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PROJECT SAFE NEIGHBORHOODS:

Police-Corrections Partnerships

MISSION:

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The International Association of Chiefs of Police (IACP) Project Safe Neighborhoods (PSN) Initiative, with support from the Bureau of Justice Assistance, Office of Justice Programs, Department of Justice (BJA) works to improve law enforcement's capacity to interdict firearms trafficking and disrupt gang activity. This is one in a series of Resource Briefs designed to provide law enforcement officers and executives with an overview on topics related to firearms.¹

RESOURCE BRIEF

What is a Police-Corrections Partnership?

A police-corrections partnership is a formal and informal agreement between police, sheriffs and corrections agencies with the goal of preventing new offenses by the members of the community who are most likely to commit crimes.²

Law enforcement agencies should take a leadership role in initiating relationships with corrections officials by sharing information and work collaboratively to drive S.M.A.R.T. (Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Relevant and Timely) crime prevention efforts. A police-led partnership starts with developing a shared vision or concern, implementing an action plan, and accomplishing the goal.³

In order to successfully build and maintain a relationship with corrections officials, law enforcement agencies should:

- Communicate and share information;
- Share police intelligence with corrections officials on individuals released from prison, including gang information, field interviews, and traffic stops;
- Develop and standardize a wide-range base of information that corrections agencies can supply;
- Incorporate intelligence sharing and use into all police operations (such as patrol, special operations, crime analysis, CompStat, and smart/predictive policing) in order to increase insight into emerging threats;
- Develop a strategic plan outlining common goals;
- Dedicate experienced officers willing to contribute resources to the initiative; and
- Monitor and evaluate the value of the relationship and information exchange.



BJA

Bureau of Justice Assistance
U.S. Department of Justice



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Why Establish a Police-Corrections Partnership?

Law enforcement and correctional professionals often work parallel to one another, instead of collaboratively, in their respective roles to ensure public safety. However, it has been shown that by working together and maximizing the expertise and resources of each entity, communities benefit to a much greater degree. When establishing a police-corrections partnership, keep in mind that each partnership will be unique to the agencies involved because the challenges that the community faces and the strengths of the partners will differ. Establishing a mutually agreed-upon mission, sharing a commitment to the partnership's success, and communicating clearly will break down old patterns and allow both agencies to share in the successes that come from the partnership agreement.

Benefits of Partnerships:

1. Reducing Crime – When the knowledge and resources of the two agencies are focused on achieving the same goals, crime prevention strategies can be employed and crime reduction is increased.⁴
2. Increasing Officer Safety – Law enforcement officers can benefit from knowing more about the individuals they come in contact with, especially if they have a tendency toward violence or have been involved in dangerous incidents.
3. Addressing Community Concerns – Many times, a community is concerned about an individual returning to their neighborhood. Collaboration between corrections agencies and police departments can provide more targeted supervision after an individual's release from prison. This builds trust among community members as they feel their safety concerns are being heard.
4. Participating in Intelligence-Led Policing – Data is a critical component to preventing crime and reducing the rate of recidivism. Use risk-assessment tools, crime data analytics, and crime location statistics to reduce and prevent crime.
5. Improving Productivity – Partnerships have many implications to the bottom line of an organization. While some investments may need to be made, and some additional work is required, the positive outcomes outweigh the negative. Partnerships are force multipliers and increase crime prevention.⁵
6. Increasing Officer Safety – Law enforcement officers can benefit from knowing more about the individuals they come in contact with, especially if they have a tendency toward violence or have been involved in dangerous incidents.



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What Types of Partnerships Exist?

Police-corrections partnership types depend on agency size and jurisdictional need. Activities within a police-corrections partnership can vary depending on the needs of the agencies and the communities they serve. Some partnerships will have one mission, some will encompass several goals. The important factor in these partnerships is the mutual agreement from the outset and defined goals so all are working together in the same direction.

Partnership styles include:

- Information sharing partnerships- Police and corrections share information about those who have interacted with the criminal justice system. Information types may include personal history, photographs, family members, visitor logs, commissary or inmate accounts, and lists and registries.
- Interagency problem-solving partnerships – These partnerships represent executive-level efforts to identify goals and address strategic issues and mutual concerns.
- Enhanced supervision partnerships – Joint supervision initiatives assess individuals being released on parole or probation in order to prevent recidivism or any violations of the conditions of release.
- Specialized enforcement partnerships – This police-corrections partnership addresses a specific type of crime within a municipality (e.g. gang crime, drugs, and robberies).
- Fugitive apprehension- Joint police-corrections tactics help locate and lead to the arrest of probationers or parolees who violate conditions of release.⁶

What does a Police-Corrections Information Sharing Partnership Require?

Informal and long-standing working relationships are beneficial, but agencies should formalize their partnership through a memoranda of understanding (MOUs) or standard operating procedures (SOPs). An MOU for a police-corrections information sharing partnership identifies who can access specific types of data; what data fields can be shared (e.g., date of birth, height, and weight); data storage details (e.g., security of data and the length of time data will be saved); when, how, and in what format data can be shared (e.g., Excel files, Word files, database sharing, and cloud computing); and what reports will be generated from the intelligence gathered.

For agencies that do not have compatible records management systems, there are tools that have been developed that will aid in defining and mapping data across systems. However, even in these situations, departments do not need to invest in a fancy technology solution – simple spreadsheets or databases with names of people who have committed a crime, addresses, and other pertinent demographic information can provide law enforcement officers with the information they need to address public safety concerns.



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What Kind of Information Should be Shared?

The information that should be shared between police and corrections agencies include: parolee addresses; probation and parole cases; local crime intelligence; sex offender registration; gang affiliations and symbols; intel gathered from social networking sites; maps that overlay probationers' addresses and time-bounded crime data; and criminal history.

IACP Resources Related to Police-Corrections Partnerships

Police Corrections Partnerships: Collaborating For Strategic Crime Control

<http://www.iacp.org/Portals/0/pdfs/Police-Corrections-Partnerships.pdf>

A study that examines a police-led corrections-based information exchange model to achieve crime control objectives.

Sex Offenders in the Community: Enforcement and Prevention Strategies for Law Enforcement

<http://www.theiacp.org/portals/0/pdfs/SexOffendersintheCommunity.pdf>

An overview of the sex offender population and examples of prevention and enforcement strategies from agencies around the United States.

Building an Offender Reentry Program: A Guide for Law Enforcement

<http://www.theiacp.org/portals/0/pdfs/ReentryProgramGuide.pdf>

An examination of law enforcement's role in reentry initiatives including identification of promising practices and steps for building a reentry program.

Strategically Monitoring Sex Offenders: Accessing Community Corrections Resources to Enhance Law Enforcement Capabilities

<http://www.theiacp.org/portals/0/pdfs/IACPinfoGuideFINAL.pdf>

A review of community corrections resources that can enhance law enforcement capabilities.

Probation and Parole: A Primer for Law Enforcement

<http://www.theiacp.org/Portals/0/pdfs/Probation-and-Parole.pdf>

An overview of roles and responsibilities related to successful police-corrections partnerships.

Targeting Criminality: Successful Police Corrections Partnerships

<http://www.theiacp.org/Police-Corrections-Partnerships>

A 13-minute video that shows how partnerships facilitate information sharing and advance agency efforts.



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Additional Resources

- The Department of Justice's Mapping and Analysis for Public Safety (MAPS) program provides information on the use of mapping technologies throughout public safety. More information on the MAPS program can be found online at: <http://www.nij.gov/topics/technology/maps/Pages/welcome.aspx>
- The Global Justice Information Sharing Initiative (Global) serves as a Federal Advisory Committee (FAC) and advises the U.S. Attorney General on justice information sharing and integration initiatives. Global was created to support the broad scale exchange of pertinent justice and public safety information. More information on Global can be found online at: <https://it.ojp.gov/global>
- The Journal Federal Probation: A Journal of Correctional Philosophy and Practice published a review of the empirical literature on police-probation/parole partnerships: <http://www.uscourts.gov/file/3548/download>



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END NOTES

¹ For additional information related to the PSN Initiative, to include additional Fact Sheets, please visit www.theiacp.org/PSNInitiative.

² McNeil, Walter A. 2012, August. "The Importance of Police-Corrections Partnerships." *Police Chief Magazine*. Retrieved February 15, 2015. http://www.policechiefmagazine.org/magazine/index.cfm?fuseaction=display_arch&article_id=2720&issue_id=82012

³ Bonham, Gene Ph.D. & Joanne Katz J.D. (2009, March). *Effective Alternatives to Incarceration: Police Collaborations with Corrections and Communities*. U.S. Department of Justice. Office of Community Oriented Policing Services. 25. Retrieved February 15, 2015. <http://ric-zai-inc.com/Publications/cops-p165-pub.pdf>

⁴ *Police-Corrections Partnerships: Collaborating for Strategic Crime Control*. (2012, March). The International Association of Chiefs of Police. 4. Retrieved February 15, 2015. <http://www.theiacp.org/Portals/0/pdfs/Police-Corrections-Partnerships.pdf>

⁵ Ibid., 5.

⁶ *Police-Corrections Partnerships: Collaborating for Strategic Crime Control*. (2012, March). The International Association of Chiefs of Police. 12. Retrieved February 15, 2015. <http://www.theiacp.org/Portals/0/pdfs/Police-Corrections-Partnerships.pdf>