

WHAT IS PROCEDURAL JUSTICE?

FACT SHEET



COMMUNITY ORIENTED POLICING SERVICES
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE

Procedural Justice (n) /prə-'sē-jə-rəl 'jās-təs/ refers to the idea of fairness in the processes that resolve disputes and allocate resources. It is not a practice, but a philosophy and a movement which promotes positive organizational change, upholds police legitimacy in the community, and enhances officer safety.

Procedural Justice and Community Policing provide the framework for organizational change and ultimately officer safety.

The Four Pillars of **PROCEDURAL JUSTICE**

Fairness

Impartiality

Giving Voice

Transparency

The Three Pillars of **COMMUNITY POLICING**

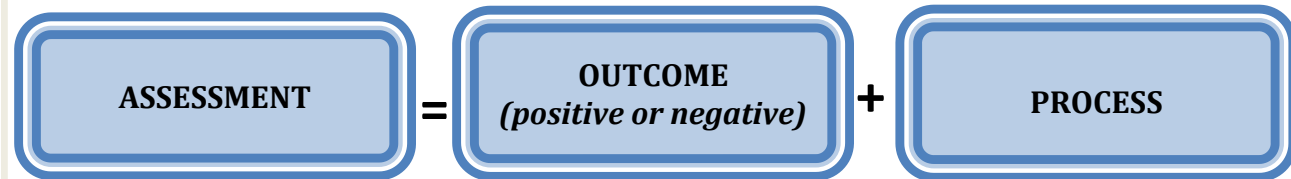
Problem Solving

Partnership Building

*Organizational
Transformation*

The perception of fairness is not just about outcomes...

According to research, people consider both the outcome of a decision and the process by which the decision was made when forming their opinion about whether a decision was fair. For example, if a member of the public receives a speeding ticket (*negative outcome*), but was treated fairly during the interaction with the officer issuing the ticket (*positive process*), the driver is more likely to feel that the encounter was fair and less likely to contest the ticket. The driver is also more likely to comply with the officer's requests, such as producing identification when asked.



Implementing Procedural Justice within Police Agencies...

Where the core principles of procedural justice are valued and practiced within the entire agency, there will be:

Positive organizational transformation

Improvement in the work culture

Decrease in the polarization of the agency

Organizations that do not implement or support fair and transparent practices and provide for employee voice within their organizations create an environment where staff become polarized. In such an environment, a subversive tone might exist that detracts from organizational performance.

Internal discontentment can manifest itself into external interactions with the community and can challenge the authority of the law enforcement agency as well as the broader criminal justice system.

Community satisfaction with law enforcement is important because the safety of officers may depend upon it.