

Huntington Bay Village Police Department Police Reform and Reinvention Collaborative

*Respectfully submitted by:
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New York State has been proactively enacting legislation over the course of the past few years that is transforming the shape of the criminal justice system that we have been accustomed to. The significant reforms that are already in place pertain to bail, discovery, speedy trial, juvenile justice, reducing the prison population and the videotaping of interrogations. Following the police-involved death of a Minneapolis man in May 2020, there has been a rash of civil unrest throughout the country demanding accountability from their respective police departments. Since that time, Governor Andrew Cuomo has signed into law the “Say Their Name” agenda which further reforms the aspects of policing in New York State. The “Say Their Name” agenda includes: 1) the repealing of Civil Rights Law 50a, which blocks police and fire departments from releasing most personnel records without a judicial order or the written consent of the officer or firefighter; 2) banning of chokeholds; 3) prohibits race-based 911 calls; and 4) appoints the NYS Attorney General as Independent Prosecutor for police-involved deaths.

In keeping with the State’s progressive redesign of the criminal justice system, Governor Andrew Cuomo signed Executive Order #203 on June 12, 2020 requiring each local government to adopt a policing reform by April 1, 2021 that will “foster trust, fairness and legitimacy” within communities and “address any racial bias and disproportionate policing of communities of color.” which is the purpose of the *New York State Police Reform and Reinvention Collaborative*.

The Huntington Bay Village Police Department has been an integral part of the community since its incorporation in 1924. The officers of the Huntington Bay Village Police Department, in its 91 year history, have always carried out their duty based on the 1829 Peelian Principles of Policing which affirms the necessity of community cooperation in achieving the law enforcement objective. The geographical size and population of the Incorporated Village of Huntington Bay allows the police department to function at a more intimate level than most other departments. It is this closely connected relationship between the members of the community and the police that promotes a mutual respect for each other. It solidifies the basis of “community oriented policing.”

The Huntington Bay Village Police Department has strived to do its part to advance its relationship with the community in an effort to preserve the trust bestowed upon it. The department demonstrated its belief in that relationship with the community when it sought out and earned New York State Accreditation in 2008. As one of only a handful of accredited departments on Long Island, it has consistently demonstrated adherence to New York State laws, policies, practices and recommendations. The department is continually assessed and audited by members of the New York State Accreditation Council, furthering the commitment to the citizens it serves.

In keeping with the department’s dedication to the community, it is using the *New York State Police Reform and Reinvention Collaborative* as an opportunity to once again demonstrate its unyielding pledge to uphold an oath while performing its duty.

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Mission

The Mission of the Huntington Bay Village Police Department has always been evident through its actions as well as its accomplishments. The department's mission statement remains the pillar and basis for achieving the law enforcement objective.

“We, the members of the Huntington Bay Police Department, exist to serve all persons within our jurisdiction with respect, fairness and consideration. We are committed to the prevention of crime; the protection of life and property; the preservation of peace; order and safety; the enforcement of laws and the safeguarding of constitutional guarantees.

With community service as our foundation, we are driven by goals to enhance the quality of life which includes investigating problems as well as incidents, seeking solutions and fostering a sense of security in our community. We nurture public trust by holding ourselves to the highest standards of performance and ethics.

To fulfill this mission, the Huntington Bay Police Department is committed to providing a quality work environment and the development of its members through effective training and leadership. We are committed to developing and managing all resources so that we can provide the highest standards of police service.”

Goals

The major objective of the *New York State Police Reform and Reinvention Collaborative* is to bring the community and the police together; to work through issues together; to overcome obstacles together; and to reinforce that sense of trust which seems to have been overlooked in some communities recently. The Huntington Bay Village Police Department's goal shall continue to be the protection of life and property while safeguarding constitutional guarantees.

Plan Synopsis

In an effort to meet the requirements of the Governor's Executive Order, the Huntington Bay Village Police Department has developed the following plan which will meet all of the necessary criteria. The plan will actively seek input as well as feedback from the stakeholders of the community which in turn will establish a solid foundation for engagement in meaningful discussions pertaining to the expectations of the police department. The plan will also compel the police department to build upon its in-service training program regarding use of force tactics, de-escalation options and use of force reporting. This plan shall remain a completely transparent process that will encourage significant dialog with the community in which the department serves.

I. Evaluate and Review

A. Review the needs of the community

1. Determine the expected role of the police department and define its primary activities
2. Determine the reasons why people utilize the 911 system
3. Evaluate when and why members of the police department self-initiate interactions in the community
4. Maintain and strengthen the civilian complaint and disposition procedure against police officers

B. Evaluate current policies and practices

1. Assess model policies and guidelines promulgated by the New York State Municipal Police Training Council to determine relevancy and suitability
2. Consider standards set forth by the New York State Law Enforcement Accreditation Program in order to maintain accredited status
3. Review and make necessary amendments to department policies regarding
 - a) Use of Force – ban use of chokeholds, reporting
 - b) Use of Force reporting
 - c) Rules of conduct – police officer responsibilities
 - d) Public information – social media, community affairs
 - e) Internal affairs – department records, complaints, discipline
 - f) Patrol function – personnel assignments, responding to scenes of disorder
4. Implement improved training protocols in order to inform and update police officers regarding the latest policies, practices and procedures pertaining to specific subjects such as:
 - a) De-escalation of volatile incidents related to mental health and domestic violence
 - b) Crowd management
 - c) Bias awareness with an emphasis regarding calls classified as “hate crimes”
 - d) Procedural justice including published studies that address systemic racial bias
 - e) Community-based outreach and conflict resolution
 - f) Hot spot policing and focused deterrence
 - g) Crime prevention through environmental design
5. Develop addendums to the disciplinary procedures in order to address police officer conduct received through civilian complaints to determine:
 - a) Which officer(s) is being reported
 - b) Why an officer is being reported (alleged conduct)
 - c) Circumstances surrounding a particular event in which an officer is reported
 - d) Determine if the complaints are being initiated in a particular portion of the community

II. Offer the plan for public comment

A. Involve the entire community – Stakeholders

1. Elected Officials (Mayor, Trustees, Commissioners and Village Justice)
2. Employees (Police Union)
3. Property Owner Associations
4. Residents
5. Commercial Establishments
6. Office of the District Attorney
7. Legal Aid Society

B. Present plan at a public meeting

1. Explain the current systems in place
2. Describe revisions to policies and procedures
3. Demonstrate how the revised policies can improve the quality of police service and bring about a more stringent requirement of accountability and responsibility

C. Ensure an open and candid dialogue

III. Develop policy recommendations resulting from the review, evaluation and discussion

A. Establish policies that allow police to effectively and safely perform their duties

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

A. Present the plan to the Board of Trustees to ratify or adopt it.