

5 THINGS YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT THE POLICE DATA INITIATIVE



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The **Police Data Initiative (PDI)** is a community of practice that promotes the use of open data in law enforcement. The PDI originated as a result of a national conversation about policing and includes leading agencies, technologists, and researchers committed to demonstrating transparency and partnering with their communities to **co-produce public safety**.

The Police Foundation administers and facilitates the PDI with support from the U.S. Department of Justice – Office of Community Oriented Policing Services.

Join today at
www.policedatainitiative.org

1

Your agency is eligible.

The PDI is a growing network that currently consists of over 130 law enforcement agencies across the United States. Participating jurisdictions include cities, college campuses, counties, states, and even transit and school systems. All U.S. law enforcement agencies are eligible for participation.

2

To join, all it takes is a promise.

Participating agencies pledge to release a minimum of three open data sets, which they host and control on their own websites. Besides common-sense security precautions, there are no restrictions on the open data's form or content.

3

You can share best practices and learn from others.

PDI agencies convene to discuss progress and challenges on a regular basis by way of regional conference calls. Participating agencies also receive updates about developments in the field of open data and law enforcement.

4

We can help.

The Police Foundation responds to requests for technical assistance and offers exclusive webinars to help participating agencies select and release open data sets, and to engage their communities around this flow of information.

5

Resources are available.

The PDI website, which is public, houses resources for promoting, using, and sharing police open data, including links to all of the open data sets released by participating agencies. The PDI network has collectively released over 200 open data sets to date.

Transparency Through Open Data

Open data is machine-readable data that is available for anyone to use and republish at no cost and without legal restrictions. As such, data that is open is usually available online and can be downloaded into an analyzable format such as a .csv file.

There are many benefits to releasing open data. Open data can **improve community-police relations** by helping the community understand what the police do and by providing opportunities for two-way engagement. In so doing, open data increases transparency and **promotes legitimacy**. It also enables **better collaboration** between different organizations on cross-cutting community concerns, such as drug addiction and pedestrian safety. Making open law enforcement data available can also lead to the development of better **tools and insights** for improving public safety and officer wellbeing.