

What does defunding look like?

Divest & invest: divert money that is currently used to train police in military-style tactics (like SWAT teams) and purchase surplus military weapons, to redistribute it to areas affected by poverty that lack resources and infrastructure (often disproportionately communities of color).

Fund community-based initiatives: local grassroots groups and organizations who have been working to improve their own communities are best equipped to engage in meaningful changes.

Find non-police solutions to social problems: Access to affordable housing, healthcare, and dignified employment keeps communities safe. Implementing restorative justice instead of criminalizing and punishing keeps people accountable. Education and economic opportunity prevents crime.

Additional Reading

The End of Policing by Alex S. Vitale

Are Prisons Obsolete? by Angela Davis

Alternatives to Police by Rose City Copwatch

The Case for Abolition by Gilmore and Kilgore

A Critique of Reformism and The Case for Abolition

"The problem is not police training, police diversity, or police methods.

The problem is the dramatic and unprecedented expansion and intensity of policing in the last forty years, a fundamental shift in the role of police in society."



The Problem is Policing Itself *

* Alex S. Vitale
The End of Policing

Excessive use of force motivated by racial discrimination on the part of police is "based on a mindset that people of color commit more crime and therefore must be subjected to harsher police tactics. Police argue that residents in high-crime communities often demand police action. What is left out is that these communities also ask for better schools, parks, libraries, and jobs, but these services are rarely provided. They lack the political power to obtain real services and support to make their communities safer and healthier." *

This is why we call for disarming, defunding, and dismantling police departments and investing directly in communities.

Our proposed solutions cannot stop at demanding retribution for individual officers, or reducing the harm caused by police through reform.

We must target the roots of injustice and envision a world without police.

Calls for reform have focused on increased **training, diversity, community policing**, and greater **accountability**. These reforms *fail to deal with the fundamental problems inherent to policing*. Historically, reforms have increased funding for the training and technologies police use against us, increased the scale of policing, and have not adequately held police accountable. Calls to ban certain tactics and "exhaust all alternatives to shooting" will only bring more "less-than-lethal" weapons and surveillance technology. "Having more black and brown police officers may sound like an appealing reform, but as long as larger systems of policing are left in place, there is no evidence that would give cause to expect a significant reduction in brutality or overpolicing. Research shows that community policing does not empower communities in meaningful ways. It expands police power"* by inviting police to further infiltrate communities.

When we call for these reforms, we further legitimize and entrench the idea that more policing is the solution to social problems.

We should call for the abolition of the surveillant police state.