



TALKING POINTS

Independent Assessment of the Bennington Police Department

These talking points are designed for departments who have contracted with the IACP to conduct a management study or assessment of the law enforcement agency. The information below can be used for speaking to the media, community leaders, or at public forums.

What is the key concept you'd like your audience to understand?

The Town of Bennington has contracted with the International Association of Chiefs of Police (IACP) to conduct an independent assessment of the policies and practices of the Bennington Police Department to learn how the department is performing and identify any areas where we could improve.

Additional context:

1. This assessment will:
 - a. Compare and contrast department operational policies and practices against best practices.
 - b. Determine to what extent, if any, systemic racial bias manifests itself in department policies and practices.
 - c. Recommend changes to department policies and practices to mitigate the effects of systemic racial bias, if any is found to exist.
2. The Bennington Police Department will be participating fully with the IACP to ensure a full and accurate assessment can be performed.
3. The final product will be a comprehensive report and action plan that will outline the current state of the department as well as recommendations to improve productivity, effectiveness, and professionalism.

Call to Action:

We hope the community will support us during this time and your input is important as we move through this study. There will be opportunities to provide your feedback through surveys and community forums. Additionally, you may choose to connect with the IACP team directly by contacting: BenningtonVT@theIACP.org.

If asked whether undergoing an assessment means something is wrong with the agency:

The IACP's assistance, in the role of an impartial, third-party observer, is a positive step for our community and for the Bennington Police Department. This assessment requires the department to be very transparent in terms of data, staff comments, and other information. Independent assessments of this nature help ensure accountability.

1. The Bennington Police Department is not alone in conducting this type of study. The IACP has been doing these types of studies nationally for the past 20 years.
2. The willingness of department leadership to undergo a critical look at its practices and being open to making change is a win-win for the department and the community.
3. Taking on a study like this shows this department's willingness to be transparent about its actions, overall management and operations.

Include any additional messaging or additional information to help strengthen the points already made:

1. The IACP will conduct its assessment using a variety of data collection methods, and the recommendations brought forward will be valid, actionable, and based on effective best practices of the police profession.
2. The IACP is the world's leading association of law enforcement executives with more than 30,000 members in 120 countries.
3. The IACP has been conducting management studies and assessment for more than 20 years and has completed well over 100 studies and technical assistance projects during that time.

How long will it take for the study to be completed?

This assessment is expected to be completed by January 2020.