REIMAGINING PUBLIC SAFETY

Urban Peace Institute’s Recommendations for Police Reform, Accountability, and Embracing Community Based Alternatives

URBAN PEACE INSTITUTE
UPI seeks to dismantle the economy of mass incarceration and invest in building a community-based public safety and health infrastructure that allows people of color to thrive. Public leaders across the country are looking for a quick fix, but there is no quick fix. Change is only going to come from a seismic shift in power away from police, police unions, and the justice system towards a transformative investment in community-led safety and health solutions. Public safety should be redefined by communities that experience over-policing and violence.
POLICE REFORM: REDEFINE THE MISSION OF AMERICAN POLICING

1. End Over-Policing of Communities of Color
   • End and divest funding from law enforcement practices that support systemic racism, use of force, and warrior style policing
   • End stop and frisk practices
   • End racial and gang profiling
   • End use of gang databases and injunctions
   • End police in schools
   • End police collaboration with Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE)
   • Decriminalize and de-prioritize enforcement of minor crimes
   • End for-profit policing and eliminate fines and fees for low-income people

2. End Police Violence & Brutality
   • End use of adversarial policing and aggressive suppression tactics
   • Transform use of force policies
   • Require police departments to bear the cost of misconduct; settlements should be paid out of police budgets

3. Reimagine Policing for Public Trust
   • Embrace policing that focuses on community well-being and building public trust as core value in communities of color
   • Transform policing approach from warrior-style to guardian-style policing
   • Recognize officers for exercising restraint and embracing relationship-based policing
   • Change promotional criteria and incentives for officers
• Institutionalize and fund community-based pre-arrest diversion practices
• Require relationship-based policing training for all officers
• Require public agencies and police departments to engage with community-based training organizations and resident leaders
• Require officers responding to school incidents have advanced training to work with youth
• Law enforcement should embrace community-based alternatives to addressing safety for non-criminal offenses

ACCOUNTABILITY: CREATE PUBLIC ACCOUNTABILITY AND LEADERSHIP

4. Ensure Community-Led Police Accountability
• Create police commission and civilian complaints offices including community oversight with subpoena power
• Invest in community leadership training to ensure police accountability is driven by communities of color most impacted by over policing
• Ensure expedient officer discipline and prosecution without pay when under investigation of an alleged crime or improper use of force
• Assign independent prosecutors for use of force cases
• Ensure citizens’ rights to record and film police is respected by law enforcement agencies
• Establish policies that allow individuals to review police video and audio footage of their interaction with police without a court order
• Require the use of body cameras and dashboard cameras, and require the expedient release of footage to the public
• Enact consent decrees with strict oversight and accountability (federal and/or state)
• End the application of qualified immunity doctrine to police accused of use of excessive and/or deadly force
• End application of SLAPP motions by government agencies to discourage lawsuits seeking accountability
• Require policing data publication for arrests, diversion, officer-involved shootings with disaggregation by race, age, and zip code
• Ensure data transparency and make data available on officer misconduct, lawsuits, disciplinary actions, etc.
• End police union interference in the oversight and crafting of police accountability
• State legislatures must separate negotiation of contracts on police wages and benefits from law enforcement disciplinary procedures
• State legislators must ensure transparency and public involvement in the negotiation of collective bargaining agreements for law enforcement
• Revise state “Officer Bill of Rights” to ensure it does not interfere with officer accountability
• Increase budget transparency for law enforcement agencies
5. Invest in Community-Based Alternatives to Public Safety

- Divest funding from law enforcement practices that support systemic racism, use of force, and warrior style policing to fund alternative community-based public safety strategies
- Build a comprehensive community-based public safety infrastructure focused on non-law enforcement approaches to neighborhood health and safety
- Review public safety budgets at the state, county, and city level to reprioritize funding to improve community health and safety; redistribute public safety funding responsibilities between city, county, and state
- End the use of police in schools and divest funding to support school mental health counselors, gang intervention and outreach workers, nurses, psychologists, social workers, and public health workers
- Increase public and private investment in gang and street outreach
- Expand the role of gang intervention and outreach workers to respond and de-escalate violence as an alternative to law enforcement

- Increase investment and expand community leadership development to guide public safety initiatives
- Increase investment in and expand the role of community-based mental health responders
- Expand community-led and operated pre-arrest diversion alternatives
- Expand behavioral health and addiction infrastructure with harm reduction approaches

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