with offensive or inappropriate symbols or words. These showing tattoos must, however, be covered up all of the time while on duty (Nashuapd.com).

Once you have met all the requirements listed above, you can apply for a testing date. On this date, you will take the exam and if you pass, you immediately go into the physical testing portion. The exam is a 100-question packet that includes true/false questions, memory testers, vocabulary questions, job satisfaction questions, and basic police officer questions. Upon completion of the exam, you bring it to a separate part of the building for scoring. A passing grade is considered 70 or above for this exam. If you do not pass, you leave at this time. If you do pass, you go into the gymnasium for the start of the physical testing portion. On the day of the test you must arrive in workout attire.

In the state of New Hampshire, all police departments use the Cooper Aerobics Institute standards for physically examining police officer candidates. For my demographic group (males ages 21-29) I first had to complete 37 sit-ups within a minute. Demographics are split up based on age and gender. Upon completion of this first part, you move onto the push-ups. I had to complete at least 27 straight push-ups. If I wanted to rest, it had to be in the “up” position (Nashua PD, NHPSTC). After completing both of these events you then go out to a track and complete the 1.5 mile run. For males ages 21-29 the time you must finish within is 12 minutes, 53 seconds. To reiterate, failure to reach any of the numbers above results in disqualification from that testing date. You are allowed to retest at a later time (Nashua PD). Upon completion of the written and physical tests, you schedule an oral board interview.

The oral board is an interview with three officers in the Professional Standards Bureau of the Nashua Police Department. The candidate must be dressed professionally. It is a multi-hour process in which the officers ask you questions regarding your hobbies, family life, past mishaps and mistakes, drug use, alcohol use, history of violence, job history, etc. There were many questions involved and many reasons behind this portion of the hiring process. First and foremost, the officers want to get to know the candidate and what their background looks like from all angles. It is important for police departments to hire morally and ethically sound candidates. Another reason behind this level of questioning is to test the candidate’s honesty. Police officers are held to high standards and you must be honest at all times during your career. Honesty and integrity are essential to being a great officer. The oral board has some subjectivity to it regarding grading the candidate. The three officers who perform the interview decide whether or not to move forward with the candidate or to let him or her go. Every answer the

candidate gives is written down and sent to the supervisors in the Professional Standards Bureau for confirmation that the candidate is able to move forward in the hiring process.

After passing the oral board, you are emailed a lengthy background check packet. This packet again asks you to list your name, family's names, prior and current roommates, prior and current spouses/boyfriends/girlfriends, prior and current jobs and bosses, and ten references. This packet also asks the candidate to list any and every time he or she has ever broken the law and to explain the circumstances around the situation(s). When the packet is fully completed, it is sent back to Nashua PD for examination. The examination is done by the lieutenant in charge of the Professional Standards Bureau and this lieutenant will go through each answer and highlight any that may be of interest. From this point, the candidate then schedules a second interview which takes place with a lieutenant in the Professional Standards Bureau.

This interview is a one on one talk with the lieutenant about all the things listed in the background check packet, also with professional dress attire. It is also a time for the candidate to add anything they would like to add to the packet if they forgot to include something in there. This interview reviews your answers in the packet and allows the candidate to explain in depth about the potential conflicts of interest. After reviewing the packet and making sure everything in it is up to date and correct, the lieutenant then asks a series of other questions, similar to the oral board but far more in depth and personal. An example of one of these questions would be "What is the worst thing you have ever done?" After completion of this step, you are offered a conditional offer of employment. A conditional offer is basically a job offer for the candidate as long as they can pass the final steps of the hiring process. The next step is you wait for a response from Nashua PD regarding the scheduling of the polygraph examination.



The polygraph is a lie detector test to see if a candidate has been fully honest and transparent with the recruiting officers of the department. On the day of the test, the candidate briefly goes over his or her answers to the previous interview with the lieutenant to make sure all of the answers have stayed consistent. After that, you go into another room where the polygraph machine is set up. This machine consists of special wiring that goes around your head, fingers, mid-section, and legs. The machine is able to pick up inconsistencies and lying tendencies. This portion of the hiring process is crucial to the final offer of employment. It is the final test of the candidate's honesty and the recruiting officers can see how transparent the candidate has been throughout the process. Upon completion of the polygraph, you will be about 3-4 months into this lengthy process.

After completing all the steps above, you move on to some less stressful tasks. You have to go to St. Joseph's Hospital in Nashua and take a medical physical test, a drug test, and get blood work done. This test is just to make sure there are no hidden conditions that may result in an inability to perform the job of police officer such as a possible heart problem. You also must meet with a psychologist who will run you through a series of tests to test your mental capacity. One of these tests is performed on a tablet in which the candidate answers hundreds of multiple choice questions regarding their personal life and feelings. Nashua PD uses a doctor out of Exeter, NH. This psych evaluation took about a total of an hour to complete. After the psychologist evaluates you, she writes a report that is sent to the Nashua Police Department about the candidate's mental state based on the interview and tests.

The initial written exam I took for the Nashua Police Department was in September, 2021. It is currently towards the end of February, 2022. This hiring process may be long but it is necessary to make sure the best candidates are being hired into the department. Currently I have

passed all of the above tests and procedures and have first-hand experience as to how they run. Now, the recruiting officers are performing my background check in which they contact former employers, my friends and family, current and ex-girlfriends, etc. and have meetings with them about the type of person I am and the things I have done, both good and bad. If the background check goes smoothly and they have no further questions after completing it, I will schedule a one on one meeting with the Chief of Police for a formal offer of employment. From there, all my paperwork automatically has to go to the Police Commissioners of the City of Nashua for approval of employment. When the hiring process is all finished, the candidate is sent to the police academy for basic training.

### ***Police Academy***

The state of New Hampshire uses the same location for the academy training of municipal departments, the State Police, and for corrections officers. It is run by the New Hampshire Police Standards and Training Council (NHPSTC) in Concord, NH (NHPSTC). There are three academy classes per year, starting in January, May, and August. This year, the classes will be February, June, and September due to Covid-19 issues with the previous class. The date of the academy that I will most likely be attending is June 6th. For Nashua PD, I would start working two weeks before that date to do in-service and firearms training. The in-service mostly includes rules and procedures specific to Nashua PD.

The police academy is a 16-week basic training for police officers to learn everything there is to know about being a patrol officer. The academy in New Hampshire was created in 1971 with the purpose of educating and certifying police officers (NHPSTC). The overall description of the academy is basic training and in-service training for prospective and current police officers. Within two weeks of day one of your academy training, you must repass the

physical fitness test required by the state of NH. Upon arrival on day one, you are immediately taught discipline and how to listen to superiors' orders and commands.

There are a multitude of tactics, practices, and other everyday activities taught while in the academy. According to the NHPTSC website the list of things taught at the academy are: physically subduing resisting individuals, engaging in foot chases, changing vehicle tires for disabled motorists, accurately firing pistols, revolvers, shotguns, and rifles, driving automobiles safely at high speeds and under adverse conditions, how to use judgment and discretion in high-stakes situations, how to verbally command and communicate, how to read and interpret complex laws and instructions, how to listen to and operate a police radio, adequate keyboard skills, writing legible and detailed reports, searching persons and applying handcuffs, utilization of a police baton and defensive spray, development and maintenance of relationships with other officers, superiors, and the public, firing a weapon in dim light conditions, and professional, paramilitary appearance in uniform (NHPSTC). All of the above listed training will be instilled in the cadets in each academy class.

### ***Field Training***

Upon graduating from the police academy, you start working for your department immediately. For the first three months of work, you are assigned to a Field Training Officer (FTO) who shows you the ins and outs of the job and how the department runs. For a majority of these three months you work the second shift, which is typically 3pm-11pm or 4pm-12am, with your primary FTO. For other parts of the field training three-month cycle you will work overnights and the first shift as well with your secondary FTO (A. Beato, personal communication, January, 2022). During the FTO period, you are unable to work overtime or details. This is because you are not yet allowed to work on your own which is what both

overtime and details require. Once you have done your three months of training, you are assigned shifts and are on the job.

Training in law enforcement never ends throughout a police officer's career. There are constantly new lessons to be learned and adaptations that must be made in order to reach full potential as an officer. Nashua Police has sent officers to all over the country to learn about different tactics and police seminars. For example, one officer spent 10 weeks in Philadelphia learning how to operate a polygraph machine and system. Other officers have been instructed on the use of body-worn cameras (BWCs) and how to properly use them in (A. Beato, personal communication, January, 2022). Other essential training can include the tactics within a specialty unit, like narcotics, and how the unit operates.

### ***Salary and Benefits***

In most departments in the United States first-year officers are in a "probationary period." This basically means you have no Union protection and are subject to firing or any discipline and further training at any time. The reasoning behind this is to test your skills and character and your ability to perform the job. Once you reach one full year of service time, you become part of the Nashua Police Patrolman's Association. This unit is to help police be represented in the city and to assist officers in the courtroom when help is needed (A. Beato, personal communication, January, 2022). Because of this, your first-year salary is lower than your second by a somewhat significant amount. Your salary starts on your first day on the job, two weeks before your academy start date (A. Beato, personal communication, January, 2022). The first-year officer salary at the Nashua PD is \$56,654. The second-year jumps to \$69,490 (Nashuapd.com). For an officer with a college degree, you get an additional \$1,500 per year (K. Puccillo, personal communication, January, 2021).

Just like every other department, when you get promoted your pay goes up. The pay bumps are not specified online but when you go from officer to sergeant, etc., your salary will increase. New officers can expect to get a promotion to a specialty unit between three to five years on the job. A specialty unit is any unit created for a specific issue, such as the narcotics unit. Transfers into different bureaus, such as the Professional Standards Bureau, happen between five and ten years on the job. After you finish your field training, you are also eligible to work overtime and details which can bring in significant amounts of money depending on the amount of work put in. Details during the daytime usually range around \$60 per hour. After a certain time at night, they can range up to around \$90 per hour (T. Crowley, personal communication, 2022).

There are also health insurance plans available through the state of NH for both individuals and families (Nashuapd.com). A part of each paycheck is paid into this and it makes the insurance process easy to handle. Uniforms and necessary equipment are supplied in full to new officers. You are also given an allowance for clothing yearly for any other necessary items you may need (Nashuapd.com).

After one year of service, when your probationary period is up, you are granted 10 vacation days. After four years you get 15 days, nine years you get 20 days, and after 16 years you get 25 days (Nashua PD). You also get 12 paid holidays per year once you begin. If you are not working a holiday, you are paid your regular pay for that day. If you are working, you get paid double-time and a half (T. Crowley, personal communication, February, 2022). In New Hampshire you can retire with a pension after 25 years of service. The youngest age you can retire at is 50 years old (Nashuapd.com).

### ***Work Schedule***

A typical work schedule for a lot of police departments across the country includes a “4 and 2” rotating schedule. The 4 and 2 stands for four days on, two days off. So, if you work Monday through Thursday, you get Friday and Saturday off and then start working again on Sunday. As you can see, your schedule will constantly rotate. This is especially true for patrol officers and units. It can also make social lives more difficult due to your off days differing from your friends and family, who may have the typical weekends off. If your shift falls on a holiday it is still your responsibility to work the shift. Officers have 12 paid holidays per year and you may take that day off if you so choose. Officers who work on holidays get holiday pay as well which bumps the hourly salary up by double time and a half.

At Nashua PD, the shifts also rotate with time. What this means is that if you are working the first shift, three months later you work the second and three months after that you work the third. This is mostly true for patrol officers and units as well (Nashuapd.com). Working the overnight shifts may also be difficult to handle with a social life but the constantly changing schedule helps free up some of that potential anxiety. It may also be difficult for officers to find time to get their workouts in. Luckily there is a full gym at the Nashua Police Department that officers can utilize before or after their shifts if they would like.

### ***Other Areas of Law Enforcement***

The hiring process and jobs in New Hampshire are a little different than in Massachusetts. In Massachusetts, candidates take a state-wide civil service exam in which scores are sent to municipal departments and the State Police. Your name is then placed on a list based on score and departments may reach out for further evaluation or you might have to retake the test in the next year. Some departments in MA are not a part of civil service and you can apply straight through them. There is no civil service in NH. Due to the absence of civil service, NH

departments have more room to hire candidates in the ways that they desire. However, there are state-wide guidelines that still must be met such as the physical fitness standards.

The laws also vary in some ways between states, which officers must be aware of if they decide to switch departments. If you start out in a New Hampshire department and want to move to a MA department, you must go through the MA police academy. However, if you are a MA officer and want to switch to a NH department, you do not have to go through the academy but you do have to take a law package class which is a few weeks long. The purpose of the law package is to familiarize the officer with the laws in New Hampshire compared to Massachusetts (T. Crowley, personal communication, February, 2022).

I have not greatly considered future job opportunities outside of Nashua PD but they do exist due to the wide range of jobs in this field and the need for people in all aspects of law enforcement. In most federal agencies, you are required to have multiple years of experience within a given field before you can even apply to them. For example, the Federal Bureau of Investigation requires candidates to have three years of job experience within a given range of fields, or two years of job experience with a master's degree. Federal agencies may be something I could be interested in in the future but I am currently more focused on starting up a career as a police officer at the local level right now.

## **Part 2: Review of policy issues**

### ***Introduction***

The field of criminal justice and criminology is constantly adapting to new challenges and national issues. These adaptations especially occur within the world of law enforcement. Any time there is national outcry for change within the criminal justice system, it usually begins with the frontlines: police officers. The overarching theme to most issues regarding police

officers is the excessive use of force. With technological advances evolving yearly, there is always some sort of camera filming police officers interacting with citizens. When cops use their authority in an overreaching manner, citizens get hurt and the public loses trust.

The criminal justice field has made strides to try and help with the issues of excessive use of force. A step in the right direction is the creation and implementation of body-worn cameras (BWCs). Thousands of municipal, state, and federal police agencies across the United States have their officers wearing portable cameras on their uniforms to capture each and every interaction an officer has with a member of the public. The purpose behind these cameras is to improve the behavior of both police officers and citizens and also to have accurate video footage of every situation to help out in the courtroom.

However the issues between the police in the United States run deeper and a tangible item such as body cameras are not the be-all solution. If the citizens of the country's overall relationship with law enforcement wants to be improved there needs to be a foundation of trust between both sides. Without trust every other tactic and strategy employed by law enforcement will fall short. Police officials in the United States have realized this and the widespread idea of community policing was created (Crowl, 2017).

### ***Evolution of Community Policing***

Community policing is the idea that the police and public can trust each other to the extent that they can work together to help fix neighborhoods and prevent crime (Patterson, 1995). It is basically a partnership between law enforcement and the community. The purpose of this partnership is to enhance the relationship between people and the police and to increase the quality of life across the United States. The stronger the foundation of trust, the stronger the partnership between police and the public will be. When the trust is substantial other aspects of



the criminal justice system will be enhanced as well. A researched example of this is the fact that citizens are far more likely to reach out to the police for assistance when they feel that they can trust the officers responding (Avery, Hermsen, & Towne, 2020).

The idea of community policing spiked in popularity during the Civil Rights Movement in the 1960s (Patterson, 1995). Tensions between police officers and the public, especially amongst minorities, were skyrocketing, sparking conversations about community policing at the federal, state, and local levels. President Johnson signed the President's Commission on Law Enforcement in 1967 (Patterson, 1995). This commission looked at the depth of problems within law enforcement and instructed police departments to analyze the root causes of crimes in their jurisdictions. It stressed the idea of forming relationships with the members of the more run-down communities (Patterson, 1995).

The first ever police unit with the main purpose of community policing was created in San Francisco, CA. in 1962. The San Francisco Police Department wanted their department to act as a "multifunctional social service agency," (Patterson, 1995). This basically means that the police are more than just crime fighters and their jobs also require aiding the public to help improve the quality of life. The goal of this unit was to lessen despair in poor and crime-ridden neighborhoods by implementing officers within those communities. By lessening despair the hope was that crime rates would go down (Patterson, 1995).

This first unit highlighted some early flaws in the American way of community policing. The first issue was poor planning and efficiency (Patterson, 1995). The departments struggled to have thorough plans and guidelines for the officers to follow. There was an initial lack of training on these units and proper communication with the public seemed difficult to achieve (Patterson, 1995). These issues later followed with the issue of mission ambiguity. Due to the novelty of

this unit, the explicit mission was difficult to explain to the officers performing the duties (Patterson, 1995). The officers involved had a general idea of their purpose but the tactics and strategies were vague and they were unsure how to use them effectively. It was also difficult for the police agency to evaluate their policy and officers involved (Patterson, 1995). When the mission is ambiguous, it is tough to tell if the policy is working and if the officers are performing adequately. Evaluating these policies is still difficult to this day due to the variations of community policing strategies and goals trying to be achieved (Crowl, 2017). The main current goal of modern community policing is to create the foundation of trust between law enforcement and citizens. Departments nationwide will create their own deviations of policy and strategy but the overarching goal is consistent.

Community policing started to become prominent in the late 1990s (Zhao, Lovrich, & Thurman, 1999). There has been ample progress made since then as well. From the span of 1994 to 2020, the federal government allocated a total of \$14 billion for community policing strategies nationwide. These allocated funds went to adding more community policing officers, technological improvements, crime prevention initiatives, training, and technical support teams for departments nationwide (Paez & Dierenfeldt, 2020). By the end of 2013 the Officer of Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS) funded the hiring of an additional 126,000 community policing officers across 13,000 law enforcement agencies in the United States (COPS, Officer of Community Oriented Policing Services, 2014b). The funding of community policing is representative of the criminal justice perspective as a whole in the current United States law enforcement climate.

Another example of the growth of community policing is the President's Task Force on 21st Century Policing created by President Obama in 2015. This task force consists of six pillars

and the fourth one is “Community Policing and Crime Reduction” (USDOJ.gov). Much of what this pillar describes is getting away from the “warrior” approach so police officers are not just going into crime-ridden neighborhoods to lock people up. This pillar stresses the importance of creating relationships with the people in these neighborhoods to help them clean up their streets so that they, too, can enjoy the decreasing overall decreasing crime rates in the United States (USDOJ.gov). It also stressed the emphasis on law enforcement officials forming relationships with key institutions within the community; schools, local government, churches, etc. (USDOJ.gov). President Obama wanted the police in the United States to continue forming bonds with the people they serve to help advance the progress of crime reduction in the country.

### ***Community Policing Today***

Today, community policing has become a staple in just about every police department in the United States. Many criminologists and criminal justice officials refer to this current era of policing as the “Community Era.” The law enforcement world has undergone somewhat of a revolution from a “warrior” mentality to a “guardian” one. This basically means that police officers should now be looking at themselves as guardians of the people as opposed to crime fighting warriors. However, it is still very true that police officers must make arrests, get drugs and guns off the streets, and engage in enforcement-related police work.

The implementation of community policing is certainly not a one-size-fits-all approach. Each and every agency can choose different policies and strategies that they feel best fits not only their department, but the community they serve. Each municipality and city or town is different and a universal approach would be largely ineffective in most jurisdictions. However there are many similarities across departments in the general way they conduct community policing.

In a vast majority of places the community policing strategy is performed by the patrol officers in the department. Patrol officers are the front line officers that deal with the general public the most out of every unit within a police department. The federal government describes community policing as the patrol officer helping the community mobilize support and resources to help solve problems and enhance their quality of life (Understanding Community Policing). Every definition of community policing across levels of law enforcement emphasizes the partnership between the community and the police. The working relationship between the two sides is formed in hopes of solving problems hurting communities and limiting despair. Many departments keep patrol officers assigned to specific neighborhoods for extended periods of time in order to enforce the personal relationships the community can form with specific officers (Zhao et al., 1999). In other instances, officers can be chosen by voluntariness or by random to attend neighborhood or school activities that are designed to spark conversations between cops and the public.

### ***Community Policing Policies and Strategies***

Any police policy or strategy that is aimed at strengthening the bond with the public is a type of community policing. There are an infinite amount of ways departments can utilize resources to develop strategies with the aim to bring the community closer with the police. Community events, athletic tournaments, and intervention or prevention programs can be utilized. Drug programs for juveniles is an example which is a popular thing in many cities and towns across the United States. The purpose of these programs is to create relationships with the youth and the police and to teach kids at young ages about the dangers of drug use.

Police athletic leagues are also popular ways departments interact with the community. An example of one of these leagues is the Nashua Police Athletic League. The mission of the

Nashua PAL is to create a positive attitude between the youth in the community and the Nashua Police Department (PAL's Mission). It is run by current and former members of the Nashua Police Department. The goals of this league include reducing juvenile delinquent behavior through youth-based programs, instilling good character values and healthy habits in the youth, and to spark positive interactions between the Nashua Police Department and the members of the community (PAL's Mission). This is a perfect example of community policing because it promotes positive and voluntary relationships between the citizens of Nashua and their public servants. An example of a PAL activity is the street hockey league they run. It is coached and officiated by current and former Nashua police officers with citizens of the community on the teams (PAL's Mission).

Other examples of community policing are not so easy to achieve. In many places across the United States, especially inner cities, the relationships with the police are often strained. The city of Newark, NJ, for example, has struggled immensely with police brutality and corruption since the 1960s. Due to this the creation of Newark Communities for Accountable Policing (N-CAP) was formed (What is N-CAP?). N-CAP is a community-police partnership in which the citizens of Newark have advisory boards that meet with police officials to help create a better relationship between the two. The members of N-CAP bring up concerns and accountability issues with the police department in order to work for common solutions and understand each other's side. The mission of N-CAP is transparency and accountability between the police and the public (What is N-CAP). The police department willingly participating in this group is a community policing strategy in itself.

Other community policing strategies involve more of the typical police work people are used to thinking about. An example of this would be the Innovative Neighborhood-Oriented

Policing (INOP) units created in the 1990s. These units were implemented in eight different jurisdictions in the United States: Hayward, CA., New York, NY., Louisville, KY., Norfolk, VA., Tempe, AZ., Prince George's County, MD., Houston, TX., and Los Angeles, CA., (Sadd & Grime, 1996). The purpose of these units was to put patrol officers on foot in neighborhoods with high drug levels to interact with community members in hopes of collectively slowing down the drug usage and selling in these neighborhoods (Sadd & Grime, 1996). The idea behind this tactic was to form a better relationship between the police and the struggling neighborhoods so that the residents could trust the police and they would be more willing to reach out to the police for help (Sadd & Grime, 1996). The relationships made with community members were helpful for citizens who wanted to talk to someone who could help clean up the neighborhood and get the drugs off the streets. As such, community policing strategies come in many different forms and techniques.

Much of prior literature has shown ambiguous results. The reasoning behind this is the fact that the term "community policing" is very general and there are countless numbers of variations and goals in which policies can be implemented. It is also possible that community policing strategies are utilized for a year from when the research is conducted but the crime reduction results come after multiple years. It is difficult to link community policing and crime reduction when the policies have only been implemented for a short amount of time.

There has, however, been plenty of research studies that have shown positive results from community-based policies from police departments. One study has shown that minority communities have looked at their local police departments more favorably after community-based initiatives have been implemented and they began to form personal relationships with the officers that work their neighborhoods (Diehr & McDaniel, 2018). This is

extremely important based on the fact that the general idea in this country is that the relationships between police and the minority community is highly strained. In order for police work to reach its full potential, all members of the public need to have a strong foundation of trust with their local police force.

Research has also shown that community policing did not necessarily decrease citizens' fear of crime in a significant manner but it did increase satisfaction with the local police and increased positive crime prevention behaviors (Scheider, Rowell, & Bezdikian, 2003). These results are particularly important because there is progress being made in communities regarding crime prevention techniques. It is possible that the continuance of these policies eventually leads to an overall drop in crime rates. Other research pieces have shown that community policing tactics in general have positive impacts on citizen satisfaction with the police, perceptions of disorder, and police legitimacy (Gill, Weisburd, Telep, Vitter, & Bennett, 2014). This also reinforces the idea that citizens begin to gain more trust for their local police departments and this foundation is essential to furthering results of community policing policy.

A considerable amount of prior research has shown that crime rates and fear of crime rates did not decrease during the research studies timelines (Paez & Dierenfeldt, 2020). However, there is some prior research that has shown significant results regarding violent crime decreases (Paez & Dierenfeldt, 2020). To reiterate, community policing is a partnership between the police and the public to reduce crime in the neighborhoods. Having officers more directly involved in high-crime neighborhoods and the relationships made there will create that partnership that will allow police to find crime suspects and make arrests. Community Oriented Policing unit officers increased arrests of violent crimes by juveniles and young adults by 31.9% and 23.4% respectively in 12 major cities in the United States (Paez & Dierenfeldt, 2020). The

increase in arrests showed the people of the neighborhoods that violent crimes were not going to be left unpunished anymore and the neighborhoods would become safer (Paez & Dierenfeldt, 2020). This statistic suggests that the COP units were effective in seeking out violent crimes and making arrests when before these cases may have flown under the radar.

### ***Challenges and Setbacks***

Ever since the creation of the first community policing unit in 1962, police departments have struggled with implementing their policies in effective ways. It is especially difficult in the communities where the trust for the police is strained because having voluntary interactions with the citizens is harder to achieve. A good portion of the success of a community policing policy relies on the community and their willingness to work with the police to improve relations. Many of the issues facing departments regarding community policing are highlighted in the INOP units from the 1990s.

When the INOP units were initially created, the police departments found that citizen involvement was limited and difficult to get due to already existing tensions with the police (Chermak & Weiss, 2006). Another problem faced was the fact that community members did not understand their role (Chermak & Weiss, 2006). Similar to the first community policing unit in San Francisco, the mission was still ambiguous and the citizens struggled to understand what they had to do to help with the success. These problems compound because there were a limited number of citizens willing to help in the first place and those few were not able to understand what their responsibilities entailed. Another reason as to why citizens could not understand their roles and responsibilities was because the officers not in the INOP units did not know the goals and mission of those units (Chermak & Weiss, 2006). This was problematic because citizens would reach out to the officers in their neighborhoods asking what INOP was and how to help



and those officers were unable to explain the cause to them. It seemed as if police departments did not pay much attention to educating the department and the community about the goals of the INOP units (Chermak & Weiss, 2006). There were other marketing challenges faced by these departments that enforced the issues listed above. In short, Chermak & Weiss (2006) found that the departments were unable to market policies to the community in ways that were easy enough to understand, had difficulties exposing the public to these new practices, and the historical distrust between the community and the police lead the citizens to believe that the new community policing policies were insincere. Overall, police agencies were unable to find ways to effectively get the community involved in order to fully reach the potential of the policies.

Police departments across the United States also faced other challenges. Some police officers and departments were reluctant to change their policies and focus more on a community policing approach, especially among veteran officers. These veteran officers have an “if it ain’t broke, don’t fix it” mindset and they believe what they have always done is effective enough (Paez & Dierenfeldt, 2020). Another reason officers cited for this reluctance is the increase in nationwide police hatred. It is not unusual for citizens to voluntarily stick a camera in an officer’s face and try to get them to say or do something unethical in order to humiliate them. Police officers know this and some have stated that they do not want to start voluntary conversations with the public due to the potential for harassment (Fallik et al., 2020). Voluntary interactions between police officers and the public is extremely important for community policing policy so this issue can cause hardships for the police agencies.

The media is one of the most influential sources of information when it comes to law enforcement. The police are constantly on network news stations coverage doing something unlawful or corrupt in a manner that the media covers with a microscope. These events are often

sensationalized and they become national headlines for weeks (Fallik, Deuchar, Crichlow, & Hodges, 2020). Because of this, people across the United States start to look at law enforcement as a whole less favorably. This can make community policing strategies difficult to achieve successfully due to the setbacks departments will face from the start. Previous research has shown that people who consume heavy levels of network news are more likely to look at the police less favorably (Dowler & Zawilski, 2007). Network news is a prominent way in which people receive their news and millions of people watch it daily. This can create setbacks for law enforcement in jurisdictions that are not even included in these news stories about corrupt or criminal cops. Consumption of network news also leads to people believing that police officers universally treat White people better than minorities (Dowler & Zawilski, 2007). This fact can lower the essential function of trust that citizens have with the police.

As of recent years the increased use of social media in the United States has also hurt community policing policies. Many young people in America use social media platforms to get their news and see the new trending stories. When police misconduct is highlighted in the news, it skyrockets in popularity on social media and can become easily sensationalized. The high viewership these events have on social media has led to some negative outcomes. Prior research has shown that college students are most likely getting their news about police misconduct through social media and these students are more likely to dislike the police after viewing such events. The students consuming this information have also said that their future police interactions would be impacted negatively by what they have seen (Campbell & Valera, 2020). This has presented issues for law enforcement because reaching out to young adults is getting increasingly more difficult due to the lack of trust these people have with the police.

Social media has also started to be a tool for police departments to use to help market themselves and communicate with the community. However, many departments are using social media in ineffective ways. Prior research has shown that police agencies are using social media platforms as a one-way channel of communication. This means that the departments are putting information out to the public through social media sites, but are not allowing the citizens to respond or spark conversations (Kilburn & Krieger, 2014). A one-way channel of communication fails to recognize the relationship between police and the community. Some police departments in the United States have also changed the overall way they utilize social media on a daily basis. In the research by Fallik et al. (2020), it was found that police departments now use social media for four main reasons: bringing attention to the department, prospective investigations, retrospective investigations, and to highlight challenges facing the police department. This is a big step in the right direction for police departments because they are now allowing community members to help with investigations and communicate with officers with ease. These relationships help to strengthen the relationship and levels of trust between the police and the public.

There are many departments in the United States that have made strides to fixing other issues. For example, the overall use of social media has changed. In one way that departments have started to effectively use social media is the use of communicating details about large scale events that happened in the community (Bain et al., 2014). When highly dramatic events occur it is not uncommon for large amounts of people to build up and start demanding information on what happened. Departments across the country have started implementing policies that require information regarding large scale events to be put out in an organized manner on social media

(Bain et al., 2014). This helps answer the public's questions more thoroughly and questions get asked and answered through these social media sites.

Law enforcement can also use the media to their advantage. In every agency across the country departments have constant interactions with the local media and many do with state and national media outlets as well. When police departments have solid working relationships with these media outlets the media is more likely to cover the police in a positive light. This can also lead to media outlets covering and marketing community policing policies so the public knows the police department's mission. When local journalists describe their relationship with the police departments they cover as good, 86% have said to have covered some sort of community policing policy at some point during their careers (Chermak & Weiss, 2005). This relationship can be greatly impactful in many ways and can benefit the media, the police, and the community.

A way that the police department can benefit from a solid relationship with the local media is by using them as a marketing tool. When the police feed the media policies and strategies that they are employing based on community policing principles, the media can put it out there for the community so the members can get involved and join in on the partnership (Chermak & Weiss, 2005). This relationship can be imperative due to the fact that, in general, local journalists want to cover more dramatic stories involving crime rather than a typical "boring" policy (Chermak & Weiss, 2003). The police and media need a strong relationship so they can work together to put out important information for the people in the community. It is also critical that law enforcement agencies understand that they need to market themselves as well. Full reliance on the media will not be enough to implement themselves in a positive manner into the community.

***Relation to a Career as a Police Officer***

In my opinion, community policing is the most important aspect of policing. I am a firm believer that there has to be a foundation of trust between law enforcement and the communities they serve. Trust is essential. I plan to take the information I have researched and directly apply it to the field of policing by communicating with the community and having an open-mind. I hope to someday become involved with a neighborhood action-type unit so I can create relationships with members of the community and help them solve problems. This also directly relates to the Nashua Police Department's mission statement which states the mission to improve quality of life in partnership with the community. A majority of people who get into this profession want to spend their careers helping others and making a difference in one way or another. It will be my goal daily to have used an aspect of community policing to help a fellow citizen improve their situation by any means necessary.

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