



**OLD BROOKVILLE POLICE DEPARTMENT  
POLICE REFORM AND REINVENTION COLLABORATIVE**

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**Mayor**

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## **Public Comment Cover Letter**

This draft document is being presented for public comment following collaborative meetings with community leaders and representatives, it is very important the village and Police Department receive input on this plan for police reform. Positive change and reform can only be accomplished if our citizens review the plan and provide comment, suggestions and recommendations.

Comments and feedback must be submitted via email to [cwalsh@oldbrookvillepd.com](mailto:cwalsh@oldbrookvillepd.com) or dropped off at Police HQs in writing at 5701 Northern Blvd, Upper Brookville NY 11545 by March 1, 2021.

**Police and Community Stakeholder Meetings**

**November 18, 2020**

**December 16, 2020**

**Police and Community Trust Initiative**

**(PACT)**

**June 24, 2020**

**July 14, 2020**

**August 6, 2020**

**September 17, 2020**

**October 8, 22, 2020**

**November 12, 19, 2020**

**December 2, 7, 17, 30, 2020**

**Nassau County Legislature Public Safety Reform Hearing**

**January 7, 2021**

*\*The Old Brookville Police Department was represented by the President of the Nassau County Chiefs Association at the PACT meetings. Representative forwarded information about community concerns and suggestions in the county at large that were discussed at these meetings.*

## **Introduction**

The village of Old Brookville and the Old Brookville Police Department submit this plan pursuant to N.Y.S. Executive Order 203. This plan was developed after review of current policies and procedures and input of community stakeholders.

New York State has been adopting new legislation over the last few years which has changed the criminal justice system. Reforms that have occurred pertain to juvenile justice, bail reform, and discovery changes. With the death of George Floyd in Minneapolis in May of 2020 and the associated civil unrest many states are re-evaluating their legal and justice systems, Governor Cuomo signed the “**Say Their Name**”, reform package. This reform includes the repeal of section 50-a of the Civil Rights Law, (the release of Police Personnel Records), Banning of Chokeholds, the Prohibition of race-based 911 calls and the appointing the Attorney General as an independent prosecutor to investigate all police involved deaths.

In accordance with the mandates set forth by Executive Order 203, each local government has been ordered to adopt a police reform plan by April 1, 2021. The purpose of the plan is to ensure that police policies and procedures foster trust and fairness within the community. All communities should be asking what goals they want their police department to accomplish.

## **Old Brookville Police Department**

The Old Brookville Police Department was established in 1949 and has been an important part of the community since its formation. The department is located on the North Shore of Nassau County and in its current form serves six villages, Brookville, Cove Neck, Matinecock, Mill Neck, Old Brookville and Upper Brookville through a joint protection agreement. The department covers approximately 24 square miles and serves approximately 10,000 residents. OBPD has 26 sworn members, six civilian dispatchers and two department clerks. Given the departments size and the geographical area covered we are able to provide a personal level of service to the communities that we serve.

OBPD also has a close working relationship with the Nassau County Police Department. NCPD provides detectives for criminal investigations, K9, Helicopter and Marine assistance, and other specialized units when needed. OBPD civilian hires are assigned to the Nassau County Police Academy for recruit training and current members attend in-service training at the academy. The Nassau County Police Academy training program follows the NYS DCJS guidelines.

Throughout its history the department has expanded and strengthened its ties with the community it serves.

## **Mission**

The mission of the Old Brookville Police Department has always been to *Protect and Serve with Integrity and Professionalism*. This mission statement has been the guiding principle in our day-to-day operations and how each member approaches their duty.

## **Goals**

The primary goal of the New York State Reform and Reinvention Collaborative is to bring the community and the department together to solve issues and overcome obstacles reinforcing a sense of trust between the two.

## **Plan Summary**

To meet the requirements of Executive Order 203 The Old Brookville Police Department has developed the following plan. This plan will seek comment and input from community leaders to further expand the public's expectations of the Police Department. The department will also continue its education and training programs which include but are not limited to; Use of Force, De-Escalation, Reporting Requirements, Implicit Bias Awareness and Hate Crimes. This plan will be transparent and encourages ongoing dialog with the communities this department serves.

## **Evaluate Current Practices Review:**

### **1) Review the needs of the community;**

- a) Determine the expected role of the police department and define its primary activities.
  - (1) Prevention of crime, protection of life and property, preservation of peace, the enforcement of laws and safeguarding constitutional guarantees.
  - (2) Provide police services that are professional and respectful of all citizens.
- b) Determine why people are calling 911 and the non-emergency police line.
  - (1) In 2020, OBPD received 6,488 calls for service.
  - (2) OBPD dispatchers receive calls relating to medical emergencies. OBPD officers, who are trained first responders, respond along with paramedics to all medical emergency calls. Typically, OBPD officers are the first to arrive to the scene of a medical emergency and provide life saving measures until a paramedic arrives on scene and the patient can be transported to the hospital.
  - (3) As a service-based police department, OBPD responds to any and all requests for assistance. These may include assisting an elderly resident who has fallen and needs helping getting up, neighbor disputes, vehicle and home lockouts and many other minor assignments that would not generally be considered police activities.
- c) Evaluate in what situations police self-initiate interventions in the community.
  - (1) Officers routinely patrol local houses of worship and schools. Officers come in contact with leaders and security of both and ascertain any needs or problems that need to be addressed.
  - (2) Officers are encouraged, as part of their daily patrol activities, to park their vehicles and visit local businesses and interact with the customers and business owners, speak to visitors at our nature preserves and interact with residents. These interactions allow the department to hear community members concerns and alert the officers to any crime conditions in the community. Developing trust and confidence between the department and the community enabling members to quickly address any issues that the police department might have not been previously aware of.
- d) Maintain and strengthen the civilian complaint procedure against Police Officers.
  - (1) Increase the frequency of review for complaints against members
  - (2) All complainants are documented and investigated fully by the administration. Any appropriate discipline is administered and is in accordance with negotiated discipline procedures outlined in the employment contract with the Old Brookville PBA.

## Evidence Based Policing:

### 1) Use of Force

The use of force by members of law enforcement is a matter of utmost concern to the public and the department. **The police use of force must be “objectively reasonable”, the officer’s actions were reasonable in light of the facts and circumstances confronting him, without regard to his underlying intent or motivation.** The policy of the Old Brookville Police Department is that a member shall use only the minimum force necessary to achieve their lawful objective. Members shall use the least amount of force necessary to effect cooperation and control of a situation which requires police intervention, and then only when all other reasonable alternatives have been exhausted or are not available. No member shall exceed the limits of his/her authority under Article 35 of the New York State Penal Law.

The use of **Deadly Physical Force** is only justified when it is to protect him/herself or another person from what the member reasonably believes is an imminent threat of serious physical injury or death, or to stop a fleeing suspect where the member has probable cause to believe the suspect has committed a felony involving the infliction or threat of serious physical injury and the member reasonably believes that the suspect poses an imminent threat of serious physical injury to the member or others.

### Reform:

- a) All sworn members have been informed of the new law, **Aggravated strangulation, New York State Penal Law 121.13-a.**
- b) To ensure that OBPD officers are aware of the most updated legislation regarding use of force, this topic will be included in the annual in-service training provided by the Nassau County Police Academy. OBPD policy changes or updates will be communicated to all members on an on-going basis.
- c) The new police academy being constructed will allow for more hands-on and scenario-based training when it comes to use of force. Facility is scheduled to open in April of 2021.
- d) Members of the department who witness another member using force that he/she believes to be clearly beyond what is reasonable are duty bound to intervene to prevent unreasonable or unnecessary force being used. Members who observe another using force that exceeds the use of what is objectively reasonable shall promptly report these observations to his/her supervisor. In every situation members are expected to act with intelligence and use reasonable judgement.
- e) Members of the department shall notify their supervisor as soon as possible in incidents involving the use of force. In any use of force incident members are required to prepare OBPD form 1040, Use of Force report. All Use of Force incidents

shall be investigated and reviewed by the Chief of Police to ensure that the force used was justified, necessary and reasonable and in accordance with Department policy.

- f) After any level of force is used, a member shall immediately evaluate the need for medical treatment for the person upon whom the force was used, and arrange for such treatment when the person has a visible injury, or complains of an injury, or requests medical attention.
- g) The Administrative Lieutenant will conduct a periodic review of the use of force reports to determine trends that may indicate training needs, patterns, or policy modifications.

## 2) Procedural Justice, Systematic Racial Bias and Racial Justice in Policing;

The Old Brookville Police Department recognizes that procedural justice and police legitimacy play an essential role in establishing a positive relationship with the community. OBPD has a long-lasting relationship with our local houses of worship and local public schools, private schools, and colleges to foster public confidence in the police and its ability to safeguard the community. Members of the Department will not engage in any form of racial profiling. Officers are trained in the inherent dangers of conscious and unconscious bias and prejudice that affect decision making.

### Reform;

- a) In accordance with the NYS Criminal Justice reform laws passed in April 2019, as a general rule, when a person is arrested for an offense OTHER than a class A, B, C or D felony, or for a violation of Penal Law section 130.25, (Rape third degree), 103.40, (Criminal Sexual Act third degree), 205.10, (Escape second degree), 205.17, (Absconding from temporary release first degree), 205.19, (Absconding from a community treatment facility), and 215.56, (bail Jumping second degree), a **Desk Appearance ticket must be issued.**
- b) To ensure that members of the community with limited English proficiency have equal level of access to service by OBPD, we have partnered with NCPD and will implement a Language Access Plan. Members of OBPD will use the department issued I-Phone to access a video conference with an interpreter to ensure both parties properly understand each other. This language line will also provide access to a sign language option to assist residents who are hard of hearing.
- c) OBPD's new TRACS upgrade requires that when an officer issues a summons the driver's ethnicity be recorded in the "**Ethnicity Field**". While not mandated by law this will increase transparency, accountability, and data collection going forward.



### 3) Implicit Bias Awareness Training;

Implicit Bias refers to the attitudes or stereotypes that affect our understanding, actions, and decisions in an unconscious manner. It is imperative that OBPD officers are accepting and respectful of everyone's principles and lifestyles. Respectful language, thoughtful and intentional dialogue, and consistent involvement both formal and informal during community engagement helps to ensure relationships of trust between police and communities we serve.

#### Reform;

- a) Every OBPD member has successfully completed, **Changing Perceptions a Fair and Impartial Policing Approach**, an online training class. In addition, all members will participate in an online anti-bias class. Immediately following, the members must pass an exam exhibiting their understanding of the topic and course material.

### 4) De-escalation Training and Practices.

OBPD recognizes the importance of de-escalation in safeguarding citizens as well as officers. Through effective communication and techniques, officers attempt to resolve situations which might otherwise escalate towards a physical confrontation.

#### Reform;

- a) OBPD members will attend the Nassau County Police Academy's eight-hour course on De-escalation techniques. The De-escalation course centers on Dr. George Thompson's Five Universal Truths of Human Interaction.
  - (1) People feel the need to be respected
  - (2) People would rather be asked than told
  - (3) People have a desire to know why
  - (4) People prefer to have options instead of threats
  - (5) People want to have a second chance
- b) Inclusive of previous outlined use of force reforms, all use of force investigations will review if any de-escalation techniques were necessary and utilized.

## 5) **Law Enforcement Assisted Diversion Programs, (LEADS)**

As stated in the NYS guidance, diversion programs recognize that incarceration or establishment of a criminal record may not be the most appropriate mechanism to address certain conduct. Indeed, education and/or drug or mental health treatment may provide a better alternative for both the individual and the community. NCPD Community Affairs Unit has many Law Enforcement Assisted Diversion Programs;

- a) Bullying/Cyber Bullying Programs
- b) Bias Crime/Hate Crime Training
- c) Drug Awareness and Prevention Programs
- d) Bicycle Safety Demonstrations

Nassau County District Attorney's Office offers the following diversion programs;

- a) Mental Health Court
- b) Misdemeanor drug treatment Court
- c) Treatment alternative Plea Part
- d) Drug Treatment alternative to Prison
- e) Veterans Treatment Court

### **Reform;**

OBPD will continue to direct members to local schools to interact with youths in the community, in an effort to build trust between the police and youth and breakdown existing barriers, stereotypes, and biases.

## 6) **Restorative Justice**

Restorative justice seeks to change an offender's behavior by educating him/her on the deleterious consequences that his/her actions have taken on the community and the victim. The purpose of justice is to restore the victim, the community and the offender so that they all may be integrated back into, and enhance the community.

OBPD works with the Nassau County Special Victims Detective unit when dealing with victims of family violence or sexual abuse. These detectives work in tandem with the Nassau County Safe Center, which is an advocacy agency that services these victims and assists them when needed.

**Reform;**

OBPD will educate its Officers and Staff of the availability of offered programs from State agencies such as Probation, Department of Corrections, and Community Partnership programs. The Community Partnership Program employs former gang members as outreach workers to engage with groups and individuals involved in gang related activities. CPP workers assist with tattoo removal, job training and parenting workshops for individuals who leave gang life and want to become more involved in the lives of their children.

**7) Community based outreach and conflict resolution**

Increasing the availability of police officers in the community puts a focus on growing and strengthening community relationships to provide more comprehensive services and responds to citizens in a geographic area. Community-based outreach and conflict resolution allows police agencies to provide education to the communities to increase crime awareness, advise of services offered, and enhance collaboration and trust through proactive outreach.

- a) OBPD officers are assigned and encouraged to visit all houses of worship and local schools to build working relationships with the leaders of these institutions. These personal relationships that are formed affords direct communication of any needs directly to officer patrolling the area.
- b) Officers also visit local businesses and speak to business owners and their employees. These interactions allow the officer to hear directly from the business owner of any concerns or problems that may be corrected immediately and otherwise the department may not be aware of.
- c) The Old Brookville Police Department partners with the Nassau County Police Department's Community Affairs Unit. This unit plays a critical role in achieving the Department's goals against crime by strengthening community relationships and trust.

**Reform;**

While OBPD officers are interacting with local houses of worship, schools and businesses they will encourage all to update their contact information with the department. This information will be used in times of emergency or if the department needs to contact these institutions for any reason.

## 8) **Problem Oriented Policing**

Problem oriented policing replaces primarily reactive incident driven policies with strategies that proactively identify underlying issues that can be targeted to alleviate crime at its roots.

OBPD administrative staff routinely communicates with community stake holders and community leaders about issues or problems that need to be addressed in the community. Local residents are also routinely in contact with the department to report suspicious activity that they observe. This information is relayed directly to the officers patrolling the area affected. In addition, NCPD regularly notifies OBPD personnel of any conditions that are affecting our neighboring communities.

## 9) **Hot Spot Policing**

Hot spot policing focuses on intelligence gathering and crime analysis to focus resources in a particular area to reduce crime. OBPD routinely utilizes information gathered from previous incidents to detect patterns and focus resources to a specific area. This information is gathered from the following:

- a) Directed Patrol assignments
- b) Vehicle and Traffic Enforcement
- c) License Plate Readers
- d) Information gathered from other agencies and Detective units.
- e) 911 calls
- f) Information gathered from the community

## 10) **Focused Deterrence**

Focused deterrence is a strategy whereby officers engage directly with offenders or groups of offenders based on their prior history, sometimes in partnership with community members. The purpose of focused deterrence is to alter the opportunities for crime in order to deter motivated offenders.

- a) NCPD intelligence will identify known offenders in each jurisdiction and relay that information to the appropriate law enforcement agency.
- b) OBPD through NCPD intelligence unit has access to their real time intelligence information through a computer portal. This portal allows OBPD officers to receive up to date information on wanted and known individuals. Intelligence bulletins, and interactive maps of major crimes.

**Reform;**

OBPD officers will continue to implement focused deterrence. This topic will be reinforced during the newly expanded annual in-service training program at the Nassau Academy.

**11) Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design**

Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design is based on the theory that crime is a man-made hazard which can be resisted through quality design. The effective use of buildings and public spaces can lead to a reduction in the incidence of crime.

**Reform;**

- a) OBPD will educate residents on precautionary measures to secure their home and property, with proper use of lighting, alarm and camera systems.
- b) During routine patrol officers will observe any street lights not working and make appropriate notifications for repair.

**12) Violence Prevention and Reduction Interventions**

Violence prevention and reduction interventions is the theory that focusing on prevention, intervention and suppression, reduces crime. This model calls for police departments to proactively address potential criminal activity by facilitating or participating in community programs and connecting high risk individuals with needed services and other forms of community engagement.

- a) NCPD Community affairs Officers visit local schools to discuss different forms of bullying. OBPD will continue to work in conjunction with NCPD Community Affairs to ensure a safe learning environment.
- b) OBPD follows a strict domestic violence policy that is pro-arrest when allowed by law and proactive gun removal.

**Reform;**

OBPD will seek and implement increased training on crime prevention techniques.

**13) Model policies and guidelines promulgated by the NYSMPT**

- a) OBPD officers receive training at the Nassau County Police Academy which meets or exceeds the standards set forth by the NYS Municipal Police Training Council.
- b) Members also attend additional training through the FBI, Suffolk County Police Academy, NYPD, IACP, Sothern Police Institute and the COPS office training portal.

**Reform;**

OBPD will continue to work with the Nassau County Police Department to determine if the training provided to our officers is relevant to the mission of the department and its community. The department will continue to investigate other outside training opportunities to enhance the skills of our officers and benefit the community we serve.

**Offer the plan for public comment**

Involve the community

Make the plan available for review to:

- Elected officials
- Employees, (Police Union, Civilian Employees)
- Residents
- Commercial Establishments
- Houses of Worship
- Civic Associations
- Office of the District Attorney
- Legal Aid Society

**Announce the plan at a public meeting**

Announcement of plan, January 25, 2021 at the village of Old Brookville Public meeting.

**Develop policy recommendations resulting from the review, evaluation and discussions.**

Finalize policies that allow the Department and its members to effectively and safely perform their duties.

**Certify the adoption of the plan to the State Budget Director before April 1, 2021**

Present the plan to the Old Brookville board of Trustees to certify and submit to New York State.

**Implement the plan**

Implement and communicate progress to the public and community stakeholders.

### **Conclusion**

The NYS guidance asked that our plan include how we will measure success. OBPD will measure success with an expanded police community partnership. OBPD will continue to monitor and measure the success of our plan by reviewing data, expanding and modifying our training and listening to the community.