



ABLE
ACTIVE BYSTANDERSHIP FOR LAW ENFORCEMENT
GEORGETOWN LAW

**CENTER for INNOVATIONS
in COMMUNITY SAFETY**
GEORGETOWN LAW

Active Bystandership for Law Enforcement (ABLE)

Years of academic research and on-the-ground experience has shown us that effective active bystandership can be taught. The Center for Innovations in Community Safety, partnering with global law firm Sheppard Mullin, created the ABLE (Active Bystandership for Law Enforcement) Project to prepare officers to successfully intervene to prevent harm and to create a law enforcement culture that supports peer intervention.

The ABLE Project is a national hub for training, technical assistance, and research, all with the aim of creating a police culture in which officers routinely intervene as necessary to:

- Prevent misconduct;
- Avoid police mistakes; and
- Promote officer health and wellness.

The ABLE Project builds upon decades of social science research and on-the-ground experience to develop and deliver practical, scenario-based training for police agencies in the strategies and tactics of police peer intervention. The ABLE Project guides agencies and communities on the concrete measures that must be in place to create and sustain a culture of peer intervention.

ABLE training is evidence-based and founded upon decades of research, field and lab experiments, and on-the-ground experience. The ABLE Project team has brought together experts from a wide array of disciplines to ensure ABLE training incorporates the best and newest thinking about active bystandership, and continues to evolve as we learn more about what makes people active or passive bystanders. The ABLE team makes yearly updates to the curriculum to ensure it reflects the latest learning on active bystandership in law enforcement contexts. The team also produces yearly refresher training curricula, which all officers at ABLE agencies are required to complete.

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Anticipated Benefits of ABLE

ABLE builds upon decades of research and collaboration with law enforcement to bring the concept of active bystandership into practical, real-world, scenario-based training that helps law enforcement officers feel empowered to better serve their community. The anticipated benefits of creating a meaningful culture of active bystandership at a law enforcement agency include:

- Reduced unnecessary harm to citizens
- Reduced unnecessary harm to officers
- Reduced risk of officers losing their jobs
- Reduced risk of lawsuits against the department, the city, and individual officers
- Improved police/community relations
- Improved officer health and wellness
- Improved officer job satisfaction
- Improved citizen satisfaction with their law enforcement agency

Sincere Commitment to Change

In order to ensure ABLE is implemented effectively and meaningfully, law enforcement agencies wishing to send instructors to participate in an ABLE Train-The-Trainer event, receive other ABLE training or technical assistance, and/or use the registered ABLE trademarks must commit to the [ABLE Standards](#): 1) Community Accountability; 2) Training; 3) Implementation and Program Coordination; 4) Supporting Intervention in Police and Practice; 5) Employee Wellness; 6) No New Intervention Reporting Requirements; 7) Data and Research; 8) Sustainability and Commitment. More information on the Standards can be found by reviewing the linked page on the ABLE website. The ABLE Standards are designed to keep agencies accountable to their stated intent to shift the culture in law enforcement toward acceptance and promotion of active bystandership. When agencies implement the Standards, they are honoring their commitment to spearhead culture change.