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VOICES

# OPINION | Diverse Voices Are Needed to Understand Public Safety and Security in Seattle

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*by Jacqueline B. Helfgott, Brandon N. Bledsoe, and Katie Kepler*

The [Seattle Public Safety Survey](#), now in its eighth year, is administered annually from Oct. 15 to Nov. 30. The survey is part of the [Micro-Community Policing Plans \(MCP\)](#), a collaboration between Seattle University (SU) Crime and Justice Research Center and the Seattle Police Department (SPD), focused on police and community engagement at the neighborhood level.

The survey is administered in 11 languages, and dialogue between community members and police are conducted between administration of surveys to provide community members with an opportunity to discuss the survey findings and real-time public safety concerns with Seattle Police personnel. These discussions also serve as an opportunity for police and community members to work together to improve public safety through increased engagement between officers and the communities they serve.

The Seattle Public Safety Survey and the MCPP Community-Police Dialogues reflect the voices of thousands of people who live and/or work in Seattle every year. Outreach to the community for the survey and the community-police dialogues involve extensive precinct and neighborhood-based recruitment through emails, social media, and distribution of flyers across the city to community centers, community groups, religious organizations, businesses, nonprofit organizations, private organizations, cultural centers, schools and universities, retirement communities, residential buildings, neighborhood councils, city advisory boards, public libraries, emergency service centers, and a broad range of individuals across all Seattle neighborhoods.

The MCPP is a grassroots attempt to understand nuanced neighborhood-based perspectives of all people who live and/or work in Seattle based on the idea that community perceptions of crime matter and no two neighborhoods in Seattle are alike. The Seattle Public Safety Survey and the Community-Police Dialogues depend on community participation of individuals from all demographic groups to reflect the voices of all who live and/or work in Seattle, especially those who historically have not had the opportunity to participate in conversations with and about police, police reform, and public safety. The voices of marginalized community members are critical to understanding the perceptions of public safety and security for those who live and/or work in Seattle. Different perspectives reflected in the survey and the dialogues have immense value to empower Seattle to address nuanced neighborhood-based concerns about public safety and quality of life elements of neighborhoods including how to resolve issues of lack of trust in the police and system-level racial discrimination and bias.

Just as all Seattle neighborhoods are not alike, public safety and security concerns of members of demographic groups are not alike. Please consider participating in the Seattle Public Safety Survey, which is available until Dec. 2, 2023, and sharing the opportunity with others who are concerned about their neighborhoods, safety, law enforcement, or any other community concern. To take the survey, go to [PublicSafetySurvey.org](https://PublicSafetySurvey.org).

*(Note: The survey will be open for an additional day beyond Nov. 30 to ensure that those who read this article have the opportunity to participate in the survey. To take the survey, go to [PublicSafetySurvey.org](https://PublicSafetySurvey.org).)*

There will be three “Before the Badge Dialogues” Community-Police Dialogues held in December – Dec. 5 (North Precinct), Dec. 12 (South Precinct), and Dec. 19 (Southwest Precinct). To sign up to participate in a dialogue, visit the [Seattle Public Safety Survey’s “Before the Badge” Community-Police Dialogues webpage](#).

# Community-Police Dialogues: Before the Badge




Seattle Police Department's  
Micro Community Policing Plans

We want to hear...

**YOUR** Ideas  
**YOUR** Concerns  
**YOUR VISION FOR SPD RECRUITS**



This is **YOUR opportunity** to be a part of the SPD training process

**Engage in a conversation with community members from your precinct/neighborhood and SPD police recruits.** The Seattle University Crime & Justice Research Center collaborates with the SPD to host these dialogues as part of the Micro-Community Policing Plans on designated **Mondays 5:30-7:30PM** via Zoom

If you live and/or work in Seattle: **SIGN UP TODAY**  
<https://publicsafetysurvey.org/index.html>





CRIME & JUSTICE RESEARCH CENTER

**Questions? Contact Dr. Jaqueline Helfgott:**

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