

Questions for the Record from Senator Charles E. Grassley
Hearing on “Federal Support for Preventing and Responding to Carjackings”
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Vaughn Bryant
Executive Director, MPI
Metropolitan Family Services
Chicago, IL

Question:

During your oral testimony, you said “It is true that guys who are working on the front lines, on the streets, with the highest risk people should not interact with law enforcement because it does reduce their credibility but the people in management, people like myself do coordinate with the law enforcement on a bi-weekly basis.” Please explain this statement. Are you saying that interacting with police negatively affects the credibility of non-police working on the front lines?

Response:

The participant profile of the individuals we engage includes the following:

- High probability to shoot someone, participate in violence, or be a victim of violence
- Victim of violence or shooting or someone close/Retaliatory
- Gang/group/cliq/crew involved
- Key individual in street organizations
- Prior Criminal History/Repeated offender
- Recently released from jail/prison
- Weapons Carrier
- History of Street Conflicts

Given the activities of the individuals we serve, there is a high likelihood they will be on police radar. Our goal is to build a relationship with them, let them know we care and provide the comprehensive set of services they need to chart a new path to a dignified life. If our outreach workers are seen interacting with law enforcement, the individuals we seek to engage may not trust our intentions. Fortunately, we have gained the respect of law enforcement to the extent that they allow our outreach team to play their role which, best-case scenario, means our interventions influence their behavior in a positive direction, away from crime and/or violence. The factors critical to that influence are familiarity, relatedness and most of all TRUST.