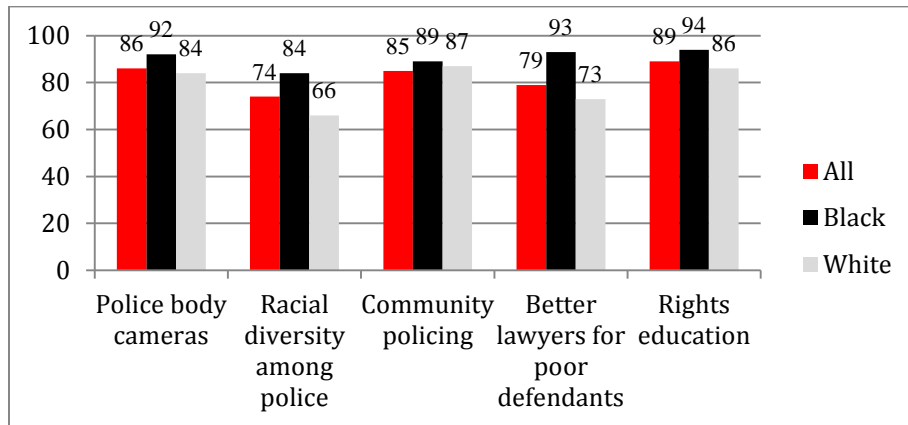## GARDEN STATERS DEMAND REFORM TO THE CRIMINAL JUSTICE SYSTEM

While Baltimore continues to clean up its broken neighborhoods, and the nation still reels with what seems like weekly headlines about police misconduct against civilians, many are already wondering: how can we do better? What specific steps can we take to heal the racial and justice divide? New polling from Fairleigh Dickinson University's PublicMind finds that by sizable majorities, Garden State residents support a variety of criminal justice reforms. The strongest support for reform comes from the black community, with whites offering more tepid endorsements for changes ranging from increased police diversity to community policing.

PublicMind asked respondents if they support or oppose a variety of reforms that have been discussed in recent months given the widespread national media coverage of instances of largely white on black police mistreatment of criminal suspects. Overall, support ranges from 74 percent for more racial diversity in the police to 89 percent for teaching citizens about their legal rights within the criminal justice system. Eighty-six percent of respondents favor requiring police to wear body cameras, 85 percent favor community policing, and 79 percent favor better lawyers for those who can't afford them.

*Support for criminal justice reforms*



Although support for reform is high across most demographics, blacks and whites differ on the degree of support they offer for each reform, with blacks considerably more likely to voice their approval than whites. For example, although more than nine-in-ten black respondents support better lawyers for those who can't afford them, just under three-quarters of whites said the same thing. As for increased racial diversity among police, over four-fifths of blacks favor such a change with only two-thirds of whites who say the same.

"There are really two takeaways here. The first is that there's a broad consensus among the public for criminal justice reforms. However, some communities favor change more than others. It could be that black residents are among the strongest supporters because they have the most distrust for the current system. The same survey found blacks and whites considerably at odds over whether the system works the same for all residents," said Krista Jenkins, professor of political science and director of PublicMind. "Reforms become more needed in the eyes of those who see or experience the most problems with the current system."

The Fairleigh Dickinson University poll of 1314 adults, including an oversample of 403 African-Americans, in New Jersey was conducted by telephone with both landline and cell phones from April 13 through April 19. The margin of error is +/- 3 percentage points.

**Methodology**
The most recent survey by Fairleigh Dickinson University's PublicMind was conducted by telephone from April 13 through April 19 using a randomly selected sample of 1314 adults in New Jersey, including an oversample of 403 African-Americans. Black respondents were identified through their response to the following question:

*In addition to being American, would you say you're… ? [Prompt as necessary]*
1        White [INTERVIEWER INCLUDE: Irish, German, Polish, Italian, and all Europeans]
2        African-American/black
3        Asian-American [INCLUDES: Indian, Pakistani, Indian, Arab, Chinese, Japanese, etc.]
4        Hispanic/Latin American
5        Other [vol]
9        Ref.

One can be 95 percent confident that the error attributable to sampling has a range of +/- 3.3 percentage points. The margin of error for subgroups is larger and varies by the size of that subgroup. The MoE for African Americans is +/- 4.9; for whites the MoE is +/- 4.3 (N = 524).

Survey results are also subject to non-sampling error. This kind of error, which cannot be measured, arises from a number of factors including, but not limited to, non-response (eligible individuals refusing to be interviewed), question wording, the order in which questions are asked, and variations among interviewers.

PublicMind interviews are conducted by Opinion America of Cedar Knolls, NJ, with professionally trained interviewers using a CATI (Computer Assisted Telephone Interviewing) system. Random selection is achieved by computerized random-digit dialing. This technique gives every person with a landline phone number (including those with unlisted numbers) an equal chance of being selected.

Landline households are supplemented with a separate, randomly selected sample of cell-phone respondents interviewed in the same time frame. The total combined sample is mathematically weighted to match known demographics of age, race and gender.

The sample was purchased from Marketing Systems Group and the research was funded by Fairleigh Dickinson University.

**Tables**

*Some people have suggested changes to law enforcement in order to improve fairness in the criminal justice system. Please tell me if you support or oppose [rotate] each of the following reforms: ROTATE SERIES*

| *Police body cameras* | | | | | | | | | | | |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| | | **PID** | | | **Gender** | | **Race** | | **Age** | | |
| | **All** | **Dem** | **Ind** | **Rep** | **Male** | **Female** | **White** | **Black** | **18-34** | **35-59** | **60+** |
| Support | 86 | 89 | 88 | 87 | 87 | 86 | 84 | 92 | 87 | 86 | 87 |
| Oppose | 10 | 9 | 6 | 10 | 11 | 9 | 14 | 5 | 11 | 10 | 9 |
| No difference (vol) | 2 | 1 | 4 | 1 | 1 | 2 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 2 | 2 |
| DK (vol) | 2 | 2 | 2 | 1 | 1 | 2 | 1 | 2 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| Refused (vol) | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 |

| *Police body cameras* | | | | | | | | |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| | | **Education** | | **Region** | | | **Detained** | |
| | **All** | **College Grad +** | **Some College and Less** | **North** | **Central** | **South** | **Yes** | **No** |
| Support | 86 | 86 | 87 | 84 | 88 | 88 | 87 | 86 |
| Oppose | 10 | 11 | 9 | 12 | 8 | 8 | 9 | 10 |
| No difference (vol) | 2 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 1 | 2 | 2 | 2 |
| DK (vol) | 2 | 1 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 1 | 2 | 2 |
| Refused (vol) | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |

| *More racial diversity in the police* | | | | | | | | | | | |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| | | **PID** | | | **Gender** | | **Race** | | **Age** | | |
| | **All** | **Dem** | **Ind** | **Rep** | **Male** | **Female** | **White** | **Black** | **18-34** | **35-59** | **60+** |
| Support | 74 | 86 | 77 | 61 | 69 | 77 | 66 | 84 | 82 | 71 | 70 |
| Oppose | 13 | 8 | 10 | 22 | 15 | 11 | 16 | 10 | 7 | 16 | 15 |
| No difference (vol) | 8 | 3 | 9 | 14 | 10 | 7 | 13 | 3 | 7 | 10 | 7 |
| DK (vol) | 4 | 2 | 3 | 3 | 4 | 4 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 6 |
| Refused (vol) | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 2 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 2 |

*More racial diversity in the police*

|  | All | Education | | Region | | | Detained | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
|  |  | College Grad + | Some College and Less | North | Central | South | Yes | No |
| Support | 74 | 74 | 73 | 76 | 75 | 69 | 78 | 72 |
| Oppose | 13 | 13 | 13 | 13 | 10 | 18 | 13 | 13 |
| No difference (vol) | 8 | 9 | 8 | 8 | 8 | 10 | 7 | 9 |
| DK (vol) | 4 | 3 | 5 | 3 | 6 | 2 | 2 | 4 |
| Refused (vol) | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 2 | 0 | 1 |

*Community policing, which means law enforcement officers have close connections to the area they patrol*

|  | All | PID | | | Gender | | Race | | Age | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
|  |  | Dem | Ind | Rep | Male | Female | White | Black | 18-34 | 35-59 | 60+ |
| Support | 85 | 87 | 81 | 91 | 87 | 84 | 87 | 89 | 81 | 87 | 87 |
| Oppose | 10 | 10 | 13 | 7 | 9 | 11 | 9 | 7 | 14 | 10 | 8 |
| No difference (vol) | 2 | 1 | 3 | 0 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 1 | 2 | 1 | 2 |
| DK (vol) | 2 | 2 | 3 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 3 |
| Refused (vol) | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |

*Community policing, which means law enforcement officers have close connections to the area they patrol*

|  | All | Education | | Region | | | Detained | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
|  |  | College Grad + | Some College and Less | North | Central | South | Yes | No |
| Support | 85 | 88 | 83 | 85 | 81 | 90 | 85 | 86 |
| Oppose | 10 | 8 | 12 | 11 | 11 | 8 | 13 | 10 |
| No difference (vol) | 2 | 2 | 1 | 1 | 3 | 1 | 1 | 2 |
| DK (vol) | 2 | 2 | 3 | 2 | 4 | 1 | 1 | 3 |
| Refused (vol) | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |

*Better lawyers for those who can't afford them*

|  | All | PID | | | Gender | | Race | | Age | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
|  |  | Dem | Ind | Rep | Male | Female | White | Black | 18-34 | 35-59 | 60+ |
| Support | 79 | 89 | 79 | 66 | 75 | 82 | 73 | 93 | 82 | 76 | 80 |
| Oppose | 14 | 10 | 11 | 23 | 18 | 11 | 18 | 4 | 13 | 16 | 14 |
| No difference (vol) | 3 | 0 | 4 | 4 | 3 | 3 | 4 | 1 | 2 | 4 | 1 |
| DK (vol) | 3 | 1 | 5 | 5 | 3 | 3 | 4 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| Refused (vol) | 1 | 0 | 0 | 2 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 2 |

*Better lawyers for those who can't afford them*

|  | All | Education | | Region | | | Detained | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
|  |  | College Grad + | Some College and Less | North | Central | South | Yes | No |
| Support | 79 | 76 | 81 | 79 | 76 | 82 | 83 | 77 |
| Oppose | 14 | 17 | 12 | 14 | 16 | 12 | 15 | 14 |
| No difference (vol) | 3 | 3 | 3 | 2 | 2 | 4 | 1 | 3 |

| | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| DK (vol) | 3 | 3 | 3 | 4 | 4 | 0 | 1 | 4 |
| Refused (vol) | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 1 |

*More efforts to teach citizens about their legal rights*

| | | PID | | | Gender | | Race | | Age | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | All | Dem | Ind | Rep | Male | Female | White | Black | 18-34 | 35-59 | 60+ |
| Support | 89 | 95 | 86 | 84 | 89 | 89 | 86 | 94 | 92 | 87 | 89 |
| Oppose | 8 | 4 | 9 | 12 | 8 | 7 | 9 | 5 | 4 | 10 | 8 |
| No difference (vol) | 2 | 1 | 4 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 3 | 1 | 4 | 2 | 1 |
| DK (vol) | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 2 |
| Refused (vol) | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 |

*More efforts to teach citizens about their legal rights*

| | | Education | | Region | | | Detained | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | All | College Grad + | Some College and Less | North | Central | South | Yes | No |
| A lot | 89 | 86 | 91 | 90 | 88 | 89 | 93 | 88 |
| Some | 8 | 11 | 4 | 8 | 8 | 7 | 5 | 9 |
| Just a little | 2 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 1 | 3 | 1 | 2 |
| None at all | 1 | 1 | 2 | 0 | 2 | 1 | 2 | 1 |
| DK (vol) | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Refused (vol) | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |

*Have you or anyone you know personally, been detained by the police for reasons that you suspect had something to do with who you are rather than what you allegedly did?*

| | | PID | | | Gender | | Race | | Age | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | All | Dem | Ind | Rep | Male | Female | White | Black | 18-34 | 35-59 | 60+ |
| Yes | 23% | 30 | 23 | 13 | 25 | 21 | 18 | 42 | 29 | 25 | 15 |
| No | 76% | 69 | 74 | 86 | 74 | 77 | 81 | 55 | 71 | 73 | 83 |
| DK (vol) | 1% | 1 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 1 |
| Refused (vol) | 1% | 0 | 2 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 2 | 1 | 1 | 1 |

*Have you or anyone you know personally, been detained by the police for reasons that you suspect had something to do with who you are rather than what you allegedly did?*

| | | Education | | Region | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | All | College Grad + | Some College and Less | North | Central | South |
| Yes | 23% | 22 | 23 | 22 | 24 | 23 |
| No | 76% | 77 | 75 | 77 | 74 | 76 |
| DK (vol) | 1% | 1 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 1 |
| Refused (vol) | 1% | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 0 |

**Exact question wording**

CJ4-8 Some people have suggested changes to law enforcement in order to improve fairness in the criminal justice system. Please tell me if you support or oppose [rotate] each of the following reforms: ROTATE SERIES

*CJ4      Police body cameras*
*CJ5      More racial diversity in the police*
*CJ6      Community policing, which means law enforcement officers have close connections to the*
*area they patrol*
*CJ7      Better lawyers for those who can't afford them*
*CJ8      More efforts to teach citizens about their legal rights*

1        Support
2        Oppose
8        DK (vol)
9        Refused (vol)

**Sample Characteristics**

| Gender | Male | 48% |
|---|---|---|
| | Female | 52% |
| **Age** | 18-34 | 28% |
| | 35-59 | 41% |
| | 60+ | 31% |
| | Refused | 1% |
| **Race** | White | 61% |
| | African American | 14% |
| | Hispanic | 14% |
| | Asian | 6% |
| | Other/Refused | 4% |
| **Party (with leaners)** | Dem | 41% |
| | Ind/DK/Refused | 27% |
| | Repub | 31% |