



# How Do People in High-Crime, Low-Income Communities View the Police?

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In certain American communities, public trust in law enforcement, a critical ingredient in public safety,<sup>1</sup> is tenuous at best.<sup>2</sup> Residents of these high-crime, heavily disadvantaged communities witness and experience intensive police presence, high rates of incarceration and community supervision, and concentrated violence and question the intent, effectiveness, and equity of the criminal justice system.<sup>3</sup> Indeed, police may carry out aggressive strategies that target quality-of-life infractions and drug-, gun-, and gang-related violence in ways that undermine public confidence.<sup>4</sup> Perhaps not surprisingly, areas with high levels of mistrust tend to be those that are heavily policed, where police use tactics such as pretextual stops<sup>1</sup> that damage their relationship with the people they are charged to protect.<sup>5</sup> The results can be far-reaching: a distrust of the criminal justice system, an unwillingness to cooperate with the police,<sup>6</sup> and a cynical view of the law that can perpetuate crime and victimization.<sup>7</sup>

The people most likely to experience high rates of violence and heavy police presence in their communities have limited resources,<sup>8</sup> social capital,<sup>9</sup> and political voice.<sup>10</sup> Yet their voices, when amplified, can be a powerful tool that communities can leverage to hold law enforcement accountable. Integrating the authentic experiences and perceptions of community members into public safety decisionmaking processes is critical in efforts to promote public safety.<sup>11</sup> Quite simply, reductions in violent crime are not possible without meaningful representation of—and engagement with—the residents most affected by it.<sup>12</sup>

This research brief aims to elevate the experiences, views, and attitudes of residents often underrepresented in research on perceptions of law enforcement—people living in high-crime neighborhoods with concentrated disadvantage. Using a unique purposive sampling methodology to represent residents in communities with the most tenuous relationships with law enforcement, we

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<sup>i</sup> Pretextual stops are when police stop and search someone for a traffic violation, minor or otherwise, to investigate other suspicious activity that is separate and unrelated to the initial violation.

conducted in-person surveys in partnership with local organizations in six cities: Birmingham, Alabama; Fort Worth, Texas; Gary, Indiana; Minneapolis, Minnesota; Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania; and Stockton, California. The purpose of these surveys was to collect baseline data on residents' views of police as part of an Urban Institute (Urban) evaluation of the National Initiative on Building Community Trust and Justice (National Initiative). But our findings serve more than an evaluation function, offering insights into the nature of community-police relations in high-crime, high-poverty neighborhoods and highlight opportunities for improvement. Our research shows that although variations exist across the six cities, respondents' perceptions of police across measures of legitimacy, procedural justice, racial bias, relatability to police, and applied principles of community policing, on average, are extremely negative. However, residents also expressed a firm belief in and support for the law and a willingness to partner with police in public safety efforts. The variation in responses by city suggests that each city's local context, including departmental policies and policing approaches, likely influence perceptions.

This brief is organized in four sections. We first review the literature on past efforts to measure and assess community perceptions of the police; next we describe our study's methodology. We then summarize findings across the six cities in accordance with the literature, grouped by category: procedural justice, police department legitimacy, police bias, community policing, perceptions of the law, relatability to the police, and willingness to partner with police in public safety efforts. We conclude by discussing the variation in perceptions across cities and the implications for policy and practice.

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### **About the National Initiative for Building Community Trust and Justice**

Established through a cooperative agreement from the US Department of Justice in 2014, the National Initiative for Building Community Trust and Justice (National Initiative) is a six-city effort to pilot ways to restore relationships between police and members residing in communities that suffer from high levels of crime and strained police-community relations. Led by John Jay College of Criminal Justice's National Network for Safe Communities, in partnership with the Center for Policing Equity, Yale Law School, and the Urban Institute, the National Initiative brings together practitioners and researchers who provide a suite of interventions focused on law enforcement and community members in six cities: Birmingham, Alabama; Fort Worth, Texas; Gary, Indiana; Minneapolis, Minnesota; Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania; and Stockton, California. These interventions include (1) training and technical assistance for police officers on how to engage with residents in a procedurally just manner; (2) trainings that encourage officers to acknowledge and tamp down implicit biases; and (3) reconciliation discussions during which police officers and community members have authentic conversations aimed at acknowledging historic tensions, harms, and misconceptions and repairing relationships. More information on the National Initiative, along with accompanying resources and tools for communities interested in engaging in similar efforts, can be found at [www.trustandjustice.org](http://www.trustandjustice.org).

# Measuring Community Perceptions

The substantial body of literature on the role of procedural justice and police legitimacy, while rich, suffers from methodological limitations because much of it relies on surveys of either the general population<sup>13</sup> or people known to have had contact with the police.<sup>14</sup> General population surveys often mask differences between groups. Those who are white and more affluent are the most likely to respond to general population surveys and tend to have relatively favorable views of the police.<sup>15</sup> Meanwhile, findings based on surveys of only those who have had direct interactions with the police do not include important means by which people develop their perceptions of police—by witnessing officers’ interactions with members of the public; hearing about officers’ interactions with residents from family, friends, and neighbors; and watching, reading, and listening to media reports.<sup>16</sup>

Another limitation of past research on community perceptions of the police is that it is based largely on mail or telephone surveys. Not only are response rates for these types of surveys low over all,<sup>17</sup> but they are particularly suppressed among lower-income respondents,<sup>18</sup> those with less education,<sup>19</sup> and respondents who are racial or linguistic minorities.<sup>20</sup> In-person surveys, by contrast, tend to yield higher and more representative responses.<sup>21</sup>

The shortcomings of past research are particularly acute in the context of police legitimacy. The places with the most tenuous relationships between residents and police are those that have the highest concentrations of crime, disadvantage, and people of color.<sup>22</sup> It stands to reason then that a particularly useful survey methodology would be one that is conducted door to door in these neighborhoods.

## Methodology

The purpose of the surveys was to document a baseline of community perceptions of and experiences with the police, from which we could then measure change associated with implementation of the National Initiative. To help us create a sample of residences,<sup>ii</sup> police departments from the six cities—Birmingham, Fort Worth, Gary, Minneapolis, Pittsburgh, and Stockton—provided us with address-level crime data.<sup>iii</sup> We combined these data with publicly available census data on poverty and disadvantage to create a composite index of concentrated crime and poverty/disadvantage for each street segment in each city.<sup>iv</sup> Between 37 and 54 percent of residential street segments in each city had no crime during

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<sup>ii</sup> Residential zones were identified and linked to street segment data. Depending on the city, approximately 44 to 78 percent of each city’s street segments were identified within a residential zone. Aggregated across the six cities, the total sample size was 84,086 street segments.

<sup>iii</sup> For sampling consistency across cities, we used the following crime metrics in our index: aggravated and simple assault, burglary, disorder offenses, drugs offenses, kidnapping, murder, motor vehicle thefts, prostitution, robbery, theft, and weapon offenses.

<sup>iv</sup> In this study, areas of concentrated disadvantage were determined by examining census tract-level data for each city. The shares of households with incomes below the poverty level, households receiving public assistance, female-headed households, unemployed people, households with residents under 18 years old, and people who are of a nonwhite racial background were Z-scored and scaled together within each tract. Households in the top 10

the periods for which data were provided; we subsequently removed these street segments from our potential survey sample. Using our index, we ranked the street segments and identified the top 10 percent with the highest index of concentrated crime and poverty in each city. These street segments accounted for 39 to 50 percent of all reported crimes on residential streets and made up our final sampling frame of 6,336 households across the six cities.

We mailed letters to the 6,336 households to let them know about their ability to participate in a research survey and the general timing of the planned survey. The fieldwork in each city occurred over one to two weeks, including at least one weekend day, between September 2015 and January 2016. We partnered with local teams of community surveyors to execute the fieldwork.<sup>v</sup> During our survey period, surveyors attempted to contact an adult occupant at 4,766 households (75.2 percent of the initial sampling frame). During these attempts, we identified 1,016 households that were vacant or abandoned and removed them from our valid sample, leading to a revised sampling frame of 3,750 valid households. For those households in which we could not make contact with an adult or a contacted adult said he or she did not have sufficient time to complete the survey, we left contact cards that residents could use to complete the survey in person or over the phone at another time with research staff.

Among the 3,750 households, a total of 1,278 adults completed the survey (1,189 in person and 89 over the phone), which made up 34.1 percent of the valid sampling frame. Contacted adults in 24.4 percent of the valid sample households declined to participate in the survey (916 adults of the 3,750 valid households). We were unable to make contact with any adult in 1,556 of the 3,750 valid households (41.5 percent) because no one answered the door during the survey period and no one called Urban using the information on the mailed letter or contact card.<sup>vi</sup>

Below are key sociodemographic characteristics of the 1,278 survey respondents. As figures 1 and 2 illustrate, of those surveyed, 66.3 percent identified as black, 11.9 percent identified as white, and 10.6 percent identified as Latinx or Hispanic. The majority of respondents were female.

Respondents ranged in age from 18 to 104, with a median age of 46. A majority of respondents (61.6 percent) were not employed at the time of the survey (figure 3). As anticipated given the sampling frame, most respondents lived in households characterized by extreme poverty, with 62.0 percent reporting a total combined annual income of less than \$20,000 (figure 4). By contrast, nationwide in 2015, 13.5 percent of all people in the United States (except unrelated children under age 15, such as foster children) were living below the federal poverty threshold of \$24,257.<sup>vii</sup>

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percent of both the concentrated disadvantage index and crime index per residential street segments were selected for this study.

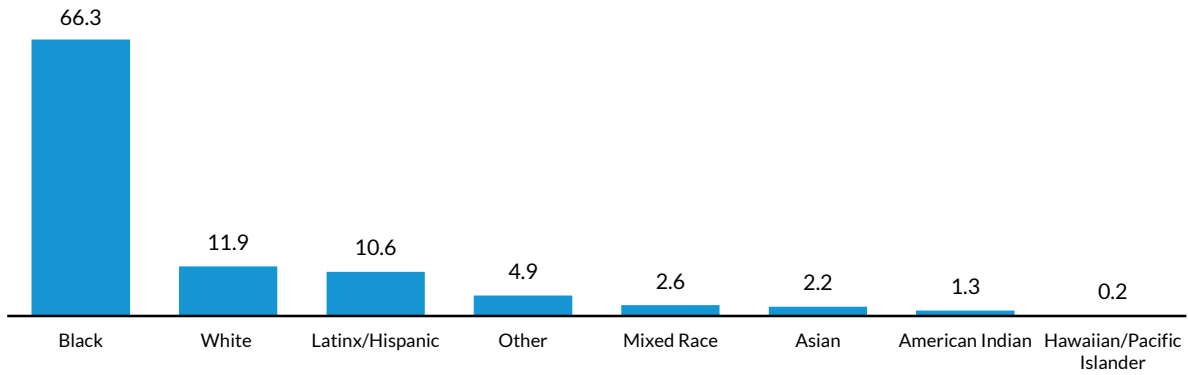
<sup>v</sup> In addition to managing all the logistics of the survey effort, Urban researchers selected and trained local surveyors in each city and transported and supervised them throughout the effort.

<sup>vi</sup> We conducted follow-up attempts as time permitted.

<sup>vii</sup> This poverty threshold is based on a family of four, with two adults and two children. See “Age and Sex of all People, Family Members and Unrelated Individuals Iterated by Income-to Poverty Ratio and Race: 2015,” CPS Poverty Table POV-01, US Census Bureau, <https://www.census.gov/data/tables/time-series/demo/income-poverty/cps-pov/pov-01.html>.

FIGURE 1

Race/Ethnicity (percent)

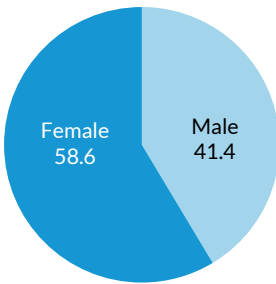


Source: Urban analysis of surveys of residents in Birmingham, AL; Fort Worth, TX; Gary, IN; Minneapolis, MN; Pittsburgh, PA; and Stockton, CA.

Note: Valid N = 1,278.

FIGURE 2

Gender (percent)

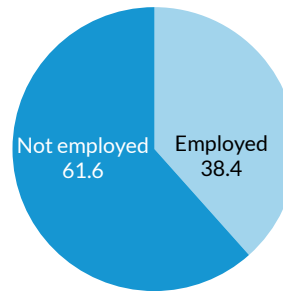


Source: Urban analysis of surveys of residents in Birmingham, AL; Fort Worth, TX; Gary, IN; Minneapolis, MN; Pittsburgh, PA; and Stockton, CA.

Note: Valid N = 1,228.

FIGURE 3

Employment Status (percent)

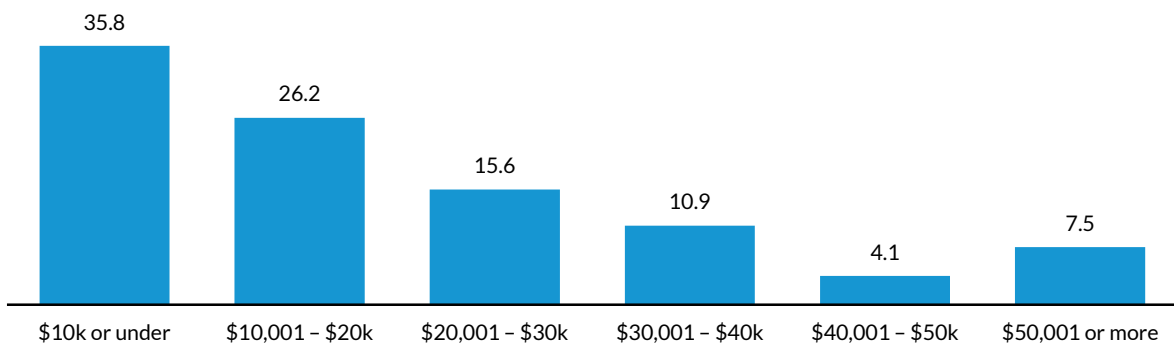


Source: Urban analysis of surveys of residents in Birmingham, AL; Fort Worth, TX; Gary, IN; Minneapolis, MN; Pittsburgh, PA; and Stockton, CA.

Note: Valid N = 1,228.

FIGURE 4

Annual Household Income (percent)



Source: Urban analysis of surveys of residents in Birmingham, AL; Fort Worth, TX; Gary, IN; Minneapolis, MN; Pittsburgh, PA; and Stockton, CA.

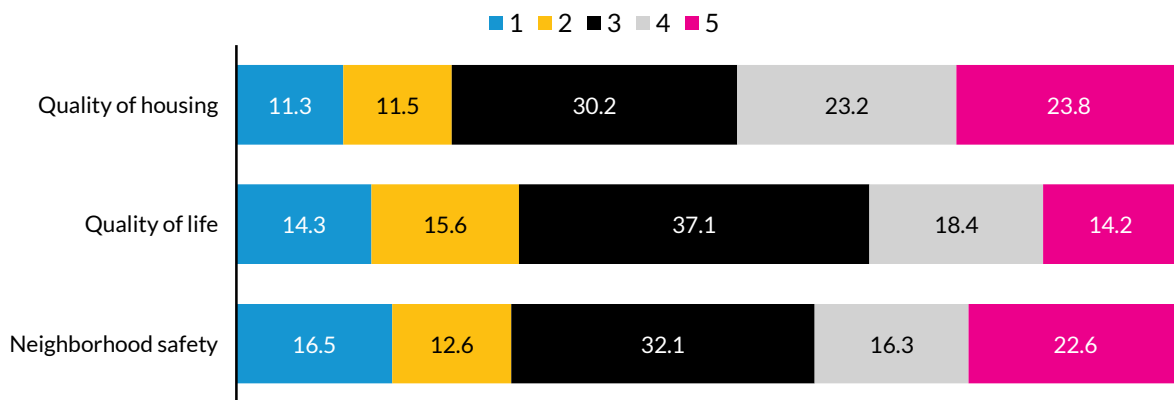
Notes: Valid N = 1,105. These data include total combined household income from legal sources such as legal jobs, Social Security, retirement income, and unemployment payments.

Understanding that perceptions of the police may be closely linked to perceptions of safety and overall community well-being, we asked respondents to rank the quality of housing, quality of life, and level of safety in their communities. Figure 5 illustrates that the modal response across these three metrics was the neutral response in the middle of the poor-to-excellent continuum. Yet 29.1 and 29.9 percent rated their neighborhood safety and quality of life negatively (1 or 2 on the 5-point scale), and 22.8 percent rated their quality of housing negatively.

**FIGURE 5**

**Perceptions of Community**

*Percentage of residents ranking the following categories from 1 (poor) to 5 (excellent)*



**Source:** Urban analysis of surveys of residents in Birmingham, AL; Fort Worth, TX; Gary, IN; Minneapolis, MN; Pittsburgh, PA; and Stockton, CA.

**Notes:** Valid N for quality of housing = 1,273. Valid N for quality of life = 1,253. Valid N for neighborhood safety = 1,250.

## Survey Findings

With the sociodemographic and quality-of-life questions in mind, we now turn to the central survey findings, which we present in seven categories: procedural justice, police department legitimacy, police bias, community policing, perceptions of the law, relatability to police, and willingness to partner with the police. The survey questions in each category were drawn from the wealth of literature on policing, crime control, and police-community relations, and statistically, the grouping of questions reliably and accurately captured each of the various concepts.<sup>viii</sup> Below we present the degree to which residents in the six cities agreed or disagreed with the questions in each category and then focus on these scales and the variation in them across the cities.

<sup>viii</sup> Factor analyses yielded Cronbach’s alphas that ranged from 0.87 to 0.96 (by scaled measure).

## Procedural Justice

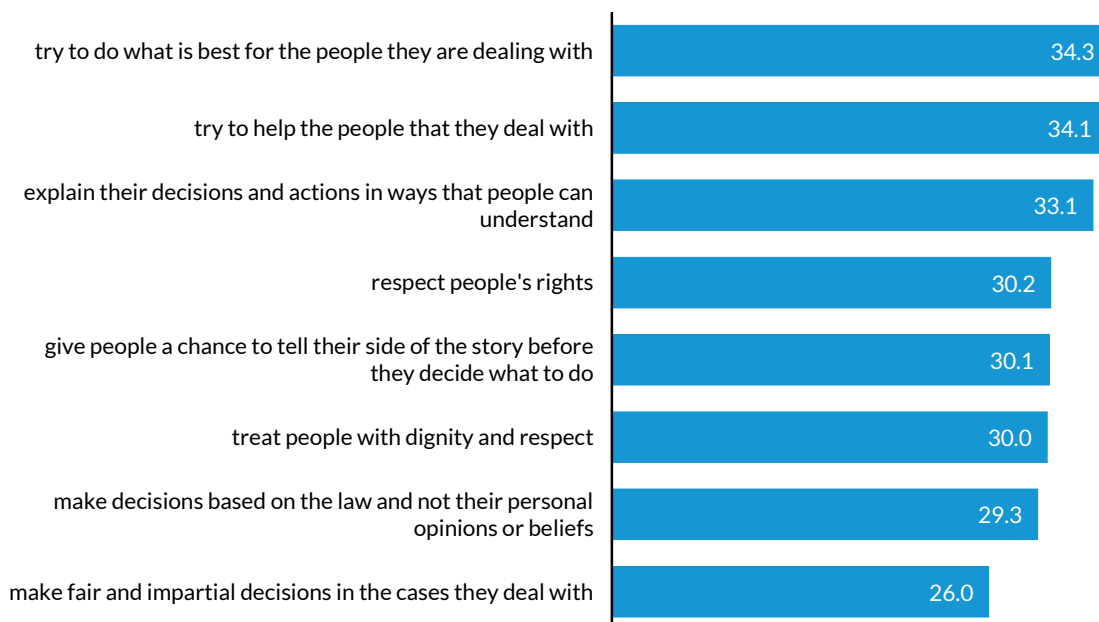
Amid enhanced public awareness of police shootings of community members, the concept of **procedural justice** has garnered increased attention. Procedural justice is composed of four perceptions or beliefs on the part of residents: they should have a voice when interacting with police, police are trustworthy, the law is fair and should be followed, and police apply the law fairly and appropriately.<sup>23</sup> In practice, if police conduct themselves in a procedurally just manner, they (1) provide an opportunity for residents to have a voice and a chance to tell their side of the story, (2) treat residents with dignity and respect, (3) explain the reasons for their decisions and actions, and (4) convey fairness and impartiality in their interactions with residents.

Figure 6 shows the percentage of residents across the six cities who responded with a 4 or a 5 on a 5-point scale from almost never (1) to almost always (5) when asked if police behave in procedurally just ways, such as explaining their decisions and actions. Across all eight questions, the majority did not believe that police behave or act in procedurally just ways. Well under half responded with a 4 or a 5 (almost always) when asked if police give people a chance to tell their side of the story before they decide what to do (30.1 percent) and when asked if police explain their decisions and actions in ways that people can understand (33.1 percent).

FIGURE 6

### Perceptions of Procedural Justice

Percentage of residents who believe police...



**Source:** Urban analysis of surveys of residents in Birmingham, AL; Fort Worth, TX; Gary, IN; Minneapolis, MN; Pittsburgh, PA; and Stockton, CA.

**Notes:** Responses ranged from 1 (almost never) to 5 (almost always). Data represent percentage of respondents selecting 4 and 5 (almost always). Valid N = 1,153. Cronbach's alpha = 0.954.

## Police Department Legitimacy

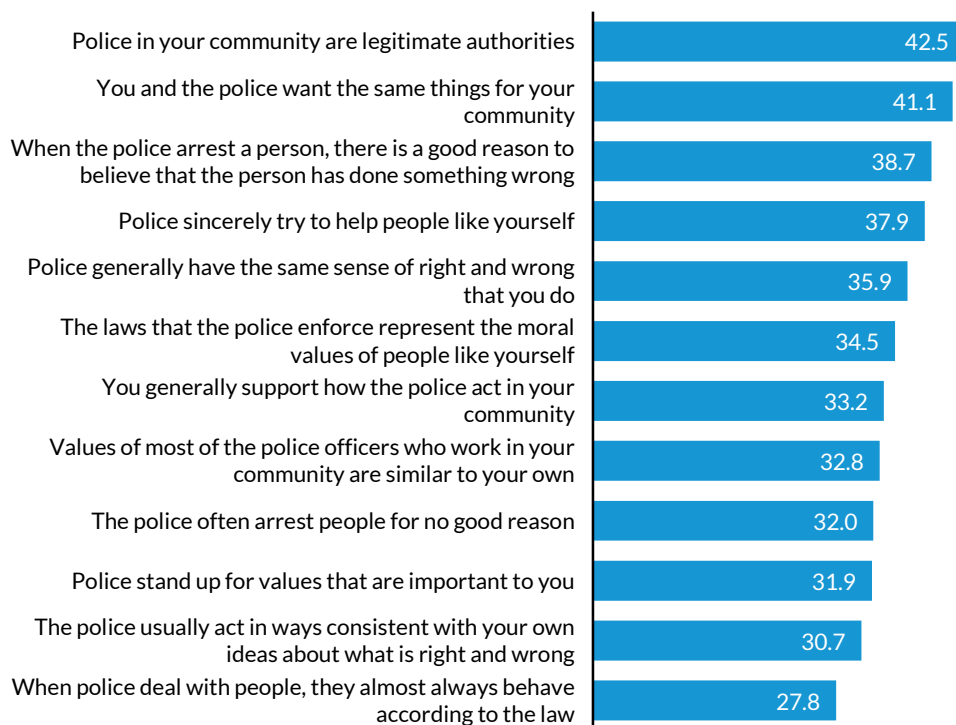
Research finds that the manner in which the law is applied does more to shape views and engender compliance than perceived fairness of the law or its application.<sup>24</sup> This relates to the concept of **police department legitimacy**: for police to be effective, the public must view them as fair and trustworthy representatives of the law, who apply the law without bias and use their considerable powers to stop, search, detain, and engage in force sparingly, equitably, and justifiably.<sup>25</sup> Such legitimacy is characterized by residents believing that police share the same sense of right and wrong as they do, that they uphold values that are important to the public, and that they sincerely aspire to promote safety.

We presented respondents with 12 questions to assess police legitimacy (figure 7). Across all 12 statements, less than half agreed or strongly agreed that police behave in legitimate ways. For example, only 27.8 percent of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that police almost always behave according to the law. Approximately one-third agreed or strongly agreed that police stand up for values that are important to them (31.9 percent) and often arrest people for no good reason (32.0 percent).

FIGURE 7

### Perceptions of Police Department Legitimacy

*Percentage of residents who agree or strongly agree with each statement*



**Source:** Urban analysis of surveys of residents in Birmingham, AL; Fort Worth, TX; Gary, IN; Minneapolis, MN; Pittsburgh, PA; and Stockton, CA.

**Notes:** Responses ranged from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). Data presented are percentage agree and strongly agree. Valid N = 1,153. Cronbach's alpha = 0.945.



## Police Bias

Many factors can negatively affect public views of the police, including perceptions that officers apply the law unevenly based on a person’s race, ethnicity, or other personal characteristics. Research on police officers’ application of the law has shown that discriminatory practices can be rooted in explicit, implicit, or unconscious biases.<sup>26</sup> Although little is known about the prevalence and nature of **police bias**<sup>27</sup> and its connection with policing behavior, there is extensive documentation of disparate policing outcomes associated with race and some research on disparate policing outcomes associated with age, gender, and sexual orientation. Studies that examine the relationship between a person’s race and police behavior point to racial disparities in police stops,<sup>28</sup> searches,<sup>29</sup> arrests,<sup>30</sup> and use of force,<sup>31</sup> which can severely erode public trust and reduce perceptions of police legitimacy.

Figure 8 shows that across six questions on perceptions of bias among the police, approximately half of the respondents agreed or strongly agreed that police officers were biased or behaved biasedly. The statement “police officers will treat you differently because of your race/ethnicity” received the highest agreement (55.5 percent) from respondents.

FIGURE 8

### Perceptions of Police Bias

Percentage of residents who agree or strongly agree with each statement



**Source:** Urban analysis of surveys of residents in Birmingham, AL; Fort Worth, TX; Gary, IN; Minneapolis, MN; Pittsburgh, PA; and Stockton, CA.

**Notes:** Responses ranged from a scale of 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). Data presented are percentage agree and strongly agree. Valid N = 1,212. Cronbach’s alpha = 0.958.

## Community Policing

Procedural justice, police legitimacy, and an absence of bias are essential ingredients for **community policing**. Community policing relies on collaboration among residents, businesses, and other local stakeholders to engage in proactive strategies that prevent crime and social disorder and support healthy and safe communities.<sup>32</sup>

Consistent with previous figures, figure 9 shows that only a small percentage of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that their police departments use the principles of community policing. Only 28 percent agreed that their city’s police department prioritizes problems most important to community members and is responsive to community concerns. Just 24.4 percent agreed that their local department holds officers accountable for their conduct.

FIGURE 9

### Perceptions of Community Policing

Percentage of residents who agree or strongly agree with each statement



**Source:** Urban analysis of surveys of residents in Birmingham, AL; Fort Worth, TX; Gary, IN; Minneapolis, MN; Pittsburgh, PA; and Stockton, CA.

**Notes:** Responses ranged from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). Data presented are percentage agree and strongly agree. Valid N = 1,205. Cronbach’s alpha = 0.874.

## Perceptions of the Law

A police department’s effectiveness in controlling and preventing crime is closely related to residents’ **perceptions of the law** and, more specifically, their belief in the rule of law. Negative views of the justice system contribute to “legal cynicism,” whereby people neither report crime nor cooperate with the police.<sup>33</sup> Neighborhoods with high levels of legal cynicism often have high crime rates and low collective efficacy.<sup>ix</sup> A self-reinforcing cycle of resident noncooperation leads law enforcement to view community

<sup>ix</sup> In the social sciences, “collective efficacy” describes the willingness of residents to exert informal social control on each other and reinforce social norms and acceptable behavior. Neighborhoods with high collective efficacy are often associated with high levels of trust and solidarity among residents. See Robert J. Sampson, Stephen W. Raudenbush, and Felton Earls, “Neighborhoods and Violent Crime: A Multilevel Study of Collective Efficacy,” *Science*

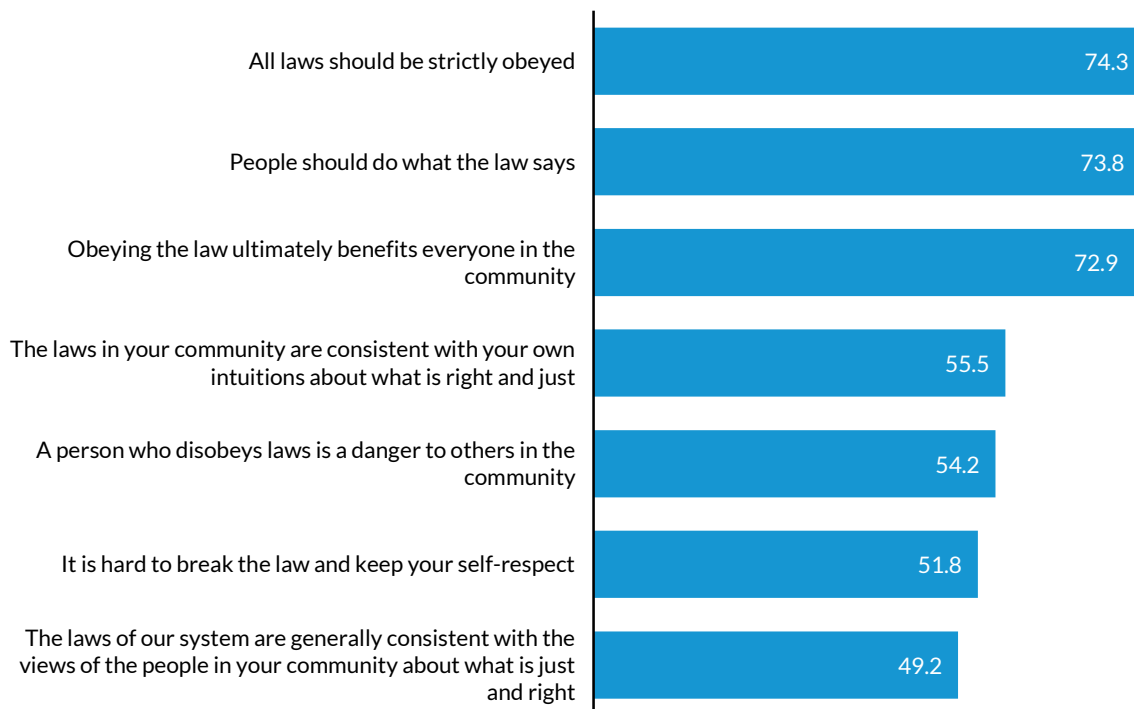
residents as apathetic about crime problems and hostile to the department, while residents perceive police as biased, indifferent, and ineffective.<sup>34</sup>

Our findings indicate that a majority of respondents support or believe in the law. Indeed, nearly three in four agreed that all laws should be strictly obeyed (74.3 percent), following the law ultimately benefits everyone in the community (72.9 percent), and people should do what the law says (73.8 percent). Yet a smaller percentage agreed that the laws are generally consistent with community members' views on what is right and just (49.2 percent). Similarly, just over half (51.8 percent) agreed that it is hard to break the law and keep your self-respect.

FIGURE 10

**Perceptions of the Law**

*Percentage of residents who agree or strongly agree with each statement*



**Source:** Urban analysis of surveys of residents in Birmingham, AL; Fort Worth, TX; Gary, IN; Minneapolis, MN; Pittsburgh, PA; and Stockton, CA.

**Notes:** Responses ranged from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). Data presented are percentage agree and strongly agree. Valid N = 1,205. Cronbach's alpha = 0.868.

277:918–24; and Robert K. Sampson and Dawn Bartusch, “Legal Cynicism and (Subcultural?) Tolerance of Deviance: The Neighborhood Context of Racial Differences,” *Law & Society Review* 32, no. 4 (1998): 777–804.

## Relatability to Police

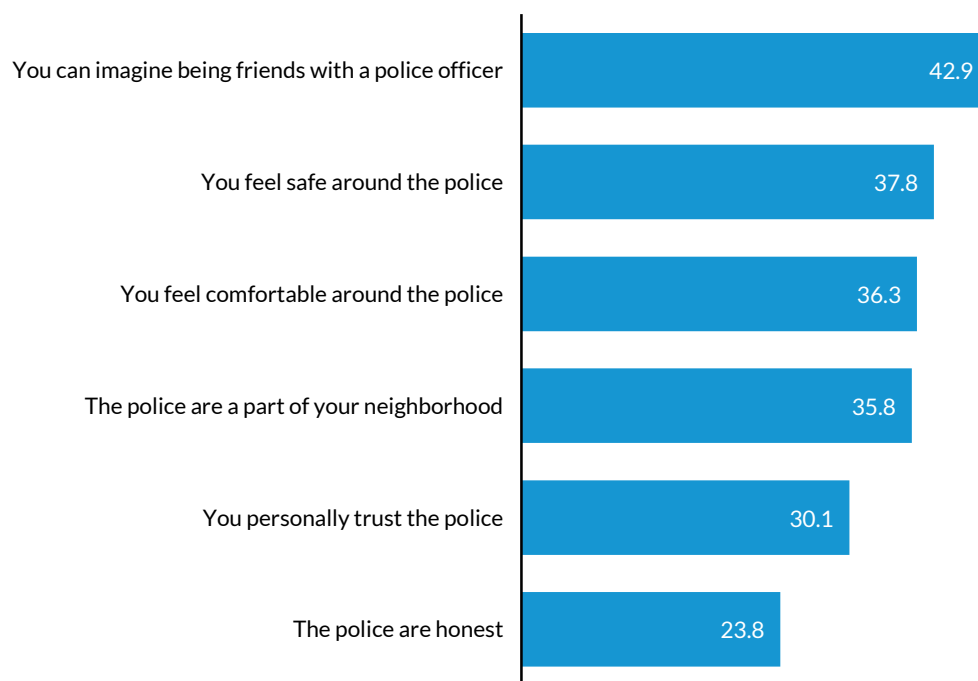
Testing a new concept not previously addressed in the literature, we hypothesized that the ways in which police engage with community members while enforcing the law are closely linked to residents' perceptions of **relatability to police**. Measures of relatability include the degree to which residents view the police as honest, personally trust the police, feel safe in the presence of police, and perceive the police as a part of the community.

Figure 11 indicates that residents' perceptions of their relatability to police are somewhat mixed and perhaps inconsistent. For example, while less than one-quarter of respondents agreed that the police are honest (23.8 percent), a considerable share could imagine being friends with a police officer (42.9 percent). This underscores a phenomenon that has been documented in the literature: Despite often deep distrust in law enforcement overall, individual relationships with individual patrol officers can be strong and positive.<sup>35</sup>

FIGURE 11

### Perceptions of Relatability to Police

Percentage of residents who agree or strongly agree with each statement



**Source:** Urban analysis of surveys of residents in Birmingham, AL; Fort Worth, TX; Gary, IN; Minneapolis, MN; Pittsburgh, PA; and Stockton, CA.

**Notes:** Responses ranged from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). Data presented are percentage agree and strongly agree. Valid  $N = 1,209$ . Cronbach's alpha = 0.914.

## Willingness to Partner with Police

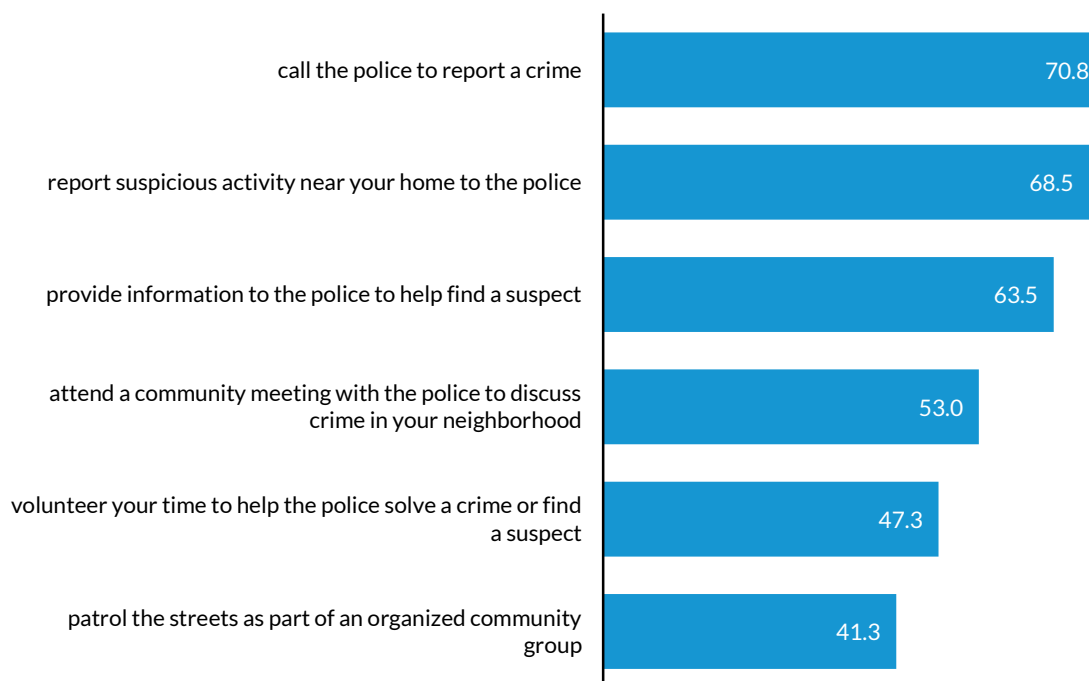
Improvements in officer behavior during encounters with community members can build public trust. In turn, this trust can encourage residents to be more likely to comply with the law and more **willing to partner with police** in crime response and crime prevention, such as coming forth as witnesses or collaborating on crime control efforts.<sup>36</sup> A strong relationship exists between police legitimacy and public safety; higher perceptions of police as trustworthy and fair are associated with increased willingness to report crimes, serve as witnesses, and comply with the law.<sup>37</sup>

As figure 12 shows, surveyed residents were generally willing to partner with police on crime control efforts. A majority indicated that they were likely to report a crime (70.8 percent), report suspicious activity near their home (68.5 percent), and provide information to help find a suspect (63.5 percent). A smaller percentage, but close to half, said they would volunteer their time to help solve a crime or find a suspect (47.3 percent). While a slightly smaller percentage said they would patrol the streets (41.3 percent), more than half (53.0 percent) were willing to attend a community meeting with police.

FIGURE 12

### Willingness to Partner with the Police

Percentage of residents who would be likely or very likely to...



**Source:** Urban analysis of surveys of residents in Birmingham, AL; Fort Worth, TX; Gary, IN; Minneapolis, MN; Pittsburgh, PA; and Stockton, CA.

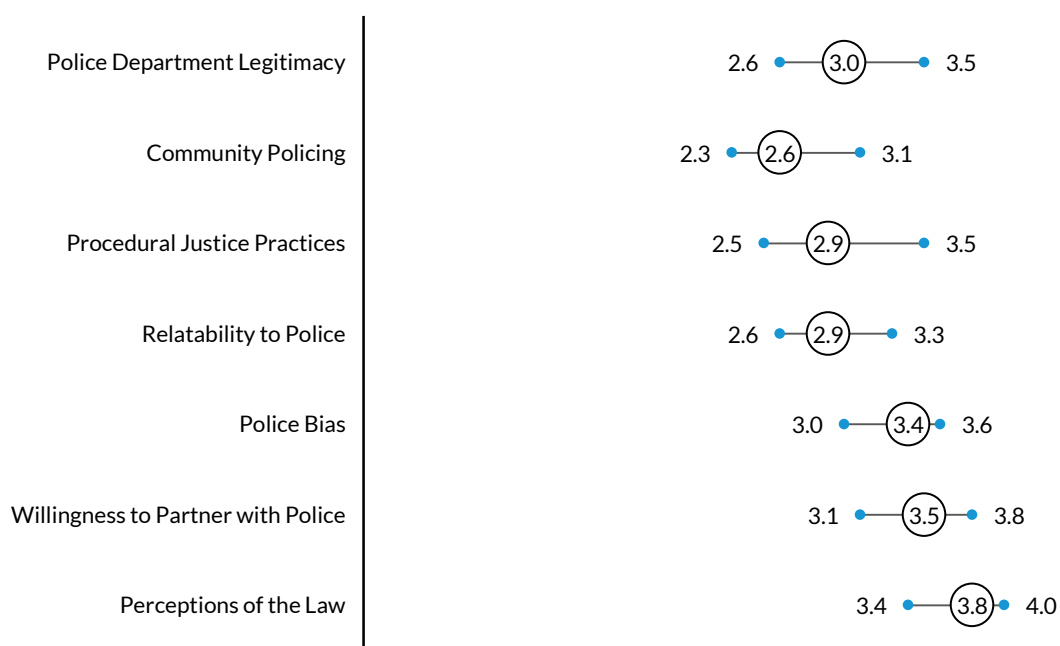
**Notes:** Responses ranged from 1 (very unlikely) to 5 (very likely). Data presented are percentage likely and very likely. Valid N = 1,249. Cronbach's alpha = 0.887.

## Variations across Cities

The graphs featured in the previous section represent responses from residents across the six cities that are the focus of our evaluation. These sampled cities are geographically disparate. They also differ in total population and police department size and along various sociodemographic characteristics. Although we found substantial similarities in the responses and findings across the cities, there was variation. For example, figure 13 presents the respondents' average ratings and ranges associated with the seven scaled categories: procedural justice, police department legitimacy, police bias, community policing, perceptions of the law, relatability to the police, and willingness to partner with police in public safety efforts. For each scale in figure 13, we show the average rating in a circle and the range of responses on either side.

FIGURE 13

### Average Ratings and Ranges in Residents' Perceptions



**Source:** Urban analysis of surveys of residents in Birmingham, AL; Fort Worth, TX; Gary, IN; Minneapolis, MN; Pittsburgh, PA; and Stockton, CA.

**Note:** Valid N = 1,278.

As shown in figure 13, some categories had a smaller range of responses than others. For example, the range between high and low ratings for perceptions of the law is smaller than the range for ratings of procedural justice. This suggests that residents across the cities are more similar in their belief in the law than they are in their perceptions of their department's procedural justice. As mentioned previously, local context, department policies, and officer practices likely influence residents'

perceptions and, consequently, our findings. Forthcoming analyses will focus on city-specific metrics and explore within-city variations across these metrics to help inform police engagement with residents and potential changes in policies and practices.

## Conclusion

The purpose of our survey was to collect baseline information on community sentiment, focusing on people living in areas with high levels of disadvantage and reported crime. Although our methodology yielded a relatively modest 34.1 percent response rate, it uniquely surveyed residents who are often underrepresented in typical phone- and mail-based surveys on satisfaction with the police.<sup>38</sup> Moreover, our purposive sampling methodology represents a new way to view community perceptions of the police—by surveying people who live in the areas where trust may be weakest, but who may benefit the most from increases in public safety. Indeed, their perspectives offer a much-needed addition to the existing literature on perceptions of police—a diverse sample of people living in areas most likely to experience heavy police presence because of high rates of reported crime and concentrated disadvantage.

Given our sampling methodology, it is not surprising that most respondents viewed police negatively across measures of procedural justice, police department legitimacy, police bias, and community policing. Perhaps the more instructive findings are residents' strong belief in the law and their willingness to partner with the police. These findings suggest that the ground may be more fertile than expected for repairing relationships between community members and the police.

The range in responses by city suggests that local context, departmental policies, and approaches to policing influence community perceptions. We expect the findings to be more illustrative when compared with our planned second wave of surveys. Conducting a comparative analysis will allow us to assess the impact of the full implementation of the National Initiative activities on community perceptions, including police training on procedural justice and implicit bias, policy and practice changes, and the community-police reconciliation process.

## Notes

1. Tom R. Tyler and Yuen Huo, *Trust in the Law: Encouraging Public Cooperation with the Police and Courts* (New York: Russell Sage Foundation, 2002).
2. Jeffrey M. Jones, "In U.S., Confidence in Police Lowest in 22 Years," Gallup, June 19, 2015, <http://www.gallup.com/poll/183704/confidence-police-lowest-years.aspx>; Rich Morin and Renee Stepler, *The Racial Confidence Gap in Police Performance* (Washington, DC: Pew Research Center, 2016).
3. Patrick J. Carr, Laura Napolitano, and Jessica Keating, "We Never Call the Cops and Here Is Why: A Qualitative Examination of Legal Cynicism in Three Philadelphia Neighborhoods," *Criminology* 45, no. 2 (2007): 445–80; Christopher Muller and Daniel Schrage, "Mass Imprisonment and Trust in the Law," *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 651 (2014): 139.
4. K. Babe Howell, "Broken Lives from Broken Windows: The Hidden Costs of Aggressive Order-Maintenance Policing," *New York University Review of Law & Social Change* 33 (2009): 271–326.
5. Jennifer Fratello, Andres F. Rengifo, and Jennifer Trone, *Coming of Age with Stop and Frisk: Experiences, Self-Perceptions, and Public Safety Implications* (New York: Vera Institute of Justice, 2013).
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