



# BRIDGING THE DIVIDE PROGRAM



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## I. PURPOSE

This directive:

- A. establishes the Bridging the Divide Program and outlines the associated duties and responsibilities of individual Department members.
- B. reinforces the Department's ongoing commitment to build community relationships, strengthen trust, develop partnerships, and facilitate healing with the residents that we serve.
- C. builds on the strategies set forth in the Department directive titled "Community Policing Mission and Vision."

## II. GENERAL INFORMATION

- A. Bridging the Divide is a program that was created by the YMCA Youth Safety and Violence Prevention Team and the Chicago Police Department that is designed to build relationships and increase understanding between youth, law enforcement officials, and other community members by offering opportunities for dialogue through the use of various community-building activities.

**NOTE:** The program does not require a YMCA Youth Safety and Violence Prevention Team in order to be implemented.

- B. Bridging the Divide programs should build relationships with local community organizations or entities that advocate for youth to participate in the program's activities. These organizations should help facilitate building relationships between youth, law enforcement, and the community.

## III. PROGRAM CONCEPTS

- A. The Bridging the Divide Program has four primary goals:
  - 1. fostering positive youth leadership focused around issues of community safety;
  - 2. training police officers in the area of restorative justice strategies;
  - 3. educating family and community members about the impact of restorative justice strategies; and
  - 4. utilizing creative methods and positive messages to strengthen local police-community relationships with youth
- B. Bridging the Divide will give juvenile members of the community a voice in the Department via membership in Youth District Advisory Councils and the opportunity to participate in District Advisory Committee (DAC) meetings.
- C. The Bridging the Divide Program in each district and area will be tailored to the unique communities it serves.

#### IV. RESPONSIBILITIES

##### A. Department Wide Responsibilities

1. It is the responsibility of all department members, regardless of rank, position or unit of assignment to positively engage members of the community with the goal of fostering productive relationships in a collaborative effort to promote safe communities.
2. All department members will positively engage members of the community throughout their tour of duty to reduce violence and overall crime.
3. All department members will use the concepts of Restorative Justice. Restorative Justice is a process to involve those who have a stake in a specific offense and to collectively identify and address harms, needs, and obligations, in order to heal and put things as right as possible. Restorative focuses on:
  - a. putting decisions into the hands of those most affected by crime;
  - b. making justice more healing and transformative; and
  - c. reducing the likelihood of future offenses.
4. All department members will continue the practice of employing the concepts of Procedural Justice and Legitimacy with a focus on:
  - a. giving others a voice (listening);
  - b. neutrality in decision making;
  - c. respectful treatment; and
  - d. trustworthiness.
5. The Department will facilitate the use of Peace Circles within the scope of Bridging the Divide in order resolve problems and concerns between individuals and the community in which they live using the concepts of Restorative Justice.
6. All command personnel will ensure members proactively engage the community, conduct non-enforcement encounters, and participate in community activities throughout their tour of duty

##### B. Office of Community Policing

1. The Director, Office of Community Policing will:
  - a. confer with district commanders, community policing sergeants, and district community policing personnel to address program issues
  - b. ensure that both the Office of Community Policing, the Restorative Justice Strategies Division, and district level community policing personnel receive proper training for the Bridging the Divide Program.
  - c. monitor and audit the department's implementation of the Bridging the Divide Program.
2. The Program Coordinator of the Restorative Justice Strategies Division will:
  - a. oversee the development and implementation of the Bridging the Divide Program
  - b. provide overall management of the Bridging the Divide Program
  - c. work in conjunction with the Director, Office of Community Policing
  - d. provide a liaison to the Training and Support Group to provide guidelines, supporting documents, and procedural information to develop training for the program.
  - e. establish the procedural guidelines for the program.
  - f. provide administrative support and training to department members

- g. work with Training and Support Group to ensure topic-specific training is developed and conducted for selected department members
- h. provide information to the Training and Support Group so that members can attend the Bridging the Divide events in order to provide experiential training.

**NOTE:** Recruits will attend at least one circle, one cafe, and one community tour during their recruit status at the Training and Support Group.

C. Office of Operations

- 1. District Commanders will
  - a. provide for overall management, monitoring, and auditing of their district's implementation of the Bridging the Divide Program.
  - b. ensure the designated personnel receive proper training in the Bridging the Divide Program.
  - c. address concerns identified at program events.
  - d. report progress made toward addressing previously identified concerns and problems to the Office of Community Policing.
  - e. ensure outdoor roll calls and foot patrols are conducted in identified areas of the district.

**NOTE:** District commanders are responsible for implementing strategies and tailoring techniques that are unique to the district's crime conditions in order to provide a more localized effective approach to both problem-solving and crime reduction.

- 2. District Community Policing Sergeant will:
  - a. provide for the daily management of the district's Bridging the Divide Program.
  - b. serve as the district-level Bridging the Divide coordinator.
  - c. ensure adequate staffing is dedicated to managing Bridging the Divide activities.
  - d. ensure community policing personnel receive initial and subsequent Bridging the Divide training as determined by the Program Director of the Restorative Justice Strategies Division.
  - e. ensure district community activities and events (on-table discussions, peace circle etc.) are developed, scheduled, and conducted.
  - f. ensure district law enforcement efforts are supported by actively organizing community members to become involved with the program.
  - g. ensure follow-up activities are scheduled and conducted after scheduled Bridging the Divide events.

- 3. Area Restorative Justice Coach will:
  - a. assist district community policing personnel in identifying youth cohorts.
  - b. provide technical and training assistance to district community policing offices.
  - c. assist in district community stakeholder engagement.
  - d. ensure data collection for quality assurance evaluations of district youth programs.
  - e. provide ongoing support of youth district advisory councils.

4. District Community Policing Personnel will:
  - a. serve as the district youth liaison officer
  - b. recruit youth, department members, and collaborative partners to participate in Bridging the Divide activities.
  - c. initiate, coordinate, facilitate, and manage Bridging the Divide process such as peace circles, cafe conversations, and implementation of the Youth District Advisory Council.
  - d. ensure members of the Youth District Advisory Council leadership attend bi-monthly District Advisory Committee meetings to present identified concerns, problems, solutions, and ideas.
  - e. report all activities, progress, problems, concerns, and solutions related to the Bridging the Divide program through their chain of command.
  - f. report potential problems that have a bearing on law enforcement activities within the community through their chain of command.
  - g. schedule and conduct follow-up activities with community participants of Bridging the Divide events.

**NOTE:** Department members will inform community participants of district level initiatives in accordance with department directive entitled "District Level Strategies".

- h. attend roll calls in order to communicate and inform department members about the Bridging the Divide Program and its events.
- i. recruit and encourage beat officers to participate in Bridging the Divide Events

D. Training and Support Group

1. The Deputy Chief, Training and Support Group will:
  - a. ensure that topic specific training is developed and conducted to enhance the efficient implementation of the Bridging the Divide Program.
  - b. provide training in community engagement methods and strategies to integrated Community Certification Training Teams to strengthen relationships between the department and the community (e.g. Bridging the Divide curriculum).
  - c. incorporate the community engagement methods and strategies into the department's recruit and in-service training curriculum.
  - d. incorporate the strategies of restorative justice strategies into the department's recruit and in-service training curriculum.
  - e. work with the Office of Community Policing to ensure that staff and recruits from the Training and Support Group attend at least one circle, one cafe. and/or one community tour during their status at the Training and Support Group.

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