

NACOLE

Our Mission:
**Advancing
Law Enforcement
Reform
through
Civilian
Oversight**



NACOLE – the National Association for Civilian Oversight of Law Enforcement – is the only national organization working to create and support independent civilian oversight entities that seek to make police, jails, and prisons more transparent, accountable, and responsive to the communities they serve.

Founded in 1995 in response to complaints of police abuse and misconduct, NACOLE's work has been foundational to the civilian oversight movement. In the last decade, NACOLE expanded the scope of its mission to encompass civilian oversight of jails and prisons. We blend research, training, partnerships, and media outreach to build support for civilian oversight of law enforcement, to enlarge the community of oversight practitioners, and to continuously improve the field.

Civilian oversight works. It builds community trust and provides local governments with a powerful set of proven tools that incentivize just and equitable law enforcement conduct and help increase accountability and professionalism. These agencies also create an agreed-upon venue to investigate complaints against officers, highlight findings, and make recommendations to improve law enforcement agencies' policies and procedures.

In developing oversight agencies, NACOLE partners with all levels of community stakeholders — civic leaders, activists, elected officials, law enforcement, journalists, academics, and others. This approach ensures credibility, community buy-in, and lasting results in law enforcement oversight efforts.

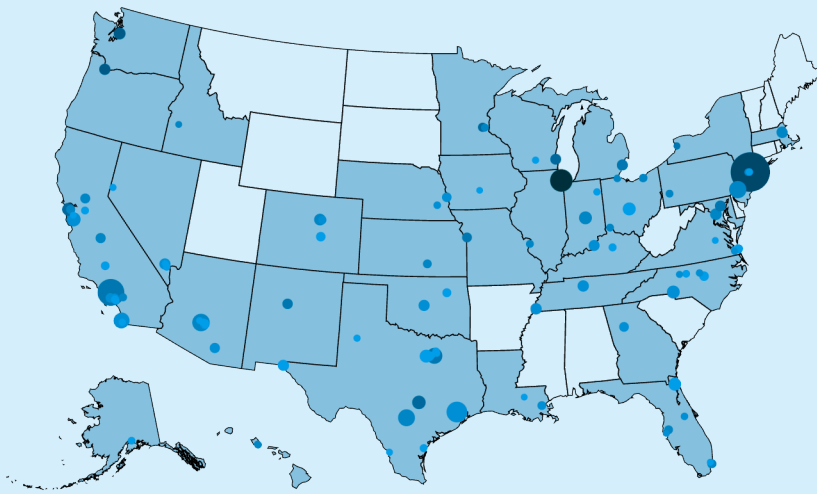


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NACOLE is a 501(c)(3) organization.

What Civilian Oversight Agencies Do and Why They Matter



In a democratic society, accountability is rooted in the principle that law enforcement officers and departments are answerable to the public. Transparency is key to holding officers and departments accountable. If law enforcement policies, practices, operations, and investigative and disciplinary processes are secret, leaving the public in the dark, trust erodes. By illuminating internal law enforcement operations, oversight agencies help the public hold departments to account.

Examples of civilian oversight activities include:

1. Independently review law enforcement agencies' internal investigations
2. Conduct independent investigations of misconduct complaints individuals file
3. Make disciplinary recommendations
4. Review and approve substantive departmental policies prior to implementation
5. Issue reports describing and making recommendations to improve department hiring practices, policies, training, procedures, and investigative and disciplinary systems

Civilian Oversight Success Stories: Key Cities



Denver, CO

The Denver Office of the Independent Monitor conducted an independent investigation of the Denver Police Department's response to the George Floyd protests, issued a comprehensive report of its findings, and made 16 recommendations for improvement. The police department agreed to implement these recommendations.



New York, NY

The New York City Civilian Complaint Review Board independently investigated the death of Eric Garner, substantiated allegations of misconduct against Officer Daniel Pantaleo, and conducted the disciplinary hearing before an administrative law judge. The judge affirmed the CCRB's decision that Pantaleo used a banned chokehold causing Garner's death, a decision the New York City Police Department commissioner upheld, which resulted in Pantaleo's termination.

Our Impact: Building Support for Civilian Oversight

Some of our impact areas include:

200
OVERSIGHT AGENCIES

10,000+
INDIVIDUALS TRAINED



- **Catalyzing local oversight agencies:** Over its 25-year existence, NACOLE has been the driving force behind the public's understanding of the need for civilian oversight entities. In just the past decade, NACOLE's work has helped increase the number of local police oversight entities by 90 percent. Currently, more than 200 jurisdictions in 42 states and the District of Columbia have some form of oversight.
- **Education and training:** Since our inception, we have trained more than 10,000 attendees from the United States and around the world. NACOLE provides the only certification program for oversight professionals.
- **Influencing national policy:** NACOLE's advocacy and research resulted in the first-ever federal government recommendations in favor of civilian oversight. *The Final Report of the President's Task Force on 21st Century Policing (2015)* also prompted an increase in federal research funding, available through the Department of Justice's Office of Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS Office), on civilian oversight. NACOLE partnered with the DOJ's COPS Office on a first-of-its-kind study, released in 2021, on the state of civilian oversight and effective oversight practices.

The need for expanded oversight is greater than ever. There are more than 17,000 police agencies and over 5,000 correctional facilities in the United States and only 200 -- *less than 1%* -- have some form of civilian oversight.

While many large cities have oversight agencies, thousands of midsize and smaller ones do not. And many use of force incidents and high-profile cases of alleged officer abuse and misconduct occur in these very communities. Civilian oversight can restore community trust through a transparent process that holds officers and their departments accountable.

NACOLE's Work:

Our Four Core Areas



Education and training:

Through regional, national, and virtual meetings, NACOLE trains and educates community leaders, activists, oversight practitioners, and law enforcement professionals on the importance and mechanics of effective civilian oversight.



Research:

In partnership with the federal government, academic institutions, and other funding partners, NACOLE conducts ground-breaking empirical research on the importance and lasting impact of civilian oversight of law enforcement. This includes developing and sharing effective practices, and making other significant contributions to the field of civilian oversight.



Advocacy and engagement:

As the leader in the field, NACOLE advocates at the federal, state, and local levels for greater use of civilian oversight entities. Our board and membership base, with hundreds of years of combined experience, are powerful, compelling advocates on the need for and benefits of effective civilian oversight.



Collaborative, hands-on strategic assistance:

NACOLE collaborates directly with local governments and communities to offer a wide range of services and a comprehensive approach to establishing and implementing civilian oversight.

NACOLE's 5-Year Plan:

Increasing Oversight, Advocacy, and Sustainability

In our first 25 years, NACOLE played a leading role in creating the field of civilian oversight of law enforcement. In our next five years, NACOLE seeks to “meet the moment” that the national outcry for law enforcement reform has created. We have three specific goals over the next five years:



Help create or strengthen 50 law enforcement oversight entities covering 5-10 million people

With community support, NACOLE intends to create or strengthen 50 oversight agencies, using the best elements of civilian oversight. Some existing agencies do not possess the authority or resources to be effective, and part of NACOLE's mission is to change this dynamic.



Equip and train 1,500 oversight practitioners

NACOLE will educate 1,500 oversight practitioners on effective oversight practices, police and corrections procedures, investigatory practices, policy analysis, community-building, and stakeholder management.



Increase our research and policy impact

NACOLE will leverage existing relationships and create new ones to further awareness of and support for civilian oversight across the country.

To achieve these goals, NACOLE will invest in four priority areas to boost its reach, impact, and capacity:

1. Training and research:

NACOLE is the sole organization in the country offering regular and comprehensive training in the area of civilian oversight and offers the only *Certified Practitioner of Oversight* credential program. To expand our training efforts, NACOLE will:

- **Increase training modules and teams:** NACOLE will develop new training modules and secure additional training consultants.
- **Establish additional standards for oversight agencies:** NACOLE will work with a broad group of stakeholders to establish additional standards, pursuant to which oversight practitioners can conduct peer reviews, to help ensure excellence in the field and build even deeper support for this work.
- **Broaden research:** As the umbrella organization for a wide range of oversight agencies, NACOLE is uniquely positioned to collect and assess information on effective practices, emerging concerns, and new trends.

2. Advocacy, outreach, and communications:

This is the biggest potential impact area for NACOLE, and our focus will be to:

- **Develop a list of targeted civilian oversight opportunities:** To achieve our goal of creating or strengthening 50 oversight entities, NACOLE will develop a detailed list of targeted communities and how they would benefit from civilian oversight. NACOLE will share this list with funding partners, local elected officials, oversight practitioners, community advocates, academics, and others, to build early support for creating or strengthening formal oversight structures.
- **Enhance advocacy and outreach:** NACOLE will partner with an additional set of national organizations in coalition-based activities. NACOLE will also reach out to elected officials and other gateway influencers to build support for NACOLE's mission. These influencers include the National Conference of State Legislators, the National Governors Association, and the United States Conference of Mayors.
- **Serve as a proactive communications resource:** We will work with a low-cost or pro-bono communications firm to actively market NACOLE for television, public testimony, and other speaking appearances, especially in the aftermath of what seem to be misuses of law enforcement authority. This will help deepen the public and funding community's understanding of NACOLE's importance.

3. Member services:

NACOLE's strength lies with its members, who are locally-based but span the nation. NACOLE serves as a critical resource of information, infrastructure, and research data for its members to advance law enforcement reform. To generate greater impact at the local level, NACOLE will:

- **Create an electronic resource library:** NACOLE plans to create a resource library members can access through the NACOLE website, for faster and easier information sharing.
- **Enlarge member training opportunities and deepen engagement:** Through additional training opportunities, NACOLE will develop more skilled members, who help accelerate change at the local level.
- **Augment support services for member agencies' leaders:** NACOLE will expand its peer-to-peer support program, which builds deeper trust and connection among oversight professionals.

4. Revenue generation:

Any organization's limiting factor is funding. To increase and diversify its revenue, NACOLE will:

- **Hire a full-time executive director:** This person will coordinate strategy, serve as spokesperson, and focus heavily on fundraising and revenue generation, including securing high-dollar grants and unrestricted funding.
- **Build regional fundraising teams:** We will develop regional fundraising teams, led by board members, in philanthropically generous areas of the country to secure additional funding and support for our mission.
- **Partner with justice-focused funding partners:** A large number of national corporations and prominent individuals are pledging funds for equity-based and racial justice activities. NACOLE's work aligns perfectly with their goals, and we will seek to partner with these corporations and individuals in a series of sponsored training.
- **Increase membership.** More members increase NACOLE's sustainability, growth, and impact.

What They are Saying:

Key Quotes on NACOLE's Impact



Julie Gonzales
Colorado State Senator, District 5

"I appreciate the nuance and specificity that NACOLE brings to the important work of building law enforcement oversight programs. NACOLE works to ensure that community activists, local and state elected officials, law enforcement officials, and attorneys are all heard, and all have meaningful opportunities for input in the creation and implementation of transparent and accountable oversight systems."



Matthew J. Hickman, Ph.D.
Professor & Chair, Department Of Criminal Justice, Criminology & Forensics, Seattle University

"What I like about NACOLE is their desire to bring evidence-based practice to the world of oversight. In some cases that evidence base does not yet exist, but NACOLE supports the efforts to build it. I've particularly enjoyed participating in the NACOLE academic symposia, where researchers and practitioners join together on oversight issues. It is a true learning organization."



Michele Deitch
Distinguished Senior Lecturer, LBJ School of Public Affairs, UT School of Law, The University of Texas at Austin

"NACOLE's work on law enforcement accountability has been a game changer for the field, by providing training, technical assistance, and other opportunities to learn from experts and practitioners, and its high-quality conferences and webinars have also helped raise the profile of issues related to correctional oversight."



Sharon R. Fairley
Professor From Practice, University of Chicago Law School

"Civilian oversight can be really challenging for practitioners and advocates alike. NACOLE serves as an important resource by fostering an engaged and supportive community among those who are in the trenches doing the work and by curating knowledge and information to help all of our efforts be successful."



Dr. Tiffany Crutcher
Executive Director, Terence Crutcher Foundation

"Since the killing of my twin brother by a police officer in 2016, NACOLE provided me support, training, and connections needed to launch a grassroots campaign recommending that the City of Tulsa implement an OIM (Office of the Independent Monitor). The City of Tulsa hasn't acted yet, but because of NACOLE, the issue is at the forefront of our fight for police reform"



Dr. Samuel Walker

*Professor Emeritus, Coordinator, Police Professionalism Initiative,
University of Nebraska at Omaha*

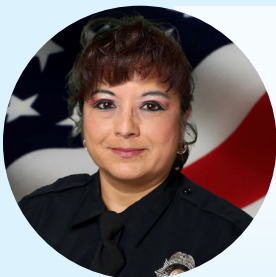
"The National Association for Citizen Oversight of Law Enforcements is THE organization in the field of oversight of the police. Its annual meeting brings together NACOLE members and experts from other parts of the law enforcement community and is an invaluable learning experience. The annual meeting is where you meet the leaders in the field, board members and staff from local oversight agencies, and learn about the latest important developments in the field. It is the best meeting I attend every year."



April Wing

Program Manager, City Manager's Office, City of Cedar Rapids

"NACOLE was a valuable partner for the City of Cedar Rapids as we embarked on our journey in exploring law enforcement oversight models. Their guidance throughout the process and assistance in gaining the necessary input and buy-in from community members was instrumental. This provided us with a strong foundation that enabled us to establish a sustainable and effective model for our citizen review board"



Lieutenant Kim Lovato

Denver Police Department

"The work of NACOLE and its concerted efforts to promote transparency is what will keep the profession of law enforcement evolving. I have been working with civilian oversight for the past several years and applaud the great strides that have improved my chosen profession as a police officer."



Lonnie Schaible, PhD

*Associate Professor
Director, Criminal Justice Research Initiative
University of Colorado Denver*

"NACOLE is a critical resource for advancing the cause of reform within policing, and ensuring that there is a forum for both practitioners and scholars to discuss both the longstanding and dynamic issues surrounding police accountability and the role of civilian oversight."