



## Together...We are the Solution!

By: Noel Pinnock, President/ CEO of Texas Cops and Communities, Inc.

**There** is an all-out-attack on cops and civilians around the country that is widening the chasm that continues to polarize both police and people, but an **eye for an eye** only leaves everyone visually impaired. **My mother used to say, when you know better, you do better, and there** can't be a more opportune time in our society to help elevate the competencies of both cops and civilians as it pertains to police interactions and engagement. According to the Department of Justice (Bureau of Justice Statistics) in 2018, there were over 253 million persons in the United States that were 16 years of age and older, and over 50 million of these individuals experienced an encounter with law enforcement...whether at the inevitable traffic stop, call for domestic intervention, or the unfortunate traffic accident. **It was also reported, in 2018, that 1 in 1000 black men**, will be killed because of a police encounter. The fact is Black and Brown men and women are more likely to have an encounter with police that may lead to a fatality in comparison to their White male and female counterparts, and when you consider the very publicized and egregious deadly encounters in our own backyard and in the backyards of our fellow Americans around the country - whose names are near to our hearts, steeped in our prayers, and on the tips of everybody's tongue regardless of age... men and women who were once a son, daughter, father, uncle, auntie, brother, sister, husband, wife, and friend. In solidarity, we say their names: George Floyd, Nicolas Chavez, Breonna Taylor, Sandra Bland, Joshua Johnson, Jordan Baker, Clinton Allen, Blake Pate, Dennis Tuttle, Rhogena Nicholas, and too many others.

**Texas Cops and Communities, Inc.** has a solution that will restore the mutual respect that cops and civilians must have to rebuild the trust that has been eroding over the years, and not just over night. **Darkness cannot drive out darkness much like hate cannot drive out hate.** So, what do we do beyond the protests and riots, task force teams, recommendations, and multiple displays of passion? Well, one thing is for sure we cannot do it independently or in silos because together, we are the solution, and we **must coordinate our efforts** to be **effective** and **sustainable to yield maximum impact**.

To that end, Texas Cops and Communities, Inc. is a backbone organization that has been in the people business for more than 20 years, and has been at the forefront in connecting people, young and old, with police officers to nurture relationships that resulted in positive interactions, free from both discrimination or retaliation. Established in 2000, our organization has been a national model for police and youth mentoring and has recently recalibrated our focus to partner with diverse stakeholders in the faith-based, business, government, and nonprofit sectors in an effort to more comprehensively:

- address issues of white supremacy, systemic racism, and retaliation in law enforcement;
- educate and train people across the state of Texas on the Community and Safety Education Law; and
- provide good cops support for reporting police misconduct and breaking the code of silence. (See the Good Cop Poster Attached)

Addressing the issues of systemic racism and retaliation in law enforcement will require all of us to be totally transparent about the challenges and root causes associated with those challenges. Unfortunately, we cannot change what we don't confront and during the confrontation, we must define a plan that outlines the proper course of action that will improve the cultures in law enforcement that has been eroding as a result of kicking the proverbial can down the road. Texas Cops and Communities, Inc., starting with the city of Houston Police Department recently shared some universal recommendations with Mayor Sylvester Turner in a formal memo from our CEO, Noel Pinnock. His administration informed us that he would take it under advisement and share our recommendations with his task force. The special task force assigned to address police reform in Houston made its formal recommendation in a 150-page report released to the public on Wednesday, September 30, 2020. In June, Mayor Sylvester Turner assembled the 45-person group in response to demands for safer crisis aversion techniques for officers and pressure from civil rights activists to release footage from several officer-involved shootings. The report includes 104 reforms divided into six categories: community policing, independent oversight, power dynamics, crisis intervention, field readiness, and clear expectations. While we applaud the efforts of the task force, implementation and measurement are critical elements that are essential in ensuring the recommendations'

true impact. Texas Cops and Communities, Inc. recommendations, crafted by our group of licensed police officers, are centered on improving the culture within the Houston Police Department and include:

1. **Join** the military who has already started purging military officers who have ties to violent racists groups and white supremacy out of the military and coordinate with them in developing a **DO NOT HIRE LIST** containing former military officers who have been **purged** to ensure law enforcement agencies do not hire these officers because they have history of racial biases towards minorities, previous family violence, and/or other problems that could pose a threat to the public and the agency.
2. **Implement** a mandatory pre-hiring screening process to filter applicants that have suffered from PTSD, have a diagnosed mental illness, or may have received a dishonorable discharge from the military.
3. **Prohibit** hiring former military officers or any officer who has ever **participated** in Killology aka Warrior Training. Killology aka Warrior is a fear-based training that teaches officers how to kill.
4. **Prohibit** police from interfering with EMTs or paramedics from treating suspects, including requesting EMTs or paramedics to give suspects, their patients, ketamine injections, as a de-escalation technique, to calm suspects down, claiming excited delirium because ketamine is a **powerful drug** often the strongest sedative in a paramedic's toolkit, which can be fatal without proper monitoring and attention to detail.
5. **Prohibit** fast-tracking the HPD application and selection process, under **Texas SB 162**, for special forces military personnel such as the Army Green Berets, Marine Force Recon, Air Force Pararescue or Navy SEALs by requiring them to complete only three weeks of online or face-to-face training because these highly skilled military individuals are trained to kill and should be required to go through the basic police academy program in its entirety.
6. **Prohibit** hiring of non-Texas residents as HPD officers, under **HB 1091**, which seeks to allow legal permanent residence for those who were honorably discharged from the US Military to become peace officers in the state of Texas.
7. **Implement** recruitment programs for minority students from surrounding middle and high schools to participate in the Police Explorers Programs not only to close the race gap in law enforcement but also to provide a pipeline that will enable them to work in Black and Latinos communities upon completing the program.
8. **Implement** mechanisms to identify problematic officers, including officers with a history of excessive, unjustified force and shooting complaints, especially shooting of unarmed residents, and terminate these officers to restore the public's trust.
9. **Implement** policy requiring officers to intervene against acts of police misconduct by fellow officers.
10. **Reinstate HPD's** Public Integrity Unit to investigate criminal acts committed by police officers.
11. **Implement** a mandatory policy to terminate officers who engage in systemic racism and/or post racial comments on their social media sites.
12. **Seek** assault charges on officers who hit, kick, knee, slap, or throw a suspect on the hood of a hot police vehicle, because a suspect failed to cooperate, claiming the suspect was resisting arrest.
13. **Implement** a mandatory policy **prohibiting** officers from dehumanizing behavior - calling citizens thugs, dirt bags, low life, animals, perverts, etc.
14. **Implement** suicide prevention training programs because of the 18,000 law enforcement agencies across the US, approximately only 5% currently have suicide prevention training programs for police officers.

Again...when people know better, they will do better, and Texas Cops and Communities has established a goal to train over 50,000 civilians and cops on the Community Safety Education Act or Texas Senate Bill 30 (SB30), which was passed by the 85th Texas Legislature, Regular Session, 2017 and became law, effectively on August 27, 2018 in the state of Texas. SB30 requires school age children between the ages of 15-18 to receive mandatory training on the proper interaction with peace officers during traffic stops and other in-person encounters as well as requires driver license seekers, defensive driver participants, and police officers to receive the same training as part of a comprehensive program to ensure

everyone knows better and knows how to engage peacefully so that the encounter doesn't end in a fatality. Senators Royce West and John Whitmire really knocked this legislation out the park but due to the lack of implementation funding, many school districts and charter schools are scratching their heads to ensure their students are compliant and are capable of meeting this requirement for graduation. We believe this type of training is too sensitive to be facilitated by a computer because the most effective delivery of this life and death material is face-to-face or at best in a virtual environment where participants are capable of asking questions and having those questions answered in real time by active and retired police officers. At the end of the day, we want to ensure civilians are equipped with everything they need to know and make it clear to police officers that our citizenry is fully knowledgeable and trained on the core mechanics of their inevitable encounter with law enforcement. Participants who complete our training after successful pre/post assessment will receive an Texas Cops and Communities, Inc. wallet card that can be paired with their identification or driver's license so that they can present it to the police officer at the initial moment of the encounter. This way, the police officer understands that they are speaking with educated civilians who aware of their rights as well as understand what police officer must do during the encounter. No longer should people fear what is going to happen when a cop stops them during a traffic stop, at a bus stop, or walking on the streets in the communities we all call home. Call it true street credibility and officer accountability. Our copy-protected curriculum for both police and civilians were developed to cover the topics below.

- The role of law enforcement and duties and responsibilities of police officers;
- A person's rights concerning interactions with police officers;
- Proper behavior for police officers during interactions;
- Law regarding questioning and detention by police officers, including any law requiring a person to present proof of identity to a police officer, and the consequences for a person's or officer's failure to comply with those laws; and
- How and where to file a complaint or compliment on behalf of a police officer.

Uniquely, Texas Cops and Communities, Inc. is in the business of supporting good cops who report bad cops for police misconduct. We have established the TC&C Whistleblower Committee that provides good cops a platform to submit anonymous written complaints of police misconduct by fellow officers, free from retaliation. Our approach pairs with former Houston Police Department Sergeant Shelby Stewart, who unveiled the independent citizen police review board with subpoena power to review internal investigation involving the use of force, discharge of firearms, incidents resulting in serious bodily injury or death and other investigations that may result from our TC&C Whistleblower Committee Review. The framework Stewart announced on September 24, 2020 is officially named "The Reverend Fred Shuttlesworth Model for Justice and Accountability" to salute a civil rights legend who was a mentor to Stewart. Shuttlesworth, a fiery activist who died at age 89 in 2011, worked alongside the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. in Alabama in the 1950s. In the following decade, he played pivotal roles in the Freedom Rides, the 1963 Birmingham campaign, and the Selma Voting Rights Movement, which were watershed moments for nonviolent social change.

Finally, Texas Cops and Communities, Inc. supports Johnny Mata's, President of the Greater Houston Coalition of Justice, position in disbanding the Independent Police Oversight Board (IPOB) based on the testimony of the Kristin Anderson, former IPOB board member of 10 years, who in a recent letter to Houston's mayor, stated, "the Independent Police Oversight Board is limited in its ability to do any actual oversight. IPOB "review[s] internal police investigations of possible misconduct by employees of the Houston Police Department that involve allegations of excessive force, discharge of firearms, serious bodily injury or death, and all other Class I internal investigations, as well as Class II investigations involving mistreatment of citizens." IPOB reviews only completed files prepared by Internal Affairs (IA). This is the sum total of what IPOB members do. Because IPOB sees cases only at the conclusion of the IA's investigation, narratives and frames are already in place, leading IPOB members toward the outcome already determined by IA. It is not surprising then that IPOB signs off on most cases without any deviation from IA's conclusions. Thus, IPOB operates inside a closed system without the ability to investigate, conduct its own interviews, or do anything else but follow the narrative offered to them." Anderson comments is the reason why former police sergeant Shelby wrote: "I leaned towards the

groups that were actually doing the work and I put them in the model. I wanted to keep City Hall politics and the politics from the police out of the decisions that would be made by the board,” Stewart said. “I wanted to give the board enough power to be able to make decisions that would affect the police department in a positive way as far as the community being able to believe that things were being handled properly in these investigations where people were being hurt or killed and handled by people who don’t have skin in the game. I want to take the HPD hierarchy and the city council and the mayor out of those decisions.”

**Texas Cops and Communities, Inc. is encouraging Texans everywhere to join our movement by simply visiting [www.texascopsandcommunities.com](http://www.texascopsandcommunities.com) and taking the Pledge for Peace in our Communities. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. once stated, we are caught in an inescapable network of mutuality, tied in a single garment of destiny. Whatever affects one directly, affects all indirectly. Life is too short; therefore, we must get it right because together...we are the solution!**