



Community-Police Engagement: Agency Considerations Checklist for Civil Demonstration Response

While civil demonstrations can occur peacefully within communities, tactical responses and agency preparedness can ensure officers engage in valuable dialogue with community members and maintain order. Consider the following items for your agency:

Communicate clearly and consistently to the public as information emerges.

- Utilize the agency's Public Information Officer (PIO) to provide information in a timely and effective manner.
- Share content and important information through various agency social media channels.
- Coordinate with national, state, tribal, and local authorities to ensure accurate and consistent information is distributed to community members.
- Share information with the public on impacts to traffic flow, police direction, and closures.

Brief and prepare officers on crowd control strategies.

- Ensure officers in close contact with crowds receive and use proper personal protective equipment.
- Focus control and enforcement response on participants threatening safety or property.
- Know what tools are available and what is appropriate to use during a demonstration.
- Identify personnel who are trained to use specialty crowd control tools with the expectation that they are the only ones who should be using it.
- Refresh procedures on using equipment with all personnel.
- Ensure equipment fits properly and remains in working condition.

Communicate clearly, consistently, and frequently with agency staff about changing policies and procedures.

- Designate a command staff leader or team to spearhead coordination with external agencies and disseminate information to agency staff.
- Prepare officers with messaging to answer questions about the relationship police have with local communities.
- Review expectations of officer discretion in arrests and citations for community members.
- Communicate policy expectations through multiple channels and formats.

Tactfully gather information for upcoming demonstrations and events.

- Designate a PIO to monitor social media for potential demonstrations, escalations, or public safety threats and compile information for analysis regarding future events.

Develop a contingency plan for staffing shortages.

- Prepare for officers to call out of work out of an abundance of caution.
- Consider alternative staffing methods, such as shared service provision with neighboring agencies, swing shifts, mandatory overtime, cancellation of leave and non-essential travel, and repurposing officer flex time.
- Cross-train personnel for temporary duty reassignment to assure proper coverage of essential duties.
- Evaluate what services require an on-scene police presence versus those that can be handled remotely or delayed.



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Coordinate with federal, state, tribal, and local government agencies as well as the private sector.

- Maintain consistent communication with local emergency services to keep personnel informed of the most up-to-date response protocol and safety measures in place.
- Coordinate with government agencies that are responsible for maintaining critical infrastructure.

Prepare officers to encounter community members with heightened emotions.

- Prepare officers to encounter community members with heightened emotions and frustrations that may impact their behavior and response to officer commands.
- Train personnel on peaceful, empathetic responses to frustrated community members when appropriate.
- Maintain and strengthen positive community relationships and partnerships.

Utilize incident command systems (ICS) to aid in agency response.

- Ensure your agency's established incident command system can be activated if needed to assist in command and control, as well as the coordination of limited resources.
- Identify which roles and duties are mission critical, if your agency does not have an incident command system.
- Designate specific command-level staff to coordinate agency response in the field.

Create a plan for critical incident stress management.

- Address officer physical and emotional well-being. Increased pressures from agency leadership and overexposure to media coverage can create stress, fear, and anxiety.
- Activate support services for officers and their families and ensure they know how to properly access it.
- Encourage personnel to develop plans should they be away from their families for an extended period of time.
- Create additional awareness of employee assistance programs (EAP).

Collect data, and document response protocols for future review and assessment, if practical.

- Data collection for community-police relations may include metrics on the volume of community participants at a demonstration event, counts of arrests or issued citations, counts of officers or demonstrators requiring medical attention, and social media engagement.

IACP Resources

- A. IACP [Community-Police Engagement Page](#)
- B. IACP Model Policy: [Media Relations](#)
- C. IACP Model Policy: [Crowd Management](#)

Additional Resources

- A. [National Consensus Policy and Discussion Paper on Use of Force](#)
- B. IACP [Law Enforcement Policy Resource Center](#)