



## State of New Jersey

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### ATTORNEY GENERAL ADMINISTRATIVE EXECUTIVE DIRECTIVE NO. 2024-05

**TO:** All Division Directors, Department of Law and Public Safety

**FROM:** Matthew J. Platkin, Attorney General

**DATE:** November 4, 2024

**SUBJECT:** Directive Creating the Office of Policing Strategy and Innovation

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As New Jersey's chief law enforcement officer, my principal responsibility is keeping New Jerseyans safe. Every day, over 40,000 brave law enforcement officers, working in one of New Jersey's over 530 law enforcement agencies, tirelessly pursue this mission. New Jersey can take great pride in the fact that we have one of the best police forces in the nation. Our officers are among the most highly trained in the country, and collectively our law enforcement community has set the bar for modern policing: New Jersey's law enforcement was among the first in the country to engage the use of body-worn cameras statewide; we have ushered in the most impactful police licensing law in the country; and our officers have, without reservation, embraced collaboration with mental health providers to bring ARRIVE Together to all twenty-one counties making New Jersey the first state in the country to have such a program in place statewide.

Our officers continue to serve with distinction and innovate even as our society continues to evolve making their jobs and duties to serve more complex. To ensure that our officers have the resources and tools necessary so that the people of this state continue to be served by the best police agencies in the nation, we need a centralized office within the Department of Law and Public Safety (DLPS or the "Department") with a core mission to promote excellence in policing.

As New Jersey's Attorney General, I am responsible for overseeing law enforcement throughout the state and ensuring that our criminal laws are adequately and uniformly enforced (N.J.S.A. 52:17B-112). These responsibilities extend to policing: an area where the Department has worked extensively to ensure that law enforcement is governed by the highest standards, and that our officers have the tools needed to protect and serve New Jersey proudly and capably.

The demands and complexities of modern-day policing necessitate a statewide, centralized office that can advise and support law enforcement agencies and incentivize their growth and improvement. The



law enforcement profession continues to become more complex and demanding in our modern society; officers have to adapt to new technology; they are in receipt of a proliferation of information about practices and strategies with little authoritative guidance on what works best or is based reliably in research or evidence; they are in need of resiliency and support to meet the challenging circumstances of modern policing; and our law enforcement leaders are continually asked to operate at a level of leadership that we should expect from any modern institution, but for which they may not have been adequately prepared.

Under my authority as Attorney General, I am establishing a new office that will promote uniformity across law enforcement agencies and elevate the caliber of policing in New Jersey. This new office, the Office of Policing Strategy and Innovation (OPSI or the “Office”), will lead DLPS’s continued commitment to transformation in this area. It will establish and ensure the implementation of sound policy; promote adherence to policy; identify opportunities for growth and improvement; support law enforcement personnel in their professional development and leadership; help the Department and New Jerseyans assess the effectiveness of its police response; and improve public safety.

OPSI will pursue these goals through the following core functions:

1. Advise the Attorney General on policing policy, strategy, and innovation;
2. Support law enforcement agencies in identifying and responding to emerging operational concerns, policy considerations, and trending crime problems and patterns;
3. Identify best practices and opportunities for improvement for law enforcement agencies by reviewing current practices and researching the field of law enforcement, criminology, and crime reduction and prevention;
4. Support the development and improvement of training for law enforcement, both at the stage of entry into the profession and through continuous professional development, and ensure adequate training of law enforcement for compliance with the developing field of law and policy;
5. Review the performance of policing throughout the state, including advising on metrics and benchmarks that should guide law enforcement agencies, and assist the public in assessing the performance of the agencies that serve them;
6. Support law enforcement agencies and officers in thinking strategically about policing, and grounding their approach to policing in a guardian framework;
7. Assist law enforcement in learning, adopting, and implementing community engagement as a core practice. This is in recognition that partnering with community is essential to increase law enforcement’s knowledge of the drivers of crime, and making it more effective in increasing safety and promoting public trust;
8. Promote an operational culture of excellence in policing, through the training and development of leadership, elevation and recognition of best practices, development of mentorship opportunities and other strategies for supporting the resilience and leadership, and growing the potential of all ranks of law enforcement;
9. Promote the adoption of technological innovation that is responsible and meets the legal and policy standards of the Department; and
10. Support the implementation of new policies, rules, procedures, and directives issued or identified by the Attorney General.

Therefore, pursuant to the authority granted to me under the New Jersey Constitution; the Law and Public Safety Act of 1948, N.J.S.A. 52:17B-1, *et seq.*, which provides for general responsibility of DLPS’s operations and the supervision of the organization of DLPS; and the Criminal Justice Act of 1970, N.J.S.A. 52:17B-97, *et seq.*, which provides for the general supervision of criminal justice by the Attorney General

as chief law enforcement officer of the State in order to secure the benefits of a uniform and efficient enforcement of the criminal law and the administration of criminal justice throughout the State, I have determined that the organization described herein is necessary for the efficient and effective operation of DLPS and its law enforcement functions and hereby direct all DLPS personnel to implement and comply with the following directives.

I. **Office of Policing Strategy and Innovation**

- A. ***Establishment*** There is established in the Department of Law and Public Safety, within the Division of Criminal Justice, the Office of Policing Strategy and Innovation (the Office, or OPSI).
- B. ***Leadership of OPSI***. The Office shall operate under the supervision of an Executive Director, who shall be an experienced law enforcement professional appointed by, and who shall operate under the authority of, the Attorney General. The OPSI Executive Director shall direct and supervise the work of the Office and its constituent organizational units, and shall devote their entire time to the duties of the Office. The Executive Director of OPSI shall report to the Attorney General, through the First Assistant Attorney General.
- C. ***Organization of OPSI***. With the approval of the Attorney General, the Executive Director may organize the work of the Office into organizational units as may be necessary for the efficient and effective operation of the Office. The Executive Director may delegate to employees in the Office and its constituent organizational units such powers as the Executive Director deems appropriate, to be exercised subject to the supervision and control of the Executive Director. The Attorney General shall assign to the Office such employees of DLPS as may be necessary to assist the Executive Director in the performance of their duties. To the extent not inconsistent with law, the Attorney General may delegate duties to the Executive Director to assist the Office in fulfilling its purpose.
- D. ***Duties of the OPSI Executive Director***. The Executive Director will set the programmatic and policy vision of OPSI, manage performance and outcomes of OPSI offices, and identify funding, grant, partnership and legislative opportunities for the Office and Department. The Executive Director or their designee will serve as the lead point of contact, subject matter expert, and coordinator for DLPS on all matters relating to policing policy, strategy, and innovation. The Executive Director will serve as the authority of the state of policing in New Jersey, assessing the strengths and weaknesses across the system of law enforcement agencies, and advise the Attorney General of opportunities for growth and the need for action. Under their leadership, the Executive Director will bring together thought leaders from around the state to highlight best practices, and foster a culture of learning and collaboration. The Executive Director will be responsible for instilling a culture of continuous improvement and the highest standards of excellence in the Office and across law enforcement agencies. The Executive Director will work with the constituent units within OPSI to ensure streamlined communication and collaboration, and that the units support each other in fulfilling their respective functions.

The Executive Director will also ensure that OPSI serves as the Office responsible for providing operational oversight to law enforcement agencies in supersession by the Attorney General, as well as to provide resources, assistance, and agency-specific trainings, to law enforcement agencies undergoing monitorships by County Prosecutors.

Working with the Attorney General's Director of Community Engagement, the Executive Director or their designee will develop and maintain strong working relationships with local, State, and federal partners, community and industry stakeholders, the Division of the New Jersey State Police, the 21 County Prosecutor Offices, law enforcement agencies statewide, and other organizational units and divisions within DLPS and other State agencies. The Executive Director or their designee will coordinate or support training and outreach efforts by OPSI's constituent organizational units, and manage shared services among them, including research, training, policy support, use of data, management of programmatic and policy elements of grants, grant applications, technical assistance, and community engagement.

- E. ***Structure of OPSI.*** In addition to any organizational units established by the Executive Director pursuant to Section I.C of this Directive, the following constituent organizational unit is hereby established in the Office, and shall operate under the general direction and supervision of the Executive Director. The Executive Director may issue, subject to the approval of the Attorney General, standard operating procedures or similar policies related to OPSI functions, including those within its constituent units, applicable throughout the Department.
- **Bureau of Policing Policy.** The Office of Policing Policy (OPP) established pursuant to Attorney General Administrative Directive No. 2019-8 in the Office of Public Integrity and Accountability shall be renamed the Bureau of Policing Policy (BPP) and administratively allocated to OPSI.<sup>1</sup> Within OPSI, it shall be administered by the Director of the Bureau of Policing Policy who shall be a lawyer. The BPP's mission is amended to encompass the following functions: be the State's lead policing policy office, charged with reviewing, recommending, and maintaining relevant statewide policing policies and Attorney General directives and guidelines to ensure that policing policy in the state is consistent with the mission, vision, and direction established by the Attorney General. This includes devising new policy, making new and existing policies more accessible to law enforcement, revising policy to address gaps and/or shortfalls or enhancing policy for best practices, modernizing existing policy, and minimizing or eliminating conflicting and/or obsolete policy. The Director of the Bureau of Policing Policy shall work with the other constituent units to develop policies that support their respective missions and shall work with OPSI to translate their recommendations into concrete policy.
- F. **Coordination with the Police Training Commission.** The Administrator and staff of the Police Training Commission (PTC) in the DLPS, established pursuant to the Police Training Act in 1961, N.J.S.A. 52:17B-66, *et seq.*, shall coordinate with the OPSI. The functions, duties, and responsibilities of the PTC shall continue unchanged, except that the Administrator and the Counsel to the PTC shall report to the Executive Director of OPSI.
- G. **Coordination with the Office of Law Enforcement Professional Standards.** The Office of Law Enforcement Professional Standards (OLEPS), established pursuant to the Law Enforcement Professional Standards Act of 2009. N.J.S.A. 52:17B-222, *et seq.*, shall ensure that it coordinates its responsibilities with the OPSI. The OLEPS Director shall work closely with the

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<sup>1</sup> Attorney General Administrative Directive 2019-8 originally charged the OPP with the statewide collection and analysis of law enforcement use-of-force data. That duty will remain a function of the Office of Public Integrity and Accountability, who currently works with the Office of Justice Data to maintain a publicly available dashboard for such data.

Executive Director of OPSI to develop standards, policies, and best practices that promote professionalism in the law enforcement community. Attorney General Administrative Executive Directive No. 2019-8 section I.E is hereby superseded.

- H. ***Coordination with Law Enforcement.*** Under the supervision of the Attorney General or their designee, law enforcement agencies across the state, including the Division of the New Jersey State Police, the 21 County Prosecutor's Offices, and local law enforcement agencies, shall collaborate and coordinate with OPSI to promote public safety.
- I. ***Coordination with NJSP.*** The Division of State Police shall coordinate with OPSI on any policy and program matters under OPSI's subject matter purview.
- J. ***Coordination with the Office of Justice Data.*** The Office of Justice Data (OJD) shall coordinate with OPSI to promote transparency and accountability of law enforcement, and use data to inform policy, training, and programs.
- K. ***Coordination with the Division of Violence Intervention and Victim Assistance (VIVA) and Office of Alternative and Community Responses (OACR).*** VIVA and OACR shall coordinate with OPSI to identify opportunities for improving public safety, officer resiliency, and promoting public trust.
- L. ***Supersession of Previous Directives.*** Any provisions of the following Attorney General Directive that are inconsistent with this Order are superseded:
- Attorney General Administrative Directive No. 2019-8, section I.D.4 and section I.E.
- M. ***Access to Department Resources.*** OPSI shall be authorized to call upon the expertise and assistance of every division, agency, office, bureau, and unit within DLPS, in order to carry out its mission. Such entities are hereby required, to the extent not inconsistent with law, to cooperate with the Office and to provide such assistance as the Office may require to accomplish the purposes of this Directive.

## II. **Other Provisions**

- A. ***Non-enforceability by third parties.*** This Directive is issued pursuant to the Attorney General's supervisory authority over DLPS and the statutory authority to ensure the uniform and efficient enforcement of the laws and administration of criminal justice throughout the State. This Directive imposes limitations that may be more restrictive than the limitations imposed under the United States and New Jersey Constitutions, and federal and state statutes and regulations. Nothing in this Directive shall be construed in any way to create any substantive right that may be enforced by any third party.
- B. ***Severability.*** The provisions of this Directive shall be severable. If any phrase, clause, sentence, or provision of this Directive is declared by a court of competent jurisdiction to be invalid, the validity of the remainder of the Directive shall not be affected.
- C. ***Questions.*** Any questions concerning the interpretation or implementation of this Directive shall be addressed to the Executive Director of OPSI, or their designee.

- D. **Effective date.** This Directive shall take effect November 22, 2024. The provisions of this Directive shall remain in force and effect unless and until it is repealed, amended, or superseded by Order of the Attorney General.



Matthew J. Platkin  
Attorney General

ATTEST:



Lyndsay V. Ruotolo  
First Assistant Attorney General

Dated: November 4, 2024.