

# YONKERS POLICE DEPARTMENT



*Public Opinion Survey 2018*



*Committed to providing quality services to the people who live in, work in, or visit the City of Yonkers.*

# MESSAGE FROM THE POLICE COMMISSIONER

January 31, 2019

I am pleased to present the results of the Yonkers Police Department's second comprehensive public opinion survey to the residents and members of our Yonkers community.

Last October, we administered our second annual survey to community members with the continued goal of identifying our strengths as well as areas that can be improved upon. The survey ran for approximately six weeks with many responses from neighborhoods throughout the City.

We sincerely appreciate the time, effort and detailed survey responses received from so many of our constituents. Yonkers Police Officers once again have much to be proud of as this report reflects. Since the beginning of this administration in 2012, the Yonkers Police Department has made community relations a top priority and it's clear from the survey results that our officers continue to engage with the community in a positive way. As with any large organization, there is always room for improvement, and this report highlights areas and opportunities where we can adjust police services to meet the needs and expectations of the public we serve.

The Yonkers Police Department recognizes that the key to our successes is a strong relationship with the community. That strong relationship has resulted in historically low crime levels in all four of our police precincts. We will continually strive to improve ourselves and elevate the level of excellence delivered by our members.

Thank you to all the people of Yonkers for supporting your Police Department.



Charles Gardner

Yonkers Police Commissioner



# MISSION STATEMENT

The Mission of the Yonkers Police Department is to enhance the quality of life in our City by working in cooperation with the diverse communities we serve. It is our duty to protect the lives and property of our residents and those visiting our City. By enforcing the law within the framework of the Constitution, we pledge to protect the people of Yonkers, preserve the peace and contribute to a safe environment for all. We shall strive to maintain and continuously enhance the public's trust by asserting the highest ethical standards. To accomplish this Mission, we make the following pledge of Service, Integrity and Respect to ourselves and the people of Yonkers:

**SERVICE :** The Yonkers Police Department pledges service to all members of our community. We place community service above self-interest and we are committed to protecting the public we serve.

**INTEGRITY:** We believe in the principles embodied in the Constitution. We recognize the authority of Federal, State and Local laws. Honesty and truth must be the standards in all our interactions with the community and with our members.

**RESPECT:** The Yonkers Police Department recognizes that a positive relationship with the community is essential to our success. Our members shall respect the public and recognize the vast diversities they represent. We shall respect each other as professionals and fellow human beings.

# INTRODUCTION

Our first ever public opinion survey, launched in 2017 to give voice to residents, those who work in Yonkers, and those who visit the city, identified a variety of strengths as well as areas ripe for improvement. With the goal of always striving for improvement, we implemented a follow-up survey in 2018 so that we may continue to develop and progress.

The 2018 survey repeated most questions from the 2017 survey in order to measure progress across topics including fairness, trust, and community impact. Several questions were added to assess whether the community feels heard and responded to, when they contact the Yonkers Police Department. As in 2017, results were compared across precincts, type of interaction with YPD, gender and ethnicity in order to gauge how different groups experience the YPD.

This report outlines the survey findings.



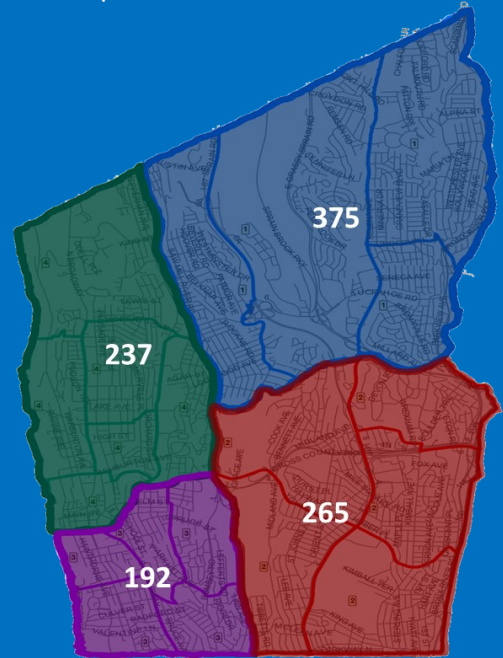
# WHO DID WE HEAR FROM?

# 1,647

Individuals

YIELDING A CONFIDENCE  
LEVEL OF 99%\*

Respondents Live In:



Number of respondents by precinct

NYC	3
Other	21

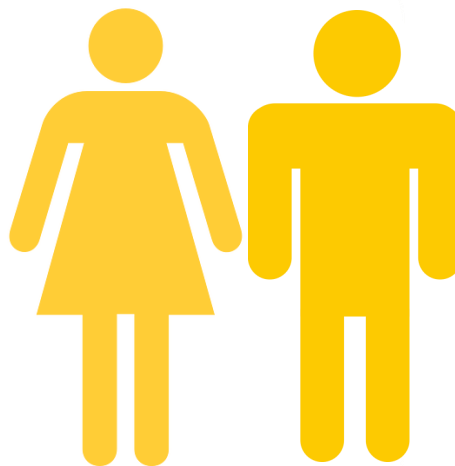
The survey, which was open from October 26th through December 7th, was administered for the second year in a row by a New York-based third-party consulting firm, OrgVitality. In order to attract a large and diverse number of respondents, the survey was administered online and by paper in English and Spanish. \*Margin of error of 3.17%

## Ethnicities

African American	6%
Asian or Pacific Islander	1%
Hispanic Latino	12%
Multi-Racial	4%
Native American	1%
White/Caucasian	66%
Other	2%
Declined to state	9%

## Ages

Under 25	3%
25-35	8%
35-45	15%
45-55	19%
55-65	22%
65-75	22%
75+	10%

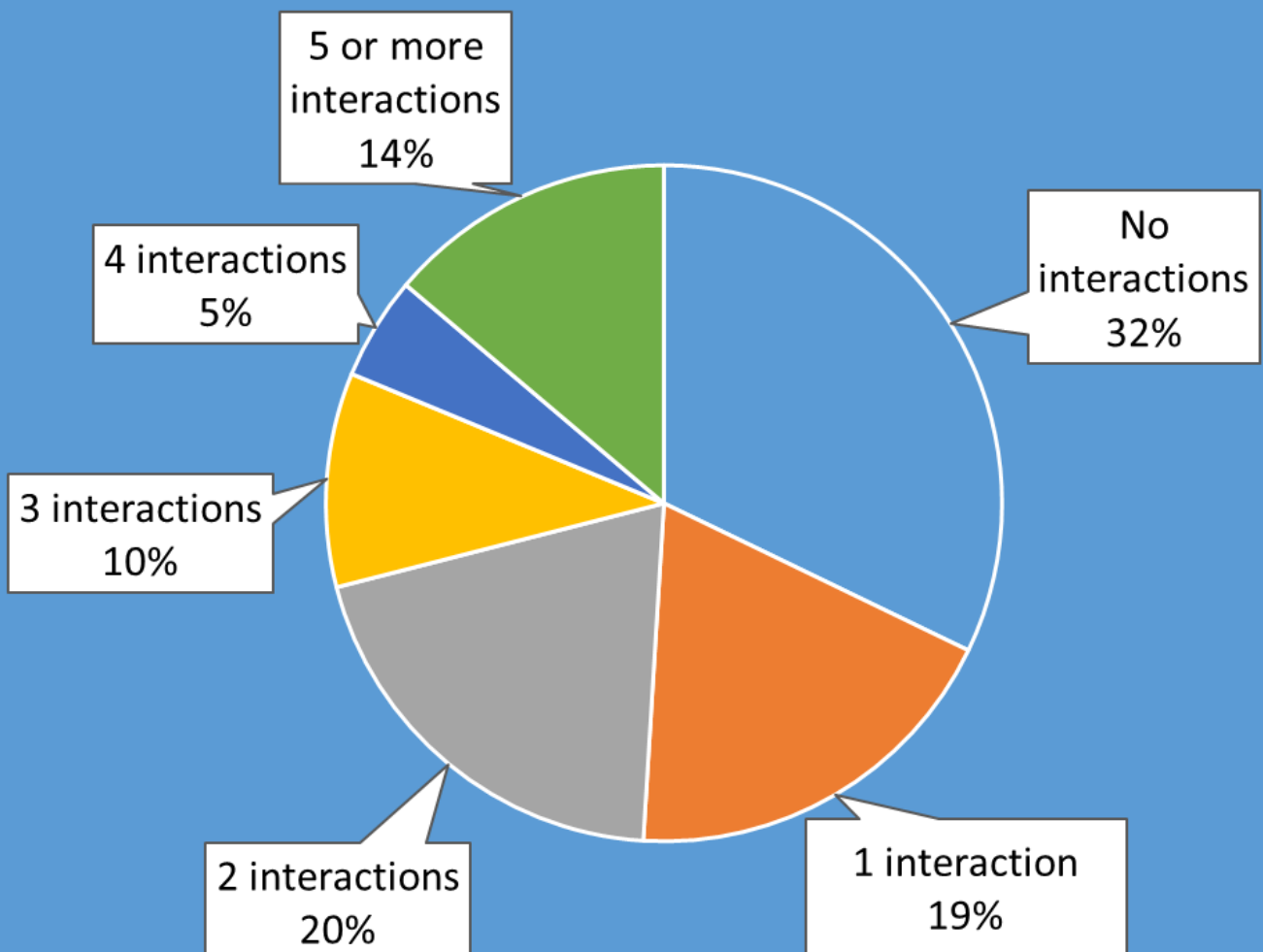


55%

40%

# TYPES OF INTERACTIONS

<b>Civilian initiated contact with YPD</b>	<b>35%</b>
<b>Other interaction</b>	<b>27%</b>
<b>Community event</b>	<b>27%</b>
<b>None</b>	<b>23%</b>
<b>Enforcement/investigation by YPD</b>	<b>14%</b>
<b>Witnessed a crime or traffic incident</b>	<b>14%</b>
<b>Victim of a crime</b>	<b>9%</b>



# GENERAL SURVEY FINDINGS

The survey results are largely stable from 2017, both in terms of population responding, as well as overall pattern of results.

Strengths continue to be foundations of agency values and treating the public fairly. These scores are among the most positive, and are comparable to 2017.



Opportunities to improve relate to continued efforts to connect with the community. Satisfaction with community impact, and a citizen's sense of being understood by the YPD are also areas that can be improved upon.

Across populations, there are more similarities than differences. Business owners feel better supported, though those who are coming to YPD after witnessing or being the victim of a crime are more skeptical.



*82% of respondents are satisfied that YPD officials act in a professional manner.*

*81% think YPD treat people fairly.*

*72% believe that YPD officers understand, support members of the community like me.*

# BREAKING IT DOWN BY PRECINCT

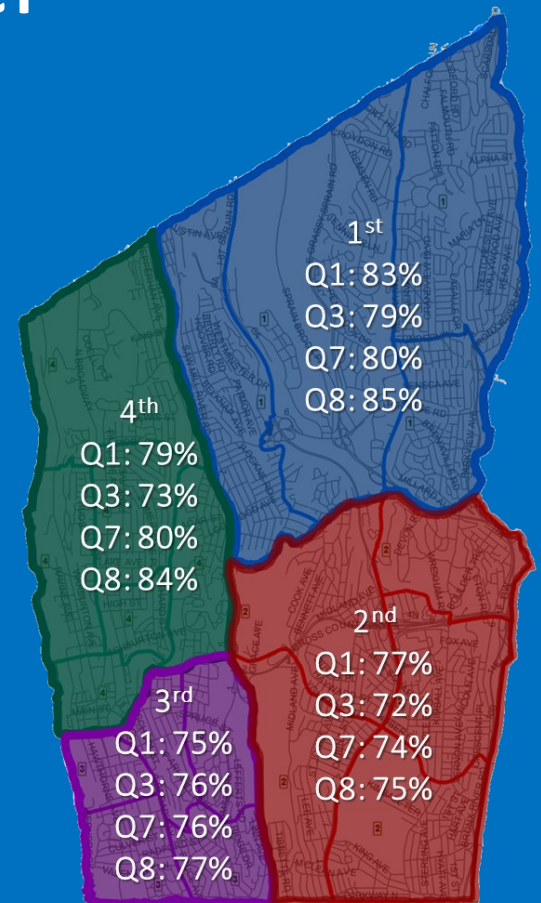
Scores across precincts are coming closer together, representing a more consistent experience. The first precinct is especially positive, and may serve as an area to learn from.

Q1: Rate your trust and confidence in YPD.

Q3: How satisfied are you with the manner in which the YPD interacts with the community?

Q6: Rate YPD on how well they listen to your concerns.

Q7: Rate YPD on whether they treat people fairly.



35% of respondents initiated contact with YPD

36% requested assistance

18% reported a crime

16% requested information

11% reported a traffic incident

9% attended a community event

5% needed medical care

4% were a victim of crime



# ADVICE TO YPD

If you could give the Yonkers Police Department any advice on how to best serve your community, what would it be?

Show more of a presence in the residential area of a precinct. It would be nice if we could recognize or be familiar with an officer in our precinct. I know it is difficult with so much time needed to be spent on crime incidents, but residents should also feel protected and not have to be a victim of a crime before getting to know an officer.

I was nervous to report the threat because I was afraid of retaliation if that person found out it was me. However the police officers were very professional, informative and reassuring that I did the right thing by reporting it. I felt confident at the end of the conversation that I made a good decision by contacting the Yonkers Police.

We have had nothing but good interactions with the YPD. We have 3 teenagers and have had various incidents, with cars and other minor things, and the YPD have been very courteous and professional at all times...We see the patrol cars driving around very frequently and feel very assured that they are there when we need them.

Because of some unusual situations that occurred over the past couple of years in our neighborhood, including a burglary of our home and foreclosure on the home next door, we had more contact with the YPD than we've had in prior years. Every officer we came into contact with seemed personally interested in what happened, what is happening, and what might happen on our street... that's pretty amazing.

More outreach with crime prevention utilizing maps which detail past criminal incidents. This is done by the NYPD and many other large USA PD's.

Start pursuing quality of life issues. Illegal dumping, cowboy driving, speeding and ignoring stop signs to name few. Start hitting motorists who break the with tickets and drum up tax revenue. Let the public know

They are very visible at the Nepperhan Community Center events, work with the Yonkers Family YMCA and attend Hudson River Community Assn. meetings. I think their intentions, leadership and actions are positive and moving in the right direction.

# TARGETED IMPROVEMENT AREAS

The survey results highlighted several areas that provide opportunities for positive change:

## **Aggressive and Reckless Driving**

The Yonkers Police understands how aggressive and reckless driving is a concern for the public due to the inherent safety issues; it also impacts the quality of life for our residents, and contributes to motor vehicle accidents and impaired traffic situations. Survey results have indicated that this is an important issue for our residents, and our Department will enhance targeted enforcement and allocate resources towards highway safety campaigns to address these issues.

## **Expanded Victim Outreach Efforts**

In response to last year's Public Opinion Survey, the Yonkers Police Department initiated a pilot victim outreach program in the 3rd Precinct to improve law enforcement follow-up with victims of crimes and domestic violence. This pilot program has proven successful and the Department is currently developing plans to expand the program to additional command(s).

## **Improved Mediation and Agency Referrals**

Further survey results have indicated a need for improved mediation efforts and agency referrals. Many law enforcement encounters often conclude with legal and or civil advice provided to the complainant; often this advice is comprised of referrals to outside agencies, such as Family Court, Landlord / Tenant services, mediation programs, etc. We have identified several opportunities for enhancement, including the development of a Patrol Officers Guide and complainant contact card that will include valuable resource information.

The survey results will also be incorporated into the Department's in-service training program for all Department personnel to increase awareness of this community feedback.

# A CALL TO ACTION

The YPD is the largest law enforcement agency in Westchester county, overseeing a diverse population. The results of this survey provided the YPD with an opportunity to identify its strengths, as well as areas that need improvement. Ultimately, giving residents a voice will help YPD with its mission to partner with the public in order to better protect and serve.

As with many law enforcement agencies across the country, the survey highlighted the delicate balance between law enforcement and the needs of the community it serves. The survey results offer the YPD a specific challenge to respond to the public with more professionalism, respect, and caring, as many officers do at community events. YPD can meet this challenge; in fact, 88% of people surveyed believe that YPD is effective at developing positive, trusting relationships in the community. The YPD appreciates the survey feedback, and commits to continuing to work towards improved relations between the YPD and the community.

