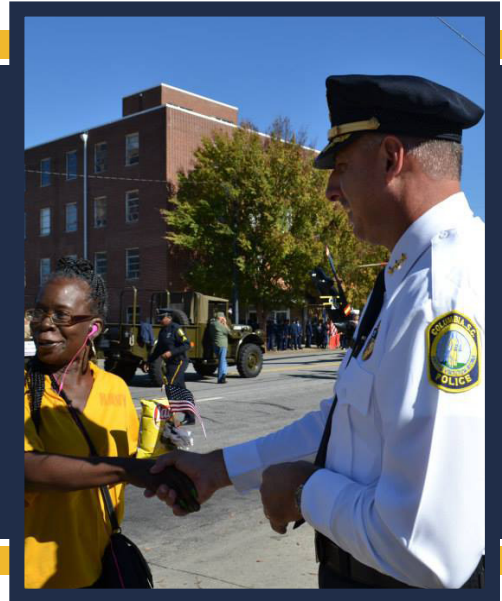


THE PRESIDENT'S TASK FORCE ON  
21ST CENTURY POLICING



**CITY OF COLUMBIA'S**  
**IMPLEMENTATION PLAN**

Moving from Recommendations to Action

# CITY OF COLUMBIA'S **COMMUNITY BASED PLAN**

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## Implementation of the recommendations of the President's Task Force on 21st Century Policing

### Introduction

In December 2014, in response to a number of serious incidents between law enforcement agencies and the communities they serve, President Obama issued an Executive Order establishing the President's Task Force on 21st Century Policing. The mission of the Task Force was to identify best practices and make recommendations to the President on how policing practices can promote effective crime reduction while, at the same time, build public trust. As a result, in May 2015, the Final Report of the President's Task Force on 21st Century Policing was submitted to the President. The report contains 59 recommendations and 92 action items organized around six main topic areas or "pillars:"

**PILLAR  
01**

#### **Building Trust & Legitimacy**

(9 recommendations, all of which are directed to local law enforcement agencies)

**PILLAR  
02**

#### **Policy & Oversight**

(15 recommendations, 13 of which are directed to local law enforcement agencies)

**PILLAR  
03**

#### **Technology & Social Media**

(7 recommendations, 2 of which are directed to local law enforcement agencies)

PILLAR  
**04**

### **Community Policing & Crime Reduction**

(7 recommendations, 3 of which are directed to local law enforcement agencies)

PILLAR  
**05**

### **Officer Training & Education**

(13 recommendations, 2 of which are directed to local law enforcement agencies)

PILLAR  
**06**

### **Officer Wellness & Safety**

(8 recommendations, 3 of which are directed to local law enforcement agencies)

Go to [http://www.cops.usdoj.gov/pdf/taskforce/TaskForce\\_FinalReport.pdf](http://www.cops.usdoj.gov/pdf/taskforce/TaskForce_FinalReport.pdf), to read the Final Report.

On July 23, 2015, representatives of the City of Columbia attended a Forum on Community Policing hosted by the White House and the U. S. Department of Justice. The purpose of the Forum was to discuss plans for implementation of the Task Force recommendations. As a result of the Forum, an Implementation Guide was developed to provide guidance on implementing the recommendations and creating change in policing and community engagement.

The President's Task Force on 21st Century Policing Implementation Guide can be found at [http://www.cops.usdoj.gov/pdf/taskforce/Implementation\\_Guide.pdf](http://www.cops.usdoj.gov/pdf/taskforce/Implementation_Guide.pdf)

The Columbia Police Department (CPD) has begun a detailed review of the Task Force Report and Recommendations. In order to support a comprehensive approach to reduce crime and build trust and legitimacy, implementation of the recommendations must come as a result of collaboration between city government officials, the Columbia Police Department and the community. The Columbia Police Department's Citizen Advisory Council (CAC), which is comprised of representatives from relevant constituent groups, will serve as the mechanism for collaborative implementation.

Internally, the Columbia Police Department's Office of Professional Standards will monitor progress of the Department's implementation of recommendations and provide regular progress reports to the Chief of Police, command staff and city council. A matrix has been created for the purpose of tracking the Department's progress that lists the recommendations, responsible personnel, and budget implications.

The purpose of this document is to provide stakeholders (City of Columbia officials, the Columbia Police Department's CAC, and members of the community) with the current status of implementation efforts and start the collaborative assessment of additional recommendations to be addressed. As reflected by our progress, much work has been done in the last year and a half to build positive relationships within our communities by making "deposits" in the "community bank account." However, there is still much work to do. Beyond the highlights listed below, several additional efforts are underway to reform the police department to better meet the challenges of 21st century policing. Changing the philosophy and culture within the police department is not done quickly and it cannot be accomplished by a few actions, policies or strategies. Our efforts, from the top down and the bottom up, must be continual until the principles of procedural justice and community policing are incorporated into everything we do.

## Promoting trust and ensuring legitimacy through procedural justice, transparency, accountability, and honest recognition of past and present obstacles

### Changing the Culture of Policing

- ✓ In the city's entertainment districts, the Columbia Police Department has implemented **public safety strategies that emphasize a guardian culture**. In meetings with both administrators and students of several area colleges and universities, as well as business leaders, a collaborative problem solving approach was developed to address safety concerns unique to nightlife areas in which large numbers of people congregate. While all stakeholders placed the highest priority on safety, no one, including Chief Holbrook, wanted the strategies employed by the police department to create an atmosphere of an occupying force. In years past, when students returned to school, police presence was significantly increased in entertainment areas and a large number of arrests and citations were made by officers. For example, in 2010, during the first weekend that students returned to school for the fall semester, there were 137 arrests and 149 charges in Five Points. In comparison, during the first weekend of the 2015 fall semester, there were only 9 arrests and 18 charges in the same area. To address the shared concern that students get home safely from entertainment areas, well-lit safety zones have been designated and transportation services are now available to all college and university students. (Recommendation 1.1)

### Culture of Transparency and Accountability

- ✓ The Columbia Police Department is currently one of approximately 30 law enforcement agencies in the country that has committed to participate in the **White House's Police Data Initiative (PDI)**. The police department is in the process of purchasing the technology necessary to enable submission of agency data to the Public Safety Open Data Portal. The datasets to be submitted to the portal are calls for service, officer use of force incidents,

and assaults on police officers. In making the data available to the public, the Columbia Police Department is further demonstrating a commitment to transparency and accountability. (Recommendation 1.3) \$ CPD budget implications.

- ☑ To strengthen a culture of transparency and accountability, the Columbia Police Department has begun the procurement process to purchase 300 additional **body-worn cameras** which will equip all patrol officers. (Recommendation 1.3)

## Internal and External Procedural Justice

- ☑ The Columbia Police Department has started holding **public community command staff meetings** on a bi-monthly basis. The meetings are held at community facilities in neighborhoods throughout Columbia. Crime trends, initiatives and public safety concerns of residents in the community are discussed at the meetings. (Recommendation 1.1)
- ☑ Chief Holbrook has initiated **quarterly round-table discussions with non-command officers** to provide a forum in which line officers can directly communicate with him. Current initiatives, issues and concerns are discussed openly. (Recommendation 1.4)

## Engaging Communities Through Positive Non-Enforcement Activities

- ☑ During the summer of 2015, the Columbia Police Department initiated a number of community engagement opportunities. On select days throughout the summer, Officers manned an **ice cream truck** and served up treats to neighborhood children in different locations throughout the city. **"Food Truck Fridays"** were hosted by the police department at its headquarters to create additional opportunities for positive engagement between officers and community members. (Recommendation 1.5)
- ☑ The Columbia Police Department has established a **Beyond the Badge Initiative** through which newly hired police officers spend their first two weeks working with community service organizations in their area of assignment. (Recommendation 1.5)

- ✓ The **Assisting Columbia's Elderly (ACE) Program** serves as an advocacy program for the City's senior citizens and other vulnerable adults. The Columbia Police Department partners with other agencies to coordinate services to promote lifelong dignity and independence. Home visits and welfare checks are conducted by Columbia Police Officers, and transportation is arranged to doctor's appointments and church events. Crime prevention tips are also provided to seniors participating in the ACE Program. (Recommendation 1.5)

## Crime Fighting Strategies that Encourage Public Trust

- ✓ In partnership with the U. S. Attorney's Office for the District of South Carolina, the Columbia Police Department launched the Ceasefire Columbia Initiative aimed at reducing gun violence in the 29203 neighborhoods of North Columbia. As part of the **focused deterrence strategy**, the first call-in was held in October 2015 for approximately 50 individuals on probation or parole. (Recommendation 1.6)
- ✓ The University of South Carolina has partnered with us in the Ceasefire Columbia initiative to **measure the effectiveness of the strategy** in the 29203 zip code area of the city. (Recommendation 1.7)

## Workforce Diversity

- ✓ A major **Recruitment and Retention Initiative** was launched in December 2014 that included a seven percent pay increase and a host of incentives to help recruit and retain law enforcement personnel. Beginning in 2015, positions that require specialized skills and training receive additional pay for subject expertise. Officers who live in the City receive a \$500 annual residency bonus, and educational pay incentives are available to all personnel who earn professional degrees while working for the Columbia Police Department. Incentives also include signing bonuses for qualified, South Carolina certified officers, and low interest home loan programs. As part of the initiative, an intense outreach effort has been conducted through partnerships with area military organizations and historically black colleges and universities (HBCUs). The Columbia Police Department has significantly increased participation in career/job fairs throughout the Midlands. The Department's recruitment efforts are paying off – in 2014, the Department received 84 applications for police officer vacancies; in 2015 year-to-date, over 1000 applications have been received. As of November 2015, 54 new employees have been hired by the Columbia Police Department, 19 of which are black, 32 are white, 1 is Asian and 2 are Hispanic. (Recommendation 1.8)

## Developing comprehensive and responsive policies on key topics while also implementing formal checks/balances and data collection/analysis

### Reducing Crime by Improving Relationships, Greater Community Engagement and Cooperation

- ✓ A recent analysis of city crime data revealed that the 29203 area of North Columbia was experiencing a disproportionate amount of the City's gun violence. In response, the Columbia Police Department partnered with local community and faith based organizations, the U. S. Attorney's Office, the South Carolina Department of Probation, Parole and Pardon Services, and others, to develop and implement **Ceasefire Columbia, a focused deterrence strategy, in the area defined by the 29203 zip code**. The first call-in, involving approximately 50 individuals on probation or parole, was held in October 2015. Community members participated in the call-in to speak out against the violence taking place in their neighborhoods. Social service organizations informed the offenders of available resources. (Recommendation 2.1)
- ✓ The Columbia Police Department **participates in meetings held by the Columbia Council of Neighborhoods (CCN)**, which is comprised of representatives of neighborhood organizations within the City of Columbia, to discuss public safety concerns and quality of life issues in the different communities. CCN meetings provide a forum for city government officials and members of the Columbia Police Department to collaborate with citizens on issues of mutual concern and develop strategies to solve neighborhood problems. It also allows citizens an ongoing opportunity to provide feedback regarding public safety perceptions and interactions with Officers that occur in each of the participating neighborhoods. (Recommendation 2.1)



## Data and Policies on Use of Force

- ✔ In May 2015, the Columbia Police Department released the **2014 Internal Affairs Report**, the first compilation of the agency's internal affairs data since 2008, and the first report of its kind to be released to the public. The Columbia Police Department's 2014 Internal Affairs Report included information regarding the process for citizens to make complaints of officer misconduct, use of force incidents, in-custody deaths and vehicle crashes. The report is available for public inspection on the agency website. (Recommendation 2.2)
  
- ✔ To **improve data collection** for incidents of officer misconduct and use of force, the Columbia Police Department is in the process of purchasing IA Pro Software for the Internal Affairs Unit. The software enables data analysis that will act as an early intervention system by allowing Department command staff to identify, address and prevent problem behavior before it escalates to an Internal Affairs matter. \$ CPD budget implications.
  
- ✔ **It is the policy of the Columbia Police Department to refer incidents of deadly force resulting in injury or death to the South Carolina Law Enforcement Division (SLED) for an external, independent investigation.** An internal, administrative investigation is conducted simultaneously by the agency's Internal Affairs Unit to determine if Department policies were violated by the subject Officer. (Recommendation 2.2)

## Composition of Columbia Police Department Made Public

- ✔ **Agency demographics** are included in the Columbia Police Department Internal Affairs Report, as well as the agency's Annual Report, which are both displayed on the agency website for public viewing. (Recommendation 2.5)

## Civilian Oversight

- ✔ The Columbia Police Department **Community Advisory Council (CAC)** was established in June 2015 to work with the police department on issues of concern and share insights and recommendations to enhance community-police relationships. The CAC membership is comprised of nine Columbia residents representing various stakeholders and diverse demographics. (Recommendation 2.8)

## Officer Identification and Citizen Feedback on Interactions with the Police

- ✓ The Columbia Police Department is in the process of implementing **web-based surveying technology** (Positive Referral Technologies) that will allow citizens to provide real-time feedback directly to the police department about interactions with police officers. Beginning in December 2015, citizens interacting with Columbia Police Officers will be given a card that includes the Officer's name and badge number, as well as a number the citizen can text to complete an online survey. The citizen survey will contain general questions about the performance of the Columbia Police Department, the citizen's perception of crime and safety in the City of Columbia and the conduct of the officer(s) during the encounter. The text message based technology gives the Columbia Police Department a way to measure all interactions, including non-enforcement related interactions. Data collection is immediate and reports are automatically generated and sent to the patrol commander. The survey will assist the police department in measuring community policing interactions and citizens perceptions of community safety, all while making strategic adjustments within the department. (Recommendation 2.11) \$ CPD budget implications.

## Balancing the embrace of technology and digital communications with local needs, privacy, assessments, and monitoring

### Implementation of Technology Designed for Local Needs

- ✓ To date, the Columbia Police Department has implemented a **body-worn camera pilot program** in the City's Entertainment Districts. Currently, the procurement process is underway to expand the program Department-wide. It is anticipated that all patrol officers will be outfitted with body-worn cameras beginning in December 2015. (Recommendation 3.2)
- ✓ A **Department Policy covering the body-worn camera program** has been developed and will be posted on the agency website for public review.

### Transparency and Accessibility for the Community through Technology

- ✓ The **Columbia Police Department's website is currently being redesigned** to increase transparency and accessibility by including statistical information, policies, and other information, i.e. how citizens can file complaints of officer misconduct, OIS and use of force incidents. (Recommendation 3.5)  
\$ CPD budget implications.

## Encouraging the implementation of policies that support community-based partnerships in the reduction of crime

### Community Policing

- ✓ **Community Response Teams** (CRTs) have been established in each Region to allow officers to develop stronger relationships with the citizens in their service area and work collaboratively with them to solve public safety and quality of life issues specific to each neighborhood. The City's **Code Enforcement Unit** was put under the purview of Columbia Police Department to support a coordinated approach between the CRT officers and code enforcement inspectors. This allows a more proactive and collaborative response to address blight in high crime areas. (Recommendation 4.5)

### Neighborhood Problem Solving – A Smart Policing Initiative

- ✓ The Columbia Police Department, in partnership with the University of South Carolina, has developed and implemented a Smart Policing Initiative to address citizen concerns about burglaries in their North Region neighborhood. A **two tier response to reduce and prevent burglaries was implemented in the identified hot spot area**. After an initial burglary, Officers complete incident reports, provide residents with a pamphlet containing burglary prevention tips, and ask residents to email serial numbers associated with stolen items. Officers also place door hangars with information regarding the local burglary incident on homes within a one-block radius of the crime. For near-repeat burglaries, officers follow up with a security survey to determine if the residence qualifies for a temporary alarm system. The University of South Carolina is conducting both process and outcome evaluations. (Recommendation 4.5)

### Positive Youth/Police Collaboration and Interactions

- ✓ The Columbia Police Department's **School Resource Officer** Unit has ten (10) officers who are assigned to various schools within the City of Columbia. The SROs work to develop positive relationships with the students and build mutual trust and respect. (Recommendation 4.7)

## Emphasizing the importance of high quality and effective training and education through partnerships with local and national training facilities

### Engage community members in trainings

- ✓ A **Citizens Police Academy** is offered by the Columbia Police Department twice a year. The Academy is a ten-week education program about law enforcement and the criminal justice system and highlights the initiatives and operations of the Columbia Police Department. Classes cover the following topic areas: Community policing, crime prevention, use of force, youth services, the police department's structure and operations, and the special units of the police department. (Recommendation 5.2)

### Officer Training in Cultural Diversity and Related Topics

- ✓ In January 2015, as part of the Mayor's Justice for All Initiative, the Columbia Police Department Training Unit, in partnership with community organizations and institutions of higher education, began offering training courses for sworn members on the topics listed below. (Recommendation 5.9/Action Item 5.9.1)
  - **Cultural sensitivity**
  - **Community Policing**
  - **Conflict Resolution**
  - **De-escalation Techniques**
  - **Implicit Bias/Discrimination Recognition**
  - **Response to Resistance/Use of Force**
  - **Mental Illness Recognition and Interaction**
  - **Chronic Illness Recognition**

**Endorsing practices that support officer wellness and safety through the re-evaluation of officer shift hours and data collection/analysis to help prevent officer injuries**

### **Promoting Officer Wellness and Safety**

- ✓ In July 2015, a **Fitness Coordinator** was employed by the Columbia Police Department and is now developing a multi-faceted officer safety and wellness program for Department employees. It is anticipated the plan will be ready for implementation in the beginning of 2016. (Recommendation 6.2)

### **Tactical First Aid Kits and Training**

- ✓ Through a partnership with Palmetto Health, **tactical first aid kits** will be included as standard equipment in all Columbia Police Department patrol vehicles. Officers will also receive additional first aid training. This can be beneficial in saving the lives of officers, victims, and suspects. (Recommendation 6.4)

### **Department Policies Requiring Officers Wear Seat Belts and Bulletproof Vests**

- ✓ The Columbia Police Department has well-established **mandatory wear policies** regarding seat-belts and ballistic vests for all sworn personnel. (Recommendation 6.6)



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