

**IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
FOR THE NORTHERN DISTRICT OF ILLINOIS
EASTERN DIVISION**

STATE OF ILLINOIS,

Plaintiff,

v.

CITY OF CHICAGO,

Defendant.

Case No. 17-cv-6260

Judge Robert M. Dow, Jr.

**SPECIAL REPORT: FOCUS GROUPS WITH BLACK AND LATINO MEN,
AGES 18–35 (CONDUCTED DECEMBER 2020 – JUNE 2021)**

The Independent Monitoring Team submits the attached *Special Report: Focus Groups with Black and Latino Men, Ages 18–35 (Conducted December 2020 – June 2021)* under ¶ 665 of the Consent Decree, which gives the IMT the authority to “prepare written reports on any issue or set of issues covered by the [Consent Decree].” This report presents results from a series of community focus groups with Black and Latino men in Chicago, ages 18–35. The focus groups were conducted between December 2020 and June 2021 by researchers from the University of Illinois at Chicago and Adler University.

The focus groups served as a qualitative complement to some of the key findings from our first citywide, representative survey: *Special Report: Community Survey Report (November 2019 – February 2020)* (the *2020 IMT Community Survey*). See Consent Decree ¶¶ 645–51. Specifically, the *2020 IMT Community Survey* reflected that young Black and Latino men in Chicago report having the highest frequency of contact with police *and* the most negative perception of police and lowest levels of trust in police. The specific feedback we received from the focus groups are not meant to be representative of the experiences, opinions, and perspectives of all young Black and Latino men in Chicago. But much of what was indicated by participants was consistent with what we learned from this population in the *2020 IMT Community Survey*.

The information from the focus groups goes beyond the *2020 IMT Community Survey* by providing a clearer sense of why members of these populations have more negative perceptions of police and lower levels of trust in police. As the City and the CPD continue their compliance efforts, it is our hope that the CPD considers the serious issues, concerns, and recommendations raised by the focus-group participants.

Overall, focus-group participants generally indicated strong negative perceptions of police, a lack of trust in their ability to carry out their expected roles while respecting individuals’ rights, and a sense that officers treat people differently based on their race or the neighborhood they live in. Although rare, some participants provided positive accounts of interactions with police. More

participants, however—including participants who gave positive feedback—gave accounts of experiencing and observing frequent negative interactions with police. One participant, for example, described witnessing an officer save a gunshot victim’s life, but also described witnessing officers “beat” his brother while his brother was in handcuffs. In fact, many focus-group participants described that most interactions they have had with the CPD are negative, even when the interactions end without law-enforcement actions.

According to feedback from focus-group participants, the cumulative effect of repeated negative personal experiences with officers significantly hinders trust-building. Some participants described that communities need police, but distrust was among the strongest theme in terms of the forcefulness and frequency of responses from focus-group participants. Some participants recounted situations in which they believed the police were ineffective, failed to take action, arrived too late to be helpful, or did not respond at all. Participants who described these situations often felt that the CPD was unresponsive to the community.

Still, many participants reported having repeated, frequent involuntary contact with police, and some participants indicated having up to 30 involuntary interactions with police in the past year. Many participants described incidents that involved a similar pattern: a traffic stop of a young adult man in a vehicle for a minor non-moving violation—such as a hanging air freshener or the degree of a window tint—followed by a perceived improper search of the vehicle, and after the search does not turn up anything, there is no citation for the initial infraction.

Moreover, consistent with the *2020 IMT Community Survey*, many participants reported that officers frequently take out and point guns at them during these interactions. Some participants said that they believe officers take out or point guns because officers feel afraid of a real or perceived threat or because officers want to force compliance, demonstrate authority, or instill fear. Likewise, many participants described that they avoid officers out of fear and that they believe there is mutual fear between police and young Black and Latino men, which can create dangerous consequences during involuntary interactions and impede building mutual trust. *Compare, e.g.,* Consent Decree ¶ 9 (“Strong partnerships between CPD and the community enable law enforcement to build and strengthen trust, identify community needs, and produce positive policing outcomes”). Much of the feedback focus-group participants provided involved a range of experiences, occurring across their lives, which demonstrates that interactions with police that community members perceive to be negative can have a lasting impact on trust and legitimacy.

The overarching implication of these focus group results is that the CPD continues to have serious work ahead to improve trust and confidence in the CPD. To comply with the Consent Decree, the City and the CPD will eventually need to effectively engage with and respond to Chicago’s communities, including those most likely to interact with the CPD:

In this Agreement, the City commits to ensuring that police services are delivered to all of the people of Chicago in a manner that fully complies with the Constitution and laws of the United States and the State of Illinois, respects the rights of all of the people of Chicago, builds trust between officers and the communities they serve, and promotes community and officer safety. . . .

Consent Decree ¶ 6.

During these focus groups, some participants provided recommendations on how the CPD could improve relationships in their neighborhoods, including the need for internal police reform, accountability, recruitment, improved training, and increased quality and quantity of non-enforcement-related social engagement with communities. The recommendations provided by focus-group participants also track closely with requirements of the Consent Decree, including accountability (*see, e.g.*, Consent Decree ¶¶ 155–56, 217, 236, 342–43, 420, and 422), recruitment (*see, e.g.*, Consent Decree ¶¶ 249–51); disciplinary action (*see, e.g.*, Consent Decree ¶¶ 444, 449, and 501); training (*see, e.g.*, Consent Decree ¶¶ 272, 275, and 317); and treating all people equally and with respect (*see, e.g.*, Consent Decree ¶¶ 54–56, 85, 156, 161, and 346). The Consent Decree also highlights the need to consistently provide “CPD members with the resources and support they need” to meet these commitments, “including improved training, supervision, and wellness resources.” Consent Decree ¶ 6.

In short, the Consent Decree lays out a path for the City and the CPD to build and maintain trust through such reforms. We will continue to regularly explore trends, issues, and subsamples through quantitative and qualitative methods, including focus groups and corresponding special reports. *See* Consent Decree ¶¶ 645–51 and 665. In fact, we have recently completed the data collection for our latest citywide survey, which we will report on soon. *See* Consent Decree ¶¶ 645–51. In the coming months, we will also file Independent Monitoring Report 6, where we will report on the City’s and the CPD’s latest compliance efforts with related requirements of the Consent Decree, including the CPD’s efforts to ensure that the CPD’s practices “prohibit discrimination on the basis of any protected class under federal, state, and local law” (¶ 53); that the CPD is fully engaged with the community when making these changes (¶ 52); and that police officers are properly trained, supervised, and held accountable for misconduct (¶¶ 419–565).

Dated September 1, 2022

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CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE

The undersigned attorney hereby certifies that, on September 1, 2022, she caused a true and correct copy of the foregoing **Special Report: Focus Groups with Black and Latino Men, Ages 18 – 35 (Conducted December 2020 – June 2021)** to be filed electronically with the Court's CM/ECF system, which caused an electronic copy of this filing to be served on counsel of record.

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Independent | Chicago Police
Monitoring Team | Department
Consent Decree

Special Report:

Focus Groups with Black and Latino Men, Ages 18–35

(conducted December 2020 – June 2021)

Report Date: September 1, 2022

MONITORING UNDER THE CONSENT DECREE

In August 2017, the Office of the Illinois Attorney General (OAG) sued the City of Chicago (City) in federal court regarding civil-rights abuses by the Chicago Police Department (CPD). The lawsuit led to a Consent Decree, effective March 1, 2019. The same day, the federal court appointed Maggie Hickey as the Independent Monitor. Ms. Hickey leads the Independent Monitoring Team (IMT), which monitors the City of Chicago's progress in meeting the Consent Decree's requirements.

As the IMT, we assess how all relevant City entities—including the CPD; the Civilian Office of Police Accountability (COPA); the Chicago Police Board; the City Office of Inspector General, including the Deputy Inspector General for Public Safety; and the Office of Emergency Management and Communications—are complying with the Consent Decree.¹

Paragraph 2 of the Consent Decree sets out its overall purpose, which has guided and will continue to guide our monitoring efforts:

2. The State, the City, and the Chicago Police Department . . . are committed to constitutional and effective law enforcement. In furtherance of this commitment, the Parties enter into this Agreement to ensure that the City and CPD deliver services in a manner that fully complies with the Constitution and laws of the United States and the State of Illinois, respects the rights of the people of Chicago, builds trust between officers and the communities they serve, and promotes community and officer safety. In addition, this Agreement seeks to ensure that Chicago police officers are provided with the training, resources, and support they need to perform their jobs professionally and safely. This Agreement requires changes in the areas of community policing; impartial policing; crisis intervention; use of force; recruitment, hiring, and promotions; training; supervision; officer wellness and support; accountability and transparency; and data collection, analysis, and management.²

¹ As a party to the Consent Decree, the City is ultimately responsible for compliance. Unless otherwise specified, our references to the City include its relevant entities. See, e.g., Consent Decree ¶ 720.

² We cite the relevant paragraphs of the Consent Decree throughout this Independent Monitoring Report. The Consent Decree is available on the IMT's website: cpdmonitoring-team.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/08/FINAL-CONSENT-DECREE-SIGNED-BY-JUDGE-DOW.pdf.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Monitoring under the Consent Decree	1
I. Executive Summary.....	3
II. Methodology.....	13
III. Theme Analysis	17
A. Sentiment Towards Police.....	17
B. Trust.....	24
C. Nature of Recent Interactions with Police	28
D. Perception of How Others Are Treated by Police	32
E. Police Pointing Guns.....	34
F. Mutual Fear and Avoidance of Police	38
Recommendations for Improving Police-Community Relations.....	39
IV. Discussion of Observations.....	44
V. Conclusion.....	47
Appendix 1: Informed Consent and Focus Group Questions	48
 Attachment A.	
Office of the Illinois Attorney General Comments (August 5, 2022).....	52
 Attachment B.	
City of Chicago Comments (August 10, 2022)	56

I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In the Consent Decree, the City of Chicago committed to, among other things, “ensuring that police services are delivered to all of the people of Chicago in a manner that fully complies with the Constitution and laws of the United States and the State of Illinois, respects the rights of all of the people of Chicago, builds trust between officers and the communities they serve, and promotes community and officer safety.” Consent Decree ¶ 6. The Consent Decree requires understanding the perceptions and experiences of community members who have frequent contact with the CPD, as well as “individuals who are people of color, LGBTQI, in crisis, youth, members of religious minorities, or have disabilities.” Consent Decree ¶ 646. As a result, to monitor the City’s and the CPD’s compliance with the Consent Decree, we must hear from Chicago’s communities.³

To measure perceptions of and satisfaction with the CPD, the IMT conducts “reliable, representative, and comprehensive surveys of a broad cross section of members of the Chicago community regarding CPD” every two years. Consent Decree ¶ 645.⁴ We completed and released the results of our first survey in 2020: *Special Report: Community Survey Report (November 2019 – February 2020)* (hereafter referred to as the *2020 IMT Community Survey*).⁵ The survey included the responses of over 1,000 Chicagoans, as well as an additional group of over 350 young Black men, ages 18 through 25—the population subgroup with the most frequent contact with the CPD. Key observations from the *2020 IMT Community Survey* included the following:

³ See also, e.g., Consent Decree ¶¶ 7–11, 16–17, 19, 21–27, 29, 37, 46, 48, 49–58, 60, 68, 75, 115, 128, 129, 158, 160, 228, 249, 266, 283, 352, 369–70, 375, 419, 421–22, 531, and 544.

⁴ Consent Decree ¶ 645 (“Within 180 days of being appointed by the Court, and every two years thereafter, the Monitor will conduct reliable, representative, and comprehensive surveys of a broad cross section of members of the Chicago community regarding CPD.”) and Consent Decree ¶ 646 (“The surveys will seek to assess perceptions of, and satisfaction with, CPD. The surveys will examine perceptions of CPD’s overall police services, trustworthiness, community engagement, effectiveness, responsiveness, handling of misconduct complaints and investigations, and interactions with members of the Chicago community, including interactions with individuals who are people of color, LGBTQI, in crisis, youth, members of religious minorities, or have disabilities.”).

⁵ The *2020 IMT Community Survey* is available on the IMT’s website: <https://cpdmonitoring-team.com/overview/reports-and-resources/independent-monitor-conducts-community-survey/>.

- ❖ Different races and ethnicities consistently responded differently to the survey questions.
- ❖ There was an alarming disparity between responses regarding CPD interactions with the population as a whole and its interactions with young Black men, ages 18–25.
- ❖ Young Black and Latino men indicated the highest frequency of contact with police *and* the most negative perception and lowest levels of trust in police.⁶

Because it is crucial to consistently hear community voices, we have also endeavored to conduct separate, special studies of Chicago’s communities during years we are not conducting the citywide, representative community surveys.⁷

⁶ In our *2020 IMT Community Survey*, we referred to particular groups consistently, such as Black Chicagoans, Latino Chicagoans, and White Chicagoans. We concluded that these terms most accurately account for the targeted population for the survey: Chicagoans. We recognized that there are other commonly used terms, such as “African Americans,” but we concluded that Black Chicagoans is a more inclusive term because it focuses on presence in Chicago rather than nationality. Likewise, we understand that some people may prefer “Latinx” or “Hispanic” to “Latino.” For the purposes of the survey, we followed the Consent Decree and the United States Census Bureau. See Consent Decree ¶ 4; *About Race*, US Census Bureau. US Census Bureau (last revised, March 1, 2022), <https://www.census.gov/topics/population/race/about.html>.

⁷ See Consent Decree ¶ 665. See also, e.g., *Independent Monitoring Report 1*, INDEPENDENT MONITORING TEAM (November 15, 2019) at 21 (“[D]uring the off years of the biennial community surveys, the IMT will conduct separate studies that target specific population groups mentioned in the decree, including LGBTQI, in-crisis, youth, members of religious minorities, and people with disabilities.”), https://cpdmonitoringteam.com/wp-content/uploads/2019/11/2019_11_15-Independent-Monitoring-Report-1.pdf. The IMT have also heard community voices through public Listening Sessions—held by Judge Robert Dow, Jr. in August 2020—regarding the City’s and the CPD’s response to protests and unrest in 2020. See *Transcript of the August 19, 2020 Listening Session* (August 19, 2020), <https://cpdmonitoringteam.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/08/081920ListeningSessions-FINAL-PROOFED.pdf>; and *Transcript of the August 20, 2020 Listening Session* (August 20, 2020), <https://cpdmonitoringteam.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/08/082020ListeningSession-Day-2-FINAL-PROOFED.pdf>. See also *Special Report: the City’s and the CPD’s Responses to Protests and Unrest under the Consent Decree*, INDEPENDENT MONITORING TEAM (July 20, 2021), https://cpdmonitoringteam.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/07/2021_07_20-Independent-Monitoring-Team-Special-Report-filed.pdf. Our corresponding special report covered the City’s and the CPD’s responses to protests and unrest from May 2020 through November 2020, and we began the focus groups for this report in December 2020.

This is the first of those studies and builds on some of the key findings from our *2020 IMT Community Survey*. Specifically, this report provides the results of a series of focus groups with Black and Latino men in Chicago, ages 18–35.⁸ Overall, we conducted 32 focus groups between December 16, 2020, and June 25, 2021, with 89 participants in Chicago within the target population of Black and Latino men, ages 18–35.⁹

We designed our approach to these focus groups to serve as a qualitative complement to our survey data and to help us better understand the nature of the interactions between young Black and Latino men and the CPD. Primarily, we sought to assess how those interactions affected “perceptions of, and satisfaction with” the “CPD’s overall police services, trustworthiness, community engagement, effectiveness, responsiveness, handling of misconduct complaints and investigations, and interactions with members of the Chicago community.” Consent Decree ¶ 646. Because this study focused on community perceptions, the IMT did not attempt to investigate or corroborate any factual assertions from participants.

The findings from focus groups are not meant to be representative of the experiences, opinions, and perspectives of all young Black and Latino men in Chicago. Rather, they are a logical next step in research, whereby researchers qualitatively explore trends and subsamples identified from broader quantitative approaches (in this case, the representative *2020 IMT Community Survey*). The IMT research team adheres to widely accepted principles of research in which the cycle of qualitative and quantitative research is continuous: using acquired knowledge to inspire further inquiry.¹⁰ Moving forward, we will continue to regularly explore trends, issues, and subsamples through quantitative and qualitative methods, including focus groups and corresponding special reports per ¶¶ 645–51 and 665.

A crucial part of how the IMT assesses the City’s and the CPD’s progress with the requirements of the Consent Decree is to understand how reforms are being felt in our communities. The results discussed in this report shed light on important

⁸ These focus groups were not intended to fulfill the community surveys required by Consent Decree ¶¶ 645–51 and, therefore, did not follow the same procedures for the surveys we conduct “of a broad cross section of members of the Chicago community” every two years. Consent Decree ¶ 645. Instead, we followed the process described in Consent Decree ¶ 665: “In addition to the mandatory semiannual reports, the Monitor may, at any time, prepare written reports on any issue or set of issues covered by the Agreement. The process for commenting on and publishing these additional reports will be the same as the process applicable to semiannual reports” (referencing Consent Decree ¶¶ 657–54).

⁹ There were a total of 106 focus-group participants, but we have complete age and race data for the 89 whose text response data we included in our analysis for this report.

¹⁰ See, e.g., Earl Babbie, *The Practice of Social Science Research*, 9th Ed., WADSWORTH PUBLISHING COMPANY (2022).

and nuanced aspects of interactions between young Black and Latino men and CPD officers. Because the report also provides an important link between the administrative reforms—such as new policies and revised training curricula—and the day-to-day operations of the CPD, the report may also assist the CPD in considering ways to address participants’ feedback.

In this report, we identify themes from the focus-group participants’ responses to better understand how they feel about the CPD and assess any recent experiences they have had with CPD officers. Understanding the personal experiences and opinions of Chicagoans who have frequent contact with the police helps the IMT assess the CPD’s progress with various areas of the Consent Decree, including community policing, impartial policing, and procedural justice. This also includes, for example, the following foundational requirements that the CPD must demonstrate to reach full and effective compliance with the Consent Decree:

49. The Parties agree that policing fairly, with courtesy and dignity, and without bias is central to promoting broad community engagement, fostering public confidence in CPD, and building partnerships between law enforcement and members of the Chicago community that support the effective delivery of police services.

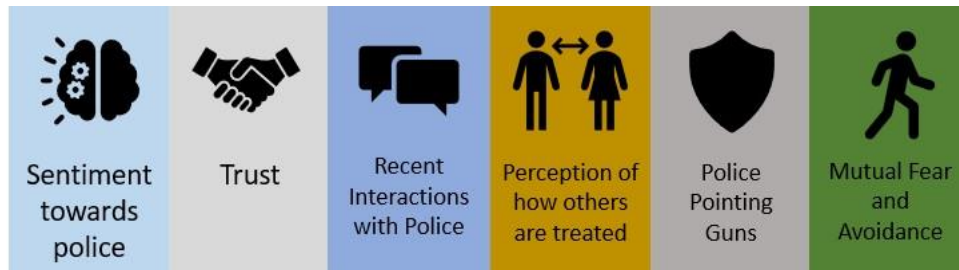
50. In conducting its activities, CPD will provide police services to all members of the public without bias and will treat all persons with the courtesy and dignity which is inherently due every person as a human being without reference to stereotype based on race, color, ethnicity, religion, homeless status, national origin, immigration status, gender identity or expression, sexual orientation, socio-economic class, age, disability, incarceration status, or criminal history.

51. CPD will ensure its members have clear policy, training, and supervisory direction in order to provide police services in a manner that promotes community trust of its policing efforts and ensures equal protection of the law to all individuals.

As we analyzed the data from our focus groups, we identified six main themes: (1) sentiment toward police, (2) trust, (3) recent interactions with police, (4) perceptions of how others are treated, (5) police pointing guns, and (6) mutual fear and avoidance.¹¹ These themes are explained further in the [Theme Analysis section](#) of this report.

¹¹ See, e.g., Consent Decree ¶¶ 8 (“Strong community partnerships and frequent positive interactions between police and members of the public make policing safer and more effective,

THE SIX FOCUS GROUP THEMES



Overall, the themes from these focus groups painted a bleak picture of the relationship between the CPD and young Black and Latino men. Participants generally indicated a strong negative perception of police, a lack of trust in officers' ability to carry out their expected roles while respecting individuals' rights, a sense that officers treat people differently based on their race or the neighborhood they live

and increase public confidence in law enforcement. Moreover, these partnerships allow police to effectively engage with the public in problem-solving techniques, which include the proactive identification and analysis of issues in order to develop solutions and evaluate outcomes.”); 9 (“To build and promote public trust and confidence in CPD and ensure constitutional and effective policing, officer and public safety, and sustainability of reforms, the City and CPD will integrate a community policing philosophy into CPD operations that promotes organizational strategies that support the systematic use of community partnerships and problem-solving techniques.”); 10 (“CPD will ensure that its community policing philosophy is a core component of its provision of police services, crime reduction strategies and tactics, training, management, resource deployment, and accountability systems. All CPD members will be responsible for furthering this philosophy and employing the principles of community policing, which include trust and legitimacy; community engagement; community partnerships; problem-solving; and the collaboration of CPD, City agencies, and members of the community to promote public safety.”); 49 (“The Parties agree that policing fairly, with courtesy and dignity, and without bias is central to promoting broad community engagement, fostering public confidence in CPD, and building partnerships between law enforcement and members of the Chicago community that support the effective delivery of police services.”); 50 (“In conducting its activities, CPD will provide police services to all members of the public without bias and will treat all persons with the courtesy and dignity which is inherently due every person as a human being without reference to stereotype based on race, color, ethnicity, religion, homeless status, national origin, immigration status, gender identity or expression, sexual orientation, socio-economic class, age, disability, incarceration status, or criminal history.”); 54 (“CPD will continue to require that all CPD members interact with all members of the public in an unbiased, fair, and respectful manner. CPD will require that officers refrain from using language or taking action intended to taunt or denigrate an individual, including using racist or derogatory language.”); 189 (“CPD will clarify in policy that when a CPD officer points a firearm at a person to detain the person, an investigatory stop or an arrest has occurred, which must be documented. CPD will also clarify in policy that officers will only point a firearm at a person when objectively reasonable under the totality of the circumstances.”).

in, and that women also receive poor treatment from police—often in different ways than men.

Much of what was indicated by participants was consistent with and expanded upon what the IMT learned from this population in the *2020 IMT Community Survey*. Those results pointed to a negative perception of police and a lack of trust in the CPD. However, these focus groups have provided two important sets of information that go beyond the *2020 IMT Community Survey*: (1) additional context to those sentiments and (2) a clearer sense of why members of these populations feel this way toward police.

The below subsections provide a summary of the results related to each theme and concludes the recommendations participants provided for ways to improve police-community relations.

SENTIMENT TOWARD POLICE



Among those who indicated a clear sentiment towards the CPD, the sentiment was much more negative than positive. Participants' expression of a negative sentiment was often stated directly, and participants often provided a reason for that sentiment—such as a reference to a specific experience or set of experiences on which they based that negative view.

The following are some key recurring examples of reasons participants provided for their negative sentiment toward police:

Recurring Feedback: *"They don't do their jobs" / "Unreliable"*

Participants recounted situations in which the police were ineffective, failed to take action, arrived too late to be helpful, or did not respond at all. Participants who described these situations often felt that the CPD was unresponsive to the community and could not be counted on to deliver on the basic functions of policing.

Recurring Feedback: *"Disrespectful"*

As a reason for their negative perceptions, many participants referenced encounters with officers who were blatantly rude or disrespectful. Some participants expressed that officers failed to treat them as human beings and as equals.

Recurring Feedback: *“Aggressive” / “Harassing”*

Some of the most troubling incidents reported by participants involved officers being overly aggressive or harassing them. Some participants provided accounts involving the same officer repeatedly making threats of arrest or demonstrating other intimidating behavior toward the same participant.

Recurring Feedback: *“Corrupt”*

Some participants provided numerous accounts of officers blatantly abusing power. Some accounts, for example, involved officers planting evidence or other criminal behavior.

Recurring Feedback: *“Racist” or “Racial Profiling”*

As a reason for their negative perception, some participants reported having experienced racial profiling from CPD officers. Some participants casually indicated that the CPD is racist by stating that as a matter of fact.

TRUST



Many participants' comments also indicated a strong level of distrust—most often expressed directly. The reasons for distrust were tied to reports of specific negative personal interactions. Participants provided, for example, many accounts of officers harassing people; being unethical—such as making false charges or using an individual's past against them in a threatening way—escalating situations; or being unreliable.

Recurring Feedback: *Harassment and Escalation*

Participants provided much discussion regarding harassment and officers escalating situations. It was not unusual for a participant to say that they had been harassed in the past—sometimes repeatedly and, in some cases even, by the same officers—ranging from repeated stops for minor infractions to threats and intimidation.

Recurring Feedback: *Unethical Behavior*

In explaining their distrust, participants gave accounts of CPD interactions ranging from unethical to illegal. Many participants accused officers of making false charges, planting evidence, lying to people, and using the participant's past unfairly.

NATURE OF RECENT INTERACTIONS WITH POLICE



The main theme emerging from the discussion regarding police interactions participants had within the last 12 months is that their experiences were predominantly negative. These negative experiences were recounted in a wide variety of interactions, ranging from the most low-tension interactions to interactions ending in arrest.

Recurring Feedback: *Being Pulled Over*

Many participants indicated that being pulled over or stopped while riding in a vehicle was one of the common ways that they encounter the CPD. Participants often recounted an incident about a stop for a minor infraction that led to an officer indicating a secondary issue or suspicion, which then led to a search or background check. A few participants indicated that the pattern ended in minor tickets.

Recurring Feedback regarding Police Behavior During Stop: *"Being Too Tough" / "Intimidating" / "Arrogant"*

When asked about the officers' behavior during a stop, participants often described officers as aggressive, tough, intimidating, arrogant, or physically or verbally abusive. Often, officers' "tough" behavior was enough for many participants to express fear or a sense of intimidation during the interaction.

PERCEPTION OF HOW OTHERS ARE TREATED BY POLICE



Participants were asked about whether they see or perceive that officers treat people differently based on their race, age, or the location of the interaction. Some participants believed race played a role in differential treatment. However, just as common was the perception that officers in different neighborhoods treat people differently, as well as the combination of race and neighborhood. One overarching perception was that officers in mostly White neighborhoods treat Black and Latino Chicagoans differently than White Chicagoans in those neighborhoods.

POLICE POINTING GUNS



We asked focus-group participants whether they have had an officer point a gun at them, or whether they witnessed an officer pointing a gun at others. The purpose of asking about gun pointing in the focus groups was not only based on the citywide survey data, but also to understand the context of the incidents, such as what was happening at the time the officer pointed a gun, what was said, and to gain an overall sense of why the gun was pointed at them from the participants' perspective.¹²

MUTUAL FEAR AND AVOIDANCE OF POLICE

Participants stated feelings of fear of the police and expressed that they also felt sometimes that the police seemed to be afraid of ordinary community residents, and therefore, they believed officers acted too harshly in interactions with community residents. Participants stated several times that they hesitated before calling the police for fear of an exaggerated reaction, which can have a "ripple effect" on the community network. Even during involuntary interactions, like getting pulled over by the police, participants stated that police were "too harsh."

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR IMPROVING POLICE-COMMUNITY RELATIONS

At the end of each focus group, participants had the opportunity to provide recommendations regarding what CPD officers should do to improve relationships with young people in their neighborhoods. Some participants also expressed deep concern about the current state of the CPD, and some recommendations expressed a desire for a re-thinking of the nature of policing and the CPD's role in public safety. Many participants pointed to the need for internal police reform, accountability, and better training. Participants also recommended ways police

¹² The 2020 IMT Community Survey is available on the IMT's website: <https://cpdmonitoring-team.com/overview/reports-and-resources/independent-monitor-conducts-community-survey/>.

can increase the quality and quantity of non-enforcement or social engagement with the community.



The IMT will continue to build from the results of these focus groups and consider their feedback during future focus groups with specific Chicago populations. See Consent Decree ¶ 646 (“The surveys will examine perceptions of CPD’s . . . interactions with members of the Chicago community, including interactions with individuals who are people of color, LGBTQI, in crisis, youth, members of religious minorities, or have disabilities.”). We are currently conducting another citywide community survey and will report on those findings later this year.¹³

¹³ Community members may always reach out to the IMT via email (contact@cpdmonitoringteam.com) or use the IMT Feedback Form on at <https://cpdmonitoringteam.com/feedback-form/>.

II. METHODOLOGY

As explained further below, between December 2020 and June 2021, the IMT research team conducted focus-group discussions with a convenience sample and a snowball sample of Black and Latino men in Chicago, ages 18–35. Due to ongoing challenges with COVID-19 and the safety of the participants, the IMT research team conducted the focus groups online.

Convenience sampling is a method of non-probability sampling in which researchers choose their sample of target study participants based on convenience by considering costs, geographic distributions, or facility of obtaining data. Snowball sampling is also a method of non-probability sampling: it is a recruitment technique in which research participants are asked to assist researchers in identifying other potential research participants. In this case, beginning with young Black and Latino Chicago men whom we knew had contact with the CPD enabled the IMT research team to ask those participants to refer us to others they knew who also had contact with the CPD.

The IMT research team chose to employ convenience sampling and snowball sampling for several reasons. First, they are cost-effective sampling approaches—random sampling, in which researchers seek to generalize research findings to an entire population, is extremely costly. Second, it is time-saving and allowed the research team to begin identifying participants through existing relationships and collect data immediately. Third, some Chicagoans who have frequent interactions with the CPD are reluctant to talk about their experiences. As referenced above, snowball sampling allowed us to identify men willing to discuss their experiences, perceptions, and opinions based on referrals from people that they already trust.

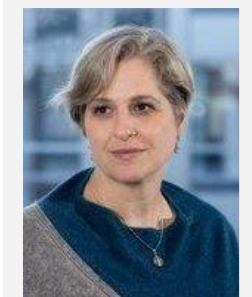
As a result of these sampling methods, (1) the results are not representative and (2) the findings may be challenging to replicate. As we have noted above, our aim was not to reflect a representative sample but rather to provide a deeper understanding of people’s experiences, opinions, and perceptions—in addition to our “reliable, representative, and comprehensive surveys of a broad cross section of members of the Chicago community regarding CPD” every two years per Consent Decree ¶ 645.

We also acknowledge some challenges with conducting the research and recruiting participants to talk with us. Some potential participants articulated a great deal of suspicion about the focus groups. For example, some participants expressed anxiety towards the possibility of police officers listening to their views despite previous statements that no police were on the call.

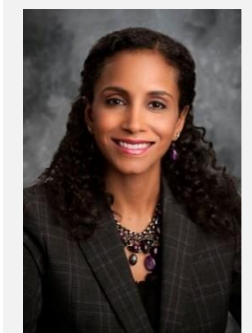
The IMT's Community Engagement Team members Dr. Joe Hoereth, Dr. Elena Quintana, and Ms. Sodiqa Williams facilitated the discussions:



Dr. Joseph Hoereth is the Director of the Institute for Policy and Civic Engagement at the University of Illinois at Chicago where he creates opportunities for scholars, concerned community members, students, and government to participate in public discourse and educational programs on current policy issues and social trends.



Dr. Elena Quintana is the Executive Director of the Institute on Public Safety and Social Justice at Adler University, where she works with community groups, peer institutions, and systems partners to address public safety challenges with socially just solutions.



Sodiqa Williams, Esq., is the General Counsel and Senior Vice President at Safer Foundation, which supports the efforts of people with arrest and conviction records to become employed, law-abiding members of the community and, as a result, reduce recidivism.

Specifically, Dr. Hoereth, Dr. Quintana, and Ms. Williams posed six questions to guide the discussion in each focus group, plus probing or follow-up questions that were used to guide the discussions (see [Appendix 1](#)).¹⁴ Each focus group typically included one facilitator to lead the conversations and one notetaker to capture detailed notes utilizing a note-taking template, which are reflected in the statements throughout this report. We then conducted a text analysis of the results.¹⁵

¹⁴ Each focus group also began with an introduction and informed consent. See [Appendix 1](#). Before filing this report, Ms. Williams left the Independent Monitoring Team.

¹⁵ Text analysis (TA) is a machine learning technique used to automatically extract valuable insights from unstructured text data.

The research team took great care to protect the confidentiality of participants in the data analysis and in this report. Instead of names, for example, we assigned participants an ID in the text data before uploading the data into Dedoose, a qualitative data analysis software.¹⁶ IMT researchers coded the response text, and codes were compiled into broader themes by three separate researchers, which we define as common topics expressed across many responses. To complement the results from the *2020 IMT Community Survey*, our approach to these focus groups was designed to develop an understanding of the root basis of sentiments and perceptions of the CPD expressed by focus-group participants particularly in the context of recent interactions with police officers.¹⁷

We recruited participants for the focus groups through multiple avenues, including with the assistance of community-based organizations and individuals in the community with whom the IMT staff had working relationships to assist with outreach in recruiting participants from the target population of the focus groups: Black and Latino men, ages 18–35. As we recruited potential participants, we scheduled online Zoom meetings for groups of between two and 10 participants. In some cases, where feasible given the organizational setting, focus groups were held in-person. We provided participants a \$25 incentive for participating either in the form of a cash-app payment or a gift card. Thirty-two focus groups were conducted between December of 2020 and June of 2021, with a total of 89 participants within the target population of Black and Latino men, ages 18–35.¹⁸

Where possible, the IMT recorded each participant's race, age, neighborhood, and zip code. The geography data, however, was not complete enough to analyze. In addition, some participants did not respond to every question asked during the focus group. This conversational aspect of focus groups made it difficult to precisely trace some responses to the specific question being asked. However, this was ultimately of no consequence, as all the text data was analyzed using the same set of codes that would have been applied to any text, regardless of the question being asked.

After assigning participant IDs and uploading data into the analytical software, the team coded the data. The codes were then compiled into broader themes, which

¹⁶ See Home, DEDOOSE, <https://www.dedoose.com/>.

¹⁷ The *2020 IMT Community Survey Report* may be accessed here: <https://cpdmonitoring-team.com/overview/reports-and-resources/independent-monitor-conducts-community-survey/>.

¹⁸ There were a total of 106 focus-group participants, but we have complete age and race data for the 89 whose text response data we included in our analysis for this report.

we define as common topics expressed across many responses. The data was analyzed by three separate researchers to promote inter-rater reliability.¹⁹ Each researcher read through the responses scanning for themes not only within each question, but within responses to other questions. The codes created by the researchers were then compiled into overarching themes where there was agreement on codes and volume of responses assigned to that code. The themes reflect the relationships between police and civilians described by participants. In essence, the recurring mention of similar topics were grouped together under these broader themes, which became the basis of the observations discussed in this report.

Although we focused our analysis on the broader themes, we reviewed a very large amount of text data for this analysis. The IMT research team applied over two-hundred codes over 2,000 times to thousands of excerpts of text. Our approach was focused on developing an understanding of the root basis of sentiments and perceptions of the CPD expressed by our focus-group participants, particularly when based on interactions with police officers. This volume of text gives power to the observations made here about the themes discussed. It is worth restating that our approach here was designed to develop an understanding of the root basis of sentiments and perceptions of the CPD as expressed by focus-group participants, rather than draw statistically backed conclusions from the data.

¹⁹ The concept of inter-rater reliability refers to the extent to which two or more research analysts agree on how data should be grouped or coded. In this study, we promoted consistency across data coding by training data analysts, providing them with a guidance for coding their observations, monitoring the quality of the data coding over time to watch for consistency, and offering a chance to discuss difficult issues or problems with coding throughout the coding process.

III. THEME ANALYSIS

As explained above, our analysis of the focus group data revealed six themes, which comprise our focus for the remainder of this report and corresponding with various guiding principles in the Consent Decree:



A. SENTIMENT TOWARDS POLICE

Consent Decree ¶ 8. Strong community partnerships and frequent positive interactions between police and members of the public make policing safer and more effective, and increase public confidence in law enforcement. Moreover, these partnerships allow police to effectively engage with the public in problem-solving techniques, which include the proactive identification and analysis of issues in order to develop solutions and evaluate outcomes.



The thematic analysis presented here stems from discussions in response to the question “How do you feel about the CPD and why do you feel that way?” Among those who indicated a clear sentiment towards the CPD, the sentiment was much more negative than positive. Participants’ expression of a negative sentiment was often stated quite plainly and directly and tended to be interpreted as a negative perception consistently by multiple reviewers and coders.

Participants rarely expressed these negative sentiments without offering a reason, or without making reference to a specific experience or set of experiences on which they based that negative view. The reasons for the negative sentiment were quite diverse, but fell into five categories:

- ❖ “They don’t do their jobs” / “Unreliable”
- ❖ “Disrespectful”
- ❖ “Aggressive” or “Harassing”

- ❖ “Corrupt”
- ❖ “Racist” or “Racial Profiling”
- ❖ Personal experience (cross cutting theme)

POSITIVE SENTIMENT

Positive Sentiments were relatively rare in the focus group discussions. Typically, participants did not express feeling positively towards their interactions with the police, although some participants tried to use positive sentiments to couch their criticisms in some cases.

I don't trust. Got more good police than bad police. Bad ones still out there.

Do I trust them? Not for the most part. Would I like to trust them? Yes. There's some that do their jobs. There was one guy that goes to the center. He got shot, and a cop put a tourniquet on his leg, saved his life. But I saw the cops handcuff my brother to the gate and beat him then throw him in the car. An officer took my boots off and stand in the snow while he searched me. It's like a minstrel show.

There is no uniformity in understanding of the law. For example, technically a Taser is legal in Chicago if you have a FOID card. I had to prove once to an officer that I was talking with that having a Taser is legal. This is the kind of thing that makes me skeptical of their ability to know my rights and the law. I do trust them to treat me with respect, but it matters where I am. If I am in a safe space when I know the officers. Outside of my neighborhood or campus, I don't trust them.

I don't necessarily trust them. I know that some officers are doing the right thing, but this is not enough to trust them all.

I do. From past experience and background. Haven't run into those that gave hard time since younger age when had trouble with the police.

I trust them, they are nice when they say hi.

RECURRING FEEDBACK: *"THEY DON'T DO THEIR JOBS" / "UNRELIABLE"*

Participants recounted situations in which the police were ineffective, failed to take action, arrived too late to be helpful, or did not respond at all. Participants who described these situations often felt that the CPD was unresponsive to the community and could not be counted on to deliver on the basic functions of its role. Unreliability and slow response times were also noted a few times as factors contributing to lack of trust and negative sentiments.

They come after a lot of things happen, then do not put much work into their investigations.

Lazy – they are just lazy. They feel that if an incident report is not life or death, then it can wait. I worked security at a bar [...]. Got back to my car after my shift one day and the window was busted, and my backpack was stolen. The police arrive and accuse me of breaking into the car. I explain that this is my wife's car. I have to prove that I am married. I did my own investigation into the break-in and sent the info directly to the detective.

Remember the footage of officers in the alderman's office just hanging out? They knew there was nothing they could do. They don't really do anything beyond securing the scene after crimes, 9 times out of 10. They are needed for like car accidents.

I work downtown and I live on the South Side. Downtown they come slowly, and on the South Side boy they are slow to show up. On 51st and Wentworth the station is right there, and they are slow.

I heard a dispatch that they were called for a shooting, and they said, "Let them shoot it out," and purposely responding slowly to shootings.

They don't care about what happens in the neighborhood. Not a source of justice or beacon of hope.

I expect them to be the police. When there is a shooting in my neighborhood, I expect them to come aggressive. I want them to do their jobs. They don't do their jobs.

I don't trust them. Definitely not, especially with what's going on recently, and their response to protests, I know some people in Good Kids Mad City who have been treated bad by them recently. No. I know people who have called the police with serious situations and the cops take a long time to get there. If an emergency was to happen, I don't think I would trust them to get there in time, or they would show up and question me as the criminal instead.

RECURRING FEEDBACK: “DISRESPECTFUL”

Participants referenced many instances of encounters with officers who were rude, mean, arrogant, or disrespectful in some way as a reason for their negative views. In addition to referencing blatant disrespect by officers in words and action, there were also references to the CPD's failure to engage with residents sincerely during interactions or to treat them as human beings and equals.

I've gotten pulled over when other people driving and maybe 'cause of how we look. They arrest you and laugh about you and how you look and all that. They try to use force when they don't need to. They already have possession of you, and they are still being rough. I will tell them: I don't want to speak, and they still try to make you speak. They will really be making up stuff. Say I'm with my friend and we are both caught.

I feel like the cops that work in my neighborhood are rude and disrespectful. . . . That just because they are police officers, they feel like they can treat us forcefully and it's scary. They threaten us with everything. It's scary how they can play with your freedom.

Our perception of police is very distorted. When coming in contact with them, they try to use their power and that makes it worse for other officers. Always going to have the perception that officers are going to use their power against everyone. Just because you have a badge doesn't mean I owe you more respect.

No, I'm ready 'cause they treat me like shit. CPD they are corrupt, and they do not serve and protect. For example, this just happened to me: I was in a car, and I have a gang affiliated haircut. Just for having this haircut they chased me down, took me away in handcuffs for reckless conduct. They didn't search the car at all. They didn't ask for license, registration, nothing. They went straight for me, and I wasn't even driving. It's off the fact that they know me. I have a shag – a tail. I cut it off after that.

RECURRING FEEDBACK: “AGGRESSIVE” / “HARASSING”

Some of the most troubling incidents recalled by participants were those related to officers who were overly aggressive and controlling or harassing participants. Some provided accounts of a specific repeated type of harassing interaction with the same officer, often when the previous interactions were used as a threat or source of intimidation.

CPD work in my neighborhood are hostile because the neighborhood is dangerous. The cops around here are on edge. They act like they recognize you from somewhere even though they don't. I know not all cops are bad, but the ones around here are iffy.

I dislike them. They come off real aggressive for no reason. They pick out certain people and bully them or look at them weird. I feel like they make it—it makes me feel like it's easy to get locked up

and it shouldn't feel that way. I feel like there's a big divide between officers and the community. I don't think it's friendly.

They told me and my homie that they would break my wrists. Our hands were on the car and were frying on the top of the police car.

Law enforcement is not following protocol. Some of us may have backgrounds, but they are over-aggressive, and use dirty tactics to keep us from making the changes that we want to make.

The neighborhood where I live is predominantly Latino and underserved. Policing here does not feel like policing. They make people nervous. They are the last call/option. They are always authoritative – that manner of power.

They are overdoing their job. Stopping over Black people for nothing. Just because the car he got. Figure everyone drinking or smoking weed. Some of these officers come to work with attitude. Give reason to disrespect you.

RECURRING FEEDBACK: “CORRUPT”

The theme of corruption was evident in numerous accounts of officers blatantly abusing power. The most common involved officers planting evidence or otherwise engaging in unethical or illegal behavior.

I feel like they are corrupted. They are just waiting to throw any Black people into jail. It doesn't matter what color they are; they do the same thing. They help each other as if they are family. It doesn't matter if you are a gang member.

I don't really care about the police. I think it's about politics at the end of the day. I feel like the police is there to take care of the rich White people. It was designed for people to lose and get locked up. I don't get into it with the police like that or talk to them, I just feel like it's all about politics and has a major role in our society right now. The whole bullshit about stuff, you know.

They have a job to be accountable to the community, to do a job, to capture their work on body-worn cameras, but they cook the stories, and give people fake charges that create felonies on your backgrounds. Just making us fight cases for years to say our 4th amendment rights were violated, and for the case to be thrown out.

Mixed feelings. Do we need them? Yes. Do I like the cover up and corruption? No. Especially in my neighborhood. I don't think they are from here and they don't care about my community. They are only interested in locking up community members.

RECURRING FEEDBACK: "RACIST" OR "RACIAL PROFILING"

The rationale of racism and having experienced racial profiling was expressed by some participants as one reason for having a negative perception of the CPD. For many participants, indicating that the CPD is racist was expressed casually without much further explanation, almost as if it was widely believed that this was CPD's manner of operating.

They racist, they foul, they bogus, abuse people, they kill Black people. They supposed to serve and protect.

Most of them don't be right. They plant stuff on people. They are racist. I feel like a lot of them don't care about the community, they just want a paycheck.

I have all types of feelings. My main feeling is that they are not for me and for my race. I don't think they benefit our neighborhood. It's not there to protect. It's there to get cases or to benefit their career, not the protect the neighborhoods they serve.

They are just waiting to throw any Black people into jail.

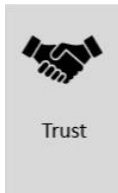
It's changed a little, but they're still biased towards Black people and browned skinned people. They still give White privilege a lot, if

you get pulled over, we go through a lot more. Me personally since I came home been through a lot, so I stay away from them. They here to serve and protect so I guess they're really protecting themselves and serving the city, I guess.

I live in the loop. The police are present in more affluent areas. It's like a heightened state. It stands for antagonism of Black and Brown folks.

B. TRUST

Consent Decree ¶ 9. To build and promote public trust and confidence in CPD and ensure constitutional and effective policing, officer and public safety, and sustainability of reforms, the City and CPD will integrate a community policing philosophy into CPD operations that promotes organizational strategies that support the systematic use of community partnerships and problem-solving techniques.



We asked participants “Do you trust the CPD? Why or why not?” Participants’ comments during this portion of the discussion indicated a strong level of distrust that was most often expressed directly. We note that “distrust” responses were expressed six times as often as “trust” and “trust some officers” responses combined. Distrust was among the strongest theme in terms of the forcefulness and frequency of responses.

Like our analysis of participants’ general sentiments towards police, the reasons for distrust tended to be tied to specific negative personal interactions, rather than a generalized reason. Embedded in many of the negative experiences recounted by participants during the discussions were some clear themes. Most common were accounts of harassment; unethical behavior by police, such as false charges or using an individual’s past against them in a threatening way; examples of officers escalating situations; and police being generally unreliable.

No. That’s a sad thing to say that I can’t trust the people that are being paid to protect us. Don’t want to lose life just because my skin is darker.

There is a trust factor in that we know why they are here, but yet they violate that in how they treat us. One time I needed to ask them for help when I lost my wallet. Any trust will not be automatic.

I really don't have a lot of trust in the police.

I don't trust them. Trust is earned. It's simple. They don't trust me, so I don't trust them.

I do not trust them at all. I don't believe I would be treated fairly if there was a problem. It is blatant.

The reason I don't trust them is because when I think about violence, I think about police. I don't think about safety. Them having a gun, a badge, pepper spraying people that is violence that is not like safety. Yeah, I think there's just no interaction they're the enforcement to protect property. [...] No I do not trust the police.

No, I don't trust them. Nope, no sir.

RECURRING FEEDBACK: *HARASSMENT AND ESCALATION*

There was plenty of discussion about harassment and officers escalating situations. It was not unusual for a participant to recount an incident of being harassed in the past, sometimes repeatedly harassed, in some cases even by the same officers. Reports of harassment ranged from repeated stops for minor infractions to threats and intimidation.

Me, trust the police? As much trust as I have in them is, I know they'll show up and answer the call but when they get there to respond without knowing the community and the area the problem could escalate if it's a fight or a dispute where people shot and stuff like that they come with little training on how to slow the bleeding down and do things like that but I don't really trust them to make the right decisions in the moments where it could be resolved. I don't trust the police to do that. I'd rather let it resolve itself because a lot of people don't like the police.

I don't trust police officers because I've seen the things they could do. I've been harassed since I was sixteen. [...] he would always pull people over in my alley, harass me. One day he pulled me over I had insurance and my license, had an ounce of weed in the car. He took everyone out the vehicle pulled me to the side and said what do you

got for me or else I'm going to take your vehicle away. So, I told him I'd give him a gun he gave me his number and said if I don't call him by tonight, he'll do everything in his power to take my freedom away. And then he asked for information I didn't give him, and I got scared that night, so I gave him the gun I recorded the call and I called him and that was it. He picked up the gun I don't know what he did with it. The next day the same officer pulled me over and pulled his gun out on me. The police have been real bogus.

The same police asked my name and said that if I didn't say my name, he would lock me up. After they found out who we were, they would continue to harass us.

Not at all. They will literally violate your constitutional rights right in front of you and if you speak of that they will lock you up for reckless conduct. I've been arrested for ridiculous stuff before. They just literally harass the shit out of you. You can't even walk to the store in peace. They ask so many questions about where are you coming from. [...] You can be walking the dog and for the way you look they just search and search. I've been with my mom and they still pull me over and harass me in front of my mom. They will stalk you, follow you behind you slow as hell. Come around the block 5–6 times. You know it's for you because they stare at you. They give you a mean face as if you are doing something wrong.

I don't trust them at all. I've never trusted a police officer. If you are a person of color, you will never [do so]. I see blatant disregard too. I see them as arrogant and acting arrogant when they are around each other, they seem angry or intentionally intimidating. It is like they want to make us submit. Like a drill sergeant mentality.

RECURRING FEEDBACK: *UNETHICAL BEHAVIOR*

In explaining their distrust, participants also provided accounts of CPD interaction that ranged from unethical to illegal. Many participants accused officers of making false charges, planting evidence on them, lying to people, and essentially using what they knew or thought they knew about the participant's past unfairly.

I agree, but speaking off real experience, they F'd up my life. My very first case was because a police officer put something on me. My neighborhood was infested with drugs, but I was hanging out with a friend, but they pulled up and told me to come here. And I trusted them. They grabbed me and took me to the station. I thought it was disorderly, but it was drugs. I don't trust them. I never trust them. Another experience was: if you are surrounded by negativity, after so long, you are going to become that. If you're surrounded by drugs, you do drugs. If you're around crooked police, it's a matter of time before you become one.

Police don't do their job in a professional manner. They plant evidence, they try to force me to plea to false charges. I have lost years of my life fighting for these false charges. I don't think it's about trusting the police. I want to be able to trust them to do their jobs.

Due to past history. They do a lot of cover up. Like when they – the McDonald case – they all lied on the stand, they all lied on the cover up and they all got hired back, except for Van Dyke. They hold up to the blue shield code. The only got caught because of the video, so why would I expect them to protect my rights. It's hard to fire them and nobody's going to do anything about it. I think they will respect my rights only on camera.

Nah I don't trust 'em either. I feel there's always a quota they gotta fill... arrest or hit this number of people a day. Something sick about that. I was a shorty, I thought they was helping me out and ended up giving me a curfew violation. I thought they were going to drop me off and keep it simple, but I don't have trust for them.

They tend to stop the same people over and over again. When a person has priors, they will just stop them again just to f with them. Some of the youth who are in juvenile detention centers are arrested again. Almost immediately after they leave.

C. NATURE OF RECENT INTERACTIONS WITH POLICE

Consent Decree ¶ 49. The Parties agree that policing fairly, with courtesy and dignity, and without bias is central to promoting broad community engagement, fostering public confidence in CPD, and building partnerships between law enforcement and members of the Chicago community that support the effective delivery of police services.



We asked focus-group participants about their recent police interactions with these questions: “Have you had any interactions with police in the past 12 months? How many? What were those like?” Where necessary, participants were asked several follow-up questions intended to provide details about the nature of the interaction, whether it was voluntary or involuntary, how they were treated and the nature of any communication from the officers regarding the situation.

The main theme emerging from the discussion regarding police interactions is that participants’ experiences were predominantly negative. These negative experiences were recounted in a wide variety of types of interactions, ranging from the most low-tension interactions to those interactions ending in arrest. These interactions with police include, for example, participants being pulled over or being stopped while walking or standing in public.

RECURRING FEEDBACK: *BEING PULLED OVER*

Being pulled over or stopped while riding in a vehicle was one of the common ways that participants indicated encountering police. We note a pattern within this theme in which participants recounted an incident about a stop for a minor infraction, which led to an officer indicating a secondary issue or suspicion, which then led to a search or background check or similar check. Few participants recounting incidents with this pattern indicated that they ended in arrest or anything more than a ticket. Some participants described being pulled over or stopped in a car illustrate this pattern and the negative tone of their experiences.

I was driving a borrowed car and I thought the lights were automatic, but they weren’t. The lights weren’t on, and two narc cars pulled up and put a gun to the window and told me to get out. They first flashed me with their high beams. I didn’t realize my lights were [not] on. They pulled up one behind me and one in front of me and told me to get out. I got out; they ran my background check.

My parents, my dad was stopped by the police in a car. So, he got pulled over. They have been harassing my family since April. They know what cars we have. They told him they didn't need his ID and insurance, and they needed to check the car quick. He wanted to know what the cause was for the search. He got out of the car, they checked it, and they let it go.

Another thing, this didn't happen to me, my uncle was supposed to be picking me up. He got pulled over and he drives a Hellcat. They started driving his car and tore it up and then they took it back to his house. Car is still damaged. Probably happened about a year ago. No paperwork. They had pulled him over (don't know what for). They took him to the station and when he got home, his car was already at his house. He had stayed in the station overnight. They didn't even tell him they were going to take his car.

I know someone who got stopped – he was pulled over on the expressway. They said they smelled weed. They searched the car.

I got pulled over twice in traffic. One they said we both stopped at the same time on a 4-way street. I nodded for them to go, they said no, and waved me on. I went and they pulled me over half a block later. He said I ran the stop sign. I said, "Bro, you just looked at me and told me to go! What's with the bullshit? Why did you pull me over?" He asked for my license. But I know there was a shooting a day or two before and when there's shootings and it's hot, they pull anybody over. But I was like I already knew but it was a bullshit excuse. If he would have just said, "Hey, it's hot out here" I would have understood, but it was the lie of it. He pretended like he had a reason to pull me over. He ignored my question, checked my license, and said I could go. And that was it.

Traffic stop sign. It was raining. We both made a complete stop. They did it right away, pulled me over. He came to my window with the camera on. I asked why he pulled me over and said I didn't make a complete stop. I asked, "What is your definition of a complete stop?" He never answered me. He took my ID, then returned it. [...] don't have my windows tinted, no loud music, but I did have a hoodie because it was raining. I think that's the only reason why

they pulled you over. Besides being Latino. We are all Latinos in this neighborhood.

RECURRING FEEDBACK REGARDING POLICE BEHAVIOR DURING STOP:
BEING TOO TOUGH, INTIMIDATING, ARROGANT

When asked about the officer's behavior during the stop, we noted a strong theme in our analysis of participants' responses pertaining to behavior described as aggressive, tough, intimidating, arrogant, or physically or verbally abusive. The extent to which officers were aggressive or tough was enough for many participants to indicate feeling very frightened or intimidated during the interaction. The following quotes illustrate this theme.

I was in Albany Park and there was a few of us and animosity was up there, police was mad aggressive flying around with M16 [rifle] threatening to move around and it could be random people we were walking when they hopped out on us and we tried to disperse. They basically looking for something and couldn't get what they wanted so I'd say agitated and scared too.

One time I was walking with my girlfriend. They didn't respect the fact that she was a minor and a female. They searched her, harassed her, they strangled her, pinning her to the floor trying to arrest her. We were walking with laundry in our hands. Just cuz they got a call. They didn't arrest her because they didn't find anything. People from a community center stepped in for us. So, she wasn't arrested.

*Some people have had worse experiences.
2–3 years ago, my brother was shot in front
of the house, an officer arriving on the scene
shoved my mom and was disrespectful to her
in that moment.*

In the last 12 months, I've had at least like 25–30 in the last 12 months. I've moved from [...] and I moved to [...] where it's more peaceful. In the other spot if I was out in front of my house, they used to harass the shit out of me. Out of those 25–30 times there were two arrests. No, there were not convictions.

Just one. They raided my house. This was around February or April. My house got raided by the police for no reason. I got arrested. They were saying cuz they had seen something online on Facebook. That's why they raided my house. They were demanding stuff. And they're 11 deep with no masks. Only one uniformed cop, the rest were detectives. I wanted to push my mom to do a lawsuit. They didn't find nothing. They found 3/8 of weed and they took me in for that. [...] When they were in here, they were touching on my mom. I told them they need a police female to search my mom. They said, "We can do whatever we want! We are the law."

Definitely doing everything aggressively. Hand already on the pistol ready to pull out of the holster. Reaching for license and insurance, they getting ready to use their guns. Motto: make answer short and brief. Talk at you than to you. Everyone not a criminal. Just don't snatch out of car assuming that you doing something illegal. Assume everyone on West Side is criminal. Out of 10 encounters, 1-2 are all right. Still talking using words like "boy," White officers.

Honestly two short females asking me about things in the neighborhood she said, "You run this neighborhood?" I said nothing she said, "You look like one of these big-time young thugs we've been looking for in the streets." I put my hands behind my back I wasn't going to resist. If I do that with two females the guys gone come as backup and beat me up. She let me go and that was it.

D. PERCEPTION OF HOW OTHERS ARE TREATED BY POLICE

Consent Decree ¶ 50. In conducting its activities, CPD will provide police services to all members of the public without bias and will treat all persons with the courtesy and dignity which is inherently due every person as a human being without reference to stereotype based on race, color, ethnicity, religion, homeless status, national origin, immigration status, gender identity or expression, sexual orientation, socio-economic class, age, disability, incarceration status, or criminal history.



Focus group discussions included questions regarding participants' views of how officers treat people in general. Participants were asked about whether they see or perceive that officers treat people differently based on their race, age, or the location of the interaction. Some participants believed race did play a role in differential treatment.

You see White people get pulled over and they get loud. With us, one cop clutching a gun, the other making you go through the paces to play with you, take your car without regard to protocol. They want us to follow all rules, but they don't.

A combination but it comes down to ethnicity. For example, back in the day they would stop people in groups, especially a group of minorities.

They walk up to the White dude; they don't take out the guns. I witnessed it myself. He put the gun up when it's a White person, and they put the gun back in the holster. "Give us a reason to pull the gun out." Come on bro. You are going to traumatize my kids.

However, just as common was the perception that officers in different neighborhoods treat people differently, as well as the combination of race and neighborhood. There was an overarching perception that officers in mostly White neighborhoods treat Black and Latino Chicagoans differently than White Chicagoans in those neighborhoods.

Huge difference. Grew up in [South side neighborhood], now in [North Side]. Only time police are in [South side neighborhood], they

are there to beat us up, not to protect anything. In [North side neighborhood], yeah it does feel like serve and protect. In Chatham we're viewed as criminals. For example, during second riots, they came to the Apple store right away, protected it, while letting [South side neighborhood] get looted. So huge difference in treatment.

I think they would treat you different if I grew up in Wrigley Field and stood on the corner drinking and partying the police would never do anything to me but if I'm over here in my neighborhood with 10 guys they're going to pull us all over and check us and ask us questions because I've been to Wrigley Field over there and the police is always there, but they don't stop anybody they let them be.

Before they (the police) even interact with someone, they already have a predetermined assumption of that person. I lived in Uptown but went to school in Rogers Park. And Rogers Park is focused on community policing and cops approach people more friendly and with positive attitude. But when cops approached people in Uptown, they approach them tensely and more harshly, ready for conflict.

What I think is the nice neighborhoods when we go there, we get harassed a lot more I can say I feel like I always had it rough no matter what the situation was, I was always the bad guy. I've been pulled over in my neighborhood and got harassed but pulled over in a good neighborhood. I'd get harassed twice as hard because they don't know what I'm doing over there. That's all it is.

I'd say it's different... It's worse out south. Uptown there's pockets and it depends on how you act in certain areas for sure.

Yes, race, but also the neighborhood. It is just more likely for police to stop and ask people questions in certain neighborhoods.

Only time guns are not drawn, is in community not with high crime. Anytime in the neighborhood with high crime, guns drawn.

Any time there's a lot of people in the car, in the Beverly area there's more police pulling people over. There's certain neighborhoods (White neighborhoods) where police are just pulling Black people over for no reason. If people didn't have to reveal their name, do you think that would lead more people to file complaints? Yes.

E. POLICE POINTING GUNS²⁰

Consent Decree ¶ 189. CPD will clarify in policy that when a CPD officer points a firearm at a person to detain the person, an investigatory stop or an arrest has occurred, which must be documented. CPD will also clarify in policy that officers will only point a firearm at a person when objectively reasonable under the totality of the circumstances.



The 2020 IMT Community Survey found participants, particularly young Black and Latino men, indicated at high rates of officers pointing guns at them or someone else.²¹ We asked focus-group participants whether they have had an officer point a gun at them, or whether they have witnessed them pointing a gun at others. In some focus group sessions, nearly every participant raised their hand when asked. The purpose of asking about gun pointing again in the focus groups was not only to confirm the survey data, but also to understand the context of the incidents, such as what was happening at the time the officer pointed a gun, what was said, and to gain an overall sense of why the gun was pointed at them from the participants' perspective. The quotes below reflect incidents shared by participants about officers pointing guns at them or witnessing officers point guns at others.

They say they don't know us or know what we are capable of. Once there were shots fired in my neighborhood. I was out walking my dog with my cousin and cops pulled an assault rifle on us. We asked why it's necessary to pull out this big ass gun. He said, "I'm not from this neighborhood." So, he would need to protect himself from the people who live there.

²⁰ The 2020 IMT Community Survey can be found here: <https://cpdmonitoringteam.com/overview/reports-and-resources/independent-monitor-conducts-community-survey/>. We also direct readers to Consent Decree ¶¶ 188–94 of the Consent Decree for more information about the reforms required of the CPD.

²¹ Several paragraphs in the Consent Decree address officers pointing their firearms and require changes to policies, officer behavior, reporting, and supervision regarding firearm pointing. See, e.g., Consent Decree ¶¶ 188–96.

I think it's because of the calls too, when they get certain type of calls, they come with that type of aggression but when I got one pulled on me. I was with some of my friends I think they thought they was outnumbered. They over-tough, and they think since they got a badge and a gun they can get away with more than we can. If anyone else on the streets did that, they'd have to kill that man. It be tough constantly being scared for their lives. That's more dangerous when police are scared for their lives and they got a badge, gun, and a vest on and we out here in regular clothes.

They would run up on us in front of my mom's house with guns drawn. They knew who I was, and they used to pass by my house, lower the window and say, "What are you doing? You're up to no good." There were some cool-ass officers, but from the 25 times, a good 17 or 18 times they had guns drawn. Once I had an officer point a rifle on me and I was just walking down the street.

They did it to me plenty of times. I'm going to tell you about one time I was walking down to my girlfriend's house. I stay there. It was about 10 PM. They asked me for my ID saying I'm a juvenile. They said where I was on the floor there were not only one officer or two. They said I had guns. They pulled a gun on me as three officers were pinning me down. Three Narcs. Between the two of these guys, they target males between 10–23 you've been stopped by police innumerable times – for one person at least 100 times and they have not one gun possession or UUW [(Unlawful Use of a Weapon)] ever. They tried to put it on me, but it didn't stick.

For White people, it's a use of force. But for Black people, it's not. What's written is always different than what happens. Pulling the gun is the first thing they do. Some people can't help themselves, it's hard to break a habit, so you still see them do it. Pulling the gun is the easiest way for them to cut corners. They pull their guns to put fear in people. They think someone's going to run, they pull their guns. If they run, I'll shoot. Move your hands, I'll shoot. It's a defensive mechanism. Perfect example: in the last two months, they came and stopped a guy. We knew it was BS, and we started recording. As soon as we did that, we have to be six, seven feet back,

otherwise we'd get arrested for disobeying. They shouldn't be doing this, even though this is our property. It's a whole system. You go through the crooked police. Even if you make it through that, you have to go through court. Public defenders don't do their job either, they just hand you over to the system. If they actually had real lawyer who did their work, then the police would stop doing this. But the pipeline works together. Who's watching you. The balance of power. "The camera wasn't working" is the common excuse. Why [...] does the police get to cut and off their own camera.

Participants were asked follow-up questions regarding why they thought the officer might have pointed a gun or whether an officer stated why the gun pointed. Below are quotes from participants who indicated that officers thought that the person they were engaging had a gun.

Last time I was stopped the police thought we had guns. We were walking through the gangway. There were a lot of us. The cops called to cut us all off. The police car cut us off. They started searching us and stuff.

Police point the gun at me before, 2014 before I got a lot of thug life around me. I can't work in this town. I was 24. I was supposed to be on my way to work. I was selling weed on the block. The reason was that he thought I had a gun on me, but I didn't have a gun out on me, I just had weed. They always have the intention that as young Black men we're going to kill them, so they always want to kill us first. I think half, or probably the whole neighborhood have had guns pointed at them because it's a gang affiliated area. They pull out their guns for no reason. They want to scare and intimidate us. It isn't right in these neighborhoods. When I'm out on transportation, I see it and I know. We have gang union task force detectives, not regular police. But the detectives try to trick us too.

Some participants stated that they believed officers perceived them as a threat as a reason that officers pointed the gun, not necessarily that the officer thought they had a gun, but some other threat possibly unknown to the participant at the time. Other participants indicated that the only reason they could perceive is that the officer was trying to get them to comply with a command.

They were doing a sting. I drove through the area and stopped at a stop sign. They swooped in with guns drawn on me.

Yes. It was just an altercation I was with somebody they got a real history with the police, so they had pulled us over and once they ran his name through, they stopped us and brought a bunch of cops that was the first time I seen it up close and person.

No, although they pointed it at my brother because he looks like a gangbanger. [...] When he came back from Afghanistan, he was talking back to him, and they pulled a gun out.

Usually when they jump out [in front] of you, want you because you did something, they trying to get you for. Say let me see your hands, don't move. [They are] straight aggressive, finger on the trigger. [A man] was with his kids. Made him get down the ground. Pulled out gun during traffic stop, they jumped out, guns drawn.

It's known that. We don't listen to them. If we walk off, they take their gun out. It's a routine situation to get you to obey their orders. It's not that you're a threat. Every time the police grab me, they hop out with all their guns, and see me as a gang member. When they see me, they have to call backup. They have to wait with two or three. They're not genuinely scared when they pull the gun. A few of them have PTSD from war. The ones that trigger happy, they put them in our neighborhoods, so they pull their guns as the first thing they do. Pulling the gun is their power.

Another time it was my brother. I was younger and watched from the upstairs bedroom window. He was high on something, they told him to comply, and he didn't listen. They first Tased him and he just pulled the clips out. Then they pulled out their guns and he finally listened.

F. MUTUAL FEAR AND AVOIDANCE OF POLICE

Consent Decree ¶ 10. CPD will ensure that its community policing philosophy is a core component of its provision of police services, crime reduction strategies and tactics, training, management, resource deployment, and accountability systems. All CPD members will be responsible for furthering this philosophy and employing the principles of community policing, which include trust and legitimacy; community engagement; community partnerships; problem-solving; and the collaboration of CPD, City agencies, and members of the community to promote public safety.



Participants stated feelings of fear of the police and expressed that they also felt sometimes that the police seemed to be afraid of ordinary civilians and, therefore, acted too harshly in their interactions with civilians. It was stated several times that civilians hesitated before calling the police for fear of an exaggerated reaction, which can have severe repercussions on the community network. Even in involuntary interactions, like getting pulled over by the police, individuals stated that the police were too harsh.

It feels like the ownership is on us to de-escalate because we see in the news when the police are called for a simple thing, it causes more issues than it should have been. A loud home shouldn't lead to an arrest. It should just be hey there's a complaint, but we don't want it to escalate that far. It's only when things get out of our control do we call the police. Police feel like they have to dominate and be intimidating. It could just be one cop car, but it's always several. People go down for things that weren't even what the call was for. It's hard enough in Chicago: there's a lack of proper education/ resources/job opportunities/housing. Why make it harder? They make things more difficult; they do everything wrong. Get on the ground for running a stop sign? There's no reason to advance that far. It's done out of fear.

My issue with them is their trust in these high crime communities. It's hard to try and overcome, even within their own department. If they have issues in their department, how are we supposed to trust them? I'm afraid to call them, even when witnessing a crime. That's a big problem in a high crime neighborhood. I'm scared of what might occur. I don't know how we're going to get that back. I'm not

scared of getting pulled over, because everything I have is legit. Police escalate the situation. Lot of police activity in my neighborhood. Always 5 extra cars. So much extra going on. My fear of calling the police: there's a consequence to calling them, because the neighbors have an issue with you.

Sometimes they are sent to neighborhoods they don't know. Sometimes they are just afraid because they are a different race than the people in those neighborhoods. Other times it's just an authority thing, trying to establish their status over people.

Most of the time I see them they are in involuntary interactions. Sometimes they are behaving in a dignified way, sometimes they are agitated. I have seen officers keep their hand on their gun during a traffic stop of someone. I have also seen officers afraid to chase after someone who runs away.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR IMPROVING POLICE-COMMUNITY RELATIONS

The focus group discussions closed with two open-ended questions:

- (1) "What do you think Chicago Police officers should do to improve relationships with young people in your neighborhood?" and
- (2) "Is there anything important you would like to tell us?"

Participants offered many recommendations in response to the first question. The second question also tended to yield recommendations for improvements as well. This section provides a snapshot of common themes that ran through the recommendations, including accountability, recruitment, and training.²²

The first set of quotes below highlights suggestions related to a need for internal police reform.

²² We note that the largest section of the Consent Decree addresses Accountability and Transparency, see ¶¶ 419–565. The Consent Decree also includes many requirements regarding Training, see ¶¶ 265–340.

It has a lot do with internally looking at the culture of police and police accountability. We can provide the police with training, and stuff, but I think the ill intention is learned behavior over time. If we focus on how or why this happens, we can see what are the policies. We know the people who are high risk in these communities. Disciplinary action doesn't exist, or is minor. We need to look at the policies of the police department. When does it go from a personal to an institutional issue?

Social emotional learning for officers. More Black officers and a better balance of officers serving similar neighborhoods as themselves.

We need to teach officers how to simply interact with a wide range of personality types. You can't be at the extremes – neither super laid back, no super aggressive. They need training to hit that middle. They need to change how they act with juveniles to help remember they are kids. Law enforcement focuses on penalizing and aggression. It's more about how do I establish my authority? We need to teach them how to win respect. Just because you can, doesn't mean you should.

Hire a few more social workers. Like in Camden, NJ.²³

Yeah, and report and fire the racist cops that constantly draw their guns that are on BS all the time because they are White. They treat Black people bad, and they should be reported and take their badges away if they ever do it again. How are they able to abuse their authority over someone? They should not be allowed to enact their racism on other people. I don't be seeing a lot of white shirts like that. When a gang unit is like that, he is known for carrying a gun. He has several pistol cases. Jack him up when you see him. You got every right and reason to look for your record. It's a lose/lose situation.

²³ We believe the speaker was referring to an effort by the Camden New Jersey police department to integrate social workers into the department. See *Camden County Pilot Project Embeds Social Workers into Pine Hill Police Department*, NJ PEN, <https://www.njpen.com/camden-county-pilot-project-embeds-social-workers-into-pine-hill-police-department/>.

Stop killing us. Stop treating us like we are criminals...They clearly don't respect us. Cops have huge issues with authority complexes, [they] don't like to be challenged. If they are challenged, they get violent.

They should stop targeting people. Anytime there's a traffic stop, anytime you just have contact with a citizen, your body cam should be on, and you should have a real probable cause for the stop. It doesn't matter who you are pulling over, gang affiliated, Black, White, or Chinese, they should be professional. They are the real gang out here. They're out here killing kids, killing minorities but we are the bad guys. Even if someone is a gang member, I'm still a f'ing human being. It's another form of racism.

Another theme in the recommendations pertained to ways police can have increased social engagement with the community. Suggestions in this category addressed opportunities to both increase the quantity and quality of that engagement.²⁴

To ban guns, they need to disarm themselves. For me, I've always been afraid of guns. Think about shootings like Breonna Taylor, Dylan Roof, etc. They would not have happened. Have officers from neighborhoods patrol those neighborhoods. Officers must be more involved in community events, volunteering. They are humans with a job to do, I understand that. All of these things would help build trust. In North Lawndale they have a restorative justice initiative, something like that.

If the police check on the people with mental illness and the homeless. If they were more community centered and not funding centered.

²⁴ See Consent Decree ¶¶ 8–11, 510, and 546 for some of the Consent Decree's requirements regarding CPD's community engagement.

I think the police need to learn how to talk better to people. They don't know how to talk to us. They think we're all the same. We know they're trying to help us, but we need to know that that they aren't going to kill us. You have to try and see if we can form a relationship with them.

I know in the past they've tried DARE or GREAT. But they need to stop profiling of kids walking to the park or the store. Kids are already on edge because of what is happening with police brutality on social media. A lot of times they are just trying to hang out.

Some participants expressed deep concern about the current state of the CPD. The recommendations in these responses expressed a desire for a re-thinking of the nature of policing, and the CPD's role in public safety.

Even though they get all that training all that they still gonna keep on framing and killing poor people, mentally ill, and Black and Latinos. I believe in the complete abolishment of the police. They kill people with mental health issues. We should find an alternative instead of calling the police. If we call the police on the mentally ill, they're going to beat them up and kill them. That's why we need community and need each other. They kill them bro. When you say it's just some of them it's not a few bad apples, this is systematic corruption violence and racism.

Remove all the stupidity. Seventy-five percent of them corrupt – throw them out. My perspective is as a law student in my neighborhood and speak for those who want to do good in society. But this institution does harm. We have to use our power as citizens to change this. The role of the public safety officer needs to be reimagined, maybe just public safety. We need more imagination to re-think it.

I feel like the relationship is irreparable. You cannot have an FOP and think we are going to have a peaceful and normal relationship with the police. You need to completely revamp the system. The issue is that policing is a vestige of slavery in America – “get the rowdy negroes.” We are going to continue to see these uprisings. I think about Malcom and Dr. King – both were murdered, and we are still fighting that ideology. We have to get this ideology completely out of the system of public safety.

I would say less questions should be asked, let's reimagine what community safety should look like and know that police is a legal gang. There's a law you can't have nothing on your little mirror, and they can pull me over for an air freshener? That gives them a reason to pull you over. They treat a car like a human. Close the JISC. It doesn't work.

IV. DISCUSSION OF OBSERVATIONS

The text data and themes from these focus groups paint a bleak picture of the relationship between the CPD and Black and Latino men, ages 18–35, in Chicago. Participants generally indicated a strong negative perception of police, a lack of trust in their ability to carry out their expected roles while respecting individuals' rights, and a sense that officers treat people differently based on their race or the neighborhood they live in.²⁵ Much of what was indicated by participants was consistent with what the IMT learned from this population in the *2020 IMT Community Survey*.²⁶ The survey results pointed to negative perception of police and a lack of trust in the CPD as well. However, these focus groups have provided two important sets of information that go beyond the *2020 IMT Community Survey*: (1) additional context to those sentiments and (2) a clearer sense of why members of these populations feel this way toward police.

We have compiled the themes present in these focus group discussions into six main observations:

1.	<p><i>Many focus-group participants described that most interactions are a negative experience for them, even when they end without any law-enforcement actions.</i></p> <p>Most of the interactions with police are negative from the perspective of those participants. The extent of that negative sentiment ranges from frustration to fear. For example, some participants described officers as behaving with aggression that is disproportionate to the situation or based on an unfounded level of suspicion or perception of danger from the participant.</p>
2.	<p><i>The cumulative effect of repeated negative personal experiences with officers significantly hinders trust-building.</i></p> <p>The lack of trust was a robustly present theme—expressed by most participants directly and in very clear language. In addition, the extent to which</p>

²⁵ Some participants also expressed that women also receive poor treatment from police often in different ways than men. The IMT is currently conducting focus groups with Black and Latina women and will also report on that data.

²⁶ The *2020 IMT Community Survey* can be found here: <https://cpdmonitoringteam.com/overview/reports-and-resources/independent-monitor-conducts-community-survey/>.

	<p>a participant's negative view of police corresponded with participants having no trust in the police being effective or respecting one's rights. This indicates that distrust of police is not simply just a general "I hate police" sentiment, but likely the result of conditioning by and through the sum of many individual negative experiences within a community. It was rare for the analysis to find that a participant had indicated a negative perception without also providing an explanation or a reason. It is not difficult to understand how these types of interactions would erode or destroy trust, particularly among people who may have frequent contact with police.</p>
3.	<p><i>Many participants described frequent and repeated involuntary contact with police.</i></p> <p>A notable feature of the high levels of contact with police from among these participants is repeated, frequent involuntary contact of the same individuals, as some participants indicated having up to 30 involuntary interactions with police in the past year. Among participants who felt they were being specifically targeted, the interaction was often described as including harassment, threatening behavior, or some form of unethical behavior, such as planting evidence or making false charges.</p>
4.	<p><i>Many participants described that stops for minor infractions lead to more serious interactions.</i></p> <p>There seemed to be at least one type of pattern to a negative interaction. Multiple incidents involved an interaction that began with a traffic stop of a young man in a vehicle, in which an officer stops the vehicle for a minor non-moving violation, such as a hanging air freshener or the darkness of a window tint. The officer then notes a smell of marijuana or the participant is just asked to step out of their car while the officer conducts what is perceived to be an improper search. The person is released after the search turns up nothing, and the officer often does not issue a citation for the initial infraction for which the participant was stopped.</p>
5.	<p><i>Many participants described that officers point their guns frequently.</i></p> <p>Participants reported that police frequently pull guns out and point guns at them during interactions. From the perspective of the participants, officers unholster their guns often, when they feel afraid from a real or perceived</p>

	threat, or as a way to force compliance with a command, or to simply demonstrate authority and scare the participants. Participants' sentiments were that gun pointing was more of a tool for officers rather than a safeguard.
6.	<p><i>Many participants described that they avoid officers out of fear and that they believe there is mutual fear between police and young Black and Latino men, which can create dangerous consequences during involuntary interactions and impede building mutual trust.</i></p> <p>Participants described a dynamic where community members avoid the police and officers are fearful of that population. <i>Compare, e.g.,</i> Consent Decree ¶ 9 ("Strong partnerships between CPD and the community enable law enforcement to build and strengthen trust, identify community needs, and produce positive policing outcomes.").</p>

V. CONCLUSION

The focus groups provided us with a snapshot into how young Black and Latino men experience the CPD. We gained some insight into the roots of some of the negative sentiments reflected in our *2020 IMT Community Survey*.

The recommendations provided by focus-group participants also track closely with requirements of the Consent Decree, including accountability (*see, e.g.*, Consent Decree ¶¶ 155–56, 217, 236, 342–43, 420, and 422), recruitment (*see, e.g.*, Consent Decree ¶¶ 249–51); disciplinary action (*see, e.g.*, Consent Decree ¶¶ 444, 449, and 501) training (*see, e.g.*, Consent Decree ¶¶ 272, 275, and 317), and treating all people equally and with respect (*see, e.g.*, Consent Decree ¶¶ 54–56, 85, 156, 161, and 346).

As the City and the CPD continue their compliance efforts, it is our hope that the CPD considers the serious issues, concerns, and recommendations raised by the focus-group participants. The IMT will continue to build from the results of these focus groups and consider their feedback during future focus groups with specific Chicago populations. *See* Consent Decree ¶ 646 (“The surveys will examine perceptions of CPD’s . . . interactions with members of the Chicago community, including interactions with individuals who are people of color, LGBTQI, in crisis, youth, members of religious minorities, or have disabilities.”). We are also currently conducting another community survey and will report on those findings later this year.²⁷

²⁷ Community members may always reach out to the IMT via email (contact@cpdmonitoringteam.com) or use the IMT Feedback Form on at <https://cpdmonitoringteam.com/feedback-form/>.

APPENDIX 1: INFORMED CONSENT AND FOCUS GROUP QUESTIONS FOR BLACK AND LATINO MEN, AGES 18–29

Estimated focus group time was approximately 60 minutes for 5 or fewer participants and approximately 90 minutes for 6–10 participants.

Focus Group Introduction and Informed Consent

The IMT is an independent group, we are not police officers, nor do we work for the CPD. The IMT reports only to a federal judge overseeing the Consent Decree. More information about the monitoring team is available on the IMT website at www.cpdmonitoring-team.com. Here are the important details about your participation:

What am I being asked to do?

- You are being asked to voluntarily participate in a focus group discussion regarding your perceptions and experiences with police, which may include up to 9 other participants, a facilitator, and in some cases a note-taker.
- The facilitator will ask the group questions that the group will respond to and discuss. Your confidentiality will be preserved in these discussions and in the notes.
- Depending on the number of participants, this discussion will take between 60 and 90 minutes.

What are the benefits of my participation?

- This research is part of important work for the Consent Decree and reforming the CPD. It is an opportunity for your voice to be included in an assessment of how good or bad a job police are doing.
- Upon completion of the focus group you will receive a \$25 gift card for your participation.

What are the risks to my participation?

- The risks to your participation are minimal. All information you share is confidential, meaning we do not share the names of participants with anyone outside of our team. We do not ask for personal information.
- Your responses may be quoted anonymously in our reports, however will not associate names with your words.
- Other participants in the focus group will hear your responses; we do not ask for any sensitive information and we ask that you avoid sharing any information you do not want others to know.

Do I have to participate?

- Participation is voluntary, you do not have to participate, and you may stop at any time for any reason.
- Also you may choose to respond to some questions and not others; you do not have to answer any question you are not comfortable with.

- All voices are important to us, as the facilitator I will work to ensure everyone has a chance to speak.

What if I have questions?

- I can answer any questions you have now. If during or after this conversation, you have questions about the purpose of these discussions, or how data will be used, you may contact us at contact@cpdmonitoringteam.com.

Getting Started

Let's go around the room with a quick introduction – first name, age, race/ethnicity, zip code, and/or neighborhood.

General Opening Questions

1. Let's go around the room and let everyone give a quick answer to this question – How do you feel about the Chicago police who work in your neighborhood and why do you feel that way?

General Sentiment towards Police

2. Do you trust the Chicago Police? Why or why not? *[Follow up for clarity only: Do you trust them to treat you with respect? Do you trust them to respond in a fair manner? Do you trust them to respect your rights?]*

Optional Probes²⁸

2a. What are some things that Chicago police in your neighborhood do that make you feel the way you do about them?

2b. Do you think that young people in your neighborhood feel differently about the police than older adults feel? And if so, why?

Nature of Recent Interactions/Stories of Recent Interactions

3. Have you had any interaction with the police in the last 12 months? How many? What were those interactions like? *[Involuntary stops; voluntary interactions; no direct interactions but indirect or witness them in voluntary/involuntary interactions with others; no interaction at all]*

²⁸ IMT researchers asked these follow up probes depending on the context of the conversations, and the responses of the participants; they were not asked of all participants.

Optional Probes

3a. If you or someone you know has been stopped by the Chicago police in the last year, how were they treated? What happened?

3b. Let's talk about people being stopped by the police, whether they are walking, riding a bike, or in car.

3b1. How often do you see stops happening to young adults compared with other age groups in your neighborhood? Is that happening a lot to young adults?

3b2. Does it seem like officers have a good reason to make these stops?

3b3. Are the officers being too tough on the people they stop or not? E.g., Are they respectful and polite or using foul language? Are they physical – searching, pushing, handcuffing? (Is this action justified or not?)

3b4. Are the officers taking the time to listen to you and hear your side of the story or are they just telling you what to do? If they are listening, do they believe what you are saying?

3c. Do you think that the Chicago Police treat people differently in different neighborhoods? If so, why? (Probe: Anything to do with race, income, language, immigration?)

3d. Do you see differences in the way that Chicago police treat females in your neighborhood compared with males? Do you think that the Chicago police are disrespectful to women or girls they stop in your neighborhood or not? (If so, how do the interactions differ?)

Gun Pointing/Use of Force

4. Have you ever had or have you ever witnessed an officer pointing a gun at you/someone (Raised hands for count)? For those with a hand up, why do you think the gun was pointed?

Solutions

5. What do you think Chicago police officers could do to improve relationships with young people in your neighborhood? Why?

Closer (if time)²⁹

6. Is there anything important that you would like to tell us before we end this session - something that we forgot to ask about or something about the Chicago police we should know?

²⁹ IMT researchers asked this final question of most, but not all, focus groups. In a few instances, the allotted time was elapsed, and participants left.

ATTACHMENT A.
OFFICE OF THE ILLINOIS ATTORNEY GENERAL COMMENTS
(AUGUST 5, 2022)



OFFICE OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL
STATE OF ILLINOIS

KWAME RAOUL
ATTORNEY GENERAL

August 5, 2022

SENT VIA EMAIL

Margaret A. Hickey
Independent Monitor
ArentFox Schiff LLP
233 S. Wacker Drive, Suite 7100
Chicago, IL 60606
(Maggie.Hickey@afslaw.com)

**Re: Comments on “Chicago Community Focus Groups” Special Report
Consent Decree, *Illinois v. Chicago*, 17-cv-6260 (N.D. Ill.)**

Dear Ms. Hickey:

The Office of the Illinois Attorney General (OAG) appreciates the Independent Monitoring Team’s (IMT) efforts in conducting focus groups and compiling its thorough Chicago Community Focus Groups Report (Report). The Report’s findings echo what many Chicagoans have long known and felt: the Chicago Police Department’s (CPD) ongoing failure to change how it treats Black and Latino residents has led to deep community distrust. As Chicago endures another summer of horrific gun violence, the consequences of this failure show up daily in unsolved shootings and fearful witnesses. Stemming this tide of violence—not just temporarily, but sustainably—will require CPD to fundamentally reset its relationship with Black and Latino residents.

Key Observations from the Report

The Report paints a “bleak picture of the relationship between the CPD and young Black and Latino men.”¹ Among the many troubling findings highlighted in the Report are the following²:

¹ Report, at 7.

² Report, at 44-45.

- Most interactions are a negative experience for participants, even when they end without any enforcement action.
- The cumulative effect of repeated negative personal experiences with officers significantly hinders trust-building.
- Certain participants had repeated, frequent involuntary contacts with police.
- Participants perceived that officers treat individuals of different ethnicities and in neighborhoods differently.
- Traffic stops for minor, non-moving violations lead to more serious interactions.
- Officers point guns frequently.
- Mutual fear between police officers and young Black and Latino males has dangerous consequences for involuntary interactions and impedes mutual trust building.

Challenges to Building Community Trust

The findings of this Report make clear that the City and CPD still face many challenges to building community trust. Changing written policies is only the first step towards reform, yet CPD still has not implemented revised policies requiring officers to interact with youth in a developmentally appropriate manner, nor has it ensured that its policies and *practices* prohibit discrimination based on race and age. Even where CPD has made commendable progress on policy development, the Department has not done enough to include the voices of community members with lived experience and expertise into its policies. The City and CPD must allocate resources and time to meaningful community engagement, including with hard-to-reach and distrustful community members.

The City and CPD must also devote sufficient resources to community policing. CPD's prior progress in implementing a community policing philosophy has stalled this summer. This is due in part to CPD's decision to pull officers from community policing positions and other reform-focused units for redeployment in unfamiliar neighborhoods with unclear objectives.

One of the major themes the IMT identified in the Report was participants' feeling that CPD officers often fear ordinary community residents, which then leads to excessive police responses. Notably, OAG's interviews with CPD officers in recent months mirror this finding: many officers expressed fear about working in neighborhoods and districts they did not know, at the cost of the opportunity to engage with community members, build relationships, or solve the problems brought to them by the residents they had grown to know in their home districts. Mandatory redeployments of critical community policing personnel threaten to undermine the continued success of community policing programs that grow trust through relationship-building—including, for example, the new and promising Neighborhood Policing Initiative. Not only that, continued redeployments also lead to frustrated, exhausted, and distrustful officers.

The Consent Decree requires CPD to integrate a community policing philosophy into all of its police services and to ensure that every CPD officer is responsible for employing the principles of community policing. In response to this Report, CPD must renew its commitment to those principles.

CPD Must Address Community Members' Concerns

OAG acknowledges that the City and CPD face incredible challenges every day combatting gun violence in Chicago. At the same time, community trust is key to ensuring community members feel comfortable cooperating in police investigations and violence reduction efforts. OAG urges the City and CPD to learn from the focus group participants. They relayed disturbing experiences with CPD officers, including calling an interaction with CPD “a minstrel show,” describing a “big divide between officers and the community,” and expressing concern about even contacting police for help (“I’m afraid to call them, even when witnessing a crime”). One participant put it plainly: “They don’t trust me, so I don’t trust them.”

Community engagement, policy development, and community policing are integral not just to Consent Decree compliance, but also to CPD’s efforts to protect public safety in Chicago. The IMT urged the City and CPD to consider the serious issues and concerns raised by the focus group participants. We agree. The City and CPD cannot continue to treat young Black and Latino men the same way it always has and expect different results.

To build trust, CPD must listen to the voices of marginalized communities and approach community policing, reform, and public safety holistically. OAG looks forward to continuing to work with the City, CPD, the IMT, the Coalition, and all community members to address the deep-seated distrust identified in the Report.

Respectfully,

KWAME RAOUL

Attorney General of the State of Illinois

By: s/Mary J. Grieb

Mary J. Grieb

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cc: Jennifer Bagby and Allan Slagel, Counsel for the City of Chicago; Dana O’Malley, General Counsel for the Chicago Police Department (via email)

ATTACHMENT B.
CITY OF CHICAGO COMMENTS
(AUGUST 10, 2022)



DEPARTMENT OF LAW
CITY OF CHICAGO

August 10, 2022

Via Email (Maggie.Hickey@afslaw.com)

Independent Monitoring Team

c/o Maggie Hickey

Independent Monitor

233 South Wacker Drive

Suite 7100

Chicago, Illinois 60606

**Re: *People v. City of Chicago*, Case No. 17-cv-6260
Chicago Community Focus Groups
(conducted between December 2020-June 2021)**

Dear Independent Monitoring Team:

We write to provide the response of the City of Chicago (City) and Chicago Police Department (CPD) to the Independent Monitoring Team's (IMT) report entitled "Chicago Community Focus Groups" (the Report). As the City and CPD has expressed in discussions with the IMT, they believe the Report's reliance on non-probability sampling methodologies undermines the reliability of the Report and therefore limits its practicable application to Consent Decree objectives. While the City and CPD appreciate the IMT's efforts to assess community sentiment, and in particular that of an important demographic group (Black and Latino males in Chicago, ages 18–35), the Report's failure to use sampling methods that are statistically representative of the overall population examined will likely only serve to reinforce and potentially exacerbate existing internal and external opinions and relationships. Moreover, using such methodologies is contrary to the Community Surveying provisions set forth in the Consent Decree. (Paragraphs 645-51).

The Report acknowledges that due to the use of convenience and snowball sampling techniques, its results are neither representative nor likely repeatable. (Report at page 5). As the Report also recognizes, no efforts were made to investigate or corroborate the information obtained from the focus group participants. (*Id.*). In addition, while the Report suggests it was attempting to assess focus group participants' recent experiences, only one of the questions posed included such a time qualifier. (*Id.* at 49-50). Therefore, the Report does not appear to differentiate between generalized views and experiences and specific recent events or incidents. In doing so, the Report fails to distinguish between events that occurred before the Consent Decree reforms were started and events occurring since the reforms began.

Independent Monitoring Team
c/o Maggie Hickey
August 10, 2022
Page 2

The Consent Decree requires the IMT to conduct “reliable, representative, and comprehensive surveys of a broad cross section of members of the Chicago community regarding CPD. (Paragraph 645). The IMT recognizes the Report does not comport with these Consent Decree requirements. (Report at 5). Instead, the IMT asserts the Report is allowed under its authority to prepare Special Reports. (Report at 5 fn 8). The City and CPD disagree. The Report by its own terms seeks to “assess perceptions of, and satisfaction with, CPD.” (Report at 5). Accordingly, the Report should have been prepared in accordance with the requirements of Community Surveys as set forth in the Consent Decree. (See paragraphs 645-51). These paragraphs include specific requirements on the conducting of surveys so that the results are among other things statistically representative and reliable. (Paragraph 648).

Convenience sampling (also known as Haphazard Sampling or Accidental Sampling) is not a representative and comprehensive surveying technique. “Convenience samples are sometimes regarded as ‘accidental samples’ because elements may be selected in the sample simply as they just happen to be situated, spatially or administratively, near to where the researcher is located.” Ilker Etikan, Sulaiman Abubakar Musa, Rukayya Sunusi Alkassim, American Journal of Theoretical and Applied Statistics 2016; 5(1): 1-4 Published online December 22, 2015. “What makes convenience samples so unpredictable is their vulnerability to severe hidden biases.” *Id.* Snowball sampling is similarly a non-representative surveying methodology. Parker, C, Scott, S and Geddes, A (2019) Snowball Sampling. SAGE Research Methods Foundations, <http://methods.sagepub.com/foundations/snowball-sampling> (“[A] form of non-random sampling where generalisation, representativeness, and external validity are not sought after.”). *Id.* at 4. Thus, the Report is not based on representative surveying methodologies generally and as specifically provided for by the Consent Decree.

Accordingly, the Report does not provide the City or CPD with verifiable and repeatable community perceptions and satisfaction data upon which the City and CPD can develop and implement the durable reforms sought to be achieved by the Consent Decree.

Very truly yours,

/s/ Jennifer Bagby
Jennifer Bagby
Deputy Corporation Counsel

/s/ Allan T. Slagel
Allan T. Slagel
Special Assistant Corporation Counsel

cc: Christopher Wells (via email: Christopher.Wells@Illinois.gov)
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