



STEUBEN COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE

JANUARY 2021

New York State Police Reform and
Reinvention Collaborative Plan

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Executive Order No. 203
New York State Police Reform and Reinvention Collaborative Plan

January 2021

I. INTRODUCTION:

On June 12, 2020, Governor A. Cuomo issued an executive order directing municipalities that employ police officers to actively engage stakeholders in the local community and develop locally approved plans for the strategies, policies and procedures of local police agencies. In accordance with this order, the Steuben County Sheriff’s Office in conjunction with the Cities of Corning and Hornell, Villages of Addison, Bath, Canisteo, Hammondsport, Painted Post and Wayland, and the Town of Cohocton, entered a collaborative effort to move through a county-wide process to enact police reform plans.

A. Department Profile:

Municipality: Steuben County
Law Enforcement Agency: Steuben County Sheriff’s Office
Steuben County Executive Officer: Jack K. Wheeler, County Manager
Steuben County Sheriff: Sheriff Jim Allard

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B. Municipality Demographics:

Steuben County is a large, rural county consisting of approximately 1,400 square miles delineated into 2 cities, 14 villages and 32 townships with a population of approximately 95,000 people. Both cities and one village have full-time police departments, 5 villages and one town have part-time police departments and two towns have constabularies. SUNY Corning also employs peace officers. The Steuben County Sheriff’s Office is the local police agency for the remaining areas of the county and provides assistance to the full and part-time police agencies. The 2019 Census data indicates that Steuben County is 94.4% white, 1.7% black, 1.7% Hispanic, 1.6% Asian, 1.6% mixed race and .03% Native American.

C. Agency Demographics:

The Steuben County Sheriff’s Office consists of 167 employees, the majority of which are associated with the corrections division. The patrol division consists of 38 full time deputies, corporals, sergeants, investigators and lieutenants and seven part time deputies and investigators, along with 12 seasonal school resource officers. The majority of employees are white males, the patrol division contains 1 Hispanic and three female deputies and the corrections division contains three African Americans (two female and one male) and one female Hispanic officer. Of the nine management positions, 8 are held by white males and one by a white female.

II. REFORM & REINVENTION COLLABORATION PROCESS

A. Collaborative Opt-in Approach:

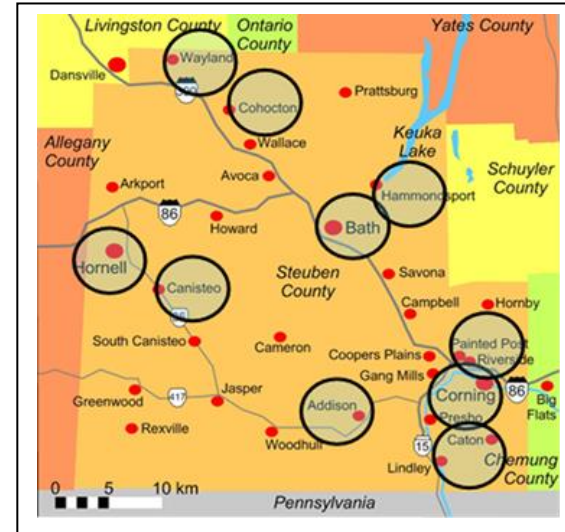
The Steuben County Sheriff’s Office partnered with other villages, towns, and cities in Steuben County as a collaborative effort. Corning Incorporated, which is headquartered in Steuben County provided a resource to assist with program management and change management expertise.

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B. Opt-in Agency Partners:

- **Steuben County Sheriff's Office (32 towns)**
- Village of Addison
- Village of Bath
- Village of Canisteo
- Town of Cohocton
- City of Corning
- Village of Hammondsport
- City of Hornell
- Village of Painted-Post
- Village of Wayland



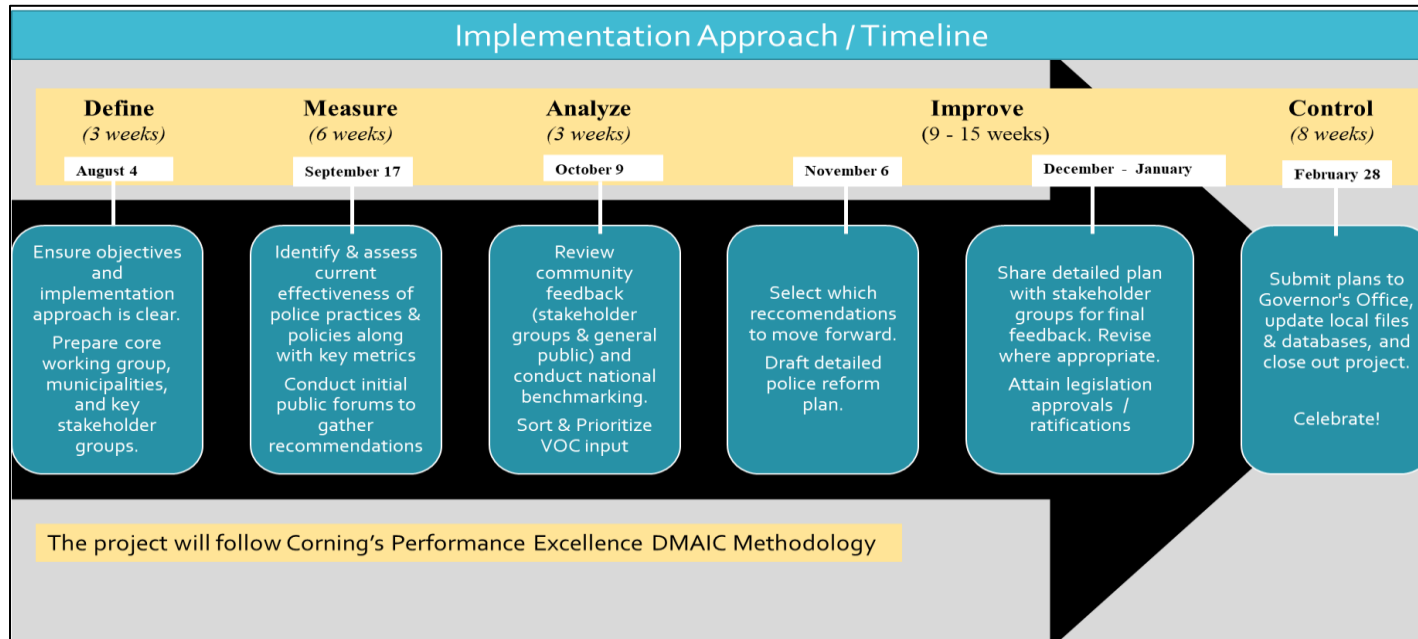
C. Team Leadership:

- Jim Allard, Steuben County Sheriff
- Kyle Amidon, Canisteo Police Chief
- Brooks Baker, Steuben County District Attorney
- Mark Barnhart, Cohocton & Wayland Officer in Charge,
- Bill Boland, Corning Mayor
- Shawn Copp, Painted Post Officer in Charge
- Jason Dininny, Hammondsport Officer in Charge
- Chad Mullen, Bath Police Chief
- Ted Murray, Hornell Police Chief
- Mark Ryckman, Corning City Manager
- Steve Sellard, Addison Officer in Charge
- Jeff Spaulding, Corning Police Chief
- Jack K. Wheeler, Steuben County Manager
- Dawn White, Corning Incorporated Program Manager

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D. Process Implementation Approach & Timeline



III. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION & FEEDBACK CHANNELS

A. Community Team Members: (106 key stakeholder participants across 60 organizations; See Appendix 1-1)

- Steuben County Law Officials
- Steuben County Elected & Appointed Officials
- Representatives from Steuben County Nonprofit Organizations, Healthcare Organizations, Educational Institutions, and Businesses
- Citizens who represent marginalized populations

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B. Listening Sessions:

- Conducted 9/9- 9/17 via Zoom and were advertised via the local news channels, newspapers, websites, and social media with an estimated 300+ participants
- 3 Public Listening Sessions were open to all Steuben County citizens
- 10 Private listening sessions were held with these special audiences:
 - Community Stakeholder Participant groups, Substance Use Disorders, Corning Community College students, Corning Black Employee Network, SPECTRA LGBTQ group, Global Latino Community, Friendship Baptist Church, Face to Faith Ministries, Steuben Greens, LGBTQ+ Community

C. Surveys: (anonymous participation for all)

- **Stakeholder Group Participant Survey:**
 - 15 survey questions and 4 demographic data questions sent out via email
 - Target audience of 103 stakeholders; **83 participants for an 81% response rate**
 - Meeting held with participants to review the results

- **General Public Survey:**
 - 15 survey questions and 4 demographic data questions; Notifications shared via news channels, newspapers, websites, and social media from 8/12 – 8/22
 - Printed copies dropped off at various locations and collected by city & law enforcement personnel for manual entry
 - Target audience of 95,000 county residents; **1,766 participants for a 1.8% response rate**
 - Results posted for public viewing

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- **Police Officer Survey:**
 - 6 survey questions, and 1 demographic question to identify their police department disseminated via email and printed copies
 - Target audience of 100 police officers; **52 participants for a 52% response rate**
 - Results posted for public viewing

- **Arrested Persons Questionnaire**
 - 3 survey questions and 3 demographic data questions asked during booking about the professionalism of the arresting officer(s). Agencies in Steuben County participated during September 2020.
 - **55 participants**

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IV. STEUBEN COUNTY SHERIFFS OFFICE REFORM PLAN

The reform plan, in accordance with public feedback and the executive order requirements, consists of six primary themes: NYS Mandated Changes, Equality and Social Justice, Transparency and Accountability, Community Relations, Operational Policy & Procedures and Training.

A. NEW YORK STATE MANDATES:

The reform items found in this section are derived directly from the Executive Order No. 203

NY State Mandated Changes	Reform Item	Description	SCSO Action	Status
NYS Mandate - 1	NYSM – 1. Civil Penalties for Filing False Reports on Member of a Protected Class	Establishes civil penalties for falsely Summoning a Police Officer when there is no reason to believe a crime, offense or threat has been committed involving a member of a protected class. <i>(Effective June 13, 2020)</i>	Conducted in-service training	Complete
NYS Mandate - 2	NYSM – 2. Require Police Officers to Report the Discharge of Weapons	Requires a police officer or peace officer (whether on or off duty) who discharges his or her weapon under circumstances where a person could be struck by a bullet to verbally report the incident within six hours, and file a written report within forty-eight hours. <i>(Effective September 13, 2020)</i>	Amended Use of Force policy	Complete

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NY State Mandated Changes	Reform Item	Description	SCSO Action	Status
NYS Mandate - 3	<p>NYSM – 3. Require the Reporting of Police Acts or Omissions Resulting in a Person’s Death to the Office of Special Investigation</p>	<p>Establishes an Office of Special Investigation within the Office of Attorney General which will have investigative authority and criminal jurisdiction for any incident involving the death of a person caused by an act or omission by a police officer or a peace officer employed as a correction officer or contracted by an education, public health, social service, parks or housing agency. Where an investigation concludes that the death or matters relating to the death or investigation of the death involved criminal conduct, the Office will be empowered to prosecute any such alleged offenses. (Effective April 2021)</p>	<p>Will conduct in-service training and establish communication method with the Attorney General’s office.</p>	<p>Pending on needed actions of NYS</p>
NYS Mandate - 4	<p>NYSM – 4. Ban Choke Holds</p>	<p>The Eric Garner Anti Choke Hold Act creates the crime of aggravated strangulation (making it a Class C felony) and establishes criminal penalties for a police officer or peace officer who uses a chokehold that causes serious physical injury or death. (Effective June 12, 2020)</p>	<p>Conducted in-service training</p>	<p>Complete</p>
NYS Mandate - 5	<p>NYSM – 5. Require Medical Response for Arrestees</p>	<p>Affirms an individual’s right to medical and mental health attention while under arrest or otherwise in custody of a police officer or peace officer. Failure to provide reasonable and good faith medical assistance could result in a cause of action against the officer, representative and/or entity. (June 15, 2020)</p>	<p>Conducted in-service training</p>	<p>Complete</p>

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NY State Mandated Changes	Reform Item	Description	SCSO Action	Status
NYS Mandate - 6	<p>NYSM – 6. Require Policing Statistics to be Reported to the Division of Criminal Justice Services</p>	<p>Requires courts to compile and publish data concerning arrests and court proceedings involving low-level offenses such as violations and traffic offenses. Such report will include aggregate and anonymized demographic information such as race, ethnicity and sex. This bill requires police departments to submit annual reports on arrest-related deaths to the Department of Criminal Justice Services, as well as the Governor and the State Legislature. <i>(Effective December 12, 2020)</i></p>	<p>Will provide data to Office of Court Administration and Division of Criminal Justice Services</p>	<p>Q1 - 2021</p>
NYS Mandate - 7	<p>NYSM – 7. Recording of Law Enforcement Activity</p>	<p>Provides that a person not under arrest or in the custody of a law enforcement official has the right to record police activity and to maintain custody and control of that recording and of any property or instruments used by that person to record such activities. A person in custody or under arrest does not, by that status alone, forfeit such right to record. <i>(Effective July 13, 2020)</i></p>	<p>No actions needed, already in compliance</p>	<p>Complete</p>

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SCSO Reform Plan

NY State Mandated Changes	Reform Item	Description	SCSO Action	Status
<p>NYS Mandate - 8</p>	<p>NYSM – 8. Provide the Public Access to Personnel Records of Deputies and Correctional Officers</p>	<p>Repeal of Civil Rights Law 50-a, which had made all personnel records used to evaluate the performance toward continued employment or promotion of police officers, firefighters, paramedics, correction officers or peace officers confidential and not subject to inspection or review without the individual’s express written consent or a court order. This legislation also amends the New York State Freedom of Information Law (FOIL), subjecting any record created in furtherance of a law enforcement disciplinary proceeding to disclosure under FOIL. The new FOIL provisions require specific sensitive personal information, including medical history, to be redacted from such records prior to being disclosed. (Effective June 13, 2020)</p>	<p>Notified the clerk of legislature for compliance.</p>	<p>Complete</p>

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B. STEUBEN COUNTY SHERIFF’S OFFICE REFORMS

Items found in this section were identified based on the feedback collected from the listening sessions and surveys.

Category	Reform Item	Description	SCSO Actions	Completion Timeline
Equality & Social Justice	ESJ-1. Diversify & Increase Candidate Recruitment Pools	Take proactive steps to increase diversity of the candidate pools so newly hired officers better reflect community demographics. Encourage potential candidates to take advantage of preparatory law enforcement training. (non-weapon portions of the police academy curriculum)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Conduct outreach with faith-based groups to increase interaction with youth and potential employees Increase Social Media Advertisement to attract diverse candidates and raise awareness of: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Available positions Civil service requirements Availability of pre-employment police academies 	<p>Q1 - 2021</p> <p>Q4 - 2021</p>
Equality & Social Justice	ESJ-2. Provide Civil Service Test Training	Provide Civil Service test training to prepare applicants for the entry-level examination. Partner with SUNY Corning & Alfred to offer this assistance.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Partner with SUNY to develop & offer a tutoring course for candidates expressing interest in applying/testing for the Civil Service exam. 	Q4 - 2021
Equality & Social Justice	ESJ-3. Expand Diversity and Bias Awareness Training	Expand diversity and bias awareness training to include marginalized populations such as Low Income, Substance Use Disorders, Minority, and LGBTQ+ communities, as well as training to recognize systemic racism.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Require Implicit Bias Awareness Training for all SCSO officers Conduct Train the Trainer sessions, to develop internal skilled presenters on implicit bias awareness training to support county-wide efforts 	<p>Q4 - 2021</p> <p>Q2 - 2022</p>

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Category	Reform Item	Description	Reform Action	Completion Timeline
Transparency & Accountability	TA-1. Launch a Personnel Complaint Review Panel	Launch external panel to review personnel complaints, investigations, and adjudications to ensure that best practices in personnel actions are being followed. Panel will include professionals with working knowledge of human resources, civil service, and labor relations.	1. Benchmark best practices of personnel complaint review panels across the country.	Q4 - 2022
			2. Establish a personnel complaint review process	Q4 - 2023
Transparency & Accountability	TA-2. Increase Transparency of Arrest Activities & Calls for service	Ensure citizens have access to appropriate police data & arrest activities via a monthly report placed on the county SCSO website and social media sites. Request for newspapers to list weekly calls for service activities.	1. Publish these monthly reports: a) Calls for service, cases and arrests, and use of force incidents b) Arrests by sex and race. c) Area patrols and community interactions (non-enforcement based)	Q1 - 2021
			2. Request local newspapers to report on police log activities	Q1 - 2021

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Category	Reform Item	Description	Reform Action	Completion Timeline
Transparency & Accountability	TA-3. Reduce Personnel Complaints & Adopt a County-wide Reporting Method & Tracking	Identify key behaviors & causes that may drive citizens to complain about officers and incorporate these findings into trainings. Work to align agencies county-wide to adopt a standardized personnel complaint process. Develop a county-wide tracking system of complaints.	1. Leverage field training officers to review complaints and determine needed focus areas & changes in trainings	Q1 - 2021
			2. Establish a standardized personnel complaint process county-wide	Q1 - 2022
			3. Develop a county-wide tracking system to assist in identifying training needs.	Q3 - 2022
Transparency & Accountability	TA-4. Increase transparency of Use of Force Incidents & Personnel Complaints	Ensure better and timely citizen access to use of force data and personnel complaint incidents and outcomes. Modify current SCSO software systems to better collect and track this data.	1. Add annual report data fields in current system for: a) Use of Force (type & frequency) b) Personnel Complaints and adjudications	Q2 - 2021
Transparency & Accountability	TA-5. Publish Job Descriptions and Annual Performance Appraisal Process	Make job descriptions and performance process more readily available to improve transparency.	1. Post job descriptions of SCSO personnel (deputy, corporal, sergeant, investigator, and lieutenant) and performance appraisal document on SCSO website.	Q3 - 2021

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Category	Reform Item	Description	Reform Action	Completion Timeline
Community Relations	CR-1. Conduct Public Education on Policing Practices	Increase the transparency of policing methods and governance by educating the public on these practices.	1. Provide videos and brochures to share recommended actions for citizens when interacting with police.	Q1 - 2022
			2. Enhance Citizen’s Police Academy a) Include in-person & on-line versions b) Partner with SUNY Alfred and Corning Community College to add a Citizen’s Police Academy on-line class offering .	Q1 - 2023
Community Relations	CR-2. Strengthen Customer Service Practices	Reinforce need for positive communications through better customer service & professional development training. Develop a quality assurance program to identify how citizens perceive the SCSO customer service.	1. Develop & conduct Professional Development training on communications for Supervisors 2. Develop & conduct best practice communication trainings county-wide: a) Positive & effective customer service b) Best practices for general communications	Q1 - 2023 Q1 - 2024

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Category	Reform Item	Description	Reform Action	Completion Timeline
Community Relations	CR-3. Strengthen Community Safety Training Programs	Partner with volunteer instructors to provide key safety trainings that are provided to residents or community groups and improve offerings. These trainings help enhance their safety knowledge and support better relations.	1. Team with citizen instructors to continue conducting safety courses for members of the community.	Q2 - 2021
			2. Promote joint safety presentations to community groups via social media web sites.	Q1 - 2021
Community Relations	CR-4. Establish & Promote Community Programs to Increase Law Enforcement Visibility in the Community	Develop and execute programs that bring law enforcement officers and citizens together in forums where they talk to one another, share thoughts, and promote interactions which support the building of positive relationships. Further promote the Department of Homeland Security’s CRASE training (Citizen Response to Active Shooter Event) and Stop the Bleed training (an emergency medical response training for catastrophic injuries)	1. Continue “CRASE” & “Stop the Bleed” training to county-wide municipalities. 2. Create new interactive programs: a) “Stop and Talk” program for deputies to interact personally with citizen groups b) “Coffee with the Sheriff” monthly social hour or gatherings for faith-based groups and community action groups to interact with the Sheriff c) “Deputy on Site” program to ensure deputy attendance of all town/village board meetings of municipalities without a police department	Q1 - 2021 Q1 - 2021 Q1 - 2021 Q3 – 2022

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Category	Reform Item	Description	Reform Action	Completion Timeline
Operational Policies & Procedures	OPR-1. Improve Selection & Promotion Methods by Requiring Candidates to Meet Additional Standards	Require candidates to meet additional criteria to help ensure a higher quality pool of candidates for new-hires, lateral transfers, and promotions.	1. Enhance selection methods for new-hire, lateral transfers, and supervisor promotions: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) Require a standardized comprehensive background investigation in accordance with LEAP standards. b) Require a psychological exam for all new hires & supervisor candidates. c) Require a polygraph exam for all new hires 	Q2 - 2021
Operational Policies & Procedures	OPR-2. Initiate Anonymous Quality Assurance Feedback Channels	Allow citizens & officers to submit feedback via website and social media to reduce the incidence of unsatisfactory or unlawful behavior.	1. Establish a process for citizens and/or officers to leverage social media and the SCSO website to anonymously notify SCSO officials of unsatisfactory or unlawful behavior of personnel.	Q3 - 2021
Operational Policies & Procedures	OPR-3. Pursue NYS DCJS Law Enforcement Accreditation (LEAP)	Assess current policy and procedures to determine areas of non-compliance in order to meet NYS DCJS Law Enforcement Accreditation standards.	1. Conduct a comprehensive review of current SCSO policies against these state level standards to identify gaps and attain NYS accreditation.	Q4 - 2023

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Category	Reform Item	Description	Reform Action	Completion Timeline
Operational Policies & Procedures	OPR-4. Pursue NYS DCJS SWAT Accreditation	Expand existing SWAT team to include members from police agencies in Steuben County to meet standards for DCJS SWAT Accreditation. SWAT Team is a higher level of training and performance to specifically deal with high risk search warrants (no-knock warrants), hostage situations, barricaded subjects, etc. to reduce the possibility of injury to officers and the public.	1. Recruit applicable police officers from outside agencies, train and accept as active members of SCSO SWAT team and achieve NYS accreditation.	Q4 - 2023
Operational Policies & Procedures	OPR-5. Improve Collaboration with Mental Health Agencies	Expand Crisis Intervention Training (40 hr. instruction by NYS office of Mental Hygiene). Partner with Steuben County Mental Health to increase field use of mobile crisis unit. Partner with county medical providers for mental health transitional treatment and expanded use of tele-medicine providers in the mental health arena.	1. Work with Steuben County Mental Health to establish protocols for expanded use of mobile crisis unit. 2. Collaborate with area providers for mental health tele-medicine (Guthrie, Arnot, and University of Rochester) 3. Collaborate with Steuben County Mental Health to conduct crisis intervention training.	Q4 - 2021 Q1 - 2022 Q4 - 2022

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Category	Reform Item	Description	Reform Action	Completion Timeline
Operational Policies & Procedures	OPR-6. Improve Awareness of Mental Health Challenges of Deputies & Officers	Expand peer counseling program and create emotional survival for law enforcement program for deputies, officers, and families.	1. Train additional peer counselors	Q1 - 2024
			2. Establish an annual family training session outlining how to recognize stress and teach effective strategies for managing stress.	Q1 - 2024
Category	Reform Item	Description	Reform Action	Completion Timeline
Training	T-1. Expand De-Escalation Training	Review current de-escalation trainings and benchmark for additional recommendations.	1. Conduct Train the Trainer sessions , to develop internal skilled presenters on de-escalation techniques	Q4 - 2022
			2. Offer De-escalation training to county-wide agencies	Q4 - 2022
Training	T-2. Expand Use of Force Training	Review current training by defensive tactics instructor group for training recommendations.	1. Benchmark and gather recommendations for improved Use of Force trainings.	Q4 - 2022
			2. Provide annual defensive tactics training to county-wide agencies.	Q4 - 2022

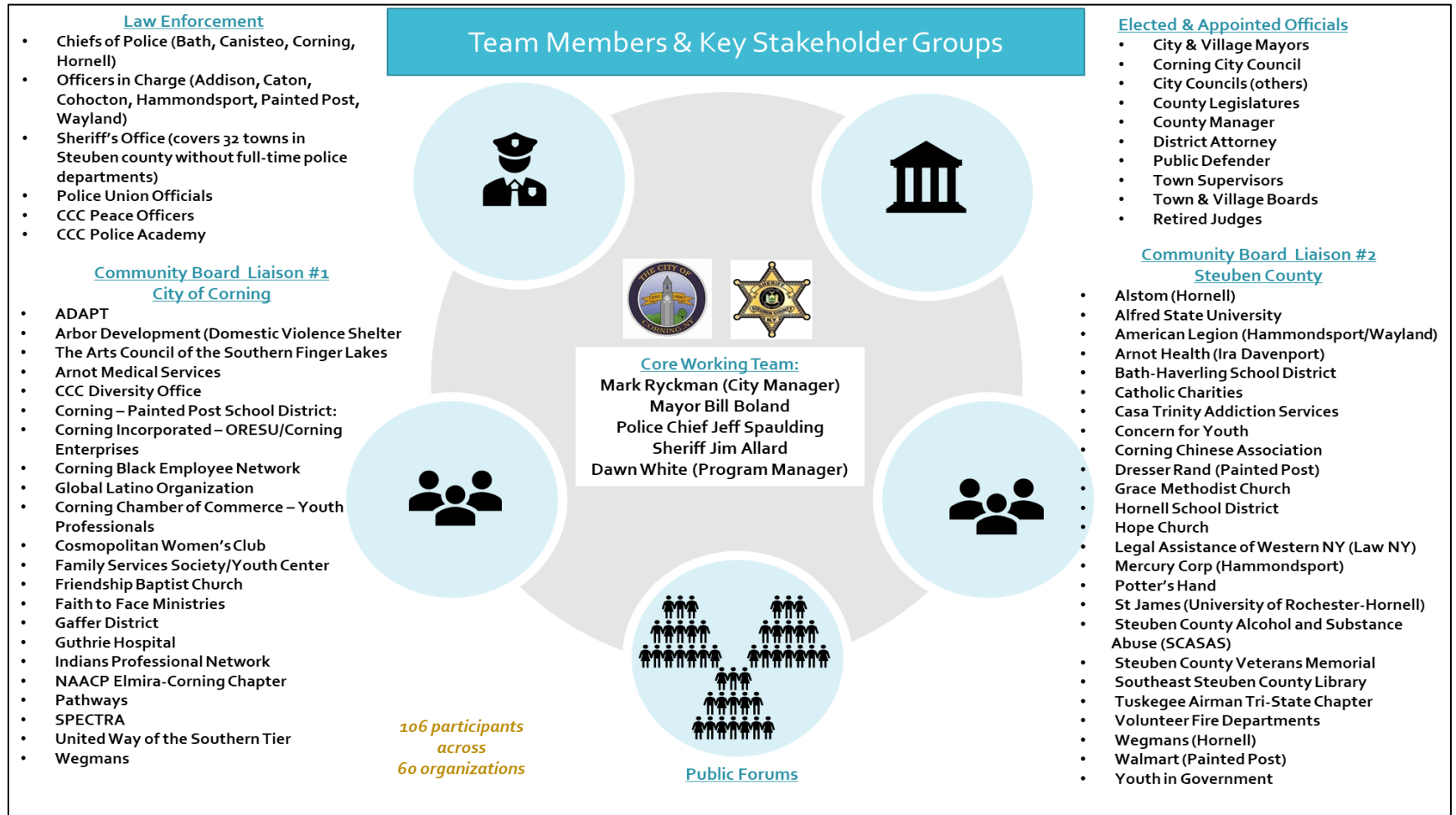
Note: Citizens made recommendations for officers to wear body cameras, but they are already in use at SCSO along with a detailed policy.

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V. APPENDIX

1-1



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