



WSU Police Department Civil Rights Strategic Plan

December 18, 2020

Introduction

The WSU Police Department would like to thank the WSU Office of Compliance and Civil Rights (CCR, formerly CRCI) for their work on the May 6th, 2020, Investigation Report conducted at the request of the Department. The following strategic plan is a result of that study. Thanks also goes to the WSU Police Citizen's Advisory Board (CAB) and the WSU Student Legal Research Association (SLRA) for their assistance. A great deal of work has gone into the analysis of data and review of reports by members of the WSU Police Department staff and the CAB and SLRA. Members of those groups have offered background and context for strategic plan elements.

The strategic plan includes the following elements:

- *bias training*
- *bias reporting and CCR referral*
- *external community partnerships*
- *data gathering*
- *data review*

It is important to the WSU Police Department that this strategic plan constitutes long-term and sustainable approaches. Specifics under each of these strategies are expected to vary depending on successes and failures and as the community provides supportive critique.

Bias Training

All WSU police personnel are required to complete the three-part Community & Equity Workshop Series hosted and taught by the WSU Office of Outreach and Education. The series is taught in the following three parts:

- *Equity 101: Defining and Cultivating Inclusive Excellence at WSU*
- *Equity 102: Who are You? Fostering Critical Self Awareness to Engage Across Difference*
- *Equity 103: Moving from Equality Towards Equity*

As stated on their website, the Office of Outreach and Education offers these courses as the foundation for the Community & Equity Certificate for WSU faculty and staff. WSU police personnel are required to complete the first three foundational courses for the certificate in cadres and then complete additional courses for certification. In addition, training in implicit bias and bias in policing is required for all personnel.

Bias Reporting and CCR Referral

The WSUPD website offers an online complaint function, making it easier for citizens to address complaints of all types, including officer behavior, discrimination, or bias.

Complaints of discrimination, harassment, and sexual misconduct are routinely referred to CCR for additional investigation and may be submitted directly to CCR as well. WSUPD reviews complaint incident data regularly at the command staff level and uses findings to make policy and procedural adjustments.

External Community Partnerships

The WSU Police Advisory Board has been configured to address policy development and community relationships. Three sub-committees are established to that end:

- *Policy and Education—to review policy on a regular and ongoing basis and to recommend targeted training protocols for department members*
- *Trust and Community—to recommend and assist the department in community outreach efforts and help build police–community trust*
- *Flashpoint—to facilitate department and community coordination for specific incidents of concern to the community*

The WSU Police Advisory Committee has an established relationship with the Pullman Police Advisory Committee. Most recently, both groups participated in a broad community summit called *Reimagining Public Safety in Pullman*. Similar ongoing community events are anticipated based on suggestions from the summit survey. Survey results and review of community comments have helped point to areas of concern to be addressed with external community partners and with the broader community through the work of the Trust and Community sub-committee of the WSU Police Advisory Board.

Data Gathering

The key issue in demographic data collection and processing is the need to strengthen manual collection methods that are understood and accepted by the communities affected. WSU Police Officers manually collect race data on citizen contacts as they are able to do so using

appropriate protocols. In addition, WSU PD continues to enhance technological solutions to enable data analysis beyond what is available through the National Incident Based Reporting System and other data collection organizations which either don't require or don't collect race data.

WSUPD's records management system (known under the brand name Spillman) uses a combination of automated systems and relational databases as well as manual entries to manage records. Records personnel using Spillman manage the gathering and external reporting of data in accordance with the National Incident-Based Reporting System (NIBRS). NIBRS captures data from a list of specific law enforcement incidents to which officers respond, including data on each criminal offense related to those incidents. NIBRS data includes information regarding offenders and their relationships to victims and specific detail data for each incident. That data is transmitted regularly to the Washington State Patrol and to federal law enforcement authorities. Associated race data (if known) may be submitted as part of NIBRS, but is not required.

Traffic offenses are not reported to NIBRS. Data on traffic infractions and citations are gathered using data from state driver's licenses held by the Washington State Department of Licensing (DOL). Race data is not associated to driver's licenses in the State of Washington (and other states) and is therefore not held in their database and not available as a data point to officers in the field. Race data gathered in the course of infraction or citation issuance are provided strictly by voluntary means.

Because race is an important demographic data point (regardless of what is implied by the various law enforcement databases which include or exclude race), it is manually added to WSU police records when it is available, either through cross-checking in the Spillman system or when it is made available to an officer.

WSU Police submits statistics to the Department of Education (DOE) in accordance with the Clery Act. Clery Act statistics do not include demographic data. Furthermore, Clery Act data is inconsistent with NIBRS data because each system relies on unique definitions of crimes as well as unique and subjective definitions of jurisdiction or reporting areas. These differences result in statistics that are normally inconsistent with NIBRS data. The Spillman Records Management System does not recognize or track Clery data which is pulled and analyzed manually outside of the NIBRS and Spillman Systems.

Data Review

Police administrators hand pulled and analyzed each case in the CCR study and examined the available fact patterns. Arrests were examined under the categories including type of offense, custody status, student status, and type of contact among other variables. The findings were

similar to the CCR findings and didn't reveal evident single causes. Although arrests of people of color were proportionate with demographic estimates, a disproportionate number were black.

The WSU Student Legal Research Association also examined the data on behalf of WSUPD, finding the same trend to a lesser degree. A formal relationship with the SLRA is being negotiated in order to facilitate regular external data analysis as part of their work. The SLRA relationship with the WSUPD represents an opportunity for a long-term, sustainable external partnership.

These reviews highlighted a known issue with law enforcement data management tools which are designed for collection of crime data but not demographic data. Mitigation strategies for these realities are mentioned in the data gathering section above.

More rigorous collection practices and an outside analysis will allow WSUPD administration (and the CAB Policy and Training sub-committee) to review demographics data for policy and procedure adjustments. The WSUPD internal review of demographics data will be paired with a review by CCR.

Summary

These and further mitigation strategies are an important part of police work as it changes. Many very attractive and appealing one-and-out programs have been either cast upon police departments or tried by police departments as quick fixes with few lasting results. Permanent fixtures of police reform involving better understanding of police interactions through better data and more open and cooperative relationships with communities stand a better chance of supporting lasting change.