



NATIONAL POLICING INSTITUTE

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EXAMINING POLICE REFORMS IN NEW JERSEY: LESSONS LEARNED FROM IMPLEMENTATION

Third Final Report



ABOUT NPI

The National Policing Institute (NPI) is an independent, nonpartisan, and nonprofit research and training institute committed to addressing policing's most complex challenges through evidence-informed, innovative solutions. By translating research and lessons learned into practice, NPI assists law enforcement organizations in adopting and adapting the most effective programs, resources, and tools available to serve their communities. Learn more at www.policinginstitute.org.

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Examining Police Reforms in New Jersey: Lessons Learned from Implementation

Final Report 3 of 3

Other Reports from the *Examining Police Reforms in New Jersey* series

- Report 1: Impacts on Officer Attitudes and Self-Reported Behavior
- Report 2: Impacts on Use of Force and Other Police Activities

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In December 2020, former New Jersey Attorney General Gurbir Grewal announced that the New Jersey Office of the Attorney General (NJOAG) would implement a comprehensive police reform plan aimed at reducing law enforcement officers' use of force during interactions with community members (NJOAG, 2020). The changes, referred to as the NJOAG's Use of Force Reduction Initiative (the "Initiative"), included three primary areas: revising statewide use of force policies, mandating use of force training for all sworn officers, and requiring all law enforcement agencies to collect and publish use of force data ([NJOAG Directive 2020-13](#)).

In 2021, the NJOAG engaged our research team to collaborate in a multi-year, multi-method evaluation of their police reform package. The evaluation involved multiple design elements, including (1) a repeated measures survey designed to assess changes in officers' knowledge and attitudes following use of force training (Report 1: [Examining Police Reforms in New Jersey: Impact on Officer Attitudes and Self-Reported Behaviors](#)); (2) state- and county-level analyses of administrative and quantitative data to examine the impact of reform efforts on officer and agency outcomes, such as the frequency and severity of use of force by officers, racial and ethnic changes in use of force incidents, and injuries to officers and community members (Report 2: [Examining Police Reforms in New Jersey: Impacts on Use of Force and Other Police Activities](#)); and (3) qualitative analyses to consider the lessons learned from implementation of the reform package (Report 3: [Examining Police Reforms in New Jersey: Lessons Learned from Implementation](#)). Collectively, the evaluation represents the most extensive study of police use of force reform, highlighting the experiences of over 500 police departments and 31,000 sworn officers in New Jersey.

This report is the third in a series of three detailing our evaluation results. It focuses on findings from the implementation evaluation of the Initiative. Specifically, the research team completed a comprehensive review of departmental use of force policies, semi-structured interviews with law enforcement executives and the coordinators of mandated training, and a cross-sectional survey of law enforcement executives. Findings assessed perceptions and compliance around the Initiative. Notably, while the NJOAG has mandated these changes, there were no dedicated accountability mechanisms to ensure that agencies properly updated their policies, trained all officers, and submitted data per all requirements. The findings show considerable compliance with agencies' policy revisions but reveal variability in the implementation process and perceptions of



the Initiative's impact. Based on these findings, this third report from the evaluation of the Initiative identifies lessons learned and presents recommendations for future reforms and directions for future research.

This evaluation adds to the very limited research exploring how change is implemented and sustained within law enforcement organizations and contributes to one of the most extensive examinations of police use of force reform.

Our evaluation confirms that large-scale reform is feasible across a decentralized law enforcement landscape. However, we emphasize that success depends not only on the strength of mandates but also on the fidelity of implementation, quality of training delivery, responsiveness to feedback, and long-term investment in sustainability.

NEW JERSEY USE OF FORCE REDUCTION INITIATIVE

In December 2020, the New Jersey Office of the Attorney General (NJOAG) announced a statewide police reform package with three major components: (1) changes to statewide use of force (UOF) policy, (2) mandatory use of force training for all sworn law enforcement officers—specifically, de-escalation (ICAT) and peer intervention (ABLE) training, and (3) collecting and publishing uniform, comprehensive data around police use of force ([NJOAG Directive 2020-13](#)). Collectively, the requirements comprising this comprehensive reform initiative (the “Initiative”) were designed to emphasize de-escalation, sanctity of all human life, and officers’ duty to intervene and were informed by extensive community engagement (NJOAG, n.d.).

METHODOLOGY

This report is the third of three reports that describe research findings from a larger evaluation of police reform in New Jersey. The evaluation included several research methodologies and forms of data collection involving over 500 police departments representing over 31,000 sworn officers. This third report in the series details the findings from an evaluation of NJ police agencies’ use of force policy compliance and general perspectives of statewide reform implementation through the use of semi-structured interviews and a police executive survey.

This report draws on multiple qualitative and policy-focused data sources to evaluate the initiative's implementation. Specifically, this report contains findings from four distinct sources:



- **Review of departmental use of force policies:** We aimed to collect use of force policies from all law enforcement agencies in New Jersey to (1) verify updates to the policies required by the NJOAG and (2) identify additional changes made by departments to help officers understand the reasons for using force. A total of 168 valid policies were collected and reviewed, representing 32.2% of the 522 law enforcement agencies we contacted.
- **Semi-structured interviews with training coordinators:** Semi-structured interviews were conducted with all 24 ICAT/ABLE training coordinators to understand how training was delivered across counties and statewide agencies in New Jersey. These interviews assessed the degree to which training was delivered as intended (e.g., model fidelity), deviations from training delivery, and perceptions about the strengths and weaknesses of each training program.
- **Survey of law enforcement executives:** A single, cross-sectional survey was conducted electronically to gather insights from law enforcement executives across every agency in the state (n=524). This survey was carried out after the full rollout of the Initiative in New Jersey (between November 15, 2023, and January 26, 2024), resulting in 139 valid responses (26.5% response rate). The survey gathers perspectives from executives regarding the development and implementation of the Initiative, challenges with different elements of the Initiative, views on perceived impacts of the Initiative, and agency plans for sustaining different components of the Initiative.
- **Semi-structured interviews with law enforcement executives:** Semi-structured interviews were conducted with 12 law enforcement executives from agencies of various sizes and regions across New Jersey. During the interviews, we asked these executives to share their views on the implementation and effects of the Initiative, the challenges faced and how they were addressed, feedback on the strengths and weaknesses of using a statewide approach to modify police use of force, and general feedback for the NJOAG.

This section provides six research questions covering topics such as adherence to the policies and trainings from the UOF Initiative; model fidelity; and perceptions of the challenges, impacts, and sustainability of the Initiative's development and implementation.



REVIEW OF NEW JERSEY DEPARTMENTAL USE OF FORCE POLICIES

To evaluate adherence to the Initiative’s mandated policy changes and identify common revisions made by departments to their individual use of force policies, a total of 168 use of force policies were collected from New Jersey law enforcement agencies (representing 32.2% of all NJ agencies). Despite the NJOAG’s lack of an accountability mechanism to ensure agencies appropriately updated their policies, the analysis of the 168 UOF policies we collected found nearly 100% compliance with the NJOAG policy mandates in our sample. Many agencies (17.3%) indicated that the NJOAG policy was their primary departmental UOF policy, while only two policies (1.2%) were identified as not meeting the NJOAG policy requirements.

Content Added to Departmental Policy: More than half (50.9%) of the agency policies we reviewed made between one and five substantive additions to the policy content to supplement the NJOAG’s requirements (i.e., the specific content was not originally included in the NJOAG UOF policy). Examples of these changes included additional guidance for officers on the application of mechanical force, specific guidance on active shooter situations, supplemental instructions for Emergency Medical Services (EMS) and paramedics when securing incident scenes, and supplemental use of force reporting requirements.

Changes to Departmental Policy: Many agencies (63.1%) also made changes or mild revisions to the NJOAG policies to add additional context or remove parts of the NJOAG language. Most commonly, these changes were to remove equipment-specific language (presumably because they do not equip their officers with these tools) and to provide additional context or clarity for officers on things such as use of force reporting requirements, prohibition of retaliation, and use of force review.

Removals from Departmental Policy: Complete removals of subpoints or sections from the NJOAG UOF policy were uncommon and usually related to equipment, the use of a separate policy, or the policy itself being outdated for NJOAG requirements.

Definitions Added or Revised in Departmental Policies: The most common modification agencies made when adopting the NJOAG UOF policy was adding or revising certain defined terms. We found that 95 departments (56%) added at least one definition to the definitions already provided in the AG’s policy. Commonly added definitions included “meaningful review” (51.2%), “excited delirium” (48.2%), and “deadly weapon” (44.6%), among others. The most commonly revised definitions were for chokehold



(51.2%) and conducted energy device (CED) (23.8%), typically to include more detail and clarification.

INTERVIEWS WITH TRAINING COORDINATORS

To understand how training was delivered across counties and statewide agencies in New Jersey, semi-structured interviews were conducted with all 24 training coordinators responsible for the delivery of ICAT and ABLE trainings. Each interview was conducted individually with the training coordinators, either virtually or in-person, and several interviews invited primary instructors for input or were instructors themselves. Interview questions covered three main conceptual areas: (1) the implementation process, (2) course delivery, and (3) perceptions of ICAT and ABLE training. Thematic analysis of interview notes and supplemental review of content in the 2021 ICAT and ABLE facilitator guides were used for analysis.

Overall Training Implementation: Coordinators relied on various techniques to schedule trainings, most commonly providing agencies with set time slots to assign their officers to (n=14) or allowing officers to sign up individually online (n=6). A little less than half of the coordinators reported delivering ICAT and ABLE trainings consecutively (n=11), and the order was based on the instructors' preferences. Many coordinators (n=9) emphasized the difficulty in maintaining instructors over the 13-month training period, with a handful indicating this was due to time constraints of the instructors by their agency, a lack of interest, or an assignment shift (n=6).

ICAT Training Delivery: The NJOAG requested no changes to the ICAT curriculum provided by the Police Executive Research Forum (PERF), and that participants should receive 12 hours of training over the course of one and a half days. Only seven coordinators indicated that their training lasted the full 12 hours, nine reported training was between 10 to 11 hours, while another seven coordinators indicated ICAT training was delivered in nine or fewer hours. There was also wide variation reported in the number of instructors per ICAT class, with the highest number of coordinators (n=7) indicating having, on average, only two of the three required instructors per class. Consistent with NJOAG requirements, however, most class sizes were reported to be composed of 25 to 30 students. Most coordinators (n=20) reported no modifications of the ICAT training materials delivered, but only 10 coordinators reported that they were able to use consistent role-players for ICAT scenario delivery as recommended by PERF. Overall positive feedback from coordinators indicated that coordinators appreciated the video case studies included in the training (n=9) or viewed ICAT as a great program



overall (n=5). The most commonly reported negative feedback was that the training was too long or repetitive (n=11).

ABLE Training Delivery: The NJOAG requested no changes to the ABLE curriculum provided by Georgetown University, and that participants should receive a single, 8-hour day of training from the instructors. Roughly half of the coordinators (n=11) reported adhering to the 8 hours specified for delivery, with 12 coordinators reporting their average training course was less than 8 hours. In line with the NJOAG and ABLE facilitator guide requirements, no coordinators reported their average class size exceeded the maximum of 30 students or had fewer than two instructors to deliver the ABLE training. Coordinator's responses related to modifications to the ABLE training materials suggest deviations related to the role-play components. Most coordinators (n=21) indicated that role plays only engaged a handful of students, rather than using small groups to allow higher student participation. Overall feedback from coordinators indicated that they valued the case study examples in ABLE (n=6), as well as the background provided by the social science experiments discussed (n=5). The most common criticism of ABLE training was that the role-plays were unrealistic (n=11) and that the training was too long or repetitive (n=11).

In sum, the interviews with training coordinators highlight the challenges of consistently implementing the mandated use of force training programs statewide, revealing variation in deliveries. Differences observed in training delivery related to the organization of training schedules (i.e., consecutive versus nonconsecutive delivery of ICAT and ABLE training), adherence to training dosage (i.e., recommended 12 hours for ICAT and 8 hours for ABLE), and some deviation from original training content. It is unclear what specific elements of training may have been altered to produce this variation or how variation in training delivery may have affected training experiences and outcomes. Still, these findings raise concerns about model fidelity in training delivery across the state, particularly for the implementation of scenario-based skill practice for both ICAT and ABLE training.

SURVEY OF LAW ENFORCEMENT EXECUTIVES

To assess the challenges and successes associated with the NJOAG's Initiative, an online survey was administered to executives from every agency in the state (n=524), following the full implementation of the Initiative. The survey included questions grouped into six conceptual areas: (1) Rollout of the Initiative, (2) Implementation of the Initiative, (3)



Perceptions of Initiative Impacts, (4) Identification of Agency Challenges¹, (5) Plans for Sustainability, and (6) Agency Characteristics and Practices. Four agency-level characteristic measures were also created by the research team to analyze the representativeness of the survey sample and the impact of agency characteristics on survey items: (1) State Region, (2) Census Population, (3) Median Household Income, and (4) Sworn Size. In total, 139 viable survey responses were collected (26.5% response rate).

Responding Agency Characteristics: Two survey items asked respondents to identify their agency and county name. The research team used these responses to match Census and NJOAG data to each agency and created four agency-level characteristic measures (i.e., region within the state, size of population served, median income of population served, number of sworn officers). When comparing the sample of agency respondents to all New Jersey law enforcement agencies statewide on these four measures, the sampled agencies had characteristics similar to law enforcement agencies across the state. This offers confidence in the generalizability of the survey findings to law enforcement agencies in New Jersey.

General Perceptions of the Use of Force Reduction Initiative: Twenty-three survey items and one open-ended question (across two survey sections) measured executives' perceptions of the development, rollout, and subsequent difficulties their agency experienced when implementing various aspects of the Initiative. Responding executives expressed mixed views on the development of the Initiative; this included split perceptions when asked if NJOAG considered the views of New Jersey law enforcement officers in the development of the initiative (34.5% Agree/Strongly Agree, 34.5% Strongly Disagree/Disagree) and slightly more executives reporting that officers didn't feel supported by the Initiative (38.4%). Perceptions of the rollout were slightly more positive, with almost two-thirds agreeing that the NJOAG clearly communicated the Initiative's purpose (61.9%) and requirements (65.9%). Executives' responses also highlighted challenges with the timeline for implementing the Initiatives' requirements with available agency resources. Only about half of the executives agreed that the initial timeframe to implement the initiative was sufficient (52.5%) or that resources were available to assist their agency with implementing the Initiative's requirements (52.9%).

Bivariate analyses found only one survey item to be significantly correlated with one agency-level characteristic measure. Based on results from Spearman's rank correlation test (r_s), a weak but positive correlation exists between the median income of the

¹ Because these findings were not directly related to the NJOAG Use of Force Reduction Initiative, they are included only in the Appendix.



population served by an agency and executives' perceived difficulty of "ensuring all officers were trained in ICAT & ABLE" ($r_s(96) = 0.232, p = 0.022$). This finding suggests that as the median income level of the population served increases, executives also perceived greater difficulty in ensuring that all officers were ICAT and ABLE trained. Agency characteristics were not associated with executives' responses across the remaining survey items.

Perceptions of Initiative Impacts: Twenty survey items, followed by two open-ended questions, measured executives' perceptions of the Initiative's impact on officers' behaviors and changes to agencies' operations and experiences with the communities they serve. A high proportion of executives reported limited or mixed effects of the Initiative on officers' behavior and agency operations. Specifically, many responding executives expressed neutral opinions on the Initiative's impact on use of force and injury-related outcomes, with a notable 44.2% of executives indicating agreement that the Initiative had *no impact* on the use of force. Conversely, when asked about the Initiative's effect on excessive force and peer intervention in their respective agencies, almost two-thirds (61.6%) of executives felt the Initiative equipped officers with better skills to avoid using excessive force. Responding executives also reported limited perceptions of change in their agency's operations and experiences with their communities produced by the Initiative. Overall, however, most executives felt that both the ICAT de-escalation training and the ABLE peer intervention training benefited their agency (66.9% and 67.0% respectively).

Bivariate analyses indicated a weak correlation between only one survey item collected in this section and two different agency-level characteristic measures. Specifically, correlations were observed between the survey item "In my agency, the Initiative had no impact on use of force" and the size of the population served by an agency ($r_s(96) = -0.281, p = 0.005$), as well as the same survey item and the size of the agency ($r_s(105) = -0.243, p = 0.012$). These findings suggest that executives from larger agencies and agencies that serve larger populations possibly perceived the Initiative to have greater effects on the use of force. Due to the phrasing of the question, however, it remains unclear if executives felt the use of force had increased or decreased. Agency characteristics were not associated with executives' responses across the remaining survey items.

Agency Activities and Plans to Support Initiative Sustainability: Eleven total survey items across two sections measured current agency activities that align with the Initiative and agency plans for sustaining different components of the Initiative. Most executives reported that their agency reviews policies at least once per year or more than once per year (59.7%), and that this was largely driven by directives from NJOAG (79.1%). When



asked about different activities related to sustainability of the Initiative, many executives had reportedly already implemented supplemental use of force training for officers (n=65), and new use of force equipment for officers (n=38). In terms of future agency plans, executives most frequently identified supplemental use of force training for officers (n=48), ICAT refresher training (n=40), ABLE refresher training (n=39), or new use of force equipment (n=40).

INTERVIEWS WITH LAW ENFORCEMENT EXECUTIVES

To complement the cross-sectional survey, semi-structured interviews were also conducted with New Jersey law enforcement executives following the implementation of the Initiative. Twelve of the 26 law enforcement executives contacted agreed to participate in an interview (a 46.2% response rate), representing agencies of different sizes and regions in New Jersey. Interviews were held both in-person and virtually, and involved at least one police executive from police captain to police chief or director. Interview questions covered five main conceptual areas: (1) Implementation Process, (2) Impacts of the Initiative, (3) Plans to Sustain the Initiative, (4) Feedback on the Initiative, and (5) Feedback for the NJOAG. Thematic analysis was employed to identify, assess, and report patterns in statements and ideas documented within the interview notes.

Implementation Process: When asked to describe any challenges their agency experienced when implementing the Initiative, most executives (n=9) indicated experiencing at least one challenge. Of those who experienced challenges, most (n=5) reported that this was due to the timeline for training all officers in the mandated ICAT de-escalation and ABLE peer intervention training programs. Many executives (n=7) also highlighted that smaller agencies experience greater resource limitations, making it harder to meet the Initiative's operational requirements and implement efforts to support Initiative sustainability. Various strategies were reported by executives to address the challenges they experienced, including the use of a second, internal system for tracking officers' use of force (UOF) (n=3) and the implementation of additional UOF training to address policy confusion (n=3).

Impacts of the Initiative: Executives expressed very mixed views related to the Initiative's impact on individual agencies, with some executives (n=3) suggesting that there was no effect at all due to the already low frequency of UOF incidents. Conversely, two executives felt the Initiative played a key role in reducing UOF incidents in their jurisdictions, and another executive credited it with reducing community complaints. Many executives (n=7) noted the importance of community awareness related to UOF reduction efforts and highlighted their efforts to communicate about the Initiative.



Executives shared mostly positive perspectives on the Initiative's statewide impacts to law enforcement, with some emphasizing that standardized UOF policies enhanced the profession (n=2), provided officers with new skills and the ability to use time during interactions (n=2), and improved communication among officers across agencies (n=1). When asked for their perspectives on the preliminary mixed patterns in UOF behavior, several executives suggested that this may be due to officer over-reporting UOF incidents. Similarly, many executives attributed geographic differences in UOF patterns to different contextual factors such as population density (n=4), crime rates (n=4), agency size and resources (n=3), and agency culture (n=2).

Agency Efforts to Sustain the Initiative: Executives described a wide range of efforts being planned or implemented to sustain the Initiative and increase the safety of police-community interactions. Most common responses included the implementation or plans to implement refresher ICAT and ABLE trainings (n=5), agency efforts to recognize and/or reward exemplary officer behavior (n=4), working with community partners (n=3), and requiring supplemental UOF trainings for officers (n=3).

Feedback on the Initiative and for the NJOAG: A majority of executives (n=8) noted that the Initiative created uniform policy for law enforcement on how and when to use force, which benefited statewide interagency cooperation. Conversely, just over half of the executives (n=7) also reported that the Initiative was "too cookie-cutter," making it difficult for agencies to customize implementation in the context of their jurisdiction. Four executives specifically mentioned confusion in policy wording and interpretation. Varied perspectives were offered by executives on how they would like the NJOAG to support efforts related to the Initiative, including enhancements to the contextual data collected in the Benchmark reporting portal (n=2), mandated ICAT and ABLE refresher trainings (n=2), and greater resources for handling behavioral health-related calls (n=2). General requests from executives to the NJOAG most commonly included providing more opportunities for agencies to give feedback on NJOAG initiatives (n=2) and identifying funding support for future training mandates (n=2).

DISCUSSION

This report describes the findings from a comprehensive review of departmental use of force policies, semi-structured interviews with law enforcement executives and the coordinators of mandated training, and a cross-sectional survey of law enforcement executives. This evaluation adds to the very limited research exploring how change is implemented and sustained within law enforcement organizations and contributes to one of the most extensive examinations of police use of force reform.



Findings from this evaluation showed strong compliance among New Jersey law enforcement agencies in applying the NJOAG's UOF policy. Many agencies adopted the statewide policy language or went further by adding clarifying definitions and operational guidance tailored to their organization. However, we cannot be sure that *all* agencies across the state executed the same level of compliance; only one-third of agencies submitted policies for review. It is possible that those who did not submit policies for external review are also those less likely to comply with NJOAG requirements.

Interviews with training coordinators pointed out inconsistencies in how the ICAT and ABLE trainings—required by the Initiative—were implemented, particularly regarding duration and fidelity to training models. Some coordinators reported modifications to training content and reduced training doses, which could impact officers' experiences and the programs' effectiveness. Additionally, fidelity issues were noted in scenario-based skill practice, a key element for reinforcing training principles. Surveys and interviews with law enforcement leaders confirmed variability in implementation experiences and challenges. While many appreciated the reform goals, issues with support and resource availability were common. Interviews also revealed that agencies must balance adhering to state mandates with their local organizational needs, considering factors such as size, leadership, and culture influencing how implementation unfolds.

Although the NJOAG Initiative established a framework for reform, this evaluation demonstrates that the implementation process varied due to numerous local factors such as resource availability and differing interpretations. This variation underscores the practical challenges of attaining consistent statewide change, particularly in the absence of formal quality assurance processes and strategic plans to sustain efforts beyond the initial rollout.

Recommendations for Future Reform Implementation

The current study highlights several key takeaways that can be used to make recommendations for the New Jersey Office of the Attorney General (NJOAG), law enforcement agencies, and researchers. Four recommendations are highlighted below:

- 1. Apply a Formal Implementation Framework:** Future police reform should use structured implementation frameworks, such as Exploration, Preparation, Implementation, Sustainment (EPIS) or Consolidated Framework for Implementation Research (CFIR) to identify factors affecting success, such as stakeholder views, organizational readiness, and resources. Recognizing barriers



and supports to implementation aids planning and sustainability, two phases that are often understudied but crucial for sustaining reform (Kirk et al., 2016).

2. Incorporate Law Enforcement Stakeholder Input Early and Often:

Consistently considering law enforcement stakeholders' perspectives is crucial for understanding feasibility and identifying barriers and facilitators for reform. While the NJOAG sought law enforcement input when planning the Use of Force Reduction Initiative, the evaluation findings indicate that many executives felt more field input was needed for clarity, timelines, and buy-in. This underscores the importance of stakeholder feedback throughout all implementation phases, including line officers, supervisors, and leaders. Engagement methods like listening sessions, pilot tests, and advisory panels can foster ongoing feedback and improve implementation efforts in real time.

3. Integrate Mechanisms for Oversight: The NJOAG played a pivotal role in initiating statewide use of force reform in the state but lacked continuous oversight or support for agencies during the implementation phase. Future initiatives should incorporate oversight personnel, regional liaisons, and structured follow-up schedules to identify issues, provide assistance, and ensure adherence to established standards. Oversight remains essential, particularly in the absence of formal accountability mechanisms such as federal consent decrees. Even minimal levels of monitoring can significantly contribute to maintaining the integrity of reform efforts across agencies.

4. Provide Opportunities to Support Sustainability: To sustain police reform, it's vital to embed it into long-term practices and the culture of law enforcement agencies. Ongoing investment in refresher and supplemental training is necessary, as initial skills need reinforcement to stay effective. Agencies should be encouraged to conduct regular refresher trainings, recognize good officer behavior, and collaborate with community and mental health partners. State support, including dedicated funding and accountability, is key to making reforms permanent.

Future Research and Conclusion

This evaluation has established important groundwork for understanding statewide police reform implementation, but its findings are limited by the sample of law enforcement agencies and stakeholders involved. Response rate challenges in policing research are well known (see, e.g., Nix et al., 2019), and they were especially apparent in



this statewide evaluation. Additionally, several pieces of this research relied on a single representative from each police agency for insights into the Initiative, which may not fully reflect the agencies' experiences. Future research should gather perspectives from line officers and supervisors, who are key implementers of policy and training changes, to identify unintended effects and areas for improvement. It is also essential to evaluate how reforms influence public trust, perceptions of safety, and community-police relationships through surveys, focus groups, and interviews—especially with marginalized communities—to better understand public legitimacy and effectiveness.

The characteristics of agencies also warrant a more detailed examination. The assessment indicates that factors such as size, location, resources, and organizational culture may influence the adoption and perception. Future research should explore how these factors impact success and what support mechanisms—such as funding, training, and technical assistance—could mitigate variability. Furthermore, the sustainability of reforms remains a critical area of study. Despite the comprehensive rollout of policies and training changes in the Initiative, few New Jersey executives reported plans to sustain these reforms. Researchers should evaluate conditions such as leadership stability, continuous funding, and external accountability measures that facilitate ongoing reform efforts. To further examine reform sustainability and many other aspects of the implementation process, future research should also explore implementation frameworks within policing, as these offer structured methodologies for examining reform adoption, adaptation, and long-term viability. Although their application has been limited in law enforcement, future evaluations may uncover best practices for managing change within decentralized systems.

This evaluation adds to the very limited research exploring how change is implemented and sustained within law enforcement organizations and contributes to one of the most extensive examinations of police use of force reform. Our assessment confirms that large-scale reform is feasible across a decentralized law enforcement landscape. However, we emphasize that success depends not only on the strength of mandates but also on the fidelity of implementation, quality of training delivery, responsiveness to feedback, and long-term commitment to sustainability. New Jersey's example highlights the complex role state actors are likely to continue playing in leading police reform efforts, providing a roadmap for future reforms based on evidence, collaboration, and ongoing learning.



I. INTRODUCTION

In December 2020, former New Jersey Attorney General Gurbir Grewal announced that the New Jersey Office of the Attorney General (NJOAG) would implement a comprehensive police reform plan aimed at reducing law enforcement officers' use of force during interactions with community members (NJOAG, 2020). Dubbed “the nation’s most ambitious police reform” (Berman, 2020), the reform efforts focused on three primary areas: revising statewide use of force policies, mandating use of force training for all sworn officers, and requiring all law enforcement agencies to collect and publish use of force data ([NJOAG Directive 2020-13](#)). These changes, referred to as the NJOAG’s Use of Force Reduction Initiative (the “Initiative”), were designed to emphasize de-escalation, sanctity of all human life, and officers’ duty to intervene and were informed by extensive community engagement (NJOAG, n.d.).

The NJOAG package is one example of police reform introduced after highly publicized incidents of officer use of deadly force against Black Americans. Driven by unrest and social justice calls, policymakers and police leaders across the nation quickly enacted reforms to reduce excessive force and improve police-community interactions (National Conference of State Legislatures, 2024). However, empirical research has lagged behind these reforms. Despite widespread changes to use of force policies and training, little is known about their effectiveness (McLean et al., 2022). The lack of evidence surrounding these often-called-upon police reforms emphasizes the need for evaluations conducted in real-time with agencies pioneering change in the field. In short, comprehensive evaluations documenting the implementation and impact of police reform efforts can provide essential information to build the evidence base and provide lessons learned to guide the field.

In 2021, the NJOAG engaged our research team to collaborate in a multi-year, multi-method evaluation of their police reform package. This evaluation involves multiple design elements, including (1) a repeated measures survey designed to assess changes in officers’ knowledge and attitudes following use of force training (Report 1: [Examining Police Reforms in New Jersey: Impacts on Officer Attitudes and Self-Reported Behavior](#)); (2) state- and county-level analyses of administrative and quantitative data to examine the impact of reform efforts on officer and agency outcomes, such as the frequency and severity of use of force by officers, racial and ethnic changes in use of force incidents, and injuries to officers and community members (Report 2: [Examining Police Reforms in New Jersey: Impacts on Use of Force and Other Police Activities](#)); and (3) qualitative analyses



to consider the lessons learned from implementation of the reform package (Report 3: *Examining Police Reforms in New Jersey: Lessons Learned from Implementation*). Collectively, the evaluation of the NJOAG Initiative represents the most extensive study of police use of force reform, highlighting the experiences of over 500 police departments and 31,000 sworn officers in New Jersey (estimates as of December 2023; NJOAG, 2024).

KEY FINDINGS FROM REPORT 1: OFFICER ATTITUDES AND SELF-REPORTED BEHAVIOR

Report 1, *Examining Police Reforms in New Jersey: Impacts on Officer Attitudes and Self-Reported Behavior*, examined the impacts of the Initiative’s mandated training—the Police Executive Research Forum’s Integrating Communications, Assessment, and Tactics (ICAT) de-escalation training and Georgetown University’s Active Bystandership for Law Enforcement (ABLE) peer intervention training. Report 1 presents findings about officers’ perceptions, attitudes, and self-reported behaviors based on surveys administered to officers immediately before, after, and one and two years after training participation. The incredibly high volume of survey responses collected—ranging from 12,623 to 17,036 responses at pre- and post-training—offers insights representative of law enforcement officers across New Jersey.

Findings demonstrate that officers were very receptive to the mandated ICAT and ABLE training programs and perceived that their leadership supported these training programs. After participating in ICAT de-escalation training, officers’ attitudes on topics such as use of force, interactions with community members, and responding to people in crisis showed measured changes aligned with training goals. Similarly, after completing ABLE peer intervention training, officers’ perceptions of police misconduct, attitudes toward peer intervention, and self-reported likelihood of engaging in peer intervention reflected measured changes aligned with training objectives. Many of these changes were statistically significant for both training programs. Long-term assessments indicate that officers still find de-escalation and peer intervention strategies useful, although some decline in training effects does occur.

The report confirms that de-escalation and peer intervention training can support change officers’ views to facilitate safe, effective interactions with community members. It also shows that mandated training, whether carried out through state reform or other oversight methods, can still be positively received by officers and produce effects similar to those of voluntary training programs implemented by law enforcement agencies.



KEY FINDINGS FROM REPORT 2: IMPACT ON USE OF FORCE AND OTHER POLICE ACTIVITIES

Report 2, *Examining Police Reforms in New Jersey: Impacts on Use of Force and Other Police Activities*, presents findings from analyses of officer field behavior, measured through law enforcement administrative data (e.g., use of force, citizen complaints, arrests). Various rigorous analytic techniques were used to determine whether and to what extent the NJOAG's Initiative reduced the frequency of use of force, improved safety (e.g., reduced officer and subject injuries), and lowered civilian complaints against the police, which are all intended outcomes of the Initiative. We found that the Initiative did not lead to consistent reductions in these outcomes. The findings vary depending on the outcome and specific analysis presented, with several instances of null findings as well as findings in mixed directions. We are not suggesting that the changes implemented by the NJOAG (training, policy, and data collection) did not work as intended at the individual level, considering the heterogeneity of changes. Instead, we confirm that it did not produce any large and uniform shifts in the use of force across New Jersey.

Based on these findings, we recommend that future statewide efforts adopt a more focused approach, incorporating best practices from implementation science and conducting problem analyses to identify the best areas for intervention. (For examples of organizational readiness, available resources, and so forth, see [Section II. Literature Review](#) in this report.) Further, interventions should be tailored to individual, high-risk areas to generate the greatest impact.

Goals of Report 3: Lessons Learned from Implementation

This report is the third of three reports detailing findings from our evaluation of the NJOAG Initiative. It focuses on findings from the implementation. Specifically, the research team completed a comprehensive review of departmental use of force policies (n=168; representing 32.2% of NJ agencies), semi-structured interviews with law enforcement executives (n=12) and the coordinators of mandated training (n=24), and a cross-sectional survey of law enforcement executives (n=139, 26.5% response rate).

Findings assessed perceptions and compliance around the Initiative. Notably, while the NJOAG has mandated these changes, there were no dedicated accountability mechanisms to ensure that agencies properly updated their policies, trained all officers, and submitted data per all requirements. The findings show considerable compliance with agencies' policy revisions but reveal variability in the implementation process and perceptions of the Initiative's impact. Based on these findings, this report identifies



lessons learned and presents recommendations for future reform implementation and directions for future research.

This report is organized as follows:

- Section I, **Introduction**, is an overview and summary of findings of the previous two reports in the series—Report 1: [Impact on Officer Attitudes and Behaviors](#) and Report 2: *Impact on Use of Force and other Police Activities*.
- Section II, **Literature Review**, summarizes research on implementation science and what is known from evaluations of organizational change in law enforcement.
- Section III, **New Jersey Use of Force Reduction Initiative**, describes the police reforms implemented as part of the Initiative.
- Section IV, **Methodology**, summarizes the research design of the broader evaluation and highlights the research questions and data sources that are the focus of Report 3: *Lessons Learned from Implementation*.
- Section V, **Review of New Jersey Departmental Use of Force Policies**, assesses compliance with the NJOAG policy mandates by reviewing use of force policies collected by our research team.
- Section VI, **Interviews with Training Coordinators**, assesses compliance with the NJOAG training mandates, including experiences with the implementation process, how the training courses were delivered, and perceptions about the training programs, using semi-structured interviews with all training coordinators across the state.
- Section VII, **Survey of Law Enforcement Executives**, presents findings from a survey of law enforcement executives across the state to gather various perceptions on the implementation and impacts of the Initiative.
- Section VIII, **Interviews with Law Enforcement Executives**, presents findings from semi-structured interviews with law enforcement executives to gather contextual information regarding the implementation and impacts of the Initiative.
- Section IX, **Discussion**, offers an overview of the primary findings, lessons learned and recommendations for future research and practice in New Jersey and beyond.

The findings in this third report, *Lessons Learned from Implementation*, adds to the very limited research exploring how change is implemented and sustained within law enforcement organizations and contributes to one of the most extensive examinations of police use of force reform. Our evaluation confirms that large-scale reform is feasible across a decentralized law enforcement landscape. However, we emphasize that success



depends not only on the strength of mandates but also on the fidelity of implementation, quality of training delivery, responsiveness to feedback, and long-term investment in sustainability.



II. LITERATURE REVIEW

For decades, scholars, policymakers, and members of the public have called for police organizations to integrate evidence-based policies and programs into their daily operations. The longstanding divide between research and policy, however, continues to hinder efforts to advance science and improve public safety (Mears, 2022). Mears (2022) argued that one substantial piece to solving this divide is the creation of a research infrastructure that informs the “real-time” decision-making and long-term planning needs of policy makers, criminal justice administrators, and practitioners. Establishing this research framework could lead to more sustainable, evidence-based decision-making and better outcomes throughout the criminal justice system.

In law enforcement, the reinforcement of the need to develop research infrastructure has advanced through the evidence-based policing (EBP) movement. EBP champions the identification and adoption of empirically supported strategies and policies in policing (del Pozo et al., 2025; Todak & Huey, 2022). Scholars have called on law enforcement to take ownership of the science used to enhance their profession to improve implementation and outcomes. This includes coming to understand and value science and its procedures and undertaking a larger role in partnering to advance it (Neyroud & Weisburd, 2014). A deeper understanding of *how* EBP can be adapted and sustained in law enforcement is an essential part of the research infrastructure that is still desperately needed. This “*how*” is something that implementation science, developed and applied primarily in the healthcare and social services fields, is directly focused on (del Pozo et al., 2025; Rudd et al., 2020). Implementation science examines the context of an organizational change (such as the environmental setting, populations both inside and outside an organization, etc.) to study the process of implementation and sustaining change (del Pozo et al., 2025).

Several implementation models have been developed to provide guidance to researchers and decision-makers seeking to implement innovative reforms in the public sector. One of the best-known models is the four-phase EPIS (Exploration, Preparation, Implementation, Sustainment) framework. Each phase in this framework also has different factors (grouped into four domains: inner context, outer context, bridging factors, and innovation factors) that might impact the implementation of an evidence-based policy or program (Aarons et al., 2011). While initially designed as a linear process, more recent adaptations of EPIS suggest that the four phases of the model are more



dynamic and cyclical, and each domain is applicable to some degree across all phases (Becan et al., 2018; del Pozo et al., 2025).

The Consolidated Framework for Implementation Research (CFIR) is another one of the most widely used implementation science frameworks (del Pozo et al., 2025). It is structured slightly differently than EPIS, comprised of over 50 constructs organized across five major domains: innovation, the outer setting, the inner setting, individuals, and the implementation process (CFIR, 2025; del Pozo et al., 2025). All of the domains and constructs contained in the CFIR framework interact with each other and influence implementation effectiveness. The constructs are also meant to be applied at any phase of implementation (Kirk et al., 2016).

Both the EPIS and CFIR frameworks identify important considerations when implementing new programs, suggesting that a more holistic approach is needed to effectively implement organizational change. This includes a thorough understanding of the key issues and taking context into account. Unfortunately, evaluations of both models suggest these are also the pieces of implementation frameworks that receive the least amount of attention. Many studies using the CFIR and EPIS frameworks have been conducted post-implementation, examining implementation retrospectively (Kirk et al., 2016). They find that much less attention is given to the planning and sustainment phases compared to the implementation phase (Moullin et al., 2019). Unfortunately, the planning stage is when perspectives are gathered from those responsible for the daily implementation of a new program, and where possible barriers can be strategized around. The absence of clarity about the key issue and the context around the issue can be particularly concerning given its importance for providing a thorough understanding of the issue a program or policy is attempting to address.

Despite the potential benefits that implementation science frameworks offer, they have only recently begun to be used in the criminal justice field. A handful of studies examining correctional practices and substance use treatment programs have been guided by implementation science (Zielinski et al., 2020). However, implementing organizational change through the use of implementation science and relevant frameworks has not yet been done in the policing field (del Pozo et al., 2025).

IMPLEMENTING CHANGE ACROSS POLICE ORGANIZATIONS

Organizational change in police agencies is often driven by two primary sources. In its proactive form, change is initiated by internal actors who identify an issue and



implement a plan of action to address it. Change can also be initiated reactively, sometimes by individuals outside of an organization, and requires the leaders and personnel in the police agency to respond or adapt to an inciting incident or environment, which may or may not be supported by internal actors in an organization (Bayley, 2008; Schafer et al., 2021). Externally-generated changes, similar to those initiated by NJOAG, can still be a successful method of reform in police agencies, but the management of the implementation process is critical to its success (King, 2014).

Evaluations of mandated multi-agency or statewide police reform initiatives (e.g., organizational change), similar to those enacted by the NJOAG, are virtually non-existent. The most similar example of an outside entity implementing sweeping organizational changes in law enforcement agencies can be found in the research on federal consent decrees, though these are focused on changes directed at a single department. Since the 1990s, the federal government has used consent decrees to reform police agencies where there is evidence of a “pattern or practice” of constitutional violations by law enforcement officers (Chappell, 2017). Based on the type of consent decree and its legal negotiations, agencies must work with an independent monitoring team to ensure the agency satisfies most or all of the conditions established in the consent decree (Alpert et al., 2017). To date, the DOJ has conducted at least 70 investigations and 60% of agencies have been compelled to institute reforms under the statute (Walker, 2022). The content of consent decree requirements varies, but many include extensive reforms related to training, policies, supervision, and police personnel accountability (Powell & Fix, 2025). Several of these have been designed to address issues related to police use of force, similar to the goals of the NJOAG’s initiative.

While a few studies point to generally favorable improvements for individual agencies under consent decree, even fewer studies have examined the views of police agency personnel related to the implementation of widespread organizational reform (Walker, 2022). Powell and Fix (2025) used interviews of police personnel currently implementing consent decree reforms to demonstrate that the process was viewed as extremely arduous, even though many interviewees agreed the consent decree improved agency procedures and discontinued harmful practices. Schafer and colleagues (2021) surveyed a large, nationally diverse group of mid-level supervisors on their experiences and found that police supervisors with a greater orientation towards service and positive views of their agency’s culture were more supportive of organizational change. Conversely, supervisors with more experience with organizational change efforts also expressed views that were less favorable of future change efforts. Both studies suggested that the perceptions and experiences of police practitioners undergoing organizational change



are nuanced and further research is needed to understand both what does and does not work in implementing change.

INHIBITORS AND FACILITATORS OF CHANGE IN A POLICE ORGANIZATION

Central to any implementation plan is the inclusion of perspectives from those who are responsible for its ongoing delivery (Telep & Lum, 2014). In policing agencies, this would include representation from all organizational levels, including line officers, supervisors, and executive leadership. Historically, however, external initiators of change (e.g., those outside of a police agency) rarely incorporate the views of law enforcement practitioners (Bayley, 2008; Mears, 2022; Skogan, 2008). In a sociopolitical environment that is continuously calling for rapid change and broad reform in police organizations, achieving successful and lasting change can be incredibly difficult (Skogan, 2008). Several inhibitors may be to blame for this difficulty, at both the organizational- and individual-level. Organizationally, resistance from police unions and resource demands are frequent barriers to implementing change in a police agency (Skogan, 2008). Revising organizational policies and procedures can be resource-intensive (Powell & Fix, 2025).

Individually, resistance from line officers to implement new approaches to police practice have been highlighted in prior work (Correia & Jenks, 2011; Jacobs et al., 2006). For example, officers who express stronger support for traditional views of policing (such as a crime control rather than service style role orientation) are also less likely to support organizational change efforts (Willis et al., 2007). Officers who are resistant to organizational changes also report feeling uninvolved in the change process, treated as a liability rather than an asset when implementing organizational changes (Bayley, 2008; Hail, 2020; Kalyal et al., 2020). Organizational change efforts that are vague or not communicated clearly to officers can also result in resistance. For example, the definition of community-oriented policing has been noted as purposefully ambiguous (Eck & Rosenbaum, 1994). This ambiguity, however, has inhibited its successful implementation (Correia & Jenks, 2011; Vito et al., 2005). Vague changes generate not only misunderstandings of how officers should modify their strategies and tactics, but also why it is being implemented (Correia & Jenks, 2011; Schafer et al., 2021; Schafer & Varano, 2017). Officer perceptions of organizational change are heavily influenced by perceptions of supervisor and executive buy-in as well. If supervisors have past negative experiences with organizational change, their attitudes can condition the responses of officers they oversee (Kalyal et al., 2020; Schafer et al., 2021). Resistance to organizational change from executives and mid-level supervisors, whether it is



expressed directly or simply perceived by officers, can ultimately impede the success of a change effort.

While there is little systematic evidence on what successful organizational change (e.g., police reform) looks like in policing (Mastrofski & Willis, 2010; Schafer et al., 2021), there are a handful of studies that have suggested possible facilitators of officer acceptance of change efforts. If line officers believe that their experiences are valued and integrated into the implementation of a new strategy, they are more likely to buy-in and cooperate with the change (Skogan, 2008; Telep & Lum, 2014). To successfully implement change, police leadership has an important role in creating support from rank-and-file officers (Mastrofski & Willis, 2010). In their study of officer receptivity to different evidence-based practices, Telep and Lum (2014) found that officers expressed willingness to try new strategies, but only when organizational leadership communicated a long-term commitment to this shift. Officers' perceptions of organizational changes can be directly and positively influenced by engagement from their supervisors as well. Understanding the important role played by supervisors and police leaders is essential to increasing the likelihood of successful implementation of change efforts (Kalyal et al., 2020).

The implementation of organizational reform in policing is still an area of research that needs improvement. Currently, very few empirical studies provide insight into how police officers, supervisors, and leadership are impacted by sweeping organizational changes or reform in their agency. While we do know that the views of police personnel can lead to the facilitation or inhibition of implementing successful organizational change, the nuances of *how* to implement and sustain successful organizational change in policing still remain unclear. The current study seeks to address these gaps by examining perceptions of police agency executives across the state of New Jersey related to the implementation of the NJOAG's Use of Force (UOF) Reduction Initiative.



III. NEW JERSEY USE OF FORCE REDUCTION INITIATIVE

Scholars have observed that State Attorneys General can be important agents for police reform and are instrumental to transformations in policing (Mazzone & Rushin, 2020). Leveraging its unilateral authority over law enforcement in the state, in 2020, the New Jersey Office of the Attorney General mandated an overhaul of the state’s use of force policies and required retraining of every sworn law enforcement officer to reframe police interactions with community members—specifically prioritizing the protection of the life, liberty, and dignity of community members in every encounter (NJOAG, n.d.; see also [NJOAG Directive 2020-13](#)). Collectively, the work comprising New Jersey’s comprehensive reform initiative aims to reduce the frequency and severity of use of force by all of New Jersey’s 31,000 state, county, and local law enforcement officers.

The comprehensive reform package includes three major components: (1) changes to statewide use of force policy; (2) mandatory use of force training for all sworn law enforcement; and (3) collecting and publishing uniform, comprehensive data around police use of force. The changes are referred to as the NJOAG’s Use of Force Reduction Initiative (the “Initiative”) in this report. Notably, the sweeping changes to the statewide use of force policy represented the first significant revisions to the policy in two decades. The revisions were informed by 21 listening sessions held for members of the public by County Prosecutors, the review of hundreds of public comments, and consideration of best practices for police use of force policies. More specifics on changes to the statewide use of force policy are available in [Section V. Review of New Jersey Departmental Use of Force Policies](#).

Also included in the Initiative was the implementation of a centralized platform for the submission of use of force reports. Powered by Benchmark Analytics, officers must submit a detailed report about an interaction with the public that resulted in force within 24 hours of the incident. The detailed use of force report is now a uniform form across the state that collects many contextual variables, such as weather conditions, location type, and subject resistance, that have not been traditionally captured in force reports. Data from these reports feed into a publicly accessible online dashboard, where users can download the entire dataset. Data captured in the dashboard includes reports from October 1, 2020, through the most recent full month of the year.



The final component of the Initiative included the mandatory participation of all sworn law enforcement officers, including correctional officers, in two in-person use of force training programs: ABLE and ICAT. Both are widely recognized use of force training programs, with hundreds of police departments implementing each of these programs.²

ABLE training, developed by Georgetown University and partners, is an eight-hour, single-day course designed around the science of active bystandership. Often referred to as peer intervention training, this program teaches officers skills to intervene—as well as instruction on the importance of accepting intervention—from peer officers and supervisors to avoid mistakes, prevent misconduct, and promote officer health and wellness.

ICAT training, developed by the Police Executive Research Forum (PERF), is a 12-hour, 2-day course designed to provide officers with tools and skills to defuse potentially volatile interactions. PERF developed ICAT with input from hundreds of law enforcement professionals, including a specific focus on how policing is conducted in the United Kingdom, where officers do not have access to firearms. ICAT uses its Critical Decision-Making Model as a framework for officer responses to all encounters with the public, emphasizing the consideration of police powers and response proportionality when responding and the importance of continuous assessment of the effectiveness of their response.

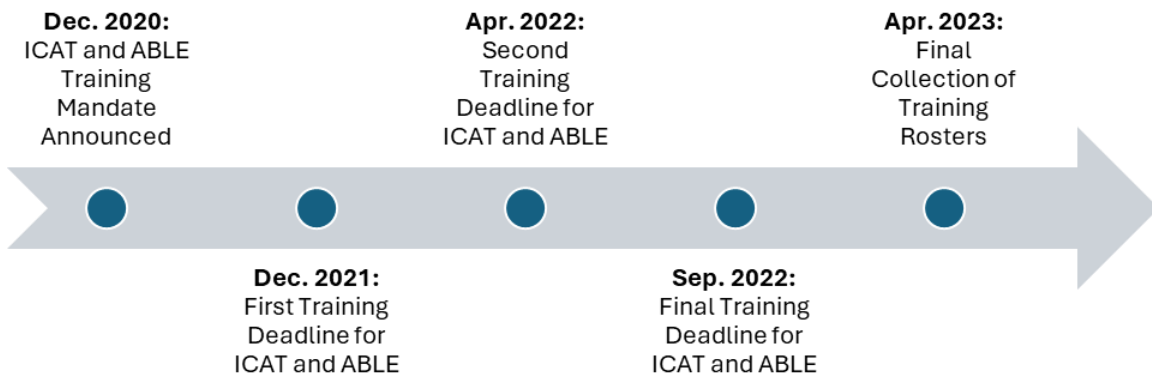
Initially, the NJOAG required all sworn law enforcement to complete ICAT and ABLE training by December 31, 2021. The plan for implementing ICAT and ABLE training was carried out individually by each of the 21 counties or by three statewide agencies: the New Jersey State Police, the New Jersey Transit Police Department, and Rutgers University Police Department. Due to delays caused by the COVID-19 pandemic and other logistical challenges, the NJOAG extended this deadline to April 30, 2022 (see [NJOAG Directive 2021-7](#)). The directive also mandated counties and statewide law enforcement agencies to report their training progress to the NJOAG's Office of Public Integrity and Accountability (OPIA). After reviewing these updates, the OPIA noted that, while many agencies were making substantial progress, some counties faced delays and would not meet the April 2022 deadline. Consequently, in May 2022, [NJOAG Directive 2022-5](#) was issued, further extending the deadline to September 30, 2022. Finally, the Department of Corrections and all county correctional agencies received a separate extension until December 31, 2022.

² <https://www.law.georgetown.edu/cics/able/> ; <https://www.policeforum.org/icat-training-guide>



Training rosters that were collected as part of these efforts were shared with the research team. Training rosters collected from September 2021 through April 2023 confirm substantial compliance with the training mandates, indicating 29,474 officers completed ABLE and 29,225 officers completed ICAT, resulting in training compliance percentages of 94.6% and 93.8%, respectively. The timeline for ICAT and ABLE training requirements is shown in **Figure 1**. For more details on this training compliance, see *Examining Police Reform in New Jersey: Impacts on Officer Attitudes and Self-Reported Behavior*, the first of three reports in this series. For more details on how ICAT and ABLE training were implemented, see [Section VI. Interviews with Training Coordinators](#) in this report.

Figure 1. NJOAG ICAT and ABLE Training Timeline





IV. METHODOLOGY

As mentioned previously, this report is the third in a series of three that describes research findings from a broader evaluation of use of force reform for law enforcement in New Jersey.³ The comprehensive evaluation involves multiple research methods and various data collection approaches, offering one of the most thorough analyses of police reform. It includes data from over 500 police departments and more than 31,000 sworn officers.

Table 1 lists the six data sources used for the full evaluation and their policy or research significance. All data collection and related research activities received approval from the University of Cincinnati's Institutional Review Board (IRB) for the period from August 2021 to October 2022, followed by approval from the National Policing Institute's IRB from October 2022 onward. The blue portions of **Table 1** are the data sources for this report, which concentrates on findings derived from interviews, a cross-sectional survey, and a review of police use of force policies. The research questions and data analysis plan guiding this report are detailed below.

³ Other reports in this series may be found at <https://www.policinginstitute.org/projects/new-jersey-evaluate-use-of-force-policies-training/>



Table 1. Data Sources and Relevance for Full Evaluation⁴

| Data Source | Research / Policy Relevance |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1. Officer Surveys <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ICAT Pre-Training Survey • ICAT Post-Training Survey • ABLE Pre-Training Survey • ABLE Post-Training Survey • Follow-Up Survey – ICAT/ABLE Combined • Second Follow-Up Survey – ICAT/ABLE Combined | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Baseline rates of receptivity and reactions to training • Extent of knowledge acquisition after training • Self-reported use of training skills in the field • Influence of supervisory and agency support on reinforcing training principles • Measures of training decay • Comparison across officers, agencies, and counties |
| 2. Statewide Police Administrative Data | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assess changes in these outcomes over time (UOF frequency/severity, racial differences in UOF, officer and community member injuries) • Identify organizational factors associated with changes |
| 3. Police Use of Force Policies | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify compliance with state requirements • Identify minor and major agency-specific additions |
| 4. Community-level Data | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Baseline/control measures for models |
| 5. Semi-Structured Interviews <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interviews with county coordinators • Interviews with AG staff, police executives | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify general perspectives of statewide reform, anticipated and unanticipated consequences, and potential impediments of behavioral changes |
| 6. Police Executive Survey | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gather the views of police executives on implementation of reform, impacts of reform, and plans to sustain over time |

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The goals within this portion of the evaluation are to assess the implementation and perspectives on the impact of the NJOAG’s Use of Force Reduction Initiative (the “Initiative”), as measured through semi-structured interviews, a cross-sectional survey, and review of departmental use of force policies. The primary research questions driving this report include:

⁴ Note that this table outlines the data sources for the project as of February 2025, after the discontinuation of case study sites from the research plan.



1. Did law enforcement agencies update their use of force policies to comply with the NJOAG requirements?
2. What additional changes to use of force policies did agencies implement beyond the NJOAG mandates?
3. Was ICAT and ABLE training delivered as intended (e.g., with model fidelity)?
4. What are law enforcement executives' perceptions of the development and implementation of the NJOAG's Use of Force Reduction Initiative?
5. What were some of the main challenges faced during the implementation of the NJOAG's Use of Force Reduction Initiative? How were those challenges addressed?
6. What are law enforcement executives' perceptions of the impact of the NJOAG's Use of Force Reduction Initiative?
7. How do law enforcement executives plan to maintain the goals of the NJOAG's Use of Force Reduction Initiative and improve officer guidance regarding use of force?

Collectively, these research questions help clarify how well law enforcement agencies and counties (e.g., county coordinators) followed the Initiative requirements outlined by the NJOAG. Additionally, the questions helped the team gather important qualitative data that provides context for the quantitative findings presented in this report and other reports in this series.

RESEARCH DESIGN AND ANALYSIS PLANS

The research team employed four distinct forms of data collection, each with its own analysis plan, to address the research questions in this part of the evaluation:

- **Review of departmental use of force policies:** We aimed to collect use of force policies from all law enforcement agencies in New Jersey to (1) verify updates to the policies required by the NJOAG and (2) identify additional changes made by departments to help officers understand the reasons for using force. A total of 168 valid policies were collected and reviewed, representing 32.2% of the 522 law enforcement agencies we contacted.⁵ This section of the report is designed to help assess adherence to the NJOAG Initiative mandates related to policy.

⁵ We emailed agency executives several times to encourage them to submit their policies to our team for review. While we retained an NJOAG contact as part of our electronic communications (CC'd on all emails), most recipients ignored our emails, likely not seeing the request as necessary or important, or ignoring because they were unfamiliar with our team. We did not have the resources to send FOIA (Freedom of Information Act) requests to all agencies for their policies.



- **Semi-structured interviews with training coordinators:** We conducted semi-structured interviews with all 24 ICAT/ABLE training coordinators to understand how training was delivered across counties and statewide agencies in New Jersey. The interviews assessed the degree to which training was delivered as intended (e.g., model fidelity), deviations from training delivery, and perceptions about the strengths and weaknesses of each training program. This section of the report is designed to help assess adherence to the NJOAG Initiative mandates related to training.
- **Survey of law enforcement executives:** A single, cross-sectional survey was conducted electronically to gather insights from law enforcement executives across every agency in the state (n=524). The survey was carried out after the full rollout of the Initiative in New Jersey, resulting in 139 valid responses (26.5% response rate). It was designed to gather perspectives from executives regarding the development and implementation of the Initiative and challenges with different elements of the Initiative. It also gathered data about their views on perceived impacts of the Initiative and agency plans for sustaining different components of the Initiative. This section of the report is designed to assess perceptions on the implementation of the NJOAG Initiative mandates.
- **Semi-structured interviews with law enforcement executives:** Semi-structured interviews were conducted with 12 law enforcement executives from agencies of various sizes and regions across New Jersey. During the interviews, we asked executives to share their views on the implementation and effects of the Initiative, the challenges faced and how they were addressed, feedback on the strengths and weaknesses of using a statewide approach to modify police use of force, and general feedback for the NJOAG. This section of the report aims to evaluate perceptions regarding the implementation of the NJOAG Initiative mandates.

The sections of this report that correspond to each of the four data sources referenced above provide more details related to the methods of data collection and analysis. Note that for each section the total number of law enforcement agencies identified for the state of New Jersey might vary by a few departments, depending on where the list of current agencies is derived from and the year. For example, data provided directly from the NJAOG to our team in 2021 identified 522 unique departments, whereas NJOAG online data from 2024 identified 524 departments.



V. REVIEW OF NEW JERSEY DEPARTMENTAL USE OF FORCE POLICIES

The update to New Jersey's statewide use of force policy is central to the NJOAG Use of Force Reduction Initiative, reflecting the first revision to the statewide use of force policy in 20 years (NJOAG, n.d.). The statewide policy defines seven core principles and more than 30 term definitions that must be integrated into revised departmental policies (NJOAG, 2022). The seven core principles include:

- 1. The Sanctity of Human Life and Serving the Community.** Officers should make every effort to preserve and protect all human life. Officers shall also respect and uphold the dignity of all persons in a non-discriminatory way. Four sub-bullets provide additional details about how officers are expected to treat community members.
- 2. Force as a Last Resort and Duty to De-escalate.** Force shall only be used as a last resort to accomplish lawful objectives and shall never be retaliatory or punitive. The policy outlines the purposes for using force and the prohibitions for certain reasons for force. It encourages officers to use de-escalation and critical decision-making skills, provides warnings and opportunities to comply (where feasible) before using force, and encourages officers to consider how factors such as behavioral health crises might impact compliance.
- 3. Duty to Use Only Objectively Reasonable, Necessary, and Proportional Force.** In circumstances where force is justified, officers should use the least amount of force to safely achieve their legitimate law enforcement objective. In deciding to use force, officers are provided a non-exhaustive list of factors to consider, including the level of resistance encountered. The policy also emphasizes that encounters are dynamic, and if a subject's resistance diminishes, officers shall immediately reduce the level of force used. The policy outlines the authorization of different forms of force and when they are applicable. Finally, specific stipulations related to displaying a firearm are outlined in the policy, requesting that officers exercise great caution in doing so.
- 4. Duty to Use Deadly Force Only as an Absolute Last Resort and Duty to Avoid Actions that Create a Substantial Risk of Death or Serious Bodily Injury.** The policy defines deadly force and its different forms; outlines specific, strict requirements that must be met before the application of deadly force; and details some of its prohibited uses.



5. **Duty to Intervene and Report.** All officers, regardless of rank, must take steps to prevent or interrupt illegal, excessive, or otherwise inappropriate uses of force by fellow officers and immediately report improper uses of force to their supervisor. The policy also stipulates that agencies are prohibited from retaliating against any officer who intercedes or reports illegal or inappropriate uses of force and requires each department to establish a written policy about intervention and protection for reporting officers.
6. **Duty to Render Medical Assistance.** After any use of force, when the environment is safe and stable, officers must promptly render medical assistance to any injured persons consistent with training. Officers must also promptly request emergency medical assistance if needed or requested.
7. **Duty to Report and Review Uses of Force.** Each use of force must be reported and receive meaningful command-level review, and this must be included in a written departmental policy. Additionally, law enforcement incidents that result in fatal or serious bodily harm to a civilian require immediate notification to the County Prosecutor's Office for the county in which the incident occurred, as prescribed by [NJOAG Directive 2019-14](#). The policy outlines specific steps to be part of departmental use of force reviews and requires that law enforcement executives conduct a meaningful annual use of force review of all incidents in their department. This review should result in a written report provided to each County Prosecutor's Office.⁶

These core principles were first introduced under [NJOAG Directive 2020-13](#) and updated in [NJOAG Directive 2021-14](#).⁷ In addition to this primary use of force policy, the NJOAG released three addendum use of force policies specific to (1) conducted energy devices and other less-lethal devices and ammunition, (2) vehicular pursuit policy, and (3) barricaded individuals.

While the NJOAG sets the minimum standards for use of force policy, agencies could expand their departmental policies with additional or supplemental requirements, definitions, restrictions, or clarifications. Notably, the NJOAG has no process in place to monitor agencies' compliance with the new policy standards. To that end, our research team elected to collect all New Jersey law enforcement use of force policies to (1) confirm

⁶ The National Policing Institute published a guide to assist agencies with the development of this report and to encourage its public release, available here: <https://www.policinginstitute.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/09/NPI-Summarizing-Use-of-Force-Data-for-the-Public-Guide-LE-NJ.pdf>

⁷ Updates to the use of force (UOF) policy included: (1) Revising three term definitions and adding one new one; (2) clarifying that the UOF policy applies to law enforcement operating within correctional facilities; (3) clarified reporting requirements for the pointing of firearms by tactical teams; (4) clarifying the review for use of force by an agency's chief law enforcement officer; (5) additions to the vehicular pursuit policy; (6) revisions for typos or technical (non-substantive) changes.



updates to the policies as mandated by the NJOAG and (2) identify supplemental changes made by departments to support officers' understanding of the decision to use force.

METHODS

To collect and review law enforcement agency policies, we identified chief law enforcement officers for each agency in New Jersey, using a list of law enforcement agencies provided by the NJOAG. The research team members looked up each department online to update their executive name and contact information, resulting in the identification of 522 unique law enforcement departments with contact information. The research team emailed all executives, copying our NJOAG partner, and requested that each department upload a copy of their UOF policy to a secure Qualtrics survey link. This collection occurred over two months (July 6, 2022, through September 16, 2022). After the initial reach-out, two follow-up email requests were sent to executives. Additionally, NJOAG Office of Public Integrity and Accountability representatives spoke at the State Chiefs' Association meeting to inform attendees of the request to encourage their participation.

We received 174 responses, containing 168 valid policies for review. Six policies received were not a use of force policy and thus were ineligible for review.⁸ The 168 valid policies represent 32.2% of the identified law enforcement agencies. The research team developed a coding instrument for use by a single coder to check that all core principles and definitions were included and to assess any additions, substitutions, or subtractions made by agencies. Coding occurred in spring 2023 and was revisited in spring 2025. We compared each policy to the mandated version put forward by the NJOAG, finding that roughly half made additions to the policy beyond what was required by the state.

Our goal for collecting and reviewing agency use of force policies is twofold: (1) to ensure agencies meet the NJOAG standards and (2) to understand what additions or changes were made by departments. The following section outlines the findings of this assessment.

FINDINGS

Our comparison of departmental use of force policies to the NJOAG use of force (UOF) policy is divided across four sections: (1) content additions; (2) changes (e.g., revising

⁸ The other six policies submitted were four vehicular pursuit policies, one conducted electrical weapon policy, and one incomplete use of force policy.



sentences or including additional information for sections and sub-bullets provided by the NJOAG); (3) content removal; and (4) changes to definitions.

Our first step in this review was to examine how many agencies submitted the NJOAG UOF policy as their own. In other words, the agency stated in their response that they adopted the NJOAG UOF policy as their own, or the policy sent to us was the NJOAG UOF policy with no changes. Twenty-nine policies met these criteria (17.3% of the total sample). Additionally, we found that nearly half of the sampled policies used the same template.⁹ This standard template's format and content are identical, with only agency-specific information, such as name, branding, and effective dates, varying across policies. This created uniformity across many of the UOF policies reviewed.

Content Added to Departmental Policies

It was common for agencies to make substantive additions to help guide officers regarding the use of force in their policies. These range from additional subpoints under the core principles to including whole sections. These additions are defined as a subpoint or section not included in NJOAG's UOF policy.¹⁰ Note that these additions do not include term definitions, which are discussed separately below.

We found that 84 law enforcement agencies (50.9%) made between one and five additions, and 34 agencies (20.2%) made six or more additions. Overall, the average number of additions made by agencies was 2.97. Additions were most commonly made to NJOAG UOF Core Principles 3 (use of force), 4 (use of deadly force), 5 (duty to intervene), 6 (duty to render medical assistance), and 7 (report and review of use of force).

Modifications to Core Principle 3 typically included agencies adding content specific to the use of mechanical force,¹¹ often adding 3 to 4 pages of content specific to the application of mechanical force and additional guidance on the use of tactical batons. We found 84 agencies (50.9%) made additions to this section.

Modifications to Core Principle 4 often added guidance regarding active shooter response. An example of this addition is, *"In active shooter situations, officers shall not fire*

⁹ We believe this template is from The Rodgers Group, LLC. This company was based in New Jersey and served as a common vendor for New Jersey law enforcement. They contracted with departments to perform policy development, online training, and accreditation consulting. The company was acquired by Lexipol in 2021.

¹⁰ See the NJOAG UOF Policy here: https://www.nj.gov/oag/dcj/agguide/directives/ag-Directive-2022-4_Statewide-Vehicular-Pursuit-Policy-and-Use-of-Force-Policy-Addendum-A-Addendum-B.pdf

¹¹ Examples of mechanical force include an asp, baton, or other objects, oleoresin capsicum (OC) spray or the physical apprehension by canines.



a weapon into buildings, doors, windows, or other openings when the person being fired upon is not clearly visible unless extraordinary circumstances necessitate officers to engage the subject to protect the lives of injured persons requiring immediate rescue and evacuation from an area in which a subject's continued actions (i.e., active shooting) pose an imminent threat of death or serious bodily injury." The NJOAG UOF policy does not contain specific guidance for active shooter situations. Approximately 49.4% of the sample (83 agencies) added content to Core Principle 4.

Modifications to Core Principle 5 typically included an extension of responsibility for the duty to intervene. The NJOAG UOF policy states that officers who observe other officers inappropriately using force should intervene. However, many agencies added language such as *"If a supervisor observes such a violation, the supervisor must issue a direct order to stop the violation,"* among other clarifying statements. Seventy-seven agencies (41.4%) made additions to this section.

Core Principle 6 of the NJOAG UOF policy outlines an officer's duty to provide medical aid. Several departments significantly added to this section, often adding three to four pages of content. Most commonly, policies include supplemental instructions about where EMS and paramedics are allowed and securing incident scenes. Eighty-one agencies (43.5%) made additions to this section.

Additions to Core Principle 7 included supplemental requirements about officer use of force reporting and administrative reviews. For example, policies added clarification for reporting the use of force under the provision of mutual aid. Others include a statement about internal affairs review, such as *"The internal affairs officer shall conduct a secondary meaningful review of the incident."* Sixty-three agencies (37.5%) made additions to this principle.

Changes to Departmental Policies

We found it was common for agencies to make a few changes to the language included in the NJOAG UOF policy. A change refers to an agency having duplicate content per the NJOAG policy, but with a slight revision to add additional context or remove parts of a sentence. This differs from an addition because "addition" indicates that the subpoint/section was not in the original policy. Minor changes that did not substantially affect the policies were not counted as changes (for example, spelling out agency names, clarifying what county the agency is in, etc.). This does not include any changes to definitions, which are discussed separately.



Our review found that 106 agencies (63.1%) made between one and five changes, while thirteen agencies (7.7%) made six or more changes. The average number of changes made by agencies was 2.79. These changes were most commonly in Core Principle 2 (duty to de-escalate), 3 (use of force), 5 (duty to intervene), and 7 (report and review of use of force).

Specific to Core Principle 2, the NJOAG policy states: *“avoiding the unnecessary display of weapons, including firearms, Conducted Energy Devices (CEDs), batons, or OC Spray.”* Law enforcement agencies removed CEDs and/or batons from this statement, presumably because they do not equip their officers with these tools. Approximately 10.7% (18 agencies) of the sample changed this section.

Core Principle 3 provides general guidance on police use of force, and reviews of departmental policies revealed wide variation in the exact changes made to this section. Most commonly, these changes involved providing additional context/clarifications to officers regarding their use of CEDs. Approximately 46 agencies (27.4% of the sample) changed this section.

Close to half (81 agencies, 48.2%) of the departmental policies reviewed made changes to Core Principle 5, outlining the duty to intervene. This was often to clarify reporting processes for improper use of force, building upon what was required by the NJOAG. The prompt below provides an example of this change:

- *Any officer who observes or has knowledge of a use of force that is illegal, excessive, or otherwise inconsistent with this policy must:*
 - *Notify a supervisor as soon as possible, and*
 - *Submit an individual written report to a supervisor before reporting off duty on the day the officer becomes aware of the incident. If the supervisor is the subject of the report, officers shall report the matter to the next level of the chain of command or directly to the internal affairs supervisor in accordance with this agency’s policy on Internal Affairs.*
 - *Such supervisors must report this incident in accordance with this agency’s policy on Internal Affairs.*

Other additions to Core Principle 5 provide context regarding the prohibition of retaliation. An example is: *“Commanders, supervisors, and officers are prohibited from retaliating in any form against an officer who intercedes in or reports illegal or inappropriate uses of force or who cooperates with an investigation into a possible violation of this general order.”* Compared to the original NJOAG language, this



modification notes the prohibition of retaliation for officers who cooperate with an investigation into a possible violation, as well as for reporting or interceding.

Changes to Core Principle 7, detailing the requirements for use of force reports and reviews, also demonstrated wide variation, though all were minor. Generally, these changes relate to providing additional clarifications for when use of force reporting should be completed and for conducting a use of force review. Additionally, many agencies revised this item to include CED reporting as well. Approximately 53.9% of the sample (89 agencies) changed this section.

Removals from Departmental Policies

We coded departmental policies for any “removals,” defined as a subpoint or section in the NJOAG UOF policy and not included in departmental policies. Overall, it was uncommon for an agency to remove something from its policy outright. The most common reasons why content from the NJOAG policy was excluded from an agency’s policy are:

- The agency did not employ CEDs or other tools referenced by the NJOAG;
- The agency used a separate policy to outline guidance for particular tools or tactics (i.e., CEDs, vehicular pursuits); or
- The policy sent to our team for review was outdated (e.g., a policy developed before 2021) and, therefore, did not reflect NJOAG requirements.¹²

Aside from these three common occurrences, there were very few instances of an NJOAG section or subpoint being excluded. In total, 41 agencies (24.4%) did not include sections on CEDs, 93 agencies (55.3%) did not include language specific to vehicular pursuits and/or CEDs, and nine agencies (5.4%) submitted policies that were dated *before* the NJOAG UOF policy effective date of December 31, 2021 (and therefore do not reflect NJOAG requirements).

We identified 11 agencies (6.5%) that did not include these seven core principles provided by the NJOAG UOF policy. Nine of the 11 agencies sent outdated policies, explaining the absence of core principles. Two policies were appropriately dated and did not appear to comply with the NJOAG requirements. However, whether these two

¹² Some may question why these “outdated” policies were not excluded from analysis. However, they were sent in 2022 as an example of the current UOF policy. We assume that the policy sent is their current policy and included it in our review accordingly.



agencies rely on other policies to supplement the UOF policy submitted for review is unclear.

Additionally, 70 agencies (41.7%) modified Core Principle 1 by replacing the phrase “at all times” with the word “always.” This change does not appear to hinder the intent of the core principle.

Definitions Added or Revised in Departmental Policies

The most common modification to departmental use of force policies adopting the standards from the statewide policy was the inclusion of additional or revised defined terms. We found that 95 departments (56%) added at least one definition to the definitions already provided in the NJOAG’s policy. Common, added defined terms included:

- “Meaningful review,” “meaningful command review,” or “administrative review” – 86 agencies (51.2%)
- “Excited delirium” – 81 agencies (48.2%)
- “Deadly weapon” – 75 agencies (44.6%)
- “Aerosol spray device (ASD)” – 65 agencies (38.7%)
- “Resisting arrest” – 60 agencies (35.7%)

Less common definition additions included:

- “Substantial risk” – 19 agencies (11.3%)
- “Less-lethal ammunition” – 16 agencies (9.5%)
- “Emotionally disturbed person” – 12 agencies (7.1%)
- “Less-lethal device” – 11 agencies (6.5%)

Agencies also revised the definitions provided by the NJOAG, most often for the definitions of chokehold (86 agencies, 51.2%) and CED (40 agencies, 23.8%). Typically, this involved expanding the definition to include more details and clarifications.

SUMMARY

This assessment aims to confirm that agencies are adopting the policy updates mandated by the NJOAG and assess revisions made by departments to identify common supplements to the NJOAG policy. Notably, while the NJOAG has mandated these changes, there is no specific accountability mechanism to ensure that agencies have appropriately updated their policies. This assessment intends to fill that gap, though



findings are limited to the 168 departments that submitted their policies for review analysis, representing about one-third of the state.

Across the 168 agency policies reviewed, we found nearly 100% compliance with the policies reviewed compared to the NJOAG UOF policy. In fact, 29 agencies submitted or indicated that the NJOAG UOF policy was their primary departmental UOF policy. Of the 168 policies reviewed, we identified only two policies (1.2%) that did not appear to comply with the NJOAG requirements. However, it is unclear if these two agencies rely on other policies to supplement the UOF policy submitted for review.

Regarding changes made by departments to adopt the statewide policy for their department, we found that agencies more often added or revised substantive content or definitions rather than removed content when adopting the NJOAG UOF policy into their departmental policy. Many changes were minor and tailored content to the equipment and practices specific to the department. Our review also revealed some revisions to the statewide UOF policy that other New Jersey law enforcement agencies may consider, such as:

- Tailoring policies to match the use of force options that officers are equipped with.
- Adding language to guide officer decision-making during an active shooter incident.
- Ensuring that review standards outlined in the policy match departmental structure and accountability practices, including if a centralized unit reviews officer use of force reports.
- Defining expectations for what constitutes a meaningful review.

In sum, we found substantial compliance by the departments that submitted their policies to implement the spirit, if not the verbatim language, of the changes to statewide use of force guidance for law enforcement. However, we only received policies from roughly one-third of the state. It is possible that agencies that are less compliant with making the necessary changes would be the least likely to submit them for external review. We cannot be certain that *all* departments across the state integrated these meaningful changes, but our assessment provides confidence that this was likely completed statewide. The decision to provide additional guidance to officers—beyond what was required by the NJOAG—appears to be a somewhat frequent occurrence by law enforcement agencies.



VI. INTERVIEWS WITH TRAINING COORDINATORS

Leveraging its unilateral authority over law enforcement in the state, the NJOAG required additional training of every sworn law enforcement officer to reframe police interactions with community members—specifically prioritizing the protection of the life, liberty, and dignity of community members in every encounter (NJOAG, n.d.; see also [NJOAG Directive 2020-13](#)). All sworn law enforcement officers, including correctional officers, were required to participate in two in-person use of force training programs for de-escalation (Integrating Communications, Assessment, and Tactics or ICAT) and peer intervention (Active Bystandership for Law Enforcement or ABLE). Participation in these trainings was intended to assist officers with implementing the new statewide use of force policy and provide them with tools and tactics to limit the use of force. For more details on ICAT and ABLE training, see [Section III. New Jersey Use of Force Reduction Initiative](#).

The plan for implementing ICAT and ABLE training was individually handled by each county (n=21) or by three statewide agencies (New Jersey State Police, New Jersey Transit Police Department, and Rutgers University Police Department). An ICAT/ABLE coordinator was selected for each, typically a staff member of the county prosecutor's office or a member of the training staff at the statewide agency. This coordinator was responsible for scheduling, coordinating, and managing the ICAT and ABLE training programs and ensuring that every law enforcement officer within their jurisdiction completed training. The coordinator served as the primary point of contact for the NJOAG regarding ICAT and ABLE training in their county/agency.

The NJOAG provided all coordinators with a written overview of the statewide requirements for ABLE and ICAT training delivery. Class sizes for both were capped at 30 students. ICAT and ABLE materials were required to be presented in the same manner they were delivered during the train-the-trainer session. Instructors were not allowed to make significant changes to the original model. The overview also outlined that all officers should receive eight hours of ABLE and 12 hours of ICAT.

Coordinators were given discretion in selecting training sites and setting schedules. However, all instructors had to participate in the train-the-trainer programs delivered directly by PERF or Georgetown University. Slots for the ICAT and ABLE instructor courses were allocated to the individual counties or statewide agencies based on the



ratio of law enforcement in that jurisdiction compared to the statewide total by the NJOAG. Several sessions of train-the-trainer deliveries for ICAT and ABLE were offered in July 2021 and November 2021.

While several requirements were provided to the ICAT/ABLE training coordinators, the NJOAG did not implement any accountability mechanisms to ensure that training was delivered as intended (i.e., with model fidelity). To that end, the research team conducted semi-structured interviews with all 24 training coordinators to understand how training was delivered across counties/statewide agencies. The methods, findings, and key takeaways from these interviews are discussed below.

METHODS

In 2022, the NJOAG provided the research team with a list of ICAT/ABLE coordinators identified by each of the 21 counties and the three statewide agencies. The research team interviewed each of the 24 coordinators individually. Interviews were conducted during the spring and summer of 2022 as counties continued to train. While ICAT and ABLE training began in August 2021, it continued through the end of 2022, with two counties still training in 2023, surpassing the NJOAG's third and final training deadline of September 2022.

Every interview included the training coordinator, but some also invited their primary instructors to provide input. Several coordinators served as trainers for either ABLE or ICAT, or both. Interviews lasted between 30 and 60 minutes, depending on participant engagement in the discussion. Twelve interviews were conducted in person: 12 were conducted virtually. Two separate but similar instruments were developed to frame the interviews.

The conceptual areas covered in the instruments focused on:

- **Implementation Process:** How officers were scheduled for training, the training survey administration process, and any challenges with or comments about implementation.
- **Course Delivery:** Duration of training, average number of instructors, average number of students, sources for role players, modifications to train-the-trainer materials, and a description of the role plays or scenarios used in the training.
- **Perceptions of ICAT and ABLE Training:** Positive and negative feedback from participants about the ICAT and ABLE training programs.



The research team took notes during all interviews. These notes were compiled and organized into a spreadsheet to support qualitative analysis. Specifically, thematic analysis was employed to identify, assess, and report patterns in statements and ideas documented within the interview notes. To support comparisons of reported training delivery with model training implementation, the research team also reviewed the 2021 ICAT and ABLE facilitator guides.¹³ The findings from this analysis are discussed below.

FINDINGS

The training coordinators' responses about training implementation and ICAT and ABLE course deliveries in their county/agency revealed both similarities and differences in training delivery across the state. This section presents findings related to the overall training implementation process first, followed by ICAT training delivery, and then ABLE training delivery.

Overall Training Implementation

In discussing training implementation, coordinators were asked how officers were scheduled to attend training. Most county coordinators (n=14) provided agencies within their counties a certain number of slots per training delivery for officers' participation and allowed agencies to assign personnel to attend at their discretion. A smaller number (n=6) used some form of online sign-up so that officers could select their own training dates. One county coordinator reported that civilian staff assigned to the county prosecutor's office had a roster of all officers in the county and scheduled each for training. The remaining three agency coordinators assigned officers from their respective agencies to attend training on specific dates.

Coordinators were also asked whether ICAT and ABLE trainings were delivered consecutively. There was a nearly even divide in responses about whether these programs were trained back-to-back or separately. Eleven coordinators reported that ICAT and ABLE were consecutive, and 13 coordinators reported that they were not. In those instances of consecutive delivery, the order in which the trainings were presented was based on the preferences of the instructors in that county. Overall, these findings begin to reveal the variation of ICAT and ABLE training deliveries across the state.

¹³ In addition to the ICAT facilitators guide provided to instructors, PERF has an ICAT Training Guide available online here <https://www.policeforum.org/assets/icattrainingguide.pdf>.



The NJOAG instructed all coordinators to facilitate the implementation of the research team's pre-training and post-training surveys to officers attending ICAT and ABLE training.¹⁴ A recruitment script was written by the research team and provided to coordinators to help instructors encourage survey participation and relay confidentiality reminders. Most commonly (n=20), coordinators reported that instructors provided students with QR codes to complete the survey right before and after training. The QR code was often presented on a PowerPoint slide in the classroom along with verbal instructions about the importance of the survey. However, four coordinators reported that their instructors printed out the QR code, placed it where students could access it, and asked participants to complete the surveys. Two coordinators reported that a weblink for the survey was written on the whiteboard in the classroom for officers to type into their web browser. One coordinator printed paper copies of the electronic surveys and mailed the completed surveys to the research team. Finally, one coordinator elected not to have their agency participate in the training surveys because it was not mandatory.

Many (n=9) county coordinators emphasized the difficulty in maintaining instructors for training implementation during the 13-month training period. Three of those coordinators also noted that the instructors allocated to their county by the NJOAG never taught any courses or inconsistently showed up to their assigned training dates during the training period. Others (n=6) had instructors available for a limited time before their agency could no longer lend them out for county trainings, they no longer wished to instruct, or they shifted assignments. In general, due to the time needed to train all 31,000+ officers across the state, maintaining a consistent instructor pool was challenging. A few (n=3) coordinators also relayed difficulties in training implementation related to training facility inefficiencies, such as WIFI issues, no areas to store firearms for scenarios, or a general lack of tools and resources to implement scenarios.

ICAT Training Delivery

The interviews with training coordinators were designed to assess model fidelity to ICAT training delivery across New Jersey. Specifically, understanding whether counties trained ICAT according to the guidelines provided by the NJOAG and PERF, the creators of the training. The NJOAG required that ICAT training be delivered “in the manner prescribed by the courses.” Delivery should match the train-the-trainer program, which is “12 hours of training to the end-user, normally taught over one and a half days. Class size is limited

¹⁴ A description of these surveys and their findings is provided in the first report in this series, [Examining Police Reform in New Jersey: Impacts on Police Officer Attitudes and Behavior](#).



to 30.”¹⁵ Instructors were encouraged to make no changes to the original ICAT PowerPoint, discussions, or activities.

Table 2 presents the responses from the 23 training coordinators regarding ICAT training delivery in their county/agency.¹⁶ Notably, only seven of the 23 coordinators (30.4%) indicated that training lasted the full 12 hours. Even fewer of those (n=5) were delivered over one and a half days. Within seven counties, ICAT training was delivered over nine or fewer hours, calling into question the degree to which training delivery in these counties matched the original training materials. It is unknown what elements or materials of the training may have been shortened or not covered to affect the training dosage.

*Table 2. Dosage of ICAT Training Delivery (n=23)**

| # of Days spent on ICAT | ICAT Course duration | Count |
|-------------------------|---------------------------------------------------|-------|
| 2 | 12 hours (Day 1: 8 hours; Day 2: 4 hours) | 5 |
| | 12 hours (Day 1: 10 hours; Day 2: 2 hours) | 1 |
| | 12 hours (Day 1: 4 hours; Day 2: 8 hours) | 1 |
| | 11 hours (Day 1: 7 hours; Day 2: 3 hours) | 3 |
| | 9 hours (Day 1: 2 hours; Day 2: 7 hours) | 1 |
| 1 | 10 hours | 6 |
| | 9 hours | 1 |
| | 8 hours | 5 |

*Rutgers University PD trained ICAT before the NJOAG mandate; hours are not provided here.

PERF recommends that ICAT training be delivered with a minimum of three certified instructors.¹⁷ This is to facilitate engaging classroom discussion and to mitigate burnout among instructors. Noted previously, the NJOAG required classroom sizes to be a maximum of 30 students. **Table 3** presents the average number of instructors and students for ICAT training across the 23 counties and state agencies in New Jersey. There was wide variation in the reported average number of instructors per ICAT class, with the most common responses being two (n=7) or three instructors (n=6). As highlighted above, access to instructors was a challenge over the training implementation period.

¹⁵ According to an internal “ICAT and ABLE Training Overview” document shared by the NJOAG with the research team.

¹⁶ Rutgers University PD reported training all officers in ICAT prior to the NJOAG mandate. Therefore, information about ICAT training delivery in their organization is not available.

¹⁷ Per the summer 2021 ICAT Training materials.



There was less variation in class size, with only two counties reporting that they allowed more than 30 students in a room. In these instances, only five additional students were allowed. In general, class sizes appear to hover between 25 and 30, consistent with the requirements of the NJOAG.

*Table 3. Average Class Size and Instructor Counts for ICAT Training (n=23)**

| Avg number of instructors per class | Count | Avg number of students per class | Count |
|--------------------------------------------|--------------|-----------------------------------------|--------------|
| 5 | 1 | 30-35 | 2 |
| Between 4 and 5 (varied) | 1 | 30 | 9 |
| 4 | 1 | 25-30 | 7 |
| Between 3 and 6 (varied) | 1 | 25 | 2 |
| Between 3 and 5 (varied) | 2 | 20 | 2 |
| 3 | 6 | Less than 20 | 1 |
| Between 2 and 3 (varied) | 4 | | |
| 2 | 7 | | |

*Rutgers University PD trained ICAT prior to the NJOAG mandate; hours are not provided here.

The interviews with training coordinators also sought to illuminate modifications made to the ICAT training materials (e.g., PowerPoint) and delivery methods. Coordinators and instructors were discouraged from making changes to the materials, and several coordinators shared their belief that they were not allowed to adjust the training. Indeed, 20 of the 23 interviews on ICAT delivery confirmed that no changes were made to the ICAT delivery. Three counties reported making minor, unique changes, including: (1) adding a supplemental officer-involved shooting video from New Jersey; (2) modification of module 1 (introductions) to mitigate negative officer attitudes; and (3) adding a video from state troopers in Florida. Coordinators reported that additional efforts made by instructors to enhance the delivery of the training materials included: (1) doing background research for the case studies included in the training; (2) adding the personal experiences of instructors; (3) asking for personal stories of students; and (4) tailoring conversations to experiences in their county and in New Jersey more broadly.

The ICAT Training Guide encourages instructors to select and coach “role players”—that is, individuals who portray, for example, subjects who appear to be experiencing some form of crisis that requires de-escalation—to support the implementation of scenario-based skill practice.¹⁸ The training guide strongly discourages training participants from serving as role-players during scenarios, encouraging instructors to identify role-players from local acting guilds or colleges. Another common practice is to use sworn law enforcement from partner agencies who are unfamiliar to the students. The ICAT

¹⁸ <https://www.policeforum.org/assets/icattrainingguide.pdf>



Training Guide also emphasizes the importance of consistency in the use of specific role players over time, suggesting that role players with greater familiarity with the ICAT training can enhance the implementation of scenario-based skill practice because of their knowledge of the training and experience in engaging in ICAT scenarios.

Coordinators were asked about how they identified role players for the scenario-based training portion of ICAT delivery. Responses to this question are presented in **Table 4**. Most commonly, coordinators reported that their role players were identified from current or previously sworn law enforcement officers who were not part of the training class (n=13). Role-players were also sourced from local colleges, community members from various groups, theater groups, and instructors or students in class that day. The description of scenarios used during ICAT training by coordinators were found to match those from the library of scenarios provided by ICAT training.

Table 4. Source of Role-Players for ICAT Training (n=23)

| Source | Count |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------|-------|
| Current or previously sworn officers (not part of training class) | 13 |
| Local college students | 5 |
| Instructors from training class | 5 |
| Students from training class | 4 |
| Community members from various groups | 3 |
| Theatre groups | 2 |

Some coordinators elaborated on their experiences identifying and maintaining role players for ICAT training. Ten coordinators shared that they were able to use consistent role-players throughout the duration of ICAT training delivery in their county or agency. In contrast, six coordinators noted issues with maintaining role-players, thus experiencing inconsistency. Additionally, another four coordinators indicated they experienced issues in identifying external role-players from the start, and these counties or agencies often had to rely on instructors and students who were present during the training to serve as subject role-players.

Finally, coordinators were asked about any feedback (positive and negative) they would like to share about the ICAT training program. Coordinators may have reported more than one element in their feedback or may have chosen not to share any feedback. These perspectives were grouped into themes and are shown in **Table 5**. In terms of positive feedback, nine coordinators mentioned the value of using video case studies as part of the training. Five coordinators regarded the ICAT training as a great program overall. Concerning specific modules of the training, four coordinators noted the benefits of the scenario-based skill practice, four coordinators emphasized the value of Module 3 (crisis recognition), two coordinators enjoyed Module 4 (communications), and two



coordinators emphasized Module 7 (step up and step in). Another three coordinators reported that the Critical Decision-Making Model (CDM) presented in ICAT was a valuable tool.

In terms of negative feedback, the most common response was that the training was too long or repetitive, indicating a preference for a shorter program (n=11). A handful of coordinators (n=4) also did not like that the training was not specific to New Jersey. Certain videos used in the training were viewed as problematic for various reasons, such as focusing on “bad tactics” or the videos being “too long.” Three coordinators also found implementing the scenarios to be difficult, usually due to a lack of role players or facility issues. Two coordinators noted that the facilitator guide could be improved, largely by providing more details specific to elements of training delivery so that instructors did not have to look it up themselves.

*Table 5. Positive and Negative Elements of ICAT Training (n=23)**

| Positive Feedback | Count | Negative Feedback | Count |
|--------------------------------------|-------|------------------------------------|-------|
| Use of video case studies | 9 | Too Long/Too repetitive | 11 |
| Training as a whole | 5 | Not specific to New Jersey | 4 |
| Scenario-based skill practice | 4 | Issues with certain videos | 4 |
| Module 3: Crisis Recognition | 4 | Issues with implementing scenarios | 3 |
| Critical Decision-Making Model (CDM) | 3 | Facilitator Guide | 2 |
| Module 4: Communications | 2 | | |
| Module 7: Step Up and Step In | 2 | | |

*Note that multiple responses may be provided by a single coordinator.

ABLE Training Delivery

Interviews with the training coordinators were also used to assess model fidelity to ABLE training delivery. Like ICAT training, the NJOAG requested no changes to the ABLE curriculum provided by Georgetown University, and that participants should receive a single, 8-hour day of training from the instructors. The NJOAG also outlined a maximum class size of 30 officers. **Table 6** presents the responses from the 24 training coordinators about the average length of ABLE training delivery in their county/agency. Compared to ICAT delivery, there was generally less variation in the dosage of ABLE delivery. Roughly half of the coordinators (n=11) reported adhering to the 8 hours specified for delivery. However, half of the coordinators (n=12) reported that the average training course was less than the intended 8 hours, and one coordinator reported their training was longer due to additional discussion questions and the inclusion of pre- and post-training written tests during course delivery.



Table 6. Dosage of ABL Training Delivery (n=24)

| # of Hours | Count |
|------------|-------|
| 10 hours | 1 |
| 8 hours | 11 |
| 7 hours | 3 |
| 6.5 hours | 4 |
| 6 hours | 4 |
| 5.5 hours | 1 |

The 2021 ABL Training Facilitator Guide recommends that training be delivered by a minimum of two certified instructors and classes be held to a maximum of 30 students. **Table 7** displays the average class size and instructor counts provided by the New Jersey training coordinators. In line with both NJOAG and the facilitator guide requirements, no coordinators reported that their average class size was above 30, with most common average class sizes being 30 students (n=13). Additionally, no coordinators reported having fewer than two instructors deliver ABL training. In fact, many coordinators reported having more than two instructors available for most training deliveries.

Table 7. Average Class Size and Instructor Counts for ABL Training (n=24)

| Avg. # of instructors | Count | Avg. # of students | Count |
|-----------------------|-------|--------------------|-------|
| 4 | 4 | 30 | 13 |
| 3 | 3 | 25-30 | 7 |
| 2 to 3 | 5 | 20 | 3 |
| 2 | 12 | 15 | 1 |

The interviews with training coordinators also sought to illuminate modifications made to the ABL training materials (e.g., PowerPoint) and delivery methods. Like ICAT training delivery, the delivery of ABL training should not have deviated from the original training materials. Notably, 21 of the 24 coordinators (87.5%) reported making no modifications. The remaining three suggested that instructors integrated additional videos or supplemental materials viewed to support the ABL training objectives. Coordinators also noted additional efforts made by instructors to enhance the delivery of the materials, including discussing personal experiences, noting wellness resources available in their jurisdiction, tying discussions to recent events in New Jersey and nationally, doing additional background research into videos and social science experiments, and integrating additional videos from the ABL supplemental materials.



Coordinators' responses related to implementing the role-play component of the ABLE training suggest deviation from the recommendations outlined in the ABLE Training Facilitator Guide.¹⁹ The ABLE curriculum outlines four role-plays intended for student participation. The first role-play is designed for student volunteers to demonstrate intervention skills for class observation. The remaining three are meant to be completed in small groups, allowing each student the opportunity to practice their intervention skills.²⁰

Although the description of role-plays used during ABLE training by coordinators matched those from the ABLE Facilitator Guide, only three coordinators indicated that ABLE training participants were broken into small groups to support skill practice in the role-plays. Most others (n=21) indicated that the role-plays engaged only a handful of individuals (students, or instructors if students were unwilling), and that these were performed with the rest of the class observing. One coordinator reported that while they had role-plays in the early months of training delivery, they later dropped the role-plays altogether because they could not get buy-in during their training deliveries.

Finally, coordinators were asked about any feedback (positive and negative) they would like to share about the ABLE training program. Coordinators may have reported more than one element in their feedback or may have chosen not to share any. The feedback that was gathered is presented in **Table 8** grouped by theme. Regarding positive feedback, the coordinators valued the case study examples included in ABLE (n=6) as well as the background provided by the social science experiments discussed (n=5). Three coordinators simply noted that they thought the ABLE training was an overall good training. Two noted that the tabletop exercises included in the training were beneficial, and two specifically emphasized the utility of the ABLE Facilitator Guide. Another two coordinators appreciated ABLE's focus on officer health and wellness.

Regarding negative feedback, the most common criticism of ABLE training pertained to the role-plays being unrealistic (n=11) and that the training was too long or repetitive (n=11). Six coordinators explicitly noted that the Washington State Training video, a video showing a mock peer intervention, was not believable. A small number of coordinators did not value the tabletop exercises (n=2), the breathing exercise (n=2), or did not like the term "active bystandership" for use in law enforcement training (n=2).

¹⁹ Unlike ICAT, ABLE training *does not* encourage the use of outside role-players during skill practice. Therefore, no questions were asked about the source and consistency of role players.

²⁰ According to the 2021 ABLE facilitator guide.



Table 8. Positive and Negative Elements of ABLE Training (n=24)*

| Positive Feedback | Count | Negative Feedback | Count |
|--------------------------------------|-------|---------------------------------------|-------|
| Case Study Examples | 6 | Role Plays | 11 |
| Social Science Experiments | 5 | Too Long/Too repetitive | 11 |
| Training as a Whole | 3 | Washington State Training Video | 6 |
| Tabletop Exercises | 2 | Tabletop exercises | 3 |
| Facilitator Guide | 2 | Breathing Exercise | 2 |
| Focus on Officer Health and Wellness | 2 | Terminology around “Active Bystander” | 2 |

*Note that multiple responses may be provided by a single coordinator.

SUMMARY

In 2022, semi-structured interviews were conducted with the 24 training coordinators responsible for facilitating the implementation of ICAT and ABLE training across the state of New Jersey in accordance with [NJOAG Directive 2020-13](#). These coordinators represented the 21 New Jersey counties and three statewide agencies, including the New Jersey State Police, New Jersey Transit Police Department, and Rutgers University Police Department. The interviews were designed to gather information on how ICAT and ABLE trainings were implemented across the state, including the extent to which training delivery adhered to the ICAT and ABLE training models, respectively.

Findings demonstrate challenges to consistently implementing training statewide. Many coordinators highlighted the difficulty in identifying and maintaining instructors to train all 31,000+ officers in the state over the 13-month implementation period. Given the limited instructor pool, several coordinators noted experiences with instructor burnout produced by the overreliance on specific trainers who were consistently available to support training delivery. This speaks to the challenge of instituting mandatory training on a large scale, given the importance of consistent, knowledgeable, and supportive instructors to enhance the quality of training delivery.

The interviews also revealed variation in the delivery of ICAT and ABLE training across different counties and agencies. Differences observed in training delivery related to the organization of training schedules (i.e., consecutive versus nonconsecutive delivery of ICAT and ABLE training), adherence to training dosage (i.e., recommended 12 hours for ICAT and 8 hours for ABLE), and some deviation from original training content. It is unclear what specific elements of training may have been altered to produce this variation or how variation in training delivery may have affected training experiences and outcomes. Still, these findings raise concerns about model fidelity in training



delivery, particularly for the implementation of scenario-based skill practice for both ICAT and ABLE training.

In sum, the findings from the interviews with ICAT/ABLE training coordinators reveal issues in the consistency of training delivery across New Jersey. This highlights the possibility of variation in training effects across the state over the implementation period. The implications of these findings are discussed further in the Discussion section of this report.



VII. SURVEY OF LAW ENFORCEMENT EXECUTIVES

To further assess the challenges and successes associated with the NJOAG Use of Force (UOF) Reduction Initiative (“the Initiative”), the research team conducted an online survey to gather perspectives of law enforcement executives from every agency in the state (n=524). This survey was administered following the full implementation of the Initiative in New Jersey. A total of 139 viable survey responses (26.5% response rate) were received. This chapter presents the methods for and findings from this cross-sectional survey. Collectively, the findings demonstrate the complexities of implementing statewide reform across agencies with varying leadership, organizational culture, and resources.

METHODS

From November 15, 2023, to January 26, 2024, the research team administered a cross-sectional survey among law enforcement executives from every agency in the state of New Jersey (N =524). The survey instrument was created and administered through Qualtrics, a web-based survey platform that allows users to create, distribute, and analyze online surveys.

In October 2023, the study’s Principal Investigator traveled to speak to members of the New Jersey State Association of Chiefs of Police (NJSACOP) to explain the purpose of the research and enhance participation in the survey. In November 2023, the NJSACOP shared an email invitation and link to participate in the survey with their membership on behalf of the research team. The invitation requested that a single executive-level member from each law enforcement agency complete the survey to represent the views of their organization. The research team followed up on this request directly with the chief law enforcement executives from each agency using an email list generated to support the collection of UOF policies statewide. A total of 139 viable survey responses (26.5% response rate) were collected through these efforts.



Survey Measures

The survey was designed to gather law enforcement executives' perspectives on the introduction and implementation of the UOF Reduction Initiative, its perceived effects, and plans for sustaining or adding approaches to UOF training and policy at the agency level.

The survey questions were grouped into the project's six conceptual areas:

1. **Rollout of the Initiative:** Eight survey items measured executives' perceptions of the development and rollout of the statewide Initiative. Respondents were asked to indicate their level of agreement with each survey item based on a five-point scale (1 = Strongly Disagree; 5 = Strongly Agree).
2. **Implementation of the Initiative:** Fifteen survey items assessed executives' perceptions of the difficulties their agency experienced in implementing the Initiative. Respondents were asked to indicate the difficulty level for specific activities using a five-point scale (1 = Not Difficult at All; 5 = Very Difficult). This was followed by an open-ended question prompting respondents to further explain other challenges their agency experienced during implementation.
3. **Perceptions of Initiative Impacts:** Twenty survey items measured executives' perceptions of the Initiative's impact on their agency. Respondents were asked to indicate their level of agreement with each survey item on a five-point scale (1 = Strongly Disagree; 5 = Strongly Agree). This was followed by two open-ended questions, prompting respondents to describe any additional benefits and concerns regarding the impact of the Initiative.
4. **Identification of Agency Challenges:**²¹ Twelve survey items measured the executives' perceptions of general issues that create daily operational challenges in their agency (e.g., staffing shortages, budgetary restrictions, community-police relations). Respondents were asked to indicate how challenging each issue is to daily operations on a five-point scale (1 = Not at All; 5 = Extremely) for each item.
5. **Plans for Sustainability:** Seven survey items assessed agency plans for sustaining different components of the Initiative. Respondents were asked to indicate if an action was (1) Planned, (2) Implemented, or (3) Not Planned or Implemented. Multiple selections were possible for each item.

²¹ Findings associated with these items are not presented in the body of this report but can be found in Table 25 of Appendix 2.



6. **Agency Characteristics and Practices:** Six survey items measured agency-level information, including how frequently agencies review use of force policies, primary reasons for updating use of force policies, release of a public-facing annual report, agency name, and agency county.

In addition to these survey items, the research team created four agency-level characteristic measures from two external data sources. The data sources used to develop these measures were the US Census 2023 American Community Survey (ACS) and the NJOAG 2023 Police Recruiting Data Dashboard, which contains annual counts of agency size. These measures were used to assess the representativeness of the survey sample and the impact of agency characteristics on specific survey findings.

Analysis Plan

Survey data were analyzed using SPSS and Stata, which are both general-purpose statistical software programs. Analyses included descriptive and bivariate statistics (Fisher's exact test and Spearman's rank correlation). Chi-square tests of independence are often used to assess statistical differences between two categorical variables by comparing expected and observed frequencies. However, given the low frequency of responses across different characteristic variables and survey items, the chi-square test was not appropriate for the purposes of this analysis.

When analyzing survey items related to the state region (i.e., a nominal variable), Fisher's exact test was used. Fisher's exact test is a test of statistical significance used for smaller sample sizes and provides an exact p-value estimate rather than an approximation (Fisher, 1922). Notably, this test is conservative compared to many other tests for statistical significance (Choi et al., 2015).

For each of the remaining agency characteristic variables (i.e., population size, population median income, and agency sworn size), Spearman's rank correlation was determined to be the most appropriate bivariate test. Spearman's rank correlation is a non-parametric test that is used to assess the statistical differences in both strength and direction between the rankings of two ordinal variables (Spearman, 1904).

Analyses considered all valid responses to each individual survey item. The total number of responses varied across survey items because some executives may have declined to answer specific questions included in the survey. The tables in Appendix 2, Executive Survey, present the full findings from all analyses, including the exact item phrasing and ordering, number of responses, and corresponding scores.



FINDINGS

The findings from the analysis of the survey of law enforcement executives are presented below. These include a description of the characteristics of the responding agencies compared to law enforcement agencies statewide, executives' general perceptions of the Initiative's development and implementation, including challenges associated with implementation, executives' perceptions of the effects of the Initiative on officer behavior (e.g., use of force, peer intervention activities) and agency operations, and, finally, the description of agencies' current and planned activities to support the Initiative. Findings from both descriptive and bivariate analyses are presented, as appropriate, across these domains.

Responding Agency Characteristics

This section presents the characteristics of the law enforcement agencies represented by the sample of survey respondents (n=139; 26.5% response rate).²² Survey respondents were asked to identify their agency and county name. The research team collected and matched Census and NJOAG data to each agency represented by the survey responses. **Table 9** displays the frequencies and percentages of agencies falling within categories of various characteristics for both responding law enforcement agencies and the full population of New Jersey agencies. These measures include the region the agency is located in, US Census estimates of the population size the agency serves, US Census estimates of the median household income²³ of the area the agency serves, and the number of sworn officers in the agency.²⁴ This information was used to determine the extent to which the sample of responding agencies represents law enforcement agencies in New Jersey.

As demonstrated in **Table 9**, the agencies represented within the survey responses appear fairly representative of law enforcement agencies in New Jersey as a whole. Similar to the percentage of all New Jersey law enforcement (36.9%), approximately a third (34.2%) of the agencies represented among survey respondents are located in Northern Jersey, with approximately 20% of respondents representing agencies in

²² Table 20 in Appendix 2 includes a breakdown of response rates across the 21 counties in New Jersey.

²³ Due to issues with matching geographic identifier variables, the data collected from the American Communities Survey (ACS) for median income was identified by municipality. The distribution for "all NJ law enforcement agencies" represents the median household income across every New Jersey municipality in the ACS data and therefore exceeds the total number of law enforcement agencies in the state. This variable also does not include an accurate count for agencies that may cover larger geographic areas (such as county or statewide agencies).

²⁴ Data on the number of sworn officers per agency was collected from publicly available data provided by the NJOAG for the year 2023 (<https://www.njoag.gov/policerrecruiting/>). Data was current as of April 2025.



Central Jersey (19.3% compared to 20.2% statewide), Southern Jersey (23.7% compared to 21.0% statewide), and the Shore regions (22.8% compared to 21.9% statewide), respectively. Agencies serving populations of 100,000+ were slightly overrepresented (7.1% compared to 2.5% statewide), and agencies serving populations of 1–24,999 were slightly underrepresented (69.4% compared to 75.6% statewide) within the survey sample. However, the median household income of the population served by the responding agencies was closely aligned with those reported by all law enforcement agencies in the state. Similarly, the size of the law enforcement agencies represented by the survey sample was closely aligned with the state.

Table 9. Comparisons of Responding Law Enforcement Agencies to All New Jersey Law Enforcement Agencies

| <i>State Region</i> | NJ Executive Respondents (n=139) | | All NJ Law Enforcement (N=524) | |
|--------------------------------|---------------------------------------------|---------|-------------------------------------------|---------|
| | Freq. | Percent | Freq. | Percent |
| Northern Jersey | 39 | 34.2% | 192 | 36.9% |
| Central Jersey | 22 | 19.3% | 105 | 20.2% |
| Southern Jersey | 27 | 23.7% | 109 | 21.0% |
| Shore | 26 | 22.8% | 114 | 21.9% |
| <i>Missing</i> | 25 | -- | 4 | -- |
| <i>Total*</i> | 114 | 100.0% | 520 | 100.0% |
| <i>Census Population</i> | Freq. | Percent | Freq. | Percent |
| 1-24,999 | 68 | 69.4% | 328 | 75.6% |
| 25,000-49,999 | 16 | 16.3% | 64 | 14.7% |
| 50,000-99,999 | 7 | 7.1% | 31 | 7.1% |
| 100,000+ | 7 | 7.1% | 11 | 2.5% |
| <i>Missing</i> | 41 | -- | 90 | -- |
| <i>Total*</i> | 98 | 100.0% | 434 | 100.0% |
| <i>Median Household Income</i> | Freq. | Percent | Freq. | Percent |
| \$30,000-\$74,999 | 13 | 13.3% | 65 | 11.6% |
| \$75,000-\$99,999 | 23 | 23.5% | 146 | 26.0% |
| \$100,000-\$124,999 | 29 | 29.6% | 153 | 27.3% |
| \$125,000-\$174,999 | 21 | 21.4% | 133 | 23.7% |
| \$175,000+ | 12 | 12.2% | 64 | 11.4% |
| <i>Missing</i> | 41 | -- | 8 | -- |
| <i>Total*</i> | 98 | 100.0% | 561 | 100.0% |



| <i>Sworn Size</i> | Freq. | Percent | Freq. | Percent |
|---------------------------|-------|---------|-------|---------|
| Small (1-49 officers) | 77 | 72.0% | 371 | 70.8% |
| Midsize (50-499 officers) | 30 | 28.0% | 150 | 28.6% |
| Large (500+ officers) | 0 | 0.0% | 3 | 0.6% |
| <i>Missing</i> | 32 | -- | 0 | -- |
| <i>Total*</i> | 107 | 100.0% | 524 | 100.0% |

*Note that total counts calculated do not include missing responses.

General Perceptions of the Use of Force Reduction Initiative

The survey of law enforcement executives was designed to measure perceptions of the development, rollout, and subsequent difficulties their agency experienced when implementing various aspects of the Initiative. This section presents the findings across these domains of the survey.

DEVELOPMENT AND ROLLOUT OF THE INITIATIVE

Figure 2 displays executives' responses to survey items designed to assess perceptions of the development and rollout of the Initiative. These perceptions were captured across eight survey items using a five-point scale (1 = Strongly Disagree; 5 = Strongly Agree) to assess respondents' level of agreement with each statement, though aggregated categories are presented in the figure (i.e., Strongly Disagree/Disagree, Neutral, and Agree/Strongly Agree).

Responding executives expressed mixed perceptions of the development of the Initiative. For example, executives were split equally between agreement and disagreement when asked if they felt that "the views of New Jersey law enforcement officers were considered in the development of the initiative" (34.5% Agree/Strongly Agree, 34.5% Strongly Disagree/Disagree). Additionally, executives' responses were closely split when asked if their "officers felt supported by this initiative," though a slightly higher proportion of responses (38.4%) indicated disagreement with this item.

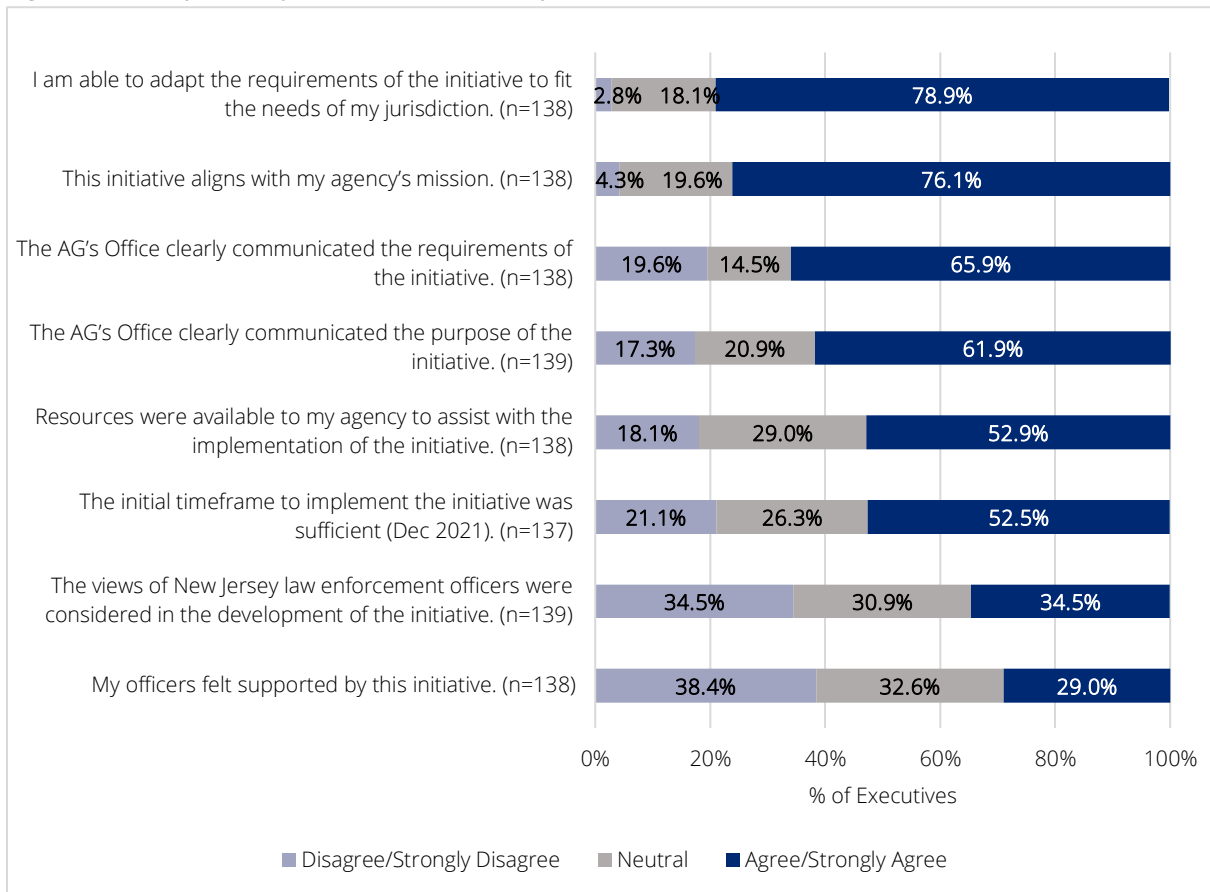
Executives appeared to hold slightly more positive perspectives on the rollout of the Initiative, with almost two-thirds agreeing that the NJOAG clearly communicated the Initiative's purpose (61.9%) and requirements (65.9%). However, executives' perceptions of their agency's capacity to implement the Initiative's requirements were mixed. For example, although most executives indicated that the Initiative aligned with their agency's mission (76.1%), only half agreed that the initial timeframe to implement the initiative was sufficient (52.5%). Similarly, only half (52.9%) of responding executives expressed perceptions that resources were available to assist their agency with



implementing the Initiative's requirements. Still, most respondents (78.9%) agreed that they had the capacity to adapt the initiative's requirements to fit the needs of their jurisdiction.

Bivariate analyses were conducted to examine the impact of agency characteristics on executives' perceptions of the Initiative development and rollout. These analyses considered the effects of agency characteristics on the eight survey items using both individual and aggregated (for a subset of items) response categories. No statistically significant differences were identified in executives' perceptions of the Initiative development and rollout based on the agency characteristics (i.e., agency size, region, total population served, median income of population served). **Table 21** in Appendix 2 presents the findings from these bivariate analyses.

Figure 2. Perceptions of the Initiative Development and Rollout



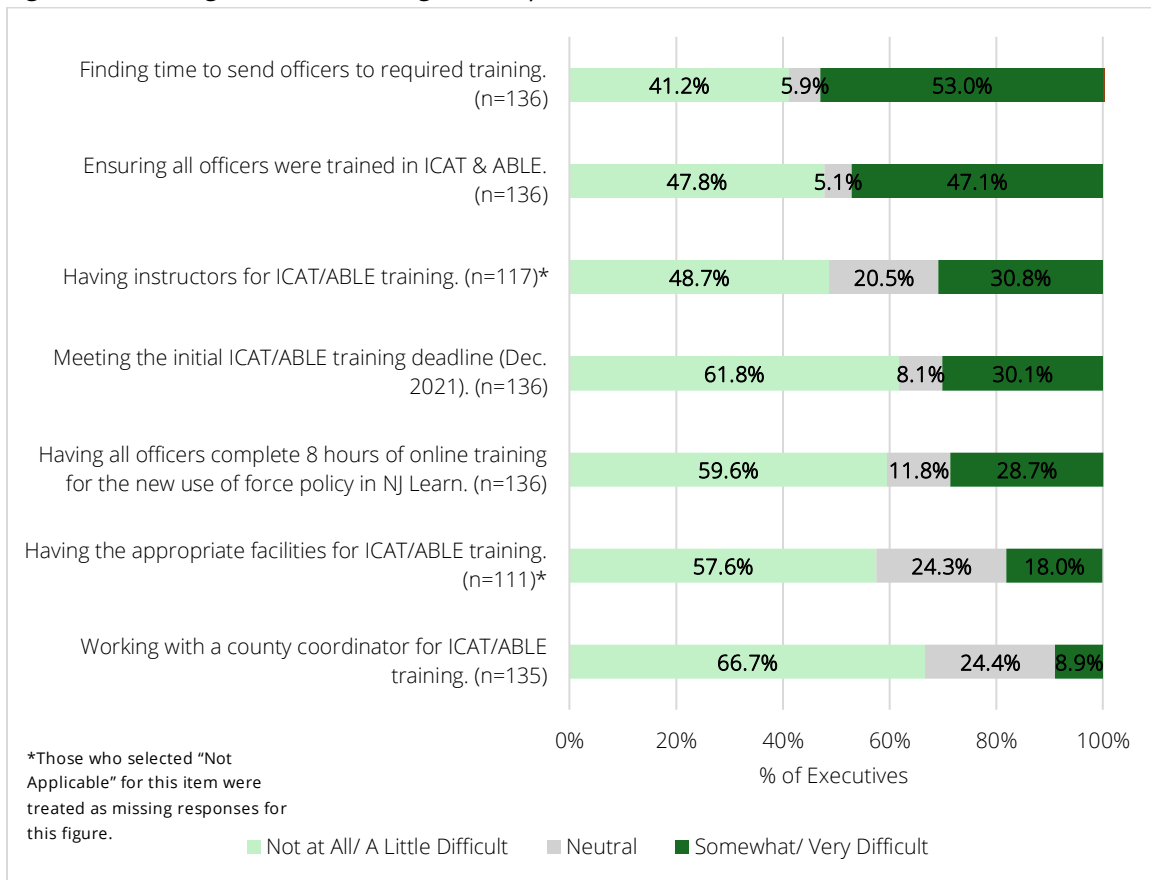


IMPLEMENTATION CHALLENGES

The survey of law enforcement executives also sought to identify perceived challenges with implementing the Initiative. Fifteen survey items were used to capture perceptions of challenges related to implementing both training- and operational-related requirements of the Initiative.

Figure 3 displays the survey items used to assess executives' perceptions of the challenges associated with implementing the Initiative's training requirements. These perceptions were captured across seven survey items using a five-point scale (1 = Not at All Difficult; 5 = Very Difficult). Aggregated responses (i.e., Not at All Difficult/A Little Difficult, Neutral, Somewhat Difficult/Very Difficult) are presented in the figure.

Figure 3. Training-Related Challenges to Implementation



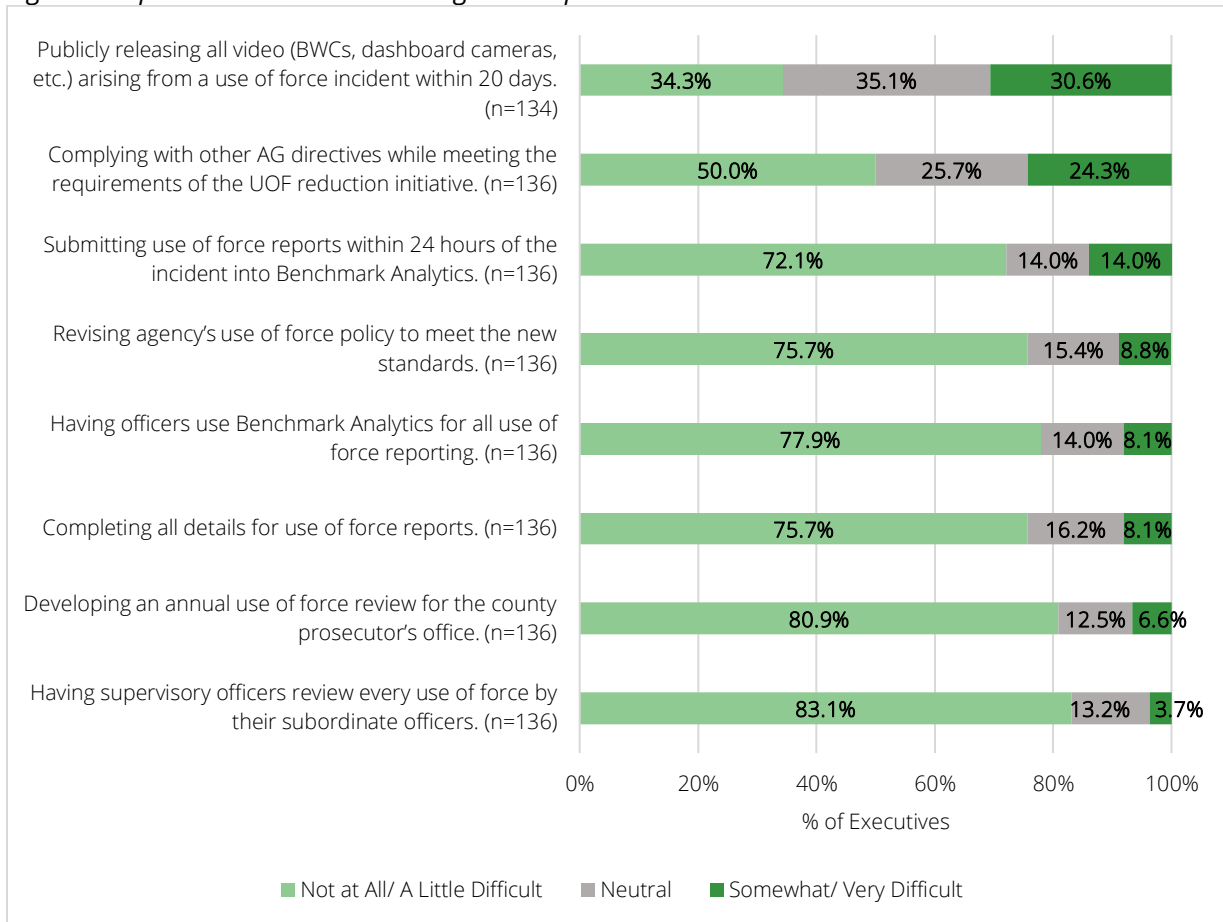
Overall, executives reported varying levels of difficulty associated with implementing the *mandated training programs* as part of the Initiative. For example, while most respondents expressed relative ease in working with a county coordinator for training implementation (66.7%), meeting the initial training deadline of December 2021 (61.8%),



and having all officers complete the mandated 8-hour online training for the new UOF policy (59.6%), approximately half (53.0%) reported challenges with finding time to send officers to the required training. Additionally, an almost equal number of respondents expressed difficulty in ensuring all officers were trained (47.1%), compared to those who reported little difficulty (47.8%). Very few executives found it challenging to have the appropriate facilities for ICAT/ABLE training (18.0%) and even fewer reported it was difficult to work with a county coordinator for ICAT/ABLE training coordinator (8.9%).

Figure 4 displays the survey items used to assess executives' perceptions of the difficulty associated with implementing the *operational components* of the Initiative. These perceptions were captured by eight survey items using a five-point scale (1 = Not Difficult at All; 5 = Very Difficult). Aggregated responses (i.e., Not at All Difficult/A Little Difficult, Neutral, Somewhat Difficult/Very Difficult) are presented in the figure.

Figure 4. Operations-Related Challenges to Implementation



Executives' responses indicate that their agency experienced few operational difficulties implementing the Initiative. A vast majority of respondents reported no or only little difficulty in revising their use of force policies to meet new standards (75.7%), having



supervisors review every use of force incident by their officers (83.1%), and completing all the details needed for use of force reports (75.7%). Additionally, most responding executives perceived little to no difficulty with developing an annual use of force review for the county prosecutor's office (80.9%), submitting use of force reports in Benchmark Analytics within 24 hours of a use of force incident (72.1%), and having officers use Benchmark Analytics for all use of force reporting (77.9%).

In contrast, only half of the responding executives reported having little to no difficulty with meeting the requirements of the Initiative while also complying with other NJOAG directives (50.0%). Notably, the greatest amount of difficulty was associated with the public release of all video from a use of force incident within 20 days (30.6% of executives selected somewhat difficult or very difficult). Nevertheless, these findings suggest that few respondents found the operations-related requirements to be somewhat or very difficult to implement.

The impact of agency characteristics on executives' perceptions of implementation challenges was assessed using bivariate analyses. For these analyses, survey items were analyzed using disaggregated response categories, aligning with the original five-point measurement scale.²⁵ One survey item was significantly correlated with a single agency characteristic. Based on results from Spearman's rank correlation test (r_s), a weak but positive correlation exists between the median income of the population served by an agency and executives' perceived difficulty of "ensuring all officers were trained in ICAT & ABLE" ($r_s(96) = 0.232, p = 0.022$). This finding suggests that as median income levels increased, executives' perceptions of the difficulty of ensuring all their officers received training also increased. Agency characteristics were not associated with executives' responses across the remaining 14 survey items. **Table 22** in Appendix 2 presents the findings from these bivariate analyses.

QUALITATIVE RESPONSES

In addition to the survey items described above, responding executives were offered the opportunity to identify additional challenges and/or provide greater detail on issues associated with the development, rollout, and implementation of the Initiative. Twenty-two responses were collected using this open-ended question. Five general perspectives were represented by these responses. Specifically, the responding executives perceived that:

²⁵ These bivariate tests also considered a subset of survey items with aggregated response options. No differences in findings were found.



- More input from the field prior to the rollout of the Initiative would have made implementation timelines more realistic;
- The statewide UOF reporting platform is redundant or incompatible with other state reporting processes;
- Elements of the UOF policy were ambiguous, creating challenges for implementation;
- The mandated timeline for releasing videos associated with UOF incidents is challenging for agencies; and
- The Initiative did not adequately consider officer safety and, in some respects, was negatively aimed at officers.

Perceptions of Initiative Impacts

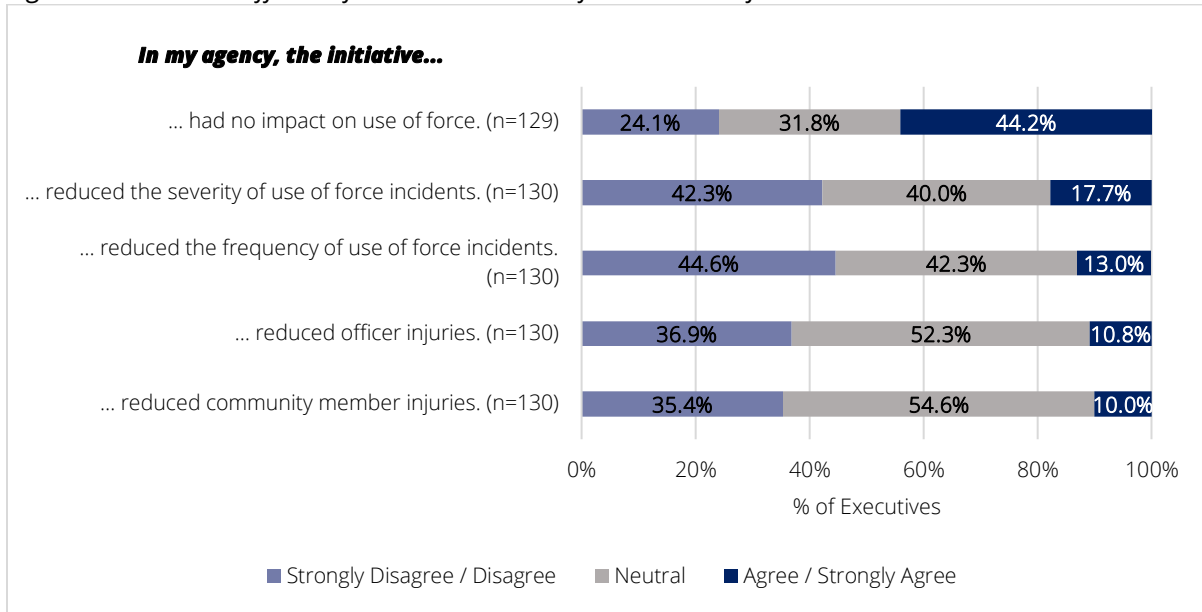
In addition to general perceptions, law enforcement executives were asked to share their perspectives on the impact of the NJOAG's Use of Force Reduction Initiative on officers' behaviors (e.g., use of force, peer intervention activities) and changes to agencies' operations and experiences with the communities they serve. The findings across the survey items measuring these domains are presented below.

INITIATIVE EFFECTS ON USE OF FORCE, INJURIES, AND PEER INTERVENTION

Ten survey items were designed to assess executives' views of the Initiative's effects on officers' use of force, injuries to officers and community members, misconduct by officers, and officers' use of peer intervention strategies. **Figure 5** displays findings from survey items assessing executives' perceptions of the Initiative's impact on the frequency and severity of use of force and injuries to officers and community members. The five survey items presented were measured using a five-point scale (1 = Strongly Disagree; 5 = Strongly Agree) to assess respondents' level of agreement with each statement. These response categories are aggregated for presentation within the figure (i.e., Strongly Disagree/Disagree, Neutral, and Agree/Strongly Agree).



Figure 5. Perceived Effects of Initiative on Use of Force and Injuries



Many responding executives expressed neutral opinions on the Initiative’s impact on use of force and injury-related outcomes. For example, a slight majority responded neutrally when asked if they felt the Initiative reduced officer and community member injuries for their agency (52.3% and 54.6%, respectively), with only about 10% of responding executives agreeing to each of these statements. Many executives disagreed that the Initiative reduced the frequency (44.6%) or severity (42.3%) of force incidents in their agency. Most notably, 44.2% of executives indicated agreement that the Initiative had *no impact* on the use of force.

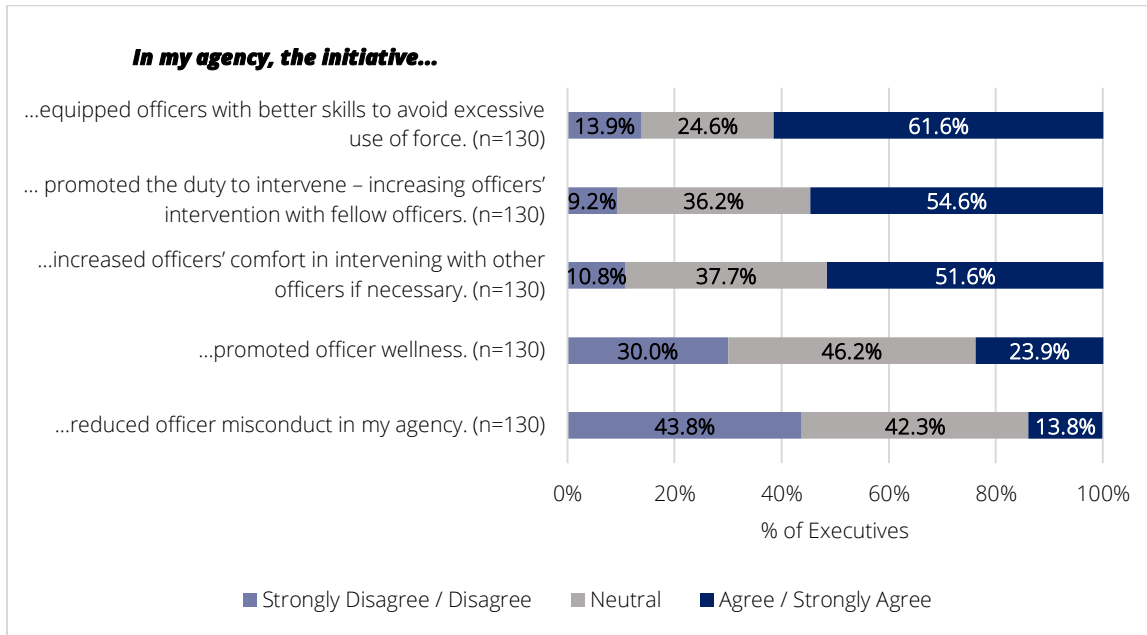
Figure 6 displays findings across survey items designed to assess executives’ perceptions of changes in officer behaviors related to excessive force and peer intervention following the Initiative. These perceptions were measured across five survey items using a five-point scale (1 = Strongly Disagree; 5 = Strongly Agree) to assess respondents’ level of agreement with each statement. These response categories are aggregated for presentation within the figure (i.e., Strongly Disagree/Disagree, Neutral, and Agree/Strongly Agree).

Executives appear to perceive some effects of the Initiative on excessive force and peer intervention in their respective agencies. Almost two-thirds (61.6%) of respondents agreed that the Initiative equipped officers with better skills to avoid using excessive force. Most executives also agreed that the Initiative promoted the duty to intervene (54.6%) and increased their officers’ comfort with peer intervention (51.6%). Fewer



executives, however, suggested that the Initiative reduced officer misconduct in their agency, with only 13.8% agreeing with this statement.

Figure 6. Perceived Impacts of Initiative on Excessive Force and Peer Intervention



Responses to the survey items included in this section were measured against agency characteristics to test any significant associations. Survey items were analyzed using the original five-point scale (e.g., responses were not grouped).²⁶ One survey item was found to be significantly correlated with two agency characteristics. There was a weak, negative correlation between executives' agreement with the statement "In my agency, the Initiative had no impact on use of force" and the size of the population served by an agency ($r_s(96) = -0.281, p = 0.005$). Specifically, as the size of the population an agency serves increases, executives' agreement with this statement (i.e., the Initiative had no impact on use of force) decreases. A significant but weak, negative correlation between this survey item and the size of the agency ($r_s(105) = -0.243, p = 0.012$) was also observed. Specifically, as the size of an agency increases, agreement with the statement (i.e., the Initiative had no impact on use of force) decreases. These findings suggest that executives from larger agencies and agencies that serve larger populations may perceive the Initiative to have greater effects on the use of force. However, due to the phrasing of

²⁶ A subset of survey items with aggregated response options were also included in bivariate tests and there were no differences as compared to the disaggregated response tests.



this item, we cannot be sure if executives perceive that use of force has increased or decreased.

For all other survey items in this section, the region, population size, median income level, and size of the agencies represented in this survey did not significantly affect executives' perceptions of the Initiative's impact on use of force and peer intervention-related outcomes. **Table 23** in Appendix 2 presents the findings from these bivariate analyses.

PERCEPTIONS OF IMPACT ON AGENCY OPERATIONS

Figure 7 displays the survey items used to assess executives' perceptions of Initiative impacts on their agency's operations and experiences with the communities they serve. These perceptions were measured across eight survey items using a five-point scale (1 = Strongly Disagree; 5 = Strongly Agree) to assess respondents' level of agreement with each statement. These response categories are aggregated for presentation within the figure (i.e., Strongly Disagree/Disagree, Neutral, and Agree/Strongly Agree).

Responding executives reported limited perceptions of change in their agency's operations and experiences with their communities produced by the Initiative. When considering agency operations, approximately 60% of executives disagreed that the Initiative reduced the burden of public records requests. Additionally, over 40% of respondents suggested the Initiative *did not* increase the chances that officers may undergo an investigation for use of force. More than half of the respondents expressed neutral opinions on whether the Initiative promoted research in their jurisdiction (54.6% Neutral) or whether it made it easier for an independent investigation into any use of force (56.9% Neutral). Still, almost half of responding executives (46.1%) suggested improvements in how their agency examines use of force data internally, and approximately a third (34.6%) suggested it has made it easier to compare their agency with similar law enforcement agencies.

When considering their experiences with the communities they serve, responding executives largely suggested the Initiative did not increase trust with the community (52.3% Neutral; 25.4% Strongly Disagree/Disagree) or affect the number of questions they received about their agency from community members (49.2% Neutral; 37.7% Strongly Disagree/Disagree).

Figure 7. Perceived Impacts of the Initiative on Agency Operations

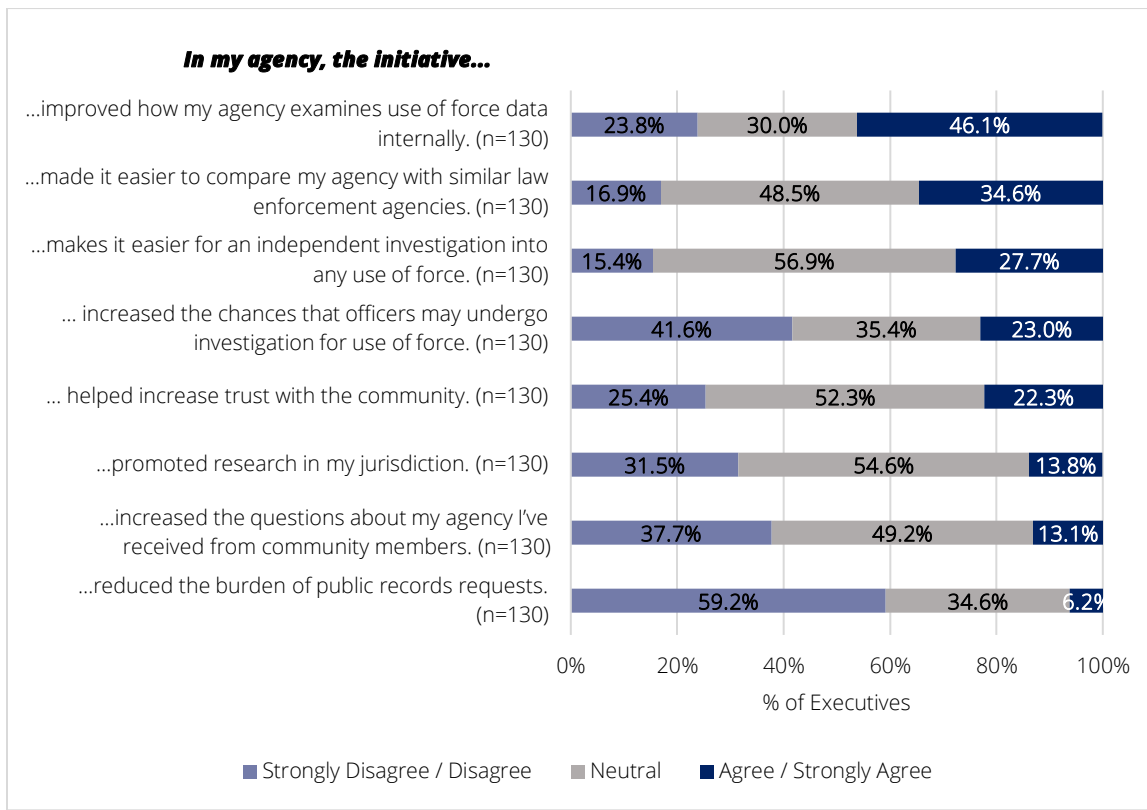


Figure 8 displays two survey items designed to assess law enforcement executives' perceptions of the overall benefits of ICAT and ABLE training for their agency. These perceptions were measured using a five-point scale (1 = Strongly Disagree; 5 = Strongly Agree) to assess respondents' level of agreement with each statement.

Overall, most executives agreed or strongly agreed that both the ICAT de-escalation training and the ABLE peer intervention training benefited their agency (66.9% and 67.0% respectively). Very few executives (6% or less) disagreed or strongly disagreed with the statements that their agency benefited from each training.

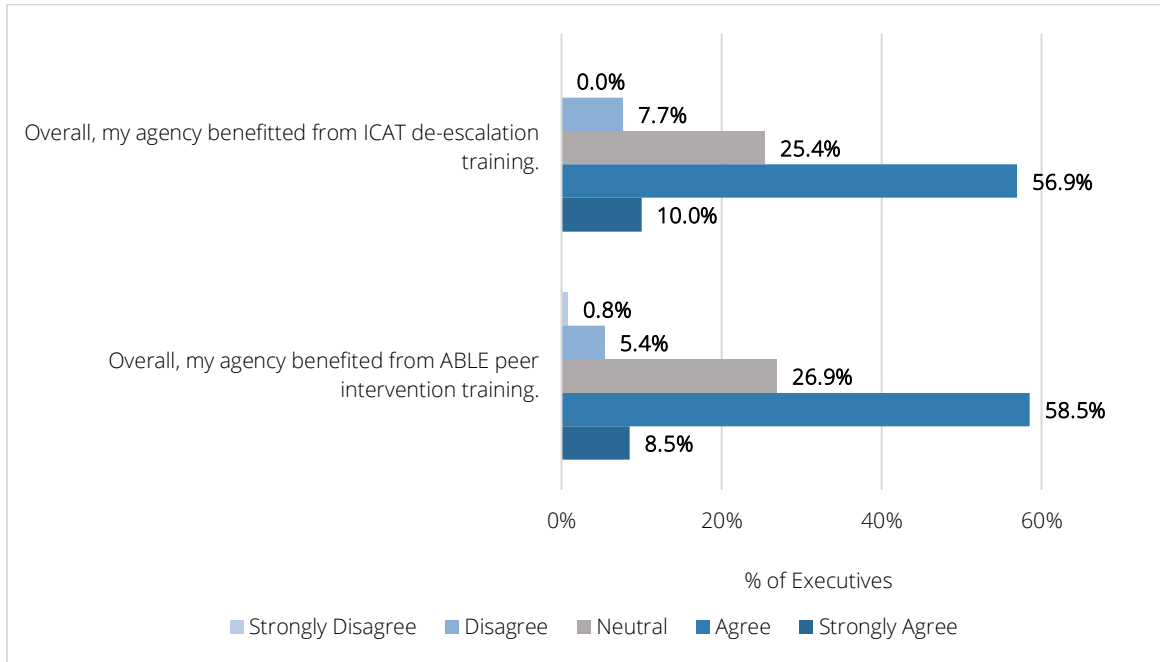
The survey items presented in this section were tested for correlations with agency characteristics. Responses were analyzed using their original five-point scale of each survey item (1 = Strongly Disagree; 5 = Strongly Agree).²⁷ No statistically significant relationships emerged in the bivariate tests for these items. This suggests that the state region, population size, population median income level, and sworn size of the agencies

²⁷ A subset of survey items with aggregated response options was also included in bivariate tests, and there were no differences as compared to the disaggregated response tests.



represented in this survey did not significantly impact executives' perceptions of the outcomes associated with the Initiative.²⁸

Figure 8. General Perceptions of ICAT and ABLE Trainings (n=130)



Agency Activities and Plans to Support Initiative Sustainability

Finally, the survey sought to assess the current activities of law enforcement agencies that align with the Initiative and understand efforts that have been implemented or are planned to be implemented to support its sustainability.

PRACTICES FOR USE OF FORCE POLICY REVIEW AND PUBLIC INFORMATION SHARING

To understand agencies' current practices that align with the Initiative, the survey asked executives about their agency's processes for updating use of force policies and public information sharing. Respondents were first asked how often their agency reviews use of force policies. Responses are presented in **Table 10** (n=129). More than half of the responding executives reported that their agency reviews policies at least annually (i.e., once per year or more than once per year; 59.7%). Conversely, a third of the responding executives reported that their agencies review use of force policies "on an as-needed basis" (33.3%).

²⁸ For full tables containing the results of all association analyses, see Appendix 2.



Table 10. Frequency of Use of Force Policy Review (n=129)

| How often does your agency conduct reviews of your policies that guide the use of force for your officers? | Freq. | Percent |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------|---------------|
| On an as-needed basis | 43 | 33.3% |
| Once per year | 39 | 30.2% |
| More than once a year | 38 | 29.5% |
| Other | 5 | 3.9% |
| Once every two years | 4 | 3.1% |
| Total | 129 | 100.0% |

Respondents were also asked for the primary reasons for revising use of force policies in their agency and instructed to select all answers that applied. As shown in **Table 11** (n=139), policy revisions were most often the product of directives from the New Jersey Office of the Attorney General (79.1%), followed by updates to case and/or statutory law (48.9%), and adherence to accreditation requirements (48.9%).

Table 11. Reasons for Use of Force Policy Review (n=139)*

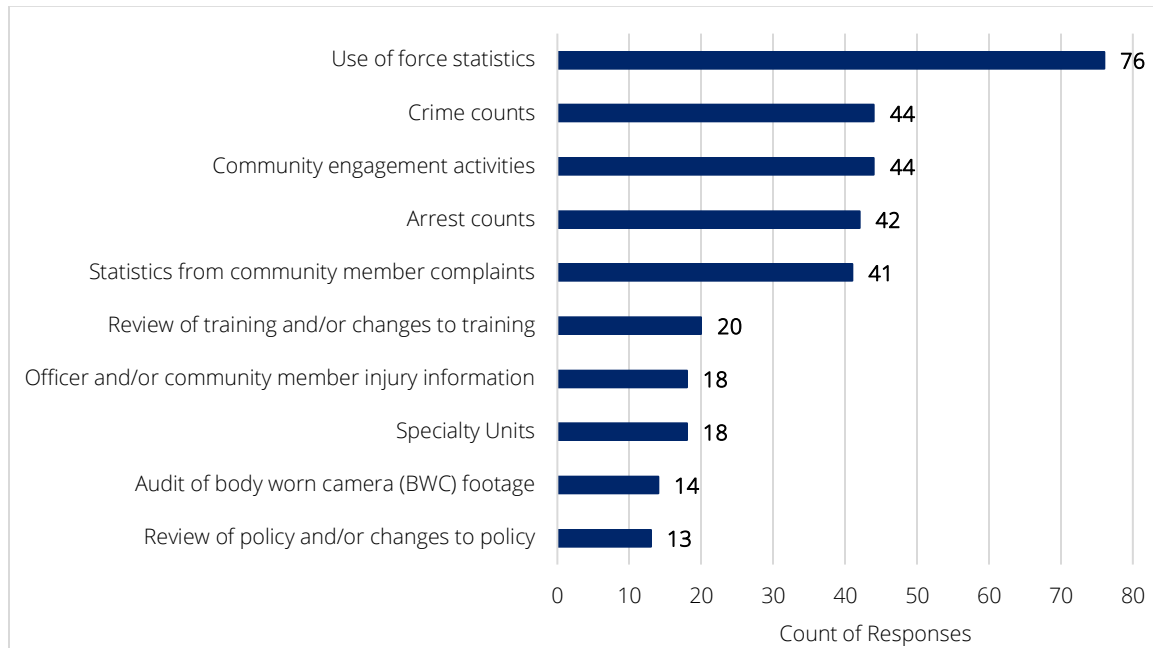
| What are the primary reasons for updating your agency policies that guide officer use of force? [select all that apply] | Freq. | Percent |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------|---------|
| Attorney General Directives | 110 | 79.1% |
| Accreditation Requirements | 68 | 48.9% |
| Case Law/Statutory Updates | 68 | 48.9% |
| Other | 3 | 2.2% |
| Citizen Review Boards | 0 | 0.0% |

*Multiple responses could be selected for this survey item.

When questioned about practices for public information sharing, most respondents (n=97; 75.8%) indicated that their agency releases an annual report of law enforcement activities. **Figure 9** presents executives' responses to a follow-up question assessing what type of information is included in the annual reports released to the public. Respondents were directed to select all applicable response options. The most common information included in the annual reports was use of force statistics (n=76), followed by community engagement activities (n=44) and crime counts (n=44). Arrest counts (n=42) and statistics from community member complaints (n=41) were also included with a similar frequency.



Figure 9. Information Included in Annual Reports Released to the Public (N=139)*



*Multiple responses could be selected for this survey item.

PLANS TO SUPPORT INITIATIVE SUSTAINABILITY

Within the survey, law enforcement executives were asked to identify all the actions their agency had planned, implemented, or did not plan to implement over the past two years to meet and/or sustain the NJOAG’s UOF Reduction Initiative. **Table 12** displays the responding executives’ responses across the seven items outlining various activities associated with the implementation and sustainability of the Initiative.

Table 12. Agency Status of Plans for Initiative Sustainability (n=139)*

| | Planned | Implemented | Not Planned or Implemented |
|---------------------------------------------------------|---------|-------------|----------------------------|
| | Freq. | Freq. | Freq. |
| 1. Refresher training on ICAT. | 40 | 21 | 69 |
| 2. Refresher training on ABLE. | 39 | 20 | 71 |
| 3. Supplemental training to guide officer use of force. | 48 | 65 | 24 |
| 4. New use of force equipment for officers. | 40 | 38 | 53 |
| 5. Hire(d) support for data analysis. | 9 | 7 | 112 |
| 6. Implement(ed) new data systems. | 14 | 25 | 92 |
| 7. Partner(ed) with an academic institution. | 11 | 9 | 109 |

*Multiple responses could be selected for each survey item in this section.



Overall, most responding executives reported that they did not have plans to implement the seven actions presented for consideration. If actions were reported as planned or implemented, they were usually related to providing additional use of force training (“refresher” or “supplemental”) or equipment to officers. The highest volume of actions that were identified as already implemented by executives included supplemental use of force training for officers (n=65), followed by new use of force equipment for officers (n=38). In terms of agency plans, executives most frequently identified supplemental use of force training for officers (n=48), ICAT refresher training (n=40), ABLE refresher training (n=39), or new use of force equipment (n=40).

SUMMARY

This chapter detailed responses provided by 139 law enforcement executives across New Jersey to a cross-sectional survey administered following the NJOAG’s 2021 Use of Force Reduction Initiative. Serving as representatives of their respective law enforcement agencies, responding executives provided their perceptions of the Initiative’s development and implementation, its perceived effects on law enforcement practice, and the planning and implementation of activities to support and sustain it.

Despite the limited response rate (26.5%) to this survey, the sample of agencies represented by the responding law enforcement executives had characteristics (i.e., location, size of population served, median income of population served, number of sworn officers) similar to law enforcement agencies across the state. This offers confidence in the generalizability of the survey findings to law enforcement agencies in New Jersey.

Overall, the responding executives offered mixed perceptions on the development and implementation of the UOF Reduction Initiative. While many suggested that the NJOAG was effective in communicating the Initiative’s purpose and requirements (61.9% and 65.9% agreed/strongly agreed, respectively), their responses highlighted challenges with the timeline for meeting those requirements with available agency resources. In particular, respondents expressed difficulty with finding the time to send officers to the training mandated by the Initiative (i.e., ICAT de-escalation training, ABLE peer intervention training) and ensuring that all officers completed training. Notably, responding executives highlighted the value of mandated training. Still, many felt the overall Initiative would have benefited from greater input from New Jersey law enforcement to support messaging, inform timelines, and prioritize officer safety. Most



other elements of the Initiative, including those related to operations, policy, supervision, and data collection, were not identified as challenging to implement.

A high proportion of the responding executives perceived limited or mixed effects of the Initiative on officer behavior and agency operations. For example, many executives felt that the Initiative did not impact officer use of force in their agency (44.2% agreed/strongly agreed) or injuries to officers or community members. A similar number of executives generally disagreed that the Initiative reduced the frequency or severity of use of force incidents in their agency (44.6% and 42.3%, respectively). However, there appear to be greater perceived effects on officers' skills acquired through training, with executives reporting that the Initiative equipped officers with skills to avoid excessive force (61.6% agreed/strongly agreed), promoted the duty to intervene (54.6% agreed/strongly agreed), and increased officers' comfort with peer intervention (51.6% agreed/strongly agreed). While most bivariate tests resulted in null or non-significant associations between agency-level characteristics and survey responses, analyses did reveal one interesting finding regarding perceived impacts. Analyses suggest that executives from larger agencies that serve bigger populations may perceive greater impacts from the Initiative on the use of force in their jurisdiction.

Notably, most responding executives reported their agency did not have plans to implement activities that would support the sustainability of the Initiative, such as refresher or supplemental training, acquiring new use of force equipment for officers, or bolstering capacity for research and data analysis through new staff, data systems, or partnering with an academic institution. Collectively, these findings highlight the complexities of implementing statewide reform and the variation in experiences across agencies.



VIII. INTERVIEWS WITH LAW ENFORCEMENT EXECUTIVES

To complement the survey of law enforcement executives from New Jersey law enforcement agencies, our research team engaged in a series of semi-structured interviews with law enforcement executives (n=12) following the implementation of the NJOAG’s Initiative. We aimed to gather executives’ perspectives on the implementation and impact of the Initiative, information on agencies’ plans to sustain the Initiative’s goals, and feedback for future UOF reduction efforts. This chapter presents the methods and findings from those semi-structured interviews. The interview findings offer context to the quantitative findings presented within this report and other reports produced as part of the overall evaluation of the UOF Reduction Initiative.²⁹

METHODS

In March 2025, the research team contacted 26 law enforcement executives from agencies of different sizes and regions in New Jersey. Twelve executives agreed to participate in an interview, and **Table 13** presents the characteristics of their size and region. Eight interviews were conducted in person in New Jersey, and four were conducted virtually between March 25 and April 14, 2025.

Table 13. Agency Characteristics of New Jersey Executives Interviewed (n=12)

| Agency Size | Count | Agency Region | Count |
|--------------------|-------|---------------|-------|
| 0 – 50 officers | 4 | Central | 1 |
| 50 – 100 officers | 2 | North | 2 |
| 100 – 500 officers | 6 | Shore | 1 |
| | | South | 6 |
| | | Statewide | 2 |

Every interview involved a police executive, ranging from police captain to police chief or director, but three executives also invited additional staff to participate. Interviews lasted between 30 and 90 minutes, depending on how engaged the discussion was. A

²⁹ See, for example, the behavioral outcomes analyses presented in Final Report 2. All final reports can be found here: <https://www.policinginstitute.org/projects/new-jersey-evaluate-use-of-force-policies-training/>



semi-structured interview instrument was created and used to guide the interviews. The instrument focused on the following conceptual areas:

- **Implementation Process:** Executives were asked to describe any challenges they faced during the Initiative's implementation and how they adapted to them. They were also asked how agency size and resources affected the difficulty of implementation.
- **Impacts of the Initiative:** Executives were asked about the Initiative's effects on their agency and community, as well as on law enforcement in New Jersey more broadly. Questions also aimed to uncover executives' perspectives on why the UOF counts observed across the state post-Initiative implementation have remained relatively stable and explanations for geographic patterns in the use of force.
- **Plans to Sustain the Initiative:** Executives were given the opportunity to highlight any efforts their agency has undertaken to continue to guide officers in their decision to use force.
- **Feedback on the Initiative:** Executives were asked about the strengths and weaknesses of using a statewide approach to implement changes to individual departmental policy and training.
- **Feedback for the NJOAG:** Executives were asked how they would like the NJOAG to support law enforcement.

The research team took notes during all interviews. These notes were compiled and organized into a spreadsheet to support qualitative analysis. Specifically, thematic analysis was employed to identify, assess, and report patterns in statements and ideas documented within the interview notes. The findings from this analysis are discussed below.

FINDINGS

Responses from law enforcement executives across New Jersey revealed both similarities and differences in their perspectives on the UOF Reduction Initiative, highlighting the diverse experiences and viewpoints of law enforcement leaders. This section presents the perspectives of the interviewed executives on the implementation process and its impacts, agency plans to sustain the Initiative, and feedback to the NJOAG. Across all interview questions, executives may have expressed more than one sentiment or idea; therefore, the number of responses might be greater than 12 for various topics.



Implementation Process

Executives were asked to describe any challenges their agency experienced when implementing the NJOAG's UOF Reduction Initiative. Nine executives described experiencing at least one challenge, while the remaining three indicated their agency did not experience any significant challenges when implementing the required changes to policies, training, and data collection to align with the Initiative.

The most frequently reported challenge (n=5) was adhering to the timeline for training all officers in the mandated ICAT de-escalation and ABLE peer intervention training programs. The timeline was viewed as difficult to manage because most agencies had not allocated time nor costs for the additional training of officers in these areas. Two executives from larger departments also noted the challenge of loaning their training instructors to their respective counties over extended periods of time to support ICAT and ABLE training implementation. Neither was aware that their instructors would be used for training outside of their department at the onset of the Initiative. Notably, many smaller departments did not have instructors on loan; instead, their officers simply attended the training sessions offered within their county. Finally, executives from one agency noted that the mandated training emphasized principles that did not apply to the context of policing in their jurisdiction and would have been more effective if tailored to the practices of both municipal and non-municipal police departments.

When considering challenges to the Initiative's implementation, three executives noted the confusion that the adoption of the statewide UOF policy created among officers due to some of the guidelines seeming unclear. One executive suggested it was difficult to revise their agency's UOF policy to align with the Initiative's requirements due to its interconnectedness with other policies and the limited staff available to assist in making revisions.

Three executives highlighted various issues, including inaccuracies, with the statewide UOF data collection platform known as "Benchmark." One executive from a very small department mentioned that it was difficult for officers to report all the required information for Benchmark UOF reports because the reporting style was substantially different from their previous form. Two executives noted that, while beneficial, the annual UOF summaries required by the NJOAG are very resource-intensive to produce.

During discussions about how some of these challenges were overcome, three executives shared that their agency uses a second, internal system for tracking officers' use of force. The reasons for using a secondary system included (1) concern about the longevity of Benchmark and the potential loss of historical data, (2) the preference for



other systems due to their capacity to capture additional contextual information to support trend analyses, and (3) efforts to minimize reporting issues. To address issues with clarity in the UOF policy, three executives shared that their agency implemented additional use of force training to help officers refine and practice in any “gray areas” of the NJOAG use of force policy. These training courses often included more scenarios and defensive tactics practice. Two executives noted that they discussed the NJOAG use of force policy in other training courses for reinforcement.

Several executives shared unique strategies that their respective agencies employed to mitigate challenges with Initiative implementation. For example, one executive highlighted how their leadership explicitly communicated to officers the reasoning behind the NJOAG UOF Reduction Initiative and the changes to relevant policies to support understanding. Another executive shared that their agency posted visuals throughout their department to emphasize key elements from the revised UOF policy (see photographs provided by the agency in Appendix 3).

Further, one executive shared that their agency created additional instructions to bolster officers’ use of Benchmark for reporting, while another noted that their agency instructs only the primary officer involved in UOF incidents to submit a report to minimize reporting issues. Finally, one executive mentioned that their agency requested additional funding from their city to assist in meeting the training requirements for their officers.

Executives were asked to share their perspectives on how agency size and resources might affect the difficulty of implementing the use of force initiative. Many executives (n=7) highlighted that smaller agencies experience greater resource limitations, making it harder to meet the Initiative’s operational requirements and implement efforts to support Initiative sustainability, such as in-house refresher training. Two executives suggested that smaller agencies have a greater capacity to influence organizational culture through internal communication, which can benefit implementation efforts. Conversely, three executives emphasized greater challenges for larger agencies, particularly difficulties adhering to training mandates given the sheer number of officers that need to complete training.

Initiative Impacts

The interviews with executives also aimed to gauge perceptions of how the NJOAG’s UOF Reduction Initiative impacted their agency, community, and law enforcement across New Jersey.



IMPACT ON INDIVIDUAL AGENCIES

Regarding the specific impacts on individual agencies, some executives (n=3) suggested the initiative had no effect—primarily because the frequency of their UOF incidents was already low and their departmental culture already emphasized the sanctity of life and de-escalation. Conversely, two executives stated that the Initiative played a key role in recent reductions in UOF within their respective jurisdictions, and one more credited it with reducing the number of community complaints. **Table 14** highlights these and other perspectives shared about the Initiative’s impact on individual agencies, both positive and negative.

Table 14. Perceptions of the Initiative’s Impact on Individual Agencies

| The Initiative... | Count |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------|
| ...had no effect | 3 |
| ...played a key role in reducing UOF in their jurisdiction. | 2 |
| ...reduced community complaints in their jurisdiction. | 1 |
| ...changed how officers manage behavioral health-related calls. | 1 |
| ...improved officer decision-making in the use of force and internal agency review of use of force incidents. | 1 |
| ...increased peer intervention by officers. | 1 |
| ...reduced “allowable” use of force tactics, limiting officers’ options to and confidence in managing situations. | 1 |
| ...increased rates of officer injury. | 1 |
| ...created difficulties in officer recruitment and retention. | 1 |

IMPACT ON COMMUNITIES

When asked about the Initiative’s effects on their respective communities, executives typically responded by sharing how the community perceived the Initiative as opposed to any outcomes they have noticed in the community. For example, some executives (n=2) suggested their community was not fully aware of the efforts being made to enhance the safety of officer interactions with community members. In contrast, one executive noted that their community was very appreciative of how their law enforcement agency had changed its approach to responding to individuals experiencing behavioral health-related (i.e., mental health and substance-use related) crises. Altogether, many executives (n=7) acknowledged the importance of community awareness of UOF reduction efforts and highlighted that they have communicated about the Initiative’s implementation with their respective communities.



IMPACT ON LAW ENFORCEMENT STATEWIDE

Executives also shared their opinions on how this initiative has affected the law enforcement profession in New Jersey. Two emphasized that standardizing UOF policies enhances the profession, while two others highlighted the benefits of providing officers with new skills and encouraging them to take their time during their interactions with community members. Another executive mentioned that communication among officers has improved because of this Initiative. One executive also suggested that the data collection requirements and use of the Benchmark system support the identification of statewide trends. Contrasting these positive perspectives, one executive expressed doubt that the Initiative would have significant effects across the state, while another believed it was leading to more officer injuries.

EXPLANATIONS FOR STATEWIDE USE OF FORCE TRENDS

During the interviews, our research team informed executives that recent trends in New Jersey law enforcement UOF showed mixed patterns. Executives were asked to share their perspectives on why statewide UOF trends do not demonstrate a clear decline following the Initiative's implementation.

Several executives suggested that the UOF trends could be a function of officers over-reporting UOF incidents. For example, four executives highlighted officers' confusion about the reporting requirements outlined within the NJOAG's UOF policy, especially how these requirements apply to incidents involving lower levels of force. This confusion was viewed as causing officers to report incidents that fall outside the purview of the UOF policy. Similarly, several executives (n=3) suggested that UOF trends could be a function of over-reporting due to officers' preference to over-comply rather than risk under-complying with requirements outlined by the NJOAG.

UOF trends were also viewed as corresponding with community members' behaviors and the nature of calls for service from the community. For example, three executives observed that community members appeared more confident in pushing back or resisting police officers, which can escalate police-community member interactions. This behavior was viewed as becoming increasingly more common since the summer of 2020. Separately, three executives noted that the UOF Reduction Initiative did little to address the root causes of certain encounters between the police and community members—like behavioral health-related calls for services—where lower levels of force are employed more often. These executives highlighted that changes in policy did not affect the frequency of these types of calls.



Finally, a few executives attributed the Initiative's limited effects on statewide UOF trends to officers' experiences and behaviors. Specifically, two executives suggested that officers were unreceptive to UOF training and policy updates, resulting in few behavioral changes post-Initiative implementation. Another observed a trend in officers not being as proactive and assertive as they could have been, contributing to escalation in encounters with the public.

When asked to identify reasons for geographic differences in the patterns of force used across the state, executives highlighted that population density (n=4), crime rates (n=4), and agency culture (n=2) were the primary drivers of this variation. Multiple executives (n=3) also suggested that geographic differences in UOF trends could be a function of the size and resources available to agencies located across various regions of the state. Specifically, executives observed that smaller agencies often can only dispatch one officer to respond to calls for service. The single-officer response was viewed to increase the likelihood of UOF in interactions with community members. Furthermore, smaller agencies were observed to have fewer resources and equipment (e.g., access to mental health clinicians; access to conducted energy weapons) to support officers' responses to potentially volatile situations, leaving officers with fewer options for managing these incidents.

Agency Efforts to Sustain the Initiative

Executives identified a wide range of efforts their respective agencies planned to implement to sustain the goals of the NJOAG UOF Reduction Initiative and increase the safety of police-community interactions. These responses are summarized in **Table 25**. Most commonly, executives reported their agency had either implemented and/or planned to implement refreshers on ICAT and ABLE training (n=5). Other commonly identified plans included agency efforts to recognize and/or reward exemplary officer behavior (n=4), working with community partners such as mental health clinicians (n=3), and requiring supplemental use of force training for officers (n=3). Of interest, one agency highlighted that their agency launched a jiu-jitsu club to supplement in-service training, where officers can voluntarily practice individual and team skills, enhance physical fitness, and increase their confidence in going hands-on. A photograph provided by the agency of their jiu-jitsu practice is included in Appendix 3.



Table 15. Agency Plans to Sustain the Goals of the Use of Force Initiative (n=12)

| | Count |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------|-------|
| ICAT/ABLE refresher training | 5 |
| Agency recognition of positive officer behavior | 4 |
| Working with community partners | 3 |
| Supplemental training (defensive tactics, jiu-jitsu) | 3 |
| Routine review of body-worn camera footage | 2 |
| Integration of body-worn camera footage into training | 2 |
| CIT Training | 2 |
| Additional training on crisis negotiation and working with clinicians | 1 |
| Emphasis on community policing initiatives | 1 |
| Use of early intervention system | 1 |
| New less-lethal equipment for officers | 1 |
| Supervisory modeling for patrol officers | 1 |
| Stress management training | 1 |
| Additional policy language to clarify the NJOAG use of force policy | 1 |
| New training equipment (e.g., use of force simulator) | 1 |
| Creation of a community review board | 1 |

Feedback on the Initiative and for the NJOAG

Executives were asked to provide feedback on the UOF Reduction Initiative's strengths and weaknesses and describe how they would like to see the NJOAG support law enforcement more generally. Executives consistently observed that the Initiative created uniformity in law enforcement policy for how and when to use force, which benefits interagency cooperation statewide (n=8). Officers across departments are held to the same standard regarding what level of force is appropriate based on the resistance encountered. Executives also considered the mandated training implemented as part of the Initiative to be “good” programs for officers (n=2), perceived officers to be more aware during crisis situations (n=1), and viewed both the systematic data collection efforts and the Benchmark portal as important advancements (n=1).

When considering the Initiative’s weaknesses, executives (n=7) consistently expressed the sentiment that it was “too cookie-cutter,” preventing agencies from customizing implementation to the context of their jurisdiction. Three executives noted that the initiative was not flexible enough for small agencies, in particular. Several executives mentioned confusion in interpretation due to policy wording (n=4). Additionally, some perceived the lack of NJOAG monitoring and enforcement of the rollout as a weakness



(n=3). Along with these weaknesses, **Table 16** shows other less common weaknesses identified by executives.

Table 16. Perceived Weaknesses of the Initiative (n=12)

| | Count |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------|
| Initiative is too “cookie-cutter” and does not allow for necessary customization | 7 |
| Confusion in policy wording | 4 |
| Not flexible for small agencies | 3 |
| Lack of NJOAG monitoring and enforcement of the Initiative | 3 |
| Variance in agency and officer compliance | 2 |
| Reduced officer morale | 2 |
| Increased officers’ hesitation in interactions with community members | 1 |
| Increased the risk of injury to officers | 1 |
| Limited buy-in from officers | 1 |
| Standards may inhibit local innovation and efforts to rise above statewide requirements | 1 |
| Benchmark data portal fails to collect contextual information pertinent to UOF incidents and should not include officer names | 1 |

Executives offered varied perspectives on how they would like the NJOAG to support law enforcement. Some of these perspectives related to the UOF Reduction Initiative, while others were more general. **Table 17** details executives’ requests to the NJOAG to support efforts related to the Initiative.

These include enhancements to the Benchmark data collection portal to encourage the documentation of contextual information within the portal (n=2) and enhancements to the portal’s features to enable agencies to compare their own data to other agencies in the state (n=1). Others requested the NJOAG to mandate refresher courses for both ICAT de-escalation training and ABLÉ peer intervention training to support consistency in officers’ interactions with community members (n=2). Some executives also requested greater resources, like access to mental health clinicians, to assist officers’ responses to behavioral health-related calls for services (n=2). Although some jurisdictions have these resources, they remain limited and are often available only on specific days or times.

Table 17. Executives’ Requests Related to Use of Force Initiative (n=12)

| | Count |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------|-------|
| Include additional contextual information in Benchmark | 2 |
| Mandate ICAT/ABLE training refreshers | 2 |
| Provide more resources for handling behavioral health-related calls | 2 |
| Enhance Benchmark’s capabilities to compare similar agencies | 1 |



| | |
|-------------------------------------------------------------|---|
| Approve more use of force equipment for officers | 1 |
| Increase hourly requirements for defensive tactics training | 1 |

More generally, law enforcement executives asked the NJOAG to provide more opportunities for agencies to give feedback on initiatives (n=2). Some expressed frustration with how this Initiative was implemented, leading two executives to request that the NJOAG identify funding support for any future training mandates. Other feedback from executives shown in **Table 18** includes ideas such as creating a centralized registry for police recruits or highlighting outstanding law enforcement officers, among other suggestions.

Table 18. Executives' General Requests to the NJOAG (n=12)

| | Count |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------|
| Provide more opportunities for law enforcement feedback | 2 |
| Identify funding for any future training mandates | 2 |
| Highlight outstanding law enforcement officers | 1 |
| Create a centralized registry for police recruit applicants | 1 |
| Consider police operations (and constraints to operations) in the implementation of future initiatives | 1 |
| Create more effective communication on future initiatives within law enforcement agencies and communities | 1 |
| Encourage state-wide Crisis Intervention Team training | 1 |
| Implement efforts to support bail reform | 1 |
| Create uniform field training standards | 1 |

SUMMARY

In spring 2025, the research team conducted semi-structured interviews with 12 New Jersey law enforcement executives to gather details about the implementation and impact of the 2021 Use of Force Reduction Initiative, agency plans to sustain Initiative efforts, and feedback to the NJOAG. These executives represented law enforcement agencies of various sizes and regions across the state.

Findings show variation in the types of challenges executives faced when implementing the Initiative. Some highlighted difficulties with completing training requirements, while others mentioned challenges with using the statewide UOF data collection portal or implementing the UOF policy. Notably, three executives reported that their agency faced no challenges during the implementation process.

To reduce issues with the statewide UOF data collection portal, some executives shared that their agency relied on a second, internal system for tracking officers' use of force. To



address challenges with officers' understanding of the UOF policy, executives shared that additional training, communications, and visuals were implemented in their respective agencies to reinforce key elements of the policy.

A common view among interview participants was that it was likely more difficult for smaller law enforcement agencies to implement the Initiative's requirements, especially in meeting some of the operational requirements outlined in the policy. However, some observed that meeting the training mandate for all officers was probably more difficult in larger organizations than in smaller ones due to the number of officers in those agencies.

When discussing the Initiative's impact, a few executives observed no effects in their agencies, while others linked the Initiative to decreases in their officers' use of force and/or community complaints. Executives also emphasized the benefits of standardizing UOF policies and providing officers with skills to manage difficult encounters with community members.

Our broader evaluation of the UOF Reduction Initiative suggests that use of force trends have not uniformly declined over time with the Initiative's implementation. When asked to provide possible explanations for these findings, executives explained that officers have experienced confusion in applying the statewide use of force policy. Specifically, officers may be over-reporting low levels of force application. Executives noted that officers may also prefer to over-report rather than risk non-compliance with reporting requirements. Others mentioned that a key reason for the lack of decline is significant changes in how community members interact with police, becoming less compliant with law enforcement since the widespread protests in 2020.

Executives highlighted several innovative ways their agency is continuing to guide officers in use of force decision-making to ensure safer interactions with the community. These mainly included refresher trainings for ICAT and ABLE, recognizing exemplary officer behavior, collaborating with community partners, and requiring additional use of force training. Many executives supported the goals of the NJOAG's Initiative, stressing that standardizing police use of force and making interactions safer were important priorities. However, executives criticized the use of a statewide approach that lacked enough flexibility for individual departments. Others pointed out that, despite uniform standards for policy, training, and data collection set by the NJOAG, some variation in interpretation still existed across agencies. Executives believed that the absence of NJOAG oversight contributed to this inconsistency.



Finally, executives were asked to give feedback to the NJOAG about any future support they would like for their profession. They requested that the NJOAG consider adding more information to the data portal to improve its usefulness, require refresher training for ICAT and ABLE, and provide additional resources for agencies to manage behavioral health-related calls. They also asked for more opportunities to give feedback on upcoming initiatives and to identify funding for future training requirements. Several of these themes overlap with the findings from the executive survey, and the implications of these findings will be discussed further in the Discussion section.



IX. DISCUSSION

In December 2020, the New Jersey Office of the Attorney General (NJOAG) announced its intention to implement a comprehensive police reform plan designed to reduce law enforcement use of force and enhance the safety of officer interactions with community members. Identified as one of the “most ambitious police reform” plans in the United States at the time, this Use of Force Reduction Initiative (the “Initiative”) prioritized three areas for statewide change in law enforcement: use of force policy, use of force training, and the collection and publication of use of force data ([NJOAG Directive 2020-13](#)).

In 2021, the NJOAG engaged our research team to collaborate in a multi-year, multi-method evaluation of the changes being implemented statewide. This evaluation was designed to illuminate the Initiative's impact and, importantly, provide a deeper understanding of how comprehensive reform efforts—like those put forth by the NJOAG—are adopted and sustained in law enforcement agencies.

This report is the third of three reports about the evaluation of the Initiative. It presents findings from the implementation evaluation of the Initiative. The research team employed multiple methodologies to examine law enforcement agencies' compliance with reform mandates, stakeholders' perceptions of and experiences with the Initiative's development and implementation, and agencies' plans to support the sustainability of the Initiative's goals. Specifically, the research team completed a comprehensive review of departmental use of force policies (n=168; representing 32.2% of NJ agencies), semi-structured interviews with law enforcement executives (n=12) and the coordinators of mandated training (n=24), and a cross-sectional survey of law enforcement executives (n=139, 26.5% response rate). Notably, the implementation evaluation adds to the very limited research exploring how change is implemented and sustained within law enforcement organizations and contributes to one of the most extensive examinations of police use of force reform. The discussion of key findings from this evaluation, recommendations for future implementation efforts based on lessons learned, and considerations for future research are presented below.

KEY FINDINGS

Collectively, the findings from the implementation evaluation highlight the strong commitment among New Jersey law enforcement agencies to implement the mandated



changes required by the Use of Force Reduction Initiative. However, they also reveal variation in the implementation processes and perceptions of the Initiative's impact.

We found substantial compliance by departments in implementing the NJOAG's requirements related to use of force policy revisions among those policies in our sample. Many of the responding agencies adopted the language from the statewide policy and/or went beyond it to offer clarifying definitions and operational guidance specific to their agency. However, we cannot be certain that *all* agencies revised their policies as required. It is very possible that agencies that did not send policies are also those more likely to be non-compliant, and agencies that did submit policies are more likely to be compliant, thus potentially biasing our sample.

Nevertheless, greater inconsistencies emerged when examining the implementation of ICAT de-escalation training and ABLE peer intervention training across the state, both in terms of training length and fidelity to the training models. Interviews with training coordinators revealed instances of training content being modified and dosage being shortened, suggesting variation in officers' experiences with training and potential effects on the intended outcomes of these mandated programs. Further, there appeared to be consistent issues in fidelity for scenario-based skill practice, a critical element of reinforcing training tenets. The survey and interviews of law enforcement executives confirmed the variability in experiences and challenges during the Initiative's implementation. Although many praised the reforms' intent, shortcomings in implementation support and resource availability were also noted. Interviews with executives highlighted the balance agencies must navigate between adopting state mandates and addressing local organizational needs, emphasizing the influence of agency size, leadership, and culture in shaping implementation.

Findings also reveal numerous challenges experienced by agencies during implementation, including resource shortages, training fatigue, and some difficulty aligning local practices with state directives. Stakeholders cited training instructor shortages and scheduling constraints as barriers to meeting the Initiative's initial timeline for training implementation. Smaller agencies were observed to struggle with capacity and resources to support training, while larger departments had trouble with scheduling training sessions for hundreds of officers. The Benchmark platform, intended to improve consistency and transparency in use of force data collection and reporting, was also criticized for being cumbersome in some instances and duplicative in others. Misconceptions surrounding the revised use of force policies, particularly related to reporting incidents of use of force, were also viewed to persist. Despite these challenges, many executives emphasized their commitment to the Initiative's goals and took



proactive steps to support implementation through communication strategies, supplemental training, and complementary data collection efforts.

Still, when asked to consider the impact of the Initiative, a high proportion of surveyed executives perceived limited or mixed effects on officer behavior and agency operations. These mixed perceptions were also evident in executive interviews, with several suggesting their agency had been minimally affected by the Initiative, though some others suggested it played a key role in reducing officers' use of force and community complaints in their jurisdiction. Additionally, most responding executives reported their agency did not have plans to implement activities that would support the sustainability of the Use of Force Reduction Initiative. Notably, these interviews and surveys occurred prior to the release of the second of our three reports, *Examining Reforms in New Jersey: Impacts on Use of Force and Other Police Activities*, and confirm what most executives suspected—there was no uniform, statewide reduction in use of force associated with the timing of any specific elements of the Initiative (ICAT or ABLE training; statewide policy change; cumulative effect of both policy and training). Instead, there was variation in the changes in the outcomes of interest across agencies as shown in *Impacts on Use of Force and Other Police Activities*.

In short, although the NJOAG established a framework for reform, findings from this evaluation reveal adaptation to the implementation of reform elements based on local capacity and resource availability. Indeed, despite uniform standards for policy, training, and data collection, some variation in interpretation was observed to exist across agencies. While this variability can reflect pragmatic adaptations to state mandates, it also underscores the limitations to implementing change statewide, particularly without formalized quality assurance mechanisms in place or plans to support the sustainability of efforts following initial implementation.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE REFORM IMPLEMENTATION

Drawing upon our findings and available research on both implementation and organizational change, we offer the following recommendations to inform future law enforcement use of force reform efforts in New Jersey and the field more generally.

Apply a Formal Implementation Framework: Future police reform initiatives should be guided by structured implementation frameworks (e.g., EPIS, CFIR). These models can help identify contextual factors that may influence implementation success, such as stakeholder perspectives, organizational readiness, and available resources. Identifying barriers and facilitators to implementation can support efforts for planning and



sustainability—two often-overlooked phases of implementation that are critical to building the infrastructure to support reform objectives in the long term (Kirk et al., 2016).

Incorporate Law Enforcement Stakeholder Input Early and Often: Consistent consideration of law enforcement stakeholders' perspectives is critical to understanding feasibility and identifying barriers and facilitators for reform implementation. Although the NJOAG sought perspectives from law enforcement when planning the Use of Force Reduction Initiative, the evaluation findings reveal that many executives felt the Initiative would have benefited from greater input from the field to ensure clarity in communication, inform timelines, and generate buy-in for implementation efforts. This highlights the value of seeking stakeholder feedback across all phases of implementation. This should include representation from all levels of a law enforcement organization, including line officers, supervisors, and executive leadership. Meaningful engagement can occur through listening sessions, pilot testing ideas, or the establishment of stakeholder advisory panels, among other options. These strategies can promote ongoing feedback that can inform implementation efforts in real time.

Integrate Mechanisms for Oversight: The NJOAG was instrumental in initiating use of force reform across the state but had limited engagement to verify compliance with the Initiative's requirements or provide ongoing support to agencies during implementation. Future initiatives would benefit from including dedicated oversight personnel, regional implementation liaisons, and a schedule for structured follow-up. For example, oversight may even be as simple as requiring agencies to submit revised policies for NJOAG review. These mechanisms can help detect inconsistencies, provide technical assistance, and ensure agencies adhere to training standards and policy requirements. Oversight is particularly important in the absence of formal accountability structures, such as those found in federal consent decrees. Even minimal monitoring and feedback loops can help maintain fidelity and variation in reform execution across agencies.

Provide Opportunities to Support Sustainability: To support the sustainability of police reform initiatives, it is essential to prioritize structured opportunities that embed reform into the long-term practices and cultures of law enforcement agencies. The findings from this evaluation underscore the need for ongoing investment in refresher and supplemental training, with many executives acknowledging that skills acquired through initial training benefit officers but require reinforcement over time to maintain effectiveness. Agencies should be encouraged—and, where possible, resourced—to implement regular refresher trainings, establish systems that recognize exemplary officer behavior, and maintain or expand partnerships with community stakeholders and



mental health professionals to support police responses. State-level support structures, including dedicated funding and accountability mechanisms, are crucial for ensuring reforms are not just implemented temporarily but embedded in standard policing practice over the long term.

DIRECTIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

This evaluation has laid important groundwork for understanding the implementation of statewide police reform. However, the findings are limited by the sample of law enforcement agencies and stakeholders who participated in the research activities. Challenges with response rates in policing research contexts are well documented (see, e.g., Nix et al., 2019). This challenge was particularly salient for this statewide evaluation. Additionally, this research relied primarily on the perspectives of a single representative from individual police agencies to offer insights into agencies' experiences with the Initiative. The information gathered is naturally limited by reliance on those individuals' perspectives of their agencies' experiences, which may or may not truly reflect the experiences of their agency. To develop a more comprehensive understanding of the implementation and impact of police reform initiatives, future research should also capture the perspectives of line officers and first-line supervisors, who are often the primary implementers of policy and training. Their experiences can reveal both unintended consequences and opportunities for refinement. Our study included surveys from line officers regarding their perceptions and experiences with the mandated ICAT and ABLE training (see [Examining Police Reforms in New Jersey: Impacts on Officer Attitudes and Behavior](#)) but did not inquire about the larger reform initiative. Additionally, understanding how reform initiatives affect public trust, perceptions of safety, and community-police relationships is essential. Surveys, focus groups, and interviews with community members, particularly from historically marginalized groups, can offer critical insights into the legitimacy and effectiveness of reform from the public's viewpoint.

Agency characteristics also warrant closer examination. The findings from this evaluation suggest that agencies' size, geographic location, available resources, and culture may influence how reforms were adopted and perceived. Future studies should explore how these factors shape implementation success and what kinds of support (e.g., funding, training, technical assistance) might mitigate this variation. Another critical area for future research involves the examination of reform sustainability. Despite the significant rollout of policy and training changes, few New Jersey executives reported implementing plans to maintain these reforms beyond the initial implementation period. Researchers



should investigate which conditions (e.g., leadership stability, ongoing funding, or external accountability mechanisms) promote the continuation of reform activities.

Finally, researchers should explore the application of implementation frameworks in policing. These frameworks offer structured approaches for understanding how complex reforms are adopted, adapted, and sustained, but their use has been limited in law enforcement settings. Prospective evaluations using these models could yield insights into best practices for managing change in complex, decentralized systems like policing.

CONCLUSION

The New Jersey Office of the Attorney General's 2020 Use of Force Reduction Initiative represents a landmark effort to enhance the safety and effectiveness of police-community interactions in New Jersey. Our evaluation confirms that large-scale reform is feasible across a decentralized law enforcement landscape. However, success depends not only on the strength of mandates but also on the fidelity of implementation, quality of training delivery, responsiveness to feedback, and long-term investment in sustainability. As federal engagement in police reform continues to fluctuate, state actors will likely assume a more prominent role in shaping law enforcement policy. The New Jersey case illustrates the promise and complexity of that role, offering a roadmap for future reform grounded in evidence, collaboration, and continuous learning.



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APPENDIX 1: USE OF FORCE POLICY COLLECTION

Table 19. Use of Force Policy Collection by County/State Agency

| County/Agency Name | # of Policies | # of LE agencies* | % Collected |
|------------------------------------------|---------------|-------------------|--------------|
| 1. Atlantic | 4 | 19 | 15.8% |
| 2. Bergen | 13 | 71 | 18.3% |
| 3. Burlington | 17 | 34 | 55.9% |
| 4. Camden** | 10 | 37 | 24.3% |
| 5. Cape May | 6 | 13 | 46.2% |
| 6. Cumberland | 1 | 5 | 20.0% |
| 7. Essex** | 6 | 24 | 25.0% |
| 8. Gloucester | 14 | 22 | 59.1% |
| 9. Hudson | 2 | 16 | 12.5% |
| 10. Hunterdon | 6 | 16 | 37.5% |
| 11. Mercer | 5 | 15 | 33.3% |
| 12. Middlesex | 11 | 27 | 40.7% |
| 13. Monmouth | 9 | 50 | 18.0% |
| 14. Morris** | 16 | 38 | 42.1% |
| 15. Ocean** | 21 | 33 | 63.6% |
| 16. Passaic | 4 | 19 | 21.1% |
| 17. Salem | 4 | 9 | 44.4% |
| 18. Somerset | 9 | 21 | 42.9% |
| 19. Sussex** | 8 | 13 | 61.5% |
| 20. Union | 5 | 25 | 20.0% |
| 21. Warren | 2 | 12 | 16.7% |
| 22. New Jersey Transit Police Department | 1 | 1 | 100% |
| 23. New Jersey State Police | 0 | 1 | 0% |
| 24. Rutgers University Police Department | 0 | 1 | 0% |
| Total | 174 | 522 | 33.1% |

*Count of agencies with valid chief/executive contact information found.

**One or more agencies from this county uploaded the incorrect policy (n=6).



APPENDIX 2: EXECUTIVE SURVEY

Table 20. Response Rate by County

| Agency County | Survey Responses from Law Enforcement Agencies (n) | Total Law Enforcement Agencies (n) | Response Rate |
|-----------------------|----------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------|---------------|
| Atlantic County | 4 | 18 | 22.2% |
| Bergen County | 17 | 71 | 23.9% |
| Burlington County | 8 | 34 | 23.5% |
| Camden County | 8 | 37 | 21.6% |
| Cape May County | 4 | 13 | 30.8% |
| Cumberland County | 1 | 5 | 20.0% |
| Essex County | 3 | 27 | 11.1% |
| Gloucester County | 9 | 21 | 42.9% |
| Hudson County | 3 | 15 | 20.0% |
| Hunterdon County | 2 | 16 | 12.5% |
| Mercer County | 3 | 15 | 20.0% |
| Middlesex County | 5 | 27 | 18.5% |
| Monmouth County | 9 | 47 | 19.1% |
| Morris County | 5 | 38 | 13.2% |
| Ocean County | 9 | 33 | 27.3% |
| Passaic County | 3 | 19 | 15.8% |
| Salem County | 1 | 9 | 11.1% |
| Somerset County | 7 | 21 | 33.3% |
| Sussex County | 4 | 13 | 30.8% |
| Union County | 5 | 24 | 20.8% |
| Warren County | 4 | 12 | 33.3% |
| State or Other Agency | 1 | 9 | 11.1% |
| *Missing | 24 | - | - |
| Grand Total | 139 | 524 | 26.5% |

*Missing counts represent the number of agency executives who did not indicate their agency or county name in their survey response.



Table 21. Full Results for Roll Out of Initiative

| | Strongly Disagree % | Disagree % | Neutral % | Agree % | Strongly Agree % |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------|---------------|--------------|------------|---------------------|
| 1. The views of New Jersey law enforcement officers were considered in the development of the initiative. (n=139) | 11.5 | 23.0 | 30.9 | 33.1 | 1.4 |
| 2. The AG's Office clearly communicated the purpose of the initiative. (n=139) | 5.8 | 11.5 | 20.9 | 54.7 | 7.2 |
| 3. The AG's Office clearly communicated the requirements of the initiative. (n=138) | 5.8 | 13.8 | 14.5 | 57.2 | 8.7 |
| 4. The initial timeframe to implement the initiative was sufficient (Dec 2021). (n=137) | 10.9 | 10.2 | 26.3 | 49.6 | 2.9 |
| 5. My officers felt supported by this initiative. (n=138) | 17.4 | 21.0 | 32.6 | 28.3 | 0.7 |
| 6. This initiative aligns with my agency's mission. (n=138) | 1.4 | 2.9 | 19.6 | 55.1 | 21.0 |
| 7. I am able to adapt the requirements of the initiative to fit the needs of my jurisdiction. (n=138) | 1.4 | 1.4 | 18.1 | 63.0 | 15.9 |
| 8. Resources were available to my agency to assist with the implementation of the initiative. (n=138) | 6.5 | 11.6 | 29.0 | 45.7 | 7.2 |



Table 22. Full Results for Implementation of Initiative

| | Not Difficult at All % | A little Difficult % | Neutral % | Somewhat Difficult % | Very Difficult % | Not Applicable % |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------|----------------------------|--------------|----------------------------|------------------------|------------------------|
| 1. Ensuring all officers were trained in ICAT & ABLE. (n=136) | 15.4 | 32.4 | 5.1 | 37.5 | 9.6 | -- |
| 2. Having the appropriate facilities for ICAT/ABLE training. (n=136) | 39.0 | 8.1 | 19.9 | 11.0 | 3.7 | 18.4 |
| 3. Having instructors for ICAT/ABLE training. (n=136) | 27.2 | 14.7 | 17.6 | 14.7 | 11.8 | 14.0 |
| 4. Working with a county coordinator for ICAT/ABLE training. (n=135) | 51.9 | 14.8 | 24.4 | 5.2 | 3.7 | -- |
| 5. Meeting the initial ICAT/ABLE training deadline (Dec. 2021). (n=136) | 22.1 | 39.7 | 8.1 | 21.3 | 8.8 | -- |
| 6. Having all officers complete 8 hours of online training for the new use of force policy in NJ Learn. (n=136) | 30.9 | 28.7 | 11.8 | 19.9 | 8.8 | -- |
| 7. Complying with other AG directives while meeting the requirements of the UOF reduction initiative. (n=136) | 25.0 | 25.0 | 25.7 | 18.4 | 5.9 | -- |
| 8. Finding time to send officers to required training. (n=136) | 6.6 | 34.6 | 5.9 | 36.8 | 16.2 | -- |
| 9. Revising agency's use of force policy to meet the new standards. (n=136) | 47.8 | 27.9 | 15.4 | 8.1 | 0.7 | -- |



| | | | | | | |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------|------|------|------|------|----|
| 10. Having supervisory officers review every use of force by their subordinate officers. (n=136) | 61.8 | 21.3 | 13.2 | 2.2 | 1.5 | -- |
| 11. Developing an annual use of force review for the county prosecutor's office. (n=136) | 50.0 | 30.9 | 12.5 | 5.1 | 1.5 | -- |
| 12. Submitting use of force reports within 24 hours of the incident into Benchmark Analytics. (n=136) | 35.3 | 36.8 | 14.0 | 12.5 | 1.5 | -- |
| 13. Having officers use Benchmark Analytics for all use of force reporting. (n=136) | 50.0 | 27.9 | 14.0 | 6.6 | 1.5 | -- |
| 14. Completing all details for use of force reports. (n=136) | 50.0 | 25.7 | 16.2 | 8.1 | 0.0 | -- |
| 15. Publicly releasing all video (BWCs, dashboard cameras, etc.) arising from a use of force incident within 20 days. (n=134) | 16.4 | 17.9 | 35.1 | 16.4 | 14.2 | -- |



Table 23. Full Results for Perceptions of Initiative Impacts

| <i>In my agency, the Initiative ...</i> | Strongly Disagree % | Disagree % | Neutral % | Agree % | Strongly Agree % |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------|----------------------|---------------------|-------------------|----------------------------|
| 1. ... reduced the frequency of use of force incidents. (n=130) | 14.6 | 30.0 | 42.3 | 11.5 | 1.5 |
| 2. ... reduced the severity of use of force incidents. (n=130) | 14.6 | 27.7 | 40.0 | 15.4 | 2.3 |
| 3. ... had no impact on use of force. (n=129) | 4.7 | 19.4 | 31.8 | 34.1 | 10.1 |
| 4. ... helped increase trust with the community. (n=130) | 8.5 | 16.9 | 52.3 | 19.2 | 3.1 |
| 5. ... increased the chances that officers may undergo investigation for use of force. (n=130) | 8.5 | 33.1 | 35.4 | 21.5 | 1.5 |
| 6. ...promoted officer wellness. (n=130) | 13.1 | 16.9 | 46.2 | 20.8 | 3.1 |
| 7. ... reduced community member injuries. (n=130) | 13.1 | 22.3 | 54.6 | 9.2 | 0.8 |
| 8. ... reduced officer injuries. (n=130) | 14.6 | 22.3 | 52.3 | 10.8 | 0.0 |
| 9. ...reduced officer misconduct in my agency. (n=130) | 19.2 | 24.6 | 42.3 | 11.5 | 2.3 |
| 10....equipped officers with better skills to avoid excessive use of force. (n=130) | 5.4 | 8.5 | 24.6 | 56.2 | 5.4 |
| 11....increased officers' comfort in intervening with other officers if necessary. (n=130) | 3.1 | 7.7 | 37.7 | 46.2 | 5.4 |
| 12.... promoted the duty to intervene – increasing officers' intervention with fellow officers. (n=130) | 3.8 | 5.4 | 36.2 | 46.9 | 7.7 |
| 13....makes it easier for an independent investigation into any use of force. (n=130) | 2.3 | 13.1 | 56.9 | 26.2 | 1.5 |
| 14....promoted research in my jurisdiction. (n=130) | 6.9 | 24.6 | 54.6 | 13.8 | 0.0 |
| 15....made it easier to compare my agency with similar law enforcement agencies. (n=130) | 2.3 | 14.6 | 48.5 | 33.1 | 1.5 |
| 16....reduced the burden of public records requests. (n=130) | 23.8 | 35.4 | 34.6 | 5.4 | 0.8 |
| 17....increased the questions about my agency I've received from community members. (n=130) | 10.0 | 27.7 | 49.2 | 12.3 | 0.8 |
| 18....improved how my agency examines use of force data internally. (n=130) | 4.6 | 19.2 | 30.0 | 43.8 | 2.3 |



Table 24. Full Results for Training Benefits

| | Strongly Disagree % | Disagree % | Neutral % | Agree % | Strongly Agree % |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------|---------------|--------------|------------|---------------------|
| 1. Overall, my agency benefitted from ICAT de-escalation training. (n=130) | 0.0 | 7.7 | 25.4 | 56.9 | 10.0 |
| 2. Overall, my agency benefitted from ABLE peer intervention training. (n=130) | 0.8 | 5.4 | 26.9 | 58.5 | 8.5 |

Table 25. Full Results for Identification of Agency Challenges

| Currently, how challenging are each of these issues for your agency's daily operations? | Not at all % | Slightly % | Neutral % | Moderately % | Extremely % |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------|---------------|--------------|-----------------|----------------|
| 1. Lack of appropriate staffing. (n=130) | 4.6 | 25.4 | 9.2 | 40.8 | 20.0 |
| 2. Increased violent crime. (n=130) | 34.6 | 20.0 | 34.6 | 8.5 | 2.3 |
| 3. Increased property crime. (n=130) | 13.1 | 21.5 | 16.2 | 33.8 | 15.4 |
| 4. Strained relations between your agency and the community. (n=130) | 62.3 | 15.4 | 20.8 | 1.5 | 0.0 |
| 5. Lack of support from elected leaders (state or municipality). (n=130) | 44.6 | 17.7 | 20.8 | 10.0 | 6.9 |
| 6. Officer morale. (n=129) | 14.0 | 27.1 | 21.7 | 27.1 | 10.1 |
| 7. Mandates from the Attorney General's Office. (n=130) | 4.6 | 16.9 | 20.0 | 41.5 | 16.9 |
| 8. Budgetary restrictions. (n=130) | 5.4 | 25.4 | 15.4 | 35.4 | 18.5 |
| 9. Lack of necessary equipment. (n=129) | 27.1 | 20.2 | 21.7 | 24.0 | 7.0 |
| 10. Lack of user-friendly data systems. (n=130) | 15.4 | 27.7 | 27.7 | 22.3 | 6.9 |
| 11. Officer wellness. (n=130) | 17.7 | 24.6 | 39.2 | 17.7 | 0.8 |
| 12. Pushback from police union. (n=130) | 44.6 | 16.2 | 26.9 | 10.8 | 1.5 |



Table 26. Full Results for Agency Plans for Sustainability (n=139)

| <i>Please select the following actions your agency has planned or has already implemented over the last two years to meet and/or sustain the requirements of the 2021 Use of Force Reduction Initiative*.</i> | Planned | Implemented | Not Planned or Implemented |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------|--------------------|-----------------------------------|
| | <i>Freq.</i> | <i>Freq.</i> | <i>Freq.</i> |
| 1. Refresher training on ICAT. | 40 | 21 | 69 |
| 2. Refresher training on ABLE. | 39 | 20 | 71 |
| 3. Supplemental training to guide officer use of force. | 48 | 65 | 24 |
| 4. New use of force equipment for officers. | 40 | 38 | 53 |
| 5. Hire(d) support for data analysis. | 9 | 7 | 112 |
| 6. Implement(ed) new data systems. | 14 | 25 | 92 |
| 7. Partner(ed) with an academic institution. | 11 | 9 | 109 |

*Multiple responses could be selected for each survey item in this section.



Table 27. Fishers Exact Test Results for Section 1 – Rollout of Initiative

| | North Freq. | Central Freq. | South Freq. | Shore Freq. | Total Freq. | Fisher's Exact Test p |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------|------------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|-------------------------------|
| 1. The views of New Jersey law enforcement officers were considered in the development of the initiative. | 39 | 22 | 27 | 26 | 114 | 0.548 |
| <i>Strongly Disagree</i> | 4 | 2 | 2 | 1 | 9 | |
| <i>Disagree</i> | 12 | 6 | 6 | 5 | 29 | |
| <i>Neutral</i> | 11 | 4 | 12 | 10 | 37 | |
| <i>Agree</i> | 12 | 8 | 7 | 10 | 37 | |
| <i>Strongly Agree</i> | 0 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 2 | |
| 2. The AG's Office clearly communicated the purpose of the initiative. | 39 | 22 | 27 | 26 | 114 | 0.767 |
| <i>Strongly Disagree</i> | 2 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 4 | |
| <i>Disagree</i> | 6 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 15 | |
| <i>Neutral</i> | 7 | 8 | 6 | 4 | 25 | |
| <i>Agree</i> | 22 | 8 | 14 | 17 | 61 | |
| <i>Strongly Agree</i> | 2 | 3 | 3 | 1 | 9 | |
| 3. The AG's Office clearly communicated the requirements of the initiative. | 39 | 22 | 27 | 26 | 114 | 0.521 |
| <i>Strongly Disagree</i> | 3 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 4 | |
| <i>Disagree</i> | 6 | 5 | 3 | 2 | 16 | |
| <i>Neutral</i> | 5 | 4 | 6 | 2 | 17 | |
| <i>Agree</i> | 23 | 10 | 14 | 19 | 66 | |
| <i>Strongly Agree</i> | 2 | 3 | 4 | 2 | 11 | |
| 4. The initial timeframe to implement the initiative was sufficient (Dec 2021). | 39 | 22 | 27 | 26 | 114 | 0.963 |
| <i>Strongly Disagree</i> | 5 | 3 | 2 | 2 | 12 | |
| <i>Disagree</i> | 4 | 2 | 3 | 2 | 11 | |
| <i>Neutral</i> | 13 | 4 | 9 | 6 | 32 | |
| <i>Agree</i> | 16 | 12 | 13 | 15 | 56 | |
| <i>Strongly Agree</i> | 1 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 3 | |



| | | | | | | |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----|----|----|----|-----|-------|
| 5. My officers felt supported by this initiative. | 39 | 22 | 27 | 26 | 114 | 0.515 |
| <i>Strongly Disagree</i> | 5 | 3 | 5 | 3 | 16 | |
| <i>Disagree</i> | 11 | 5 | 7 | 3 | 26 | |
| <i>Neutral</i> | 9 | 8 | 6 | 13 | 36 | |
| <i>Agree</i> | 14 | 6 | 9 | 6 | 35 | |
| <i>Strongly Agree</i> | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 1 | |
| 6. This initiative aligns with my agency's mission. | 39 | 22 | 27 | 26 | 114 | 0.384 |
| <i>Strongly Disagree</i> | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 2 | |
| <i>Disagree</i> | 1 | 0 | 1 | 2 | 4 | |
| <i>Neutral</i> | 10 | 5 | 7 | 1 | 23 | |
| <i>Agree</i> | 21 | 10 | 13 | 16 | 60 | |
| <i>Strongly Agree</i> | 6 | 6 | 6 | 7 | 25 | |
| 7. I am able to adapt the requirements of the initiative to fit the needs of my jurisdiction. | 39 | 22 | 27 | 26 | 114 | 0.164 |
| <i>Strongly Disagree</i> | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 2 | |
| <i>Disagree</i> | 1 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 2 | |
| <i>Neutral</i> | 8 | 4 | 7 | 2 | 21 | |
| <i>Agree</i> | 27 | 13 | 14 | 15 | 69 | |
| <i>Strongly Agree</i> | 2 | 4 | 6 | 8 | 20 | |
| 8. Resources were available to my agency to assist with the implementation of the initiative. | 39 | 22 | 27 | 26 | 114 | 0.510 |
| <i>Strongly Disagree</i> | 3 | 1 | 0 | 2 | 6 | |
| <i>Disagree</i> | 3 | 4 | 3 | 3 | 13 | |
| <i>Neutral</i> | 13 | 8 | 9 | 4 | 34 | |
| <i>Agree</i> | 19 | 7 | 12 | 13 | 51 | |
| <i>Strongly Agree</i> | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 10 | |

*Statistically significant at $p < .05$



Table 28. Spearman's Correlation Results for Section 1- Rollout of Initiative

| | Population Size | Median Income | Sworn Size |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------|---------------|------------|
| | n = 98 | n = 98 | n = 107 |
| | r_s | r_s | r_s |
| 1. The views of New Jersey law enforcement officers were considered in the development of the initiative. | 0.015 | -0.071 | -0.003 |
| 2. The AG's Office clearly communicated the purpose of the initiative. | -0.037 | -0.04 | -0.059 |
| 3. The AG's Office clearly communicated the requirements of the initiative. | -0.078 | -0.033 | -0.108 |
| 4. The initial timeframe to implement the initiative was sufficient (Dec 2021). | -0.002 | -0.094 | 0.034 |
| 5. My officers felt supported by this initiative. | -0.021 | -0.001 | -0.029 |
| 6. This initiative aligns with my agency's mission. | -0.087 | -0.026 | -0.083 |
| 7. I am able to adapt the requirements of the initiative to fit the needs of my jurisdiction. | -0.076 | -0.131 | -0.055 |
| 8. Resources were available to my agency to assist with the implementation of the initiative. | -0.057 | -0.051 | -0.031 |

*Statistically significant at $p < .05$



Table 29. Fishers Exact Test Results for Section 2 – Implementation of Initiative

| | North | Central | South | Shore | Total | Fisher's Exact Test <i>p</i> |
|--------------------------------------------------------------|-------|---------|-------|-------|-------|------------------------------------|
| | Freq. | Freq. | Freq. | Freq. | Freq. | |
| 1. Ensuring all officers were trained in ICAT & ABLE. | 39 | 22 | 27 | 26 | 114 | 0.663 |
| <i>Not Difficult at All</i> | 8 | 2 | 4 | 5 | 19 | |
| <i>A Little Difficult</i> | 10 | 6 | 12 | 7 | 35 | |
| <i>Neutral</i> | 1 | 1 | 3 | 1 | 6 | |
| <i>Somewhat Difficult</i> | 16 | 12 | 7 | 10 | 45 | |
| <i>Very Difficult</i> | 4 | 1 | 1 | 3 | 9 | |
| 2. Having the appropriate facilities for ICAT/ABLE training. | 39 | 22 | 27 | 26 | 114 | 0,875 |
| <i>Not Difficult at All</i> | 17 | 5 | 12 | 9 | 43 | |
| <i>A Little Difficult</i> | 4 | 1 | 1 | 3 | 9 | |
| <i>Neutral</i> | 5 | 7 | 5 | 5 | 22 | |
| <i>Somewhat Difficult</i> | 4 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 13 | |
| <i>Very Difficult</i> | 2 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 4 | |
| <i>Not Applicable</i> | 7 | 6 | 6 | 4 | 23 | |
| 3. Having instructors for ICAT/ABLE training. | 39 | 22 | 27 | 26 | 114 | 0.603 |
| <i>Not Difficult at All</i> | 13 | 4 | 9 | 6 | 32 | |
| <i>A Little Difficult</i> | 5 | 5 | 3 | 3 | 16 | |
| <i>Neutral</i> | 6 | 3 | 6 | 5 | 20 | |
| <i>Somewhat Difficult</i> | 4 | 3 | 3 | 8 | 18 | |
| <i>Very Difficult</i> | 5 | 2 | 1 | 3 | 11 | |
| <i>Not Applicable</i> | 6 | 5 | 5 | 1 | 17 | |
| 4. Working with a county coordinator for ICAT/ABLE training. | 39 | 22 | 27 | 26 | 114 | 0.990 |
| <i>Not Difficult at All</i> | 18 | 11 | 13 | 14 | 56 | |
| <i>A Little Difficult</i> | 6 | 4 | 4 | 5 | 19 | |
| <i>Neutral</i> | 10 | 6 | 9 | 5 | 30 | |
| <i>Somewhat Difficult</i> | 3 | 1 | 1 | 2 | 7 | |
| <i>Very Difficult</i> | 2 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 2 | |



| | | | | | | |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----|----|----|----|-----|-------|
| 5. Meeting the initial ICAT/ABLE training deadline (Dec. 2021). | 39 | 22 | 27 | 26 | 114 | 0.516 |
| <i>Not Difficult at All</i> | 10 | 4 | 6 | 6 | 26 | |
| <i>A Little Difficult</i> | 17 | 10 | 9 | 9 | 45 | |
| <i>Neutral</i> | 1 | 3 | 5 | 1 | 10 | |
| <i>Somewhat Difficult</i> | 7 | 2 | 6 | 8 | 23 | |
| <i>Very Difficult</i> | 4 | 3 | 1 | 2 | 10 | |
| 6. Having all officers complete 8 hours of online training for the new use of force policy in NJ Learn. | 39 | 22 | 27 | 26 | 114 | 0.569 |
| <i>Not Difficult at All</i> | 14 | 8 | 6 | 10 | 38 | |
| <i>A Little Difficult</i> | 13 | 5 | 11 | 6 | 35 | |
| <i>Neutral</i> | 3 | 3 | 5 | 2 | 13 | |
| <i>Somewhat Difficult</i> | 6 | 6 | 4 | 4 | 20 | |
| <i>Very Difficult</i> | 3 | 0 | 1 | 4 | 8 | |
| 7. Complying with other AG directives while meeting the requirements of the UOF reduction initiative. | 39 | 22 | 27 | 26 | 114 | 0.803 |
| <i>Not Difficult at All</i> | 9 | 6 | 6 | 9 | 30 | |
| <i>A Little Difficult</i> | 14 | 5 | 7 | 4 | 30 | |
| <i>Neutral</i> | 8 | 7 | 7 | 9 | 31 | |
| <i>Somewhat Difficult</i> | 5 | 4 | 6 | 3 | 18 | |
| <i>Very Difficult</i> | 3 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 5 | |
| 8. Finding time to send officers to required training. | 39 | 22 | 27 | 26 | 114 | 0.203 |
| <i>Not Difficult at All</i> | 4 | 2 | 1 | 1 | 8 | |
| <i>A Little Difficult</i> | 15 | 8 | 6 | 11 | 40 | |
| <i>Neutral</i> | 0 | 2 | 5 | 1 | 8 | |
| <i>Somewhat Difficult</i> | 12 | 8 | 13 | 8 | 41 | |
| <i>Very Difficult</i> | 8 | 2 | 2 | 5 | 17 | |
| 9. Revising agency's use of force policy to meet the new standards. | 39 | 22 | 27 | 26 | 114 | 0.250 |
| <i>Not Difficult at All</i> | 17 | 12 | 9 | 16 | 54 | |
| <i>A Little Difficult</i> | 14 | 5 | 8 | 8 | 35 | |
| <i>Neutral</i> | 5 | 4 | 7 | 1 | 17 | |
| <i>Somewhat Difficult</i> | 3 | 1 | 3 | 0 | 7 | |
| <i>Very Difficult</i> | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 1 | |



| | | | | | | |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----|----|----|----|-----|-------|
| 10. Having supervisory officers review every use of force by their subordinate officers. | 39 | 22 | 27 | 26 | 114 | 0.059 |
| <i>Not Difficult at All</i> | 25 | 15 | 12 | 20 | 72 | |
| <i>A Little Difficult</i> | 7 | 7 | 8 | 4 | 26 | |
| <i>Neutral</i> | 4 | 0 | 6 | 1 | 11 | |
| <i>Somewhat Difficult</i> | 3 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 3 | |
| <i>Very Difficult</i> | 0 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 2 | |
| 11. Developing an annual use of force review for the county prosecutor's office. | 39 | 22 | 27 | 26 | 114 | 0.983 |
| <i>Not Difficult at All</i> | 21 | 10 | 12 | 15 | 58 | |
| <i>A Little Difficult</i> | 12 | 8 | 8 | 8 | 36 | |
| <i>Neutral</i> | 4 | 2 | 4 | 2 | 12 | |
| <i>Somewhat Difficult</i> | 2 | 2 | 2 | 1 | 7 | |
| <i>Very Difficult</i> | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 1 | |
| 12. Submitting use of force reports within 24 hours of the incident into Benchmark Analytics. | 39 | 22 | 27 | 26 | 114 | 0.843 |
| <i>Not Difficult at All</i> | 14 | 8 | 9 | 9 | 40 | |
| <i>A Little Difficult</i> | 14 | 9 | 9 | 11 | 43 | |
| <i>Neutral</i> | 5 | 1 | 6 | 2 | 14 | |
| <i>Somewhat Difficult</i> | 6 | 3 | 2 | 4 | 15 | |
| <i>Very Difficult</i> | 0 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 2 | |
| 13. Having officers use Benchmark Analytics for all use of force reporting. | 39 | 22 | 27 | 26 | 114 | 0.262 |
| <i>Not Difficult at All</i> | 17 | 14 | 12 | 14 | 57 | |
| <i>A Little Difficult</i> | 14 | 7 | 5 | 7 | 33 | |
| <i>Neutral</i> | 4 | 0 | 6 | 4 | 14 | |
| <i>Somewhat Difficult</i> | 4 | 1 | 2 | 1 | 8 | |
| <i>Very Difficult</i> | 0 | 0 | 2 | 0 | 2 | |
| 14. Completing all details for use of force reports. | 39 | 22 | 27 | 26 | 114 | 0.790 |
| <i>Not Difficult at All</i> | 18 | 13 | 12 | 14 | 57 | |
| <i>A Little Difficult</i> | 12 | 5 | 6 | 6 | 29 | |
| <i>Neutral</i> | 7 | 1 | 6 | 4 | 18 | |
| <i>Somewhat Difficult</i> | 2 | 3 | 3 | 2 | 10 | |
| <i>Very Difficult</i> | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | |



| | | | | | | |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----|----|----|----|-----|-------|
| 15. Publicly releasing all video (BWCs, dashboard cameras, etc.) arising from a use of force incident within 20 days. | 38 | 22 | 27 | 26 | 113 | 0.194 |
| <i>Not Difficult at All</i> | 6 | 5 | 5 | 3 | 19 | |
| <i>A Little Difficult</i> | 6 | 6 | 1 | 8 | 21 | |
| <i>Neutral</i> | 16 | 6 | 12 | 7 | 41 | |
| <i>Somewhat Difficult</i> | 5 | 1 | 7 | 6 | 19 | |
| <i>Very Difficult</i> | 5 | 4 | 2 | 2 | 13 | |

*Statistically significant at $p < .05$



Table 30. Spearman's Correlation Results for Section 2 – Implementation of Initiative

| | Population Size | Median Income | Sworn Size |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------|---------------|------------|
| | n = 98 | n = 98 | n = 107 |
| | r_s | r_s | r_s |
| 1. Ensuring all officers were trained in ICAT & ABLE. | 0.055 | .232* | -0.035 |
| 2. Having the appropriate facilities for ICAT/ABLE training. | -0.011 | 0.075 | 0.019 |
| 3. Having instructors for ICAT/ABLE training. | 0.046 | 0.149 | 0.052 |
| 4. Working with a county coordinator for ICAT/ABLE training. | 0.087 | 0.055 | 0.104 |
| 5. Meeting the initial ICAT/ABLE training deadline (Dec. 2021). | -0.015 | 0.154 | -0.047 |
| 6. Having all officers complete 8 hours of online training for the new use of force policy in NJ Learn. | 0.011 | -0.073 | 0.035 |
| 7. Complying with other AG directives while meeting the requirements of the UOF reduction initiative. | 0.083 | -0.041 | 0.025 |
| 8. Finding time to send officers to required training. | -0.106 | 0.017 | -0.085 |
| 9. Revising agency's use of force policy to meet the new standards. | -0.139 | 0.058 | -0.07 |
| 10. Having supervisory officers review every use of force by their subordinate officers. | 0.118 | -0.124 | 0.034 |
| 11. Developing an annual use of force review for the county prosecutor's office. | 0.115 | -0.133 | 0.121 |
| 12. Submitting use of force reports within 24 hours of the incident into Benchmark Analytics. | -0.009 | 0.054 | -0.112 |
| 13. Having officers use Benchmark Analytics for all use of force reporting. | 0.109 | -0.021 | 0.097 |
| 14. Completing all details for use of force reports. | 0.177 | -0.122 | 0.134 |
| 15. Publicly releasing all video (BWCs, dashboard cameras, etc.) arising from a use of force incident within 20 days. | -0.015 | 0.059 | -0.044 |

*Statistically significant at $p < .05$



Table 31. Fishers Exact Test Results for Section 3 – Perceptions of Initiative Impacts

| | North | Central | South | Shore | Total | Fisher's Exact Test <i>p</i> |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------|---------|-------|-------|-------|------------------------------------|
| | Freq. | Freq. | Freq. | Freq. | Freq. | |
| 1. ...reduced the frequency of use of force incidents. | 39 | 22 | 27 | 26 | 114 | 0.089 |
| <i>Strongly Disagree</i> | 9 | 2 | 4 | 2 | 17 | |
| <i>Disagree</i> | 11 | 7 | 9 | 7 | 34 | |
| <i>Neutral</i> | 17 | 7 | 8 | 16 | 48 | |
| <i>Agree</i> | 2 | 6 | 4 | 1 | 13 | |
| <i>Strongly Agree</i> | 0 | 0 | 2 | 0 | 2 | |
| 2. ...reduced the severity of use of force incidents. | 39 | 22 | 27 | 26 | 114 | 0.467 |
| <i>Strongly Disagree</i> | 8 | 3 | 5 | 1 | 17 | |
| <i>Disagree</i> | 11 | 5 | 8 | 6 | 30 | |
| <i>Neutral</i> | 15 | 8 | 10 | 13 | 46 | |
| <i>Agree</i> | 5 | 5 | 2 | 6 | 18 | |
| <i>Strongly Agree</i> | 0 | 1 | 2 | 0 | 3 | |
| 3. ...had no impact on use of force. | 38 | 22 | 27 | 26 | 113 | 0.803 |
| <i>Strongly Disagree</i> | 1 | 2 | 2 | 1 | 6 | |
| <i>Disagree</i> | 6 | 5 | 8 | 3 | 22 | |
| <i>Neutral</i> | 12 | 8 | 6 | 9 | 35 | |
| <i>Agree</i> | 13 | 6 | 9 | 11 | 39 | |
| <i>Strongly Agree</i> | 6 | 1 | 2 | 2 | 11 | |
| 4. ...helped increase trust with the community. | 39 | 22 | 27 | 26 | 114 | 0.823 |
| <i>Strongly Disagree</i> | 5 | 1 | 4 | 0 | 10 | |
| <i>Disagree</i> | 7 | 3 | 3 | 4 | 17 | |
| <i>Neutral</i> | 21 | 12 | 13 | 15 | 61 | |
| <i>Agree</i> | 5 | 5 | 6 | 6 | 22 | |
| <i>Strongly Agree</i> | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 4 | |
| 5. ...increased the chances that officers may undergo investigation for use of force. | 39 | 22 | 27 | 26 | 114 | 0.717 |
| <i>Strongly Disagree</i> | 5 | 2 | 0 | 2 | 9 | |
| <i>Disagree</i> | 13 | 7 | 8 | 6 | 34 | |
| <i>Neutral</i> | 14 | 9 | 10 | 12 | 45 | |
| <i>Agree</i> | 6 | 4 | 9 | 5 | 24 | |
| <i>Strongly Agree</i> | 1 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 2 | |



| | | | | | | |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----|----|----|----|-----|-------|
| 6. ...promoted officer wellness. | 39 | 22 | 27 | 26 | 114 | 0.796 |
| <i>Strongly Disagree</i> | 6 | 3 | 2 | 2 | 13 | |
| <i>Disagree</i> | 6 | 4 | 6 | 3 | 19 | |
| <i>Neutral</i> | 19 | 9 | 10 | 15 | 53 | |
| <i>Agree</i> | 8 | 4 | 8 | 5 | 25 | |
| <i>Strongly Agree</i> | 0 | 2 | 1 | 1 | 4 | |
| 7. ...reduced community member injuries. | 39 | 22 | 27 | 26 | 114 | 0.793 |
| <i>Strongly Disagree</i> | 8 | 3 | 3 | 1 | 15 | |
| <i>Disagree</i> | 7 | 3 | 7 | 6 | 23 | |
| <i>Neutral</i> | 20 | 13 | 14 | 16 | 63 | |
| <i>Agree</i> | 4 | 2 | 3 | 3 | 12 | |
| <i>Strongly Agree</i> | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 1 | |
| 8. ...reduced officer injuries. | 39 | 22 | 27 | 26 | 114 | 0.524 |
| <i>Strongly Disagree</i> | 9 | 3 | 4 | 1 | 17 | |
| <i>Disagree</i> | 5 | 3 | 7 | 8 | 23 | |
| <i>Neutral</i> | 21 | 13 | 13 | 13 | 60 | |
| <i>Agree</i> | 4 | 3 | 3 | 4 | 14 | |
| <i>Strongly Agree</i> | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | |
| 9. ...reduced officer misconduct in my agency. | 39 | 22 | 27 | 26 | 114 | 0.103 |
| <i>Strongly Disagree</i> | 8 | 5 | 7 | 1 | 21 | |
| <i>Disagree</i> | 12 | 3 | 5 | 8 | 28 | |
| <i>Neutral</i> | 17 | 10 | 11 | 10 | 48 | |
| <i>Agree</i> | 2 | 3 | 2 | 7 | 14 | |
| <i>Strongly Agree</i> | 0 | 1 | 2 | 0 | 3 | |
| 10. ...equipped officers with better skills to avoid excessive use of force. | 39 | 22 | 27 | 26 | 114 | 0.655 |
| <i>Strongly Disagree</i> | 3 | 2 | 1 | 0 | 6 | |
| <i>Disagree</i> | 4 | 2 | 3 | 2 | 11 | |
| <i>Neutral</i> | 9 | 6 | 8 | 6 | 29 | |
| <i>Agree</i> | 23 | 11 | 13 | 14 | 61 | |
| <i>Strongly Agree</i> | 0 | 1 | 2 | 4 | 7 | |



| | | | | | | |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----|----|----|----|-----|-------|
| 11. ...increased officers' comfort in intervening with other officers if necessary. | 39 | 22 | 27 | 26 | 114 | 0.811 |
| <i>Strongly Disagree</i> | 2 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 4 | |
| <i>Disagree</i> | 3 | 2 | 2 | 3 | 10 | |
| <i>Neutral</i> | 13 | 7 | 7 | 13 | 40 | |
| <i>Agree</i> | 20 | 11 | 15 | 8 | 54 | |
| <i>Strongly Agree</i> | 1 | 1 | 2 | 2 | 6 | |
| 12. ...promoted the duty to intervene – increasing officers' intervention with fellow officers. | 39 | 22 | 27 | 26 | 114 | 0.581 |
| <i>Strongly Disagree</i> | 2 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 4 | |
| <i>Disagree</i> | 2 | 0 | 1 | 4 | 7 | |
| <i>Neutral</i> | 16 | 8 | 7 | 9 | 40 | |
| <i>Agree</i> | 18 | 11 | 15 | 10 | 54 | |
| <i>Strongly Agree</i> | 1 | 2 | 3 | 3 | 9 | |
| 13. ...makes it easier for an independent investigation into any use of force. | 39 | 22 | 27 | 26 | 114 | 0.421 |
| <i>Strongly Disagree</i> | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 2 | |
| <i>Disagree</i> | 8 | 4 | 1 | 2 | 15 | |
| <i>Neutral</i> | 19 | 11 | 17 | 17 | 64 | |
| <i>Agree</i> | 11 | 5 | 9 | 6 | 31 | |
| <i>Strongly Agree</i> | 0 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 2 | |
| 14. ...promoted research in my jurisdiction. | 39 | 22 | 27 | 26 | 114 | 0.940 |
| <i>Strongly Disagree</i> | 4 | 1 | 2 | 1 | 8 | |
| <i>Disagree</i> | 11 | 5 | 6 | 8 | 30 | |
| <i>Neutral</i> | 19 | 11 | 15 | 15 | 60 | |
| <i>Agree</i> | 5 | 5 | 4 | 2 | 16 | |
| <i>Strongly Agree</i> | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | |
| 15. ...made it easier to compare my agency with similar law enforcement agencies. | 39 | 22 | 27 | 26 | 114 | 0.075 |
| <i>Strongly Disagree</i> | 2 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 3 | |
| <i>Disagree</i> | 8 | 5 | 1 | 3 | 17 | |
| <i>Neutral</i> | 18 | 6 | 13 | 17 | 54 | |
| <i>Agree</i> | 11 | 10 | 12 | 5 | 38 | |
| <i>Strongly Agree</i> | 0 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 2 | |



| | | | | | | |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----|----|----|----|-----|-------|
| 16. ...reduced the burden of public records requests. | 39 | 22 | 27 | 26 | 114 | 0.190 |
| <i>Strongly Disagree</i> | 11 | 7 | 6 | 4 | 28 | |
| <i>Disagree</i> | 17 | 6 | 9 | 9 | 41 | |
| <i>Neutral</i> | 11 | 5 | 9 | 12 | 37 | |
| <i>Agree</i> | 0 | 4 | 2 | 1 | 7 | |
| <i>Strongly Agree</i> | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 1 | |
| 17. ...increased the questions about my agency I've received from community members. | 39 | 22 | 27 | 26 | 114 | 0.984 |
| <i>Strongly Disagree</i> | 4 | 2 | 3 | 3 | 12 | |
| <i>Disagree</i> | 10 | 5 | 9 | 7 | 31 | |
| <i>Neutral</i> | 21 | 11 | 11 | 12 | 55 | |
| <i>Agree</i> | 4 | 4 | 3 | 4 | 15 | |
| <i>Strongly Agree</i> | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 1 | |
| 18. ...improved how my agency examines use of force data internally. | 39 | 22 | 27 | 26 | 114 | 0.562 |
| <i>Strongly Disagree</i> | 3 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 4 | |
| <i>Disagree</i> | 8 | 7 | 5 | 3 | 23 | |
| <i>Neutral</i> | 11 | 7 | 7 | 8 | 33 | |
| <i>Agree</i> | 16 | 6 | 15 | 14 | 51 | |
| <i>Strongly Agree</i> | 1 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 3 | |
| 19. Overall, my agency benefitted from ICAT de-escalation training. | 39 | 22 | 27 | 26 | 114 | 0.215 |
| <i>Strongly Disagree</i> | 1 | 4 | 3 | 1 | 9 | |
| <i>Disagree</i> | 16 | 4 | 5 | 7 | 32 | |
| <i>Neutral</i> | 20 | 12 | 14 | 14 | 60 | |
| <i>Agree</i> | 2 | 2 | 5 | 4 | 13 | |
| <i>Strongly Agree</i> | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | |
| 20. Overall, my agency benefitted from ABLE peer intervention training. | 39 | 22 | 27 | 26 | 114 | 0.231 |
| <i>Strongly Disagree</i> | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | |
| <i>Disagree</i> | 0 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 6 | |
| <i>Neutral</i> | 17 | 5 | 5 | 6 | 33 | |
| <i>Agree</i> | 19 | 12 | 16 | 16 | 63 | |
| <i>Strongly Agree</i> | 2 | 2 | 4 | 3 | 11 | |

*Statistically significant at $p < .05$



Table 32. Spearman's Correlation Results for Section 3 – Perceptions of Initiative Impacts

| | Population Size | Median Income | Sworn Size |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------|---------------|------------|
| | n = 98 | n = 98 | n = 107 |
| | r_s | r_s | r_s |
| 1. ...reduced the frequency of use of force incidents. | 0.03 | -0.004 | 0.077 |
| 2. ...reduced the severity of use of force incidents. | 0.122 | -0.152 | 0.165 |
| 3. ...had no impact on use of force. | .281** | 0.082 | -.243* |
| 4. ...helped increase trust with the community. | 0.01 | -0.058 | -0.022 |
| 5. ...increased the chances that officers may undergo investigation for use of force. | -0.008 | -0.044 | -0.055 |
| 6. ...promoted officer wellness. | 0.073 | -0.161 | -0.007 |
| 7. ...reduced community member injuries. | 0.162 | -0.101 | 0.136 |
| 8. ...reduced officer injuries. | 0.112 | -0.048 | 0.079 |
| 9. ...reduced officer misconduct in my agency. | 0.084 | -0.134 | 0.085 |
| 10. ...equipped officers with better skills to avoid excessive use of force. | 0.127 | -0.164 | 0.038 |
| 11. ...increased officers' comfort in intervening with other officers if necessary. | -0.036 | -0.001 | -0.002 |
| 12. ...promoted the duty to intervene – increasing officers' intervention with fellow officers. | 0.103 | -0.09 | 0.109 |
| 13. ...makes it easier for an independent investigation into any use of force. | -0.065 | -0.124 | -0.124 |
| 14. ...promoted research in my jurisdiction. | 0.041 | -0.036 | 0.004 |
| 15. ...made it easier to compare my agency with similar law enforcement agencies. | -0.026 | -0.009 | -0.034 |
| 16. ...reduced the burden of public records requests. | -0.061 | -0.07 | -0.074 |
| 17. ...increased the questions about my agency I've received from community members. | 0.034 | 0.021 | 0.013 |
| 18. ...improved how my agency examines use of force data internally. | -0.034 | -0.133 | -0.079 |
| 19. Overall, my agency benefitted from ICAT de-escalation training. | -0.015 | -0.108 | -0.072 |
| 20. Overall, my agency benefitted from ABLE peer intervention training. | -0.065 | -0.152 | -0.124 |

*Statistically significant at $p < .05$; **Statistically significant at $p < .01$



APPENDIX 3: PICTURES OF AGENCY INNOVATION

A. Atlantic City Police Department's Jiu-Jitsu Club





B. Gloucester Township Police Department's Use of Force Reminders







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