

Vera Institute of Justice

Criminal Justice Issues and Prisoners' Rights

<https://www.vera.org/publications/policing-in-new-immigrant-communities>

Policy Issue Resources

Publication

The United States is becoming increasingly diverse as people emigrate from around the world seeking opportunities. The multicultural society this is generating presents new challenges for law enforcement. Recent immigrants can be both more vulnerable to crime and less likely to report it to law enforcement. Local police departments often feel blindsided by the rapidly growing pace of diversity in their communities and, therefore, have little comfort dealing with policing in this environment.

In the fall of 2008, the U.S. Department of Justice's Office of Community Oriented Policing Services assembled a number of police and community leaders into a focus group to discuss how law enforcement and new immigrants can cultivate, maintain, and restore partnerships aimed at keeping communities safe. The discussion was moderated by the Vera Institute of Justice. This report, based on that discussion, provides an overview of common challenges to effective police-immigrant relations. It also offers promising approaches which serve as recommendations for building trust and mutual respect between law enforcement and new immigrant communities.

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