

Fort Worth

2017 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 1650 of FWPD's sworn officers have undergone 16 hours of training on the theory and practice of procedural justice.
- 500 of FWPD's 1650 sworn officers have undergone the 8-hour training on implicit bias ("PJ3"), and all new recruits will be cycled through as well.
- In June 2017, FWPD hosted a PJ3 peer exchange that included officers from Stockton, Minneapolis, and Chicago. The exchange prepared FWPD for its summer 2017 rollout of PJ3 and enhanced their delivery of the training modules that confront troubling episodes and themes in police history.

Reconciliation

- FWPD is launching neighborhood-based listening sessions by the end of 2017.
- Urban Institute is completing a second round of public perception surveys in Fort Worth neighborhoods with a high incidence of crime.

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 moves into a fourth and 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.

The Fort Worth Police Department (FWPD) PJ unit has faced staffing challenges, and the capacity has been reduced from five full-time

trainers and one part-time supervisor capable of training when necessary to two full-time trainers and one part-time supervisor. Despite these challenges, FWPD has committed to completing PJ training—all of FWPD's 1600 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 began a series of community presentations on the department's PJ work intended to open up dialogue between the department and communities that mistrust it.

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.

350 of FWPD's 1600 sworn officers have undergone the 8-hour training on implicit bias ("PJ3"), and all new recruits will be cycled through as well.

In June 2017, FWPD hosted a PJ3 peer exchange that included officers from Stockton, Minneapolis, and Chicago. The exchange prepared FWPD for its summer 2017 rollout of PJ3 and enhanced their delivery of the training's historical modules. The visiting agencies report interest in adopting FWPD's unique adaptation to include 'emotional intelligence' in the training. The PJ3 training is currently underway.

As a next step, FWPD is working towards launching a community-facing implicit bias training ("PJ3—Community") in early 2018. PJ3—Community is designed to be co-facilitated by police and members of the public, and it also provides a crucial forum for police and members of communities with low levels of confidence in the police to discuss issues of legitimacy, trust, bias, and history with greater nuance and common ground.

If you're interested in attending a training or becoming a facilitator, please reach out to Sgt. Buck Wheeler at buck.wheeler@fortworthtexas.gov.

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 robust 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 department leadership and influential 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 internal policy review process, in addition to localized operational collaborations to improve public safety.

FWPD began working towards hosting its first neighborhood-based listening session in summer of 2017. FWPD Lt. Roy Hudson continues to lead the community outreach and coordination efforts, with hopes of an initial launch by the end of 2017 in Fort Worth's Cavile/Stop Six neighborhood.

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 will be a follow-up from the baseline survey they conducted in the fall of 2015, during which residents expressed overwhelming support for obeying the law and willingness to partner with police to solve crime—but only 37% believed that the police are honest, and 49% feel that police would treat them differently because of their race or ethnicity.

The Urban Institute will complete its second round of surveys in October 2017. Data from those surveys will feed into Urban's final report, which will be a comprehensive assessment of the implementation and impact of the NI and broader trust-building work.

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 are interested in getting involved, or have suggestions, questions, or comments about the National Initiative, please reach out to us at info@trustandjustice.org or contact:

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We look forward to hearing from you.