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OPA Publishes Community Survey Results About Police Accountability

SEATTLE — Today, the Office of Police Accountability (OPA) published its [Police Accountability Community Survey Report](#). The report highlights data collected during the summer of 2023 by OPA and EMC Research, a local research firm, to gauge community awareness of and opinions about Seattle's police accountability system, particularly OPA.

While the survey was open to everyone, OPA especially wanted to hear from communities with disproportionately high police contacts based on the Seattle Police Department's (SPD) Terry stops, use-of-force, and other data.*

With this information, OPA identified its key audiences:

- Those who identify as male (164 responses)
- Black men, including African American and African immigrants (73 responses)
- Indigenous/Native American populations (13 responses)

OPA Director Gino Betts Jr. described understanding public awareness and opinions about OPA as a top priority:

"Earning community trust is the most important measure of success for OPA and me as its director," said Betts. "You can't have effective policing or meaningful police accountability without it. Listening is always the first step toward earning trust. That's why conducting this survey and hearing directly from communities most impacted by policing is critical to our work."

Highlights from the survey:

- Results showed strong public support for police oversight in Seattle. Almost everyone surveyed (98%) said it's important for the city to have police accountability, with 93% giving it a "very important" rating.
- 96% of respondents across all demographics said it's important for Seattle to have a police department that holds officers accountable.
- 67% of respondents said they had heard of OPA before this survey.
- Across demographics, respondents believed OPA would side with officers over community members.
- An overwhelming majority (66%) of respondents agreed with the statement, "Police oversight is biased."



Director Betts said some aspects of the results were encouraging, but undeniably, there is significant work to do:

“The high percentage of OPA awareness among the public is a testament to the success of our community engagement work,” said Betts. “However, this report makes it clear that our work is far from done. This feedback is the beginning of an ongoing conversation with the community.”

The results from this survey will inform OPA’s community outreach work and ensure that those most likely to need its services have access to them. OPA intends to periodically collect feedback to improve its operations and services.

View OPA’s *Police Accountability Community Survey Report*: bit.ly/OPACommunitySurvey

*To understand how OPA determined its target audiences, see “Identifying Audiences” on page 3 of the report.

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