

Policing Reform Collaborative Mission and Working Groups

Through community engagement, public comment and dialogue, consultation with stakeholders and a review of evidence-based strategies, the City of Albany’s Policing Reform Collaborative will develop recommendations to address racial bias and disproportionate policing in communities of color¹, increase accountability and transparency to promote and improve the delivery of public safety² in the Albany Police Department.

The Collaborative includes a diverse group of individuals representing community, law enforcement, government agencies and service providers. Although it may not be possible to achieve unanimity on every issue, we will strive for consensus and commit to facilitate productive civic engagement in order to accomplish our mission.

To enable our work, we have created working groups to address specific policy areas. Each of these groups will hold public meetings, collect community input and consult with stakeholders. In accordance with NYS Executive Order 203, they will also review evidence-based policing strategies, studies, best practices and the work of outside experts to guide their policy recommendations.

Each working group will provide a written report that includes recommendations, implementation timelines and other proposals that the working group deems appropriate. These reports will be submitted to the full Collaborative for review no later than [January 31].

Policies, Standard Operating Procedures and General Orders

This working group will review and evaluate current APD policies and Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) and General Orders, including, but not limited to, use of force, tear gas deployment, use of body cameras, formal and informal quotas³, and disciplinary procedures. They will evaluate the Department’s adoption of recommendations in the final report on “21st Century Policing”, and review impacts of APD’s collective bargaining agreements. They will create recommendations regarding changes, additions and/or the elimination of APD polices, SOPs, general orders and union rules.

Civilian Oversight

¹ “address racial bias and disproportionate policing in communities of color” is taken directly from NYS Executive Order 203.

² “to develop practices to better address the particular needs of communities of color to promote public safety” – NYS Executive Order 203

³ See Part 1, Section II (1) of EO 203 Guidance (“Procedural Justice and Community Policing”)

This working group will review existing by-laws and ordinances, and make recommendations regarding, the City’s Community Police Review Board ⁴and the Albany Community Policing Advisory Committee⁵. They will also review APD’s collection and dissemination of police data, including demographic information, disciplinary action, the cost of civil litigation and settlements associated with alleged police misconduct, the appointment of special prosecutors, and facial recognition technology⁶and other areas impacting policing transparency and accountability to the community⁷. They will make recommendations regarding these matters, including, but not limited to, additional data collection requirements, changes to the Department’s disciplinary procedures⁸ and public dissemination of police data.

Police Department Functions⁹

This working group will review calls for service, officer initiated actions and crime and demographic data to determine the scope of functions currently performed by APD. They will also review available data related to truancy, homelessness, mental illness (including PTSD), school interactions and suspensions, including the presence of school resource officers¹⁰, child abuse and neglect, homelessness, addiction¹¹, poverty and domestic violence and make policy recommendations regarding the scope of services provided by APD and alternative models for intervention. This group will also make recommendations regarding alternative first-responder models, (e.g., responses to noise complaints and other quality of life issues)¹² and identify other agencies and service providers that could impact the footprint of the APD¹³.

Community Safety and Restorative Justice

The Albany Police Department was an early adopter of harm reduction strategies like Law Enforcement Assisted Diversion, as a way to get people the services they need and reduce recidivism. This working group will review the effectiveness of existing programs (e.g., LEAD, Group Violence Intervention, Cure Violence, Neighborhood Engagement Unit, etc.) and evaluate other harm reduction strategies, restorative¹⁴ and procedural justice models, including discriminatory or bias-based stops, searches and arrests¹⁵ problem-oriented policing, hot spot

⁴ “Unlike citizen advisory boards...[c]ivilian oversight entities have formal duties and authorities” See Part 1, Section 3(4) of EO 203 Guidance (“Citizen Oversight and Other External Accountability”)

⁵ Citizens advisory boards are broad committees formed to encourage dialogue and community connection – See Part 1, Section 3(4) of EO 203 Guidance

⁶ See Part 1, Section 1 (II) of EO 203 Guidance (“Procedural Justice and Community Policing”)

⁷ See Part 1, Section III (5) of EO 203 Guidance (“Data, Technology and Transparency”).

⁸ See Part 1, Section 3 (4) of EO 203 Guidance (“Citizen Oversight and Other External Accountability”)

⁹ See Part 1, Section 1 of EO 203 Guidance (“What Functions Should the Police Perform”).

¹⁰ See Part 1, Section 1 (2) of EO 203 Guidance (“Staffing, Budgeting, and Equipping Your Police Department”)

¹¹ See Part 1, Section 1 (1) of EO 203 Guidance (Staffing, Budgeting, and Equipping Your Police Department”)

¹² See Part 1, Section 1 (2) of Eo 203 Guidance (Staffing, Budgeting, and Equipping Your Police Department”)

¹³ See Part 1, Section I of EO 203 Guidance (“What Functions Should Police Perform”).

¹⁴ See Part 1, Section II (2) of EO 203 Guidance (“Law Enforcement Strategies to Reduce Racial Disparities”)

¹⁵ See Part 1, Section II (1) of EO 203 Guidance (“Procedural Justice and Community Policing”)

policing, crime prevention through environmental design¹⁶ and additional evidenced-based strategies, and make recommendations for the Albany Police Department¹⁷.

Recruitment, Retention, Promotion, Training and Officer Development

This working group will review the effectiveness of current recruitment efforts, civil service rules, training academy curriculum including implicit bias awareness training and de-escalation training, civilian training academy curriculum and ongoing professional development training¹⁸. They may consider whether added flexibility in recruitment, shifts and/or assignments will increase the diversity¹⁹ of the Department. They will make recommendations for changes necessary to ensure that the Albany Police Department hires, trains, promotes and evaluates officers in a way that builds trust and strong police – community relations²⁰. They will also look at issues of officer wellness and well-being²¹.

¹⁶ NYS EO 203

¹⁷ See Part 1, Section II (2) of EO 203 Guidance (“Law Enforcement Strategies to Reduce Racial Disparities and Build Trust”)

¹⁸ See Part 1, Section 4(2) of EO 203 Guidance (“Training and Continuing Education”)

¹⁹ See Part 1, Section 4 (1) of EO 203 Guidance (“Recruiting a Diverse Workforce”)

²⁰ See Part 1, Section 4(2) of EO 203 Guidance (“Training and Continuing Education”)

²¹ See Part 1, Section IV (3) of EO 203 Guidance (“Support Officer Wellness and Well-being”).