

City of Poughkeepsie Police Department Community Survey 2019



Results Prepared by the Marist Center for Social Justice Research (MCSJR), Marist College

Survey Background and Responses:

- Investigated Neighborhood Crime and Safety and Perceptions of the City of Poughkeepsie Police Department and the Criminal Justice System.
- Community Surveys were initially mailed to 3000 residents across 8 wards within the City of Poughkeepsie.
- Reminder postcards were sent out 2 weeks after the initial mailing.
- An additional 800 surveys were sent out to the 4 least responsive wards (wards 3, 5, 6, and 7).
- There were a total of 389 surveys returned, a 10.24% response rate.
- Below are the responses to questions, categorized in the areas of physical and social disorder, perception of crime, fear of crime, community control, satisfaction with police, and procedural justice.¹

Responses by Ward

Ward	Amount
Ward 1	36
Ward 2	41
Ward 3	35
Ward 4	63
Ward 5	30
Ward 6	52
Ward 7	42
Ward 8	88
Unidentified	2
Total	389

¹ Please note: responses in the middle of the scale (e.g., a response of '3' on the 1 to 5 scale), were considered a neutral response, and were not included in the percentages below.

Physical Disorder (includes disorder such as litter, vacant buildings, vacant houses, and storefronts).

When asked, "In your neighborhood, how much of a problem do you feel is litter, broken glass, or trash on the sidewalks and streets," 56% of participants felt this was either not a problem or a slight problem, as compared to 29% that felt it was a problem or big problem.

When asked, "In your neighborhood, how much of a problem do you feel is vacant and deserted houses, building, or storefronts," 60% of participants felt this was either not a problem or a slight problem, as compared to 29% that felt it was a problem or big problem.

On average, when participants were asked about physical disorder in their neighborhoods, 58% felt it was either not a problem or a slight problem, as compared to 29% that felt it was a problem or a big problem.

Social Disorder (includes disorder such as selling drugs, loitering, public drunkenness, and other disorderly conduct).

When asked, "In your neighborhood, how much of a problem is people selling or using drugs," 11% of participants felt this was either not a problem or a slight problem, as compared to 65% that felt it was a problem or big problem.

When asked, "In your neighborhood, how much of a problem do you feel is teenagers hanging around on the street," 69% of participants felt this was either not a problem or a slight problem, as compared to 19% that felt it was a problem or big problem.

When asked, "In your neighborhood, how much of a problem do you feel is people being drunk or rowdy in public places," 70% of participants felt this was either not a problem or a slight problem, as compared to 19.3% that felt it was a problem or big problem.

On average, when participants were asked about Social disorder in their neighborhoods, 50% felt it was either not a problem or a slight problem, as compared to 34% that felt it was a problem or a big problem.

Perceptions of Crime (includes how residents perceive or are aware of crime).

When asked, "In the past year, how often have you been aware of violent fights between neighbors in your neighborhood," 86% of participants responded that they never or rarely had seen or been aware of this issue, as compared to 15% that reported having seen or being aware of this issue on a monthly, weekly, or daily basis.

When asked, "In the past year, how often have you been aware of muggings or robberies," 91% of participants responded that they never or rarely had seen or been aware of this issue, as compared to 8% that reported having seen or being aware of this issue on a monthly, weekly, or daily basis.

When asked, "In the past year, how often have you been aware of home burglaries," 94% of participants responded that they never or rarely had seen or been aware of this issue, as compared to 6% that reported having seen or being aware of this issue on a monthly, weekly, or daily basis.

When asked, "In the past year, how often have you been aware of car thefts," 93% of participants responded that they never or rarely had seen or been aware of this issue, as compared to 7% that reported having seen or being aware of this issue on a monthly, weekly, or daily basis.

When asked, "In the past year, how often have you been aware of assaults," 86% of participants responded that they never or rarely had seen or been aware of this issue, as compared to 14% that reported having seen or being aware of this issue on a monthly, weekly, or daily basis.

When asked, "In the past year, how often have you been aware of rapes or sexual assaults," 96% of participants responded that they never or rarely had seen or been aware of this issue, as compared to 4% that reported having seen or being aware of this issue on a monthly, weekly, or daily basis.

When asked, "In the past year, how often have you been aware of stabbings or stabbing attempts," 93% of participants responded that they never or rarely had seen or been aware of this issue, as compared to 7% that reported having seen or being aware of this issue on a monthly, weekly, or daily basis.

When asked, "In the past year, how often have you been aware of shooting or shooting attempts," 89% of participants responded that they never or rarely had seen or been aware of this issue, as compared to 11% that reported having seen or being aware of this issue on a monthly, weekly, or daily basis.

On average, when participants were asked about perception of crime in their neighborhoods, 91% reported never or rarely seeing or being aware of a crime, as compared to 9% who reported being aware of or seeing crimes.

Fear of crime (includes changing one's behavior due to a fear of criminal activity occurring).

When asked, “In the City of Poughkeepsie, how often do you avoid certain streets, because of concern for your safety,” 55% of participants responded that they always or almost always avoid certain streets, as compared to 27% that responded never or almost never avoiding certain streets in the city of Poughkeepsie.

When asked, “In the City of Poughkeepsie, how often do you stay in at night, because of concern for your safety,” 41% of participants responded that they always or almost always stay in at night, as compared to 38% that responded never or almost never staying in at night, because of a concern for safety in the city of Poughkeepsie.

When asked, “In the City of Poughkeepsie, how often do you not travel alone (travel with someone), because of concern for your safety,” 29% of participants responded that they always or almost always travel with someone, as compared to 50% that responded never or almost never traveling with someone because of a concern for safety in the city of Poughkeepsie.

When asked, “In the City of Poughkeepsie, how often do you avoid certain buildings, because of concern for your safety,” 46% of participants responded that they always or almost always avoid certain buildings, as compared to 38% that responded never or almost never avoiding certain buildings in the city of Poughkeepsie.

When asked, “In the City of Poughkeepsie, how often you carry a weapon because of concern for your safety,” 10% of participants responded always or almost always carrying a weapon, as compared to 85% that responded, never or almost never.*

On average, when participants were asked about fear of crime in the city of Poughkeepsie, 36% reported changing behavior due to fear of crime, as compared to 48% that reported not changing their behavior.

***It should be noted that one of the questions, “how often do you carry a weapon due to safety concerns,” returned many more responses on the 4 and 5 end of the scale, as compared to other questions in this category. If this question is removed, on average when participants were asked about fear of crime in the city of Poughkeepsie, 43% reported changing behavior due to fear of crime, as compared to 38% that reported not changing their behavior.**

Participants were also asked about overall safety in their neighborhood and the city of Poughkeepsie, including overall quality of life in the following questions:

When asked to rate the safety of their neighborhood, 65% of participants rated their neighborhood as safe or very safe, as compared to 11% rating their neighborhood very dangerous or dangerous.

When asked “How you would rate the overall quality of life in your neighborhood,” 62% of participants rated it as either excellent or good, as compared to 32% rating their quality of life as poor or not good

When asked to rate the safety of the city of Poughkeepsie, 20% of participants rated the city overall as safe or very safe, as compare to 38% rating the city as dangerous or very dangerous**.

On average, when participants were asked about overall safety and quality of life, 49% reported it being very safe/safe and excellent/good, as compared to 27% that reported safety and quality of life as being very dangerous/dangerous and not good/poor.

****It should be noted that to one of the questions, “how would you rate the safety in the city of Poughkeepsie,” more respondents rated the safety of their neighborhood as safe or very safe, as compared to how they rated the safety of the City of Poughkeepsie. If this question is removed, on average when participants were asked about overall safety and quality of life in their neighborhood, 64% reported it being very safe/safe and excellent/good, as compared to 22% that reported safety and quality of life in their neighborhood as being very dangerous/dangerous and not good/poor. This seems to be consistent with prior responses to the category of perception of crime in your neighborhood.**

Community Control (the community taking part in solving crimes and other community issues).

When asked, “If you were the victim of a property crime in the City of Poughkeepsie, how likely would you be to call the police to report a crime,” 87% of participants responded it is very likely or likely that they would call the police, as compared to 9% that responded it would be very unlikely or unlikely that they would call the police.

When asked, “If you were the victim of a property crime in the City of Poughkeepsie, how likely would you be to identify the person who committed the crime,” 84% of participants responded it is very likely or likely that they would identify the person, as compared to 10% that responded it would be very unlikely or unlikely that they would identify the person.

When asked, “If you were the victim of a property crime in the City of Poughkeepsie, how likely would you be to give evidence in court against the accused,” 80% of participants responded it is very likely or likely that they would give evidence in court, as compared to 12% that responded it would be very unlikely or unlikely that they would give evidence in court.

When asked, “If you were the victim of a violent crime in the City of Poughkeepsie, how likely would you be to call the police to report a crime,” 86% of participants responded it is very likely or likely that they would call the police, as compared to 6% that responded it would be very unlikely or unlikely that they would call the police.

When asked, “If you were the victim of a violent crime in the City of Poughkeepsie, how likely would you be to identify the person who committed the crime,” 77% of participants responded it is very likely or likely that they would identify the person, as compared to 8% that responded it would be very unlikely or unlikely that they would identify the person.

When asked, “If you were the victim of a violent crime in the City of Poughkeepsie, how likely would you be to give evidence in court against the accused,” 74% of participants responded it is very likely or likely that they would give evidence in court, as compared to 10% that responded it would be very unlikely or unlikely that they would give evidence in court.

When asked, “If you were the witness of a property crime in the City of Poughkeepsie, how likely would you be to call the police,” 88% of participants responded it is very likely or likely that they would call the police, as compared to 6% that responded it would be very unlikely or unlikely that they would call the police.

When asked, “If you were the witness of a property crime in the City of Poughkeepsie, how likely would you be to identify the person who committed the crime,” 80% of participants responded it is very likely or likely that they would identify the person, as compared to 8% that responded it would be very unlikely or unlikely that they would identify the person.

When asked, “If you were the witness of a property crime in the City of Poughkeepsie, how likely would you be to give evidence in court against the accused,” 73% of participants responded it is very likely or likely that they would give evidence in court, as compared to 14% that responded it would be very unlikely or unlikely that they would give evidence in court.

When asked, “If you were the witness of a violent crime in the City of Poughkeepsie, how likely would you be to call the police,” 91% of participants responded it is very likely or likely that they would call the police, as compared to 6% that responded it would be very unlikely or unlikely that they would call the police.

When asked, “If you were the witness of a violent crime in the City of Poughkeepsie, how likely would you be to identify the person who committed the crime,” 83% of participants responded it is very likely or likely that they would identify the person, as compared to 10% that responded it would be very unlikely or unlikely that they would identify the person.

When asked, “If you were the witness of a violent crime in the City of Poughkeepsie, how likely would you be to give evidence in court against the accused,” 77% of participants responded it is very likely or likely that they would give evidence in court, as compared to 15% that responded it would be very unlikely or unlikely that they would give evidence in court.

On average, when participants were asked about taking an active role in assisting police in reducing crime, 82% reported likely or very likely, as compared to 9% who responded it would be unlikely or very unlikely.

Satisfaction with police (includes accountability of officers, as well as prioritizing and responding to community concerns).

When asked, “How strongly do you agree that the police department holds officers accountable for wrong or inappropriate conduct in the community,” 42% of participants replied that they agreed or strongly agreed that the department hold officers accountable, as compared to 25% that disagreed or strongly disagreed.

When asked “How strongly do you agree that the police are responsive to community concerns,” 46% of participants replied that they agreed or strongly agreed that the police are responsive to community concerns, as compared to 23% that disagreed or strongly disagreed.

When asked “How strongly do you agree that the police prioritize problems most important to the community,” 45% of participants replied that they agreed or strongly agreed, as compared to 24% that disagreed or strongly disagreed.

When asked, “Do you think police use community input to develop solutions to community issues,” 38% of participants responded often or always, as compared to 31% that responded never or rarely.

When asked, “How quickly you think police would respond to a nearby violent crime?” 60% of participants replied that the police would arrive quickly or very quickly, as compared to 15% that responded the police would respond slowly or very slowly.

On average, when participants were asked questions related to them being satisfied with the City of Poughkeepsie police, 46% indicated that they strongly agreed or agreed, as compared to 24% that disagreed or strongly disagreed.

Procedural Justice (includes the level of satisfaction and trust in the equitable treatment by the police)

When asked “How strongly do you agree that the police are honest,” 59% of participants replied that they agreed or strongly agreed that the police are honest, as compared to 15% that disagreed or strongly disagreed.

When asked “How much would you agree that you feel comfortable around the police,” 68% of participants replied that they agreed or strongly agreed that they felt comfortable around the police, as compared to 16% that disagreed or strongly disagreed.

When asked “How strongly do you agree that the police are trustworthy,” 63% of participants replied that they agreed or strongly agreed that the police are trustworthy, as compared to 17% that disagreed or strongly disagreed.

When asked “How much would you agree that you feel safe around the police,” 69% of participants replied that they agreed or strongly agree that they feel safe around the police, as compared to 14% that disagreed or strongly disagreed.

When asked “How much would you agree that the police DO NOT use excessive force against residents,” 52% of participants replied that they agreed or strongly agreed that the police do not use excessive force, as compared to 20% that disagreed or strongly disagreed.

When asked “How strongly do you agree that the police in my community make fair and impartial decisions in the cases they deal with,” 52% of participants replied that they agreed or strongly agreed that the police are part of their community, as compared to 17% that disagreed or strongly disagreed.

When asked “How strongly do you agree that the police in the city of Poughkeepsie do not suspect me of being a criminal because of my race/ethnicity,” 56% of participants replied that they agreed or strongly agreed that the police are part of their community, as compared to 25% that disagreed or strongly disagreed.

When asked “How strongly do you agree that the police in the city of Poughkeepsie do not do not act based on personal prejudices or biases,” 44% of participants replied that they agreed or strongly agreed that the police are part of their community, as compared to 28% that disagreed or strongly disagreed.

When asked “How strongly do you agree that you support how the police act in my community,” 70% of participants replied that they agreed or strongly agreed that the police are part of their community, as compared to 14% that disagreed or strongly disagreed.

On average, when participants were asked if police acted in a procedurally just manner, 59% indicated that they strongly agreed or agreed, as compared to 18% that disagreed or strongly disagreed.

Participants were also asked about police being viewed as part of their community and if they are perceived as authority figures.

When asked “How much would you agree that the police are part of my community,” 47% of participants replied that they agreed or strongly agreed that the police are part of their community, as compared to 29% that disagreed or strongly disagreed.

When asked “How strongly do you agree that the police in my community are perceived as authority figures,” 62% of participants replied that they agreed or strongly agreed that the police are perceived as authority figures, as compared to 15% that disagreed or strongly disagreed.

Encounters with Police (at least 1 contact)

40% (149) of participants reported that they had at least 1 contact with city of Poughkeepsie police. Within this group, 67(45%) participants reported their first encounter as a social or casual contact, 44 (30%) reported having a contact as a witness or possible witness, 7(5%) reported being stopped by an officer while on foot, 12 (8%) reported being stopped by officers while in a vehicle, 29 (19%) reported having contact due to being a victim of a crime, and 1 (<1%) reported having contact as an arrestee. Please note that some participants indicated more than 1 reason for their first contact.

Participants were asked the following questions about this contact:

When asked, “Do you feel you were treated fairly,” 70% of participants responded as being treated very fairly or fairly by the police, as compared to 15% responding that they were treated unfairly or very unfairly.

When asked, “Did the officer listen to your concerns,” 69% of participants responded very much or mostly, as compared to 16% that responded not nearly at all, or not at all.

When asked, “Did the officer explain what they were doing and the process of what was going to happen,” 62% of participants responded completely or nearly completely, as compared to 25% that responded not at all or not nearly at all.

When asked, “To what extent would you say you were treated with respect,” 71% of participants responded that the police were very respectful or respectful, as compared to 14% responding that the police were not respectful or not respectful all.

When asked, "To what extent did you receive the right outcome according to your understanding of the law," 64% of participants responded completely or nearly completely, as compared to 22% that responded not at all or not nearly at all.

When asked, "To what extent were you satisfied with the outcome," 57% of participants responded very satisfied or satisfied, as compared to 25% that responded not at all or not nearly at all satisfied.

When asked, "To what extent were you satisfied with the officer's treatment of you," 70% of participants responded very satisfied or satisfied, as compared to 15% that responded not at all or not nearly at all satisfied.

On average, when participants were asked about their encounter with police, of the 149 participants who reported that they had a least 1 contact, 66% responded as being treated very fairly or fairly and very respectfully or respectfully, and were very satisfied or satisfied with the encounter. This is in comparison to the 19% who responded having been treated very unfairly or unfairly and very disrespectfully or disrespectfully, and who were very unsatisfied or unsatisfied with the encounter.