

# Ellensburg Police Department

## 2024 Community Survey



Collection Process

Demographics

Crime & Safety

Police-Community  
Interaction

Community Interests

# Collection Process

SURVEY SOURCE	ETHICAL APPROVAL	COLLECTION PERIOD	FORMAT
<p><b>Survey:</b> Police &amp; Community-Interaction Survey</p> <p><b>Author:</b> Rosenbaum, D., University of Illinois, Chicago (Retired)</p> <p><b>Number of Questions:</b> 92</p> <p><b>Augmentation:</b> Qualitative questions were added to explore specific community interests.</p>	<p>EPD partnered with CWU, submit application for research through CWU-Institutional Review Board (IRB) under exempt status</p> <p><b>Approved:</b> January 3, 2024</p> <p><b>Valid Through:</b> January 2, 2027</p>	<p><b>Open:</b> January 4, 2024</p> <p><b>Closed:</b> January 31, 2024</p>	<p><b>Electronic</b> was available in English and Spanish, accessible through QR Code</p> <p><b>Paper</b> versions were available in English and Spanish at:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- City Hall</li> <li>- Police Department</li> <li>- Library</li> <li>- HopeSource</li> <li>- Cold Weather Shelter</li> </ul>

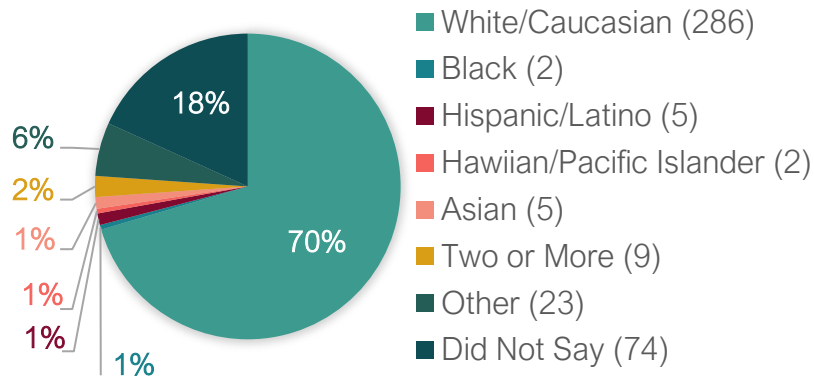
INCOMPLETE RESPONDENTS	TOTAL PARTICIPANTS	TOTAL COMMENTS
<p>12</p> <p><i>* Either did not complete the survey or were not at least 18 years of age</i></p>	406	876

# Demographics

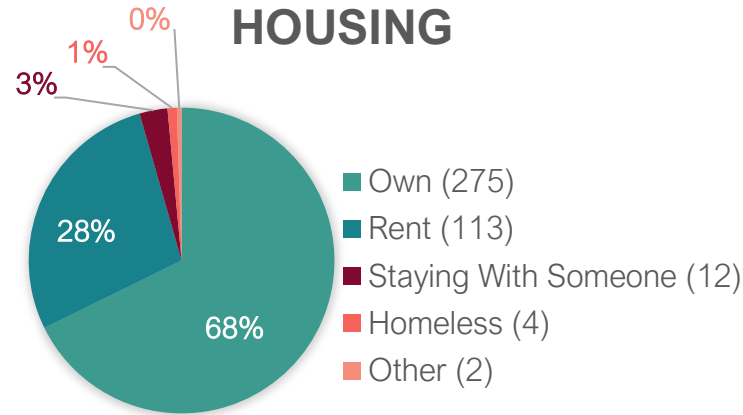
MINORITY REPRESENTATION



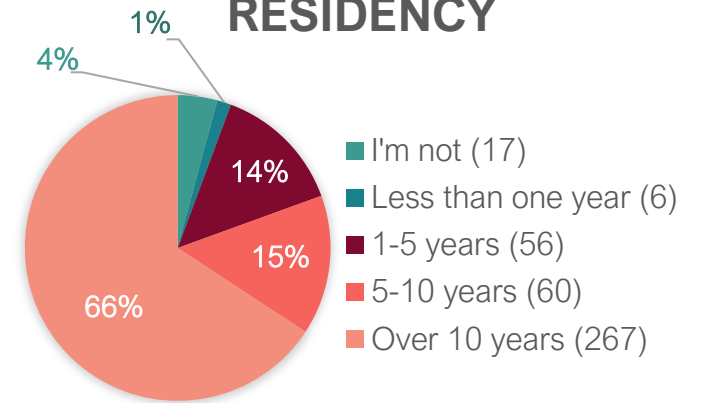
## ETHNICITY



## HOUSING



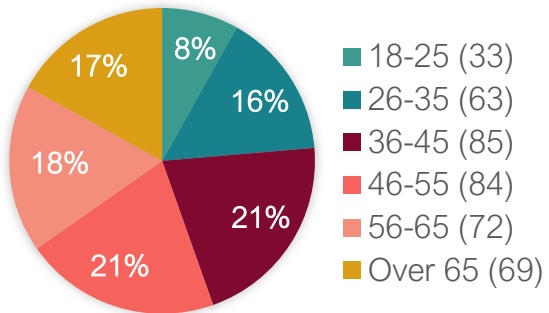
## RESIDENCY



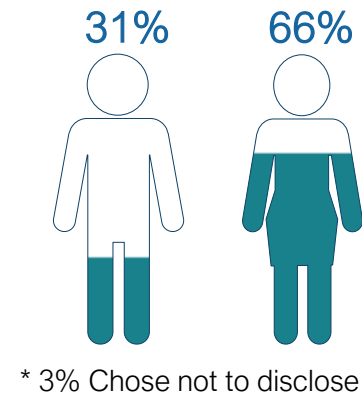
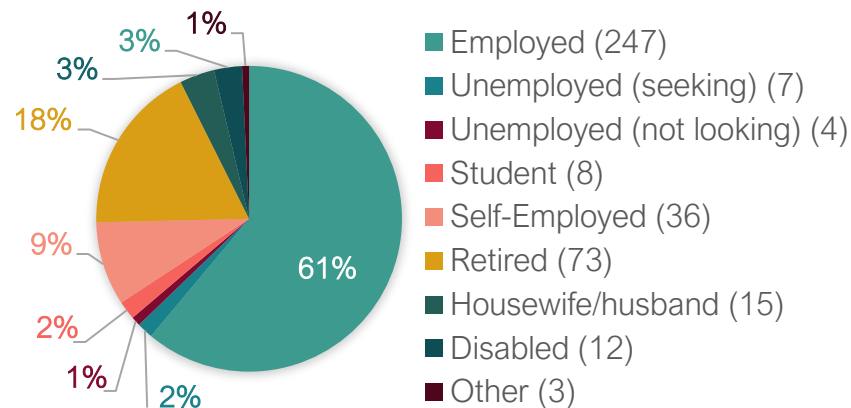
\* Matches Ellensburg 2020 Census Data with 99% accuracy

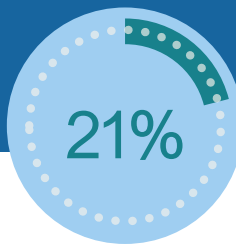
\*\* No one identified as Native American

## AGE RANGE



## EMPLOYMENT





## FEELINGS OF SAFETY

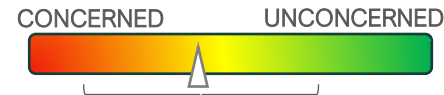
Safety in Ellensburg



Neighborhood Safety



## OVERALL CRIME



\* RANGE: lowest 1.257 to highest 2.404

\*\* PARAMETERS: 1 (concerned) to 3 (unconcerned)

## Top 10 Most Concerning Crimes

Drug Abuse



Child Abuse



Driving Under the Influence



School Safety



Child Sexual Predators/  
Internet Safety



Domestic Violence



Burglaries/Theft  
(Auto)



Burglaries/Theft  
(Residential)



Homeless- or Transient-Related  
Problems



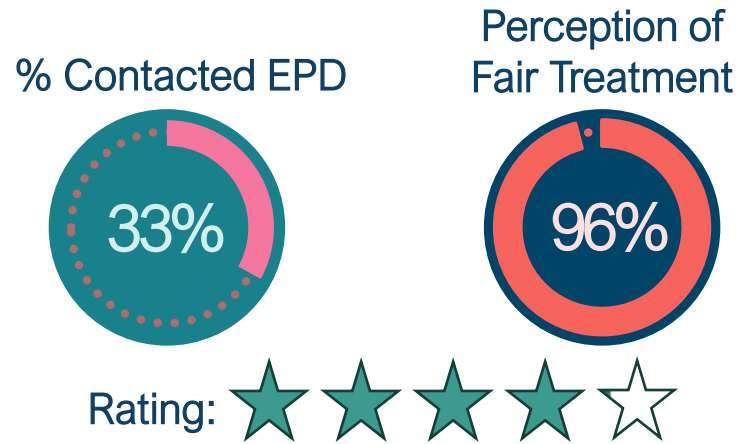
Sexual Assault/Rape



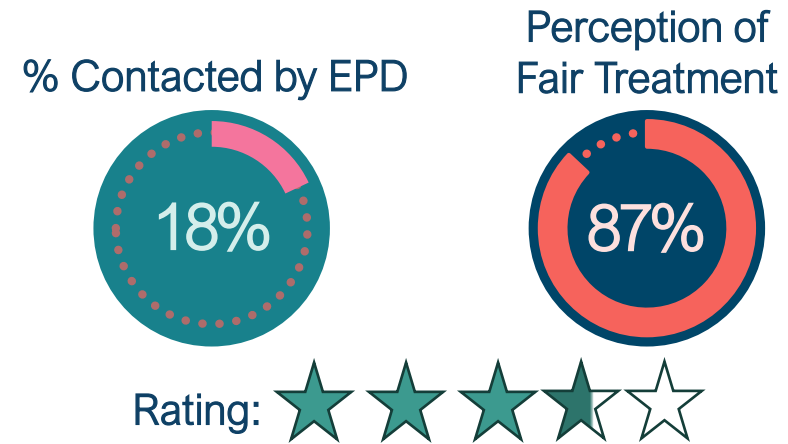
# Police-Community Interaction

## COLLABORATION WITH COMMUNITY

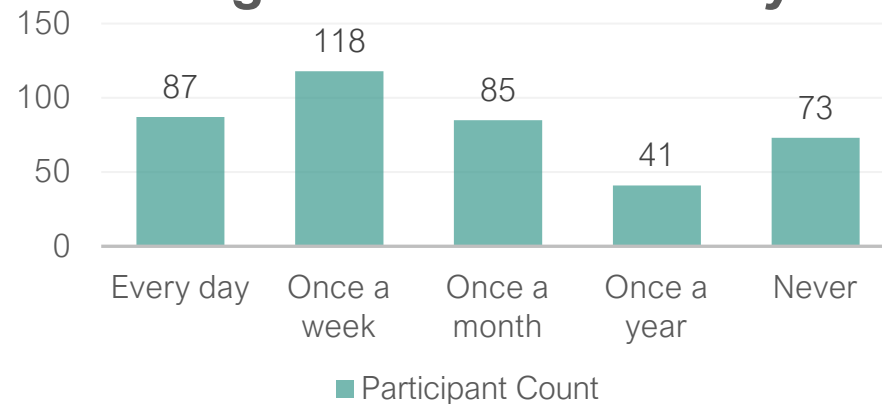
### Self-Initiated Contact with EPD



### EPD-Initiated Contact



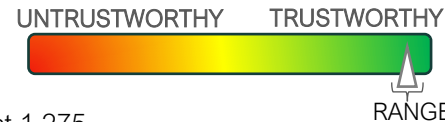
### Neighborhood Visibility



# Police-Community Interaction

## LEGITIMACY & TRUST

Trust Toward EPD



\* RANGE: lowest 1.268 to highest 1.275

\*\* PARAMETERS: 1 (highly trustworthy) to 5 (highly untrustworthy)

### Top 3 Responses

I would work with the Ellensburg Police to identify a person who committed a crime in my neighborhood



If I saw a crime happening in my neighborhood, I would call the Ellensburg Police to report it



I think I would be treated fairly by Ellensburg Police



### Bottom 3 Responses

\* Although rated lower than others, these results show exceptionally high community trust in the EPD

The Ellensburg Police do not use race and ethnicity when deciding whether to stop someone



The relationship between the Ellensburg Police and the people of this city is very good



Ellensburg Police treat people respectfully regardless of their mental health status



# Police-Community Interaction

## PERFORMANCE RATING

- Provide general education on EPD responsibilities and current crime trends in Ellensburg
- Communicate with victims to keep them informed
- Maintain vigilance over indicators that proceed more significant crime trends
- Increase visible presence in areas of concern

## COMMUNITY-RAPPORT

- Dispel misinformation pushed by traditional and social media
- Share with the community strategies to address current and future crime trends
- Educate public on EPD methods to engage with individuals believed to have mental health challenges

(MORE ON SLIDE 9)

## Top 5 Character Descriptions

1. Professional

2. Respectful

3. Friendly

4. Caring

5. Honest





## MENTAL HEALTH (MH)

MH Responsiveness



Intervention Support



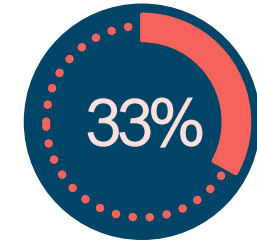
Respect Toward MH



## MH Impact on Police Interaction



FAMILY MEMBER



## Suggested Action

- Continued awareness training—responsiveness and referral
- Grow collaborative agency support to improve resources

*\* Refer to comments (q-r) on Community Interest Supporting Comments handout*



# Community Interest

## Community-Rapport Building

- **Redefine patrol officers as community diplomats:**
  - Seek opportunities for integration, beyond policing actions and calls for service
  - Develop community-rapport professional development training
- **Public transparency:**
  - Develop regular distribution of community interest topics: inform and educate
  - Grow EPD social-media footprint
  - Report on crime without stigmatizing those who have not been convicted
- **Follow-Up Procedures**
  - Incorporate follow-up protocol with identified victims after a crime, not just information seeking
  - Make community contact in areas of public-visible crimes

\* Refer to comments (a-p) on Community Interest Supporting Comments handout

## Homelessness

- **Community Education:**
  - Dispel stigmatization that homelessness causes crime or is caused by mental health diagnosis
  - Inform public on what are chargeable crimes (being homeless is not a crime):
    - Panhandling
    - Public encampments
    - Loitering

\* Comments about homelessness were not made by participants who identified as homeless

\* Refer to comments (s-u) on Community Interest Supporting Comments handout

## Child/Youth Concerns

- **Strengthen community awareness about issues that impact children and adolescents:**
  - Internet exploitation
  - Cyber-bullying
  - Mental health concerns
  - Gang recruitment/association
  - Drug abuse
- **Destigmatize reporting of crimes against children:**
  - Publicly communicate resources for individuals associated with crimes against children
- **Grow School-Police Collaboration:**
  - Public report from School Resource Officer on observations and needed awareness concerns
  - Incorporate “Handle With Care” program to facilitate further collaboration with schools

*\* Refer to comments (v-w) on Community Interest Supporting Comments handout*

# Thank You

**Dr. Eliann Carr**

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<https://ci.ellensburg.wa.us/779/Police>



### Community Interest Supporting Comments

#### COMMUNITY RAPPORT

- a. That, as a citizen, I don't want to be scared of them. I don't want my family members and friends to be treated as criminals before their innocence is established...I am grateful to those officers who have taken the time to know themselves, their biases, their preordained beliefs - and their awareness to not let those things get in the way of peaceful service to the people. Thank you for asking our citizens to be heard. (P25)
- b. Education! Stop treating people like they are criminals when they are not. Listen to the question before answering. Educate, not intimidate! Share on social media posts about what you can and cannot do, what is the law? (P33)
- c. A small positive interaction goes a very long way. I've had those experiences and will remember them very prominently. (P65)
- d. A majority of the officers are very friendly, and respectful. I always appreciate when outside working in the yard an officer stops to say Hi or visit for a moment. I believe just taking a couple minutes to visit with an officer is a moment to open the lines of communication. It also allows for community members to have a conversation with an officer that they always wanted to have but never had the opportunity. (P113)
- e. Remember that even though a neighborhood is considered \*low crime\* the residents still need a police presence! (P206)
- f. Laughing and mocking citizens who've made bad choices SHOULD be unacceptable. (P245)
- g. Please be more transparent with the community. You guys seem to keep a lot of reports about crime hidden. Post arrests and crime activity on your Facebook. Dont keep it hidden from us. Makes me feel unsafe. (P269)
- h. I would like to see the culture of EPD shift a bit. Overall the organization does great things; but there have been several instances where it seems officers are 'hunting' stats. I appreciate proactive police work, and that EPD is high visibility. I and others in my area would like to see the culture become one more of community caretaking, not just being out there fighting crime. (P286)
- i. That at the core of most people is goodness. I understand this can be really hard to assume in your line of work, but if you begin to expect the worse in everyone you will only see what you are expecting and miss the opportunities to celebrate/embrace all that is good in humanity. (P290)
- j. Neighborhood meetings with police officers helping with information about crimes affecting people in the neighborhood. Neighbors are more likely to help police when they know the people who are victims of crime. (P333)

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- k. Be more open minded and less judgmental. Honestly try to gain a new, educated, un-biased, more compassionate perspective and have better attitudes and opinions of individuals in the community who are “undesirables”. Take a better look at what happens to individuals after arrest and prosecution and the effects it has on them, eg; Did the consequence given do anything to reduce “re-offending” and lower recidivism rates? Were the consequences effective long term? Or were they just a temporary solution to a permanent problem only pro-longing additional crimes with greater severity to be committed upon release? What can we do better to lower rates of re-offending and recidivism? Are there better preventative measures we can take? How can we help the community maintain a better mental health state to help prevent crisis, drug use, etc. to begin with, before crimes are committed? What ways can we invite such individuals and encourage those struggling with mental health disorders and substance abuse issues to seek help for themselves prior to committing a crime as a result of such disorders? How better can we educate community youth about trauma, emotional maturity, and mental health well-being and encourage youth in our community to seek healthy outlets and safe, effective, non-judgmental guidance from trusted adults and peers for emotional distress and trauma to better keep them from becoming involved in drugs and crime? What can we provide our youth as far as places to be active and have good, clean, fun such as arcade, trampoline park, indoor playground/play center, water park, aquarium, activity center, etc? (P334)
- l. Out reach to organization / groups that have speaker programs... ask to be on their speaker schedule (P349)
- m. Where once a community familiar with each other would police the small stuff, a larger community with a level of anonymity will not. (P350)
- n. Get out of their cars and walk more, get acquainted with residents and be visible once in a while, not by being in a car driving by folks. (P364)
- o. Continue to be proactive with visibility in and around the community and to speak at public forums regarding crime prevention. (P379)
- p. Maybe actually helping residents who have to call all the time because of theft, vandalism, speeding, property damage, hit and run instead of just taking a report and never following up or bothering to listen to residents would help... The City Manager and City Planners need to work with the Police to address these issues because infrastructure and traffic routing (like the stupid revision on N Main and Dean Nicholson that has UNSAFELY INCREASED CAR TRAFFIC AND SPEED) directly lead to ongoing problems. (P392)

### Mental Health

- q. To take people's mental health into consideration and help them get the mental health treatment instead of sending them to jail if they can visibly see there is something more serious going on. Maybe have people get a psych evaluation and then transferred to either mental hospital or into mental health treatment, instead of locking them up. Some people just need a helping hand and not everyone is a "lost cause". We need to work together to support and improve each other. (P308)

## 2024 Community Survey

- r. That a lot of people who live here can't move or get access to proper mental health care. Most of the mental health is taken care of by comprehensive mental health and they don't take Medicare. Not everyone has Medicaid. (P333)

### Homelessness

*\* Comments about homelessness were not made by participants who identified as homeless*

- s. I am for helping people but helping people is not true help if all we give is permission for them to have free reign. (P28)
- t. I am unsettled about the uptick of homeless floating around town. A couple of businesses are concerned about finding people sleeping in their doorways when opening their shops in the morning and locking up after workday. (P160)
- u. Quit allowing the homeless to take over our community. Sleeping on the sidewalks downtown. Especially with drug abuse or mental health problems they are unpredictable and irrational. Not fair for business owners or their staff to have to deal with these people. Most are not from here. (P233)

### Child/Youth Concerns

- v. Tackle all of the issues at the schools. Its concerning how “funny” they think it is to joke about weapons and school shootings when they run rampant in this country. MANY innocent lives have been shed from this issue and these entitled kids continue to relentlessly bully others and make jokes about awful events...THE SCHOOLS NEED HELP. The high school and elementary are a little better off but the Middle school runs rampant with bullying, fighting, and worrying behavior. In my SO many years as a student and now substitute in the ESD, I have never seen a worse year at the middle school as I have this year. Its really changed my perspective of how I view this community because they have to learn that behavior and toxic opinions somewhere (most likely from hatred spewed at home or neglecting to monitor social media use at all!) (P39)
- w. That there are gangs- boys and girls age 12 and up that try to get kids in...They also have guns and have the kids do dirty work for them. The older gang members need to be arrested- the younger kids fall into peer pressure and get in over their heads listening to them. Selling drugs and going to Yakima and assaulting other kids over stupid reasons...The police should go to assemblies at schools more often and even encourage the kids to look into becoming a servant of the law- juvenile citizen patrol or ride with officers for a day (P74)