

Executive Summary

Trust Policy 2.0: Implementation & Governance Addendum Town of Great Barrington

Purpose

Trust Policy 2.0 is an **implementation and governance addendum** to the Town's 2017 Trust Policy. It does **not replace, amend, or expand** the original policy. Instead, it provides **practical guidance, advisory structures, and planning alignment** to support public safety, transparency, and community trust under current conditions.

The addendum is designed to clarify **roles, expectations, and coordination** across Town leadership, the Police Department, and community partners, while preserving existing legal authority and operational discretion.

What Trust Policy 2.0 Does

Trust Policy 2.0:

- Translates the **values of the 2017 Trust Policy** into clear, contemporary practices
- Distinguishes between **formal policy, operational protocols, and advisory functions**
- Provides guidance for **preparedness, documentation, and communication** during sensitive incidents
- Formalizes **advisory partnerships** with trauma-informed, community-based organizations
- Aligns Trust Policy implementation with **strategic planning, staffing, training, and budget considerations**

The framework is **proactive rather than reactive** and is intentionally scaled for a rural municipal context.

What Trust Policy 2.0 Does *Not* Do

Trust Policy 2.0 does **not**:

- Designate Great Barrington as a sanctuary city
- Expand police authority or enforcement powers

- Authorize voluntary participation in civil immigration enforcement
- Interfere with criminal investigations or court proceedings
- Create new legal obligations beyond existing law

Any unavoidable interaction with federal authorities must be **legally required**, and recommended documentation practices are intended solely for **transparency, accuracy, and harm reduction**.

Overview of the Five Pillars

1. Community Policing & Community Relationships

Recommends sustained, two-way community engagement as a core public safety function, supported through training, education, and resourcing.

2. Community Accountability & Trust Policy Partnerships

Establishes advisory and referral relationships with trusted community organizations that provide cultural, linguistic, and trauma-informed expertise beyond the scope of law enforcement.

3. ICE Notification, Identification & Community Alert Protocol

Clarifies recommended transparency and preparedness practices when federal immigration enforcement activity occurs, while reaffirming limits on municipal authority and non-cooperation in civil enforcement.

4. Strategic Plan & Budget Alignment

Connects Trust Policy goals to long-term planning, workforce support, training, and budget priorities to ensure sustainability.

5. Data, Privacy & State-Level Accountability

Acknowledges the impact of state and federal data systems on local trust, promotes transparency about municipal limits, and supports aligned advocacy where appropriate.

Governance Context

Trust Policy 2.0 is **advisory and implementation-focused**. It does not alter the authority of the Selectboard, Town Manager, or Police Chief. Advisory bodies and partnerships described herein are consultative and intended to support informed decision-making, operational clarity, and public confidence.

Trust Policy 2.0 – DRAFT

Implementation & Governance Addendum to the 2017 Trust Policy

 Presentation for Community and Selectboard

Purpose of the Addendum

Trust Policy 2.0 is an implementation and governance addendum to the 2017 Trust Policy. It does not replace or amend the original policy. Instead, it provides operational, relational, and strategic guidance to strengthen trust, transparency, and accountability under current conditions.

Trust Policy 2.0 recognizes that trust is not static; it must be actively resourced, stewarded, and evaluated over time. It further recognizes that trust can be undermined by systems beyond local control, requiring transparency, coordination, and advocacy across levels of government.

This **addendum** clarifies what belongs in formal policy, what is appropriately addressed through protocols and practice, and what should remain the ongoing work of advisory and governance bodies.

Pillar I: Community Policing & Community Relationships

Recommendation

Establish sustained, two-way community engagement as a core public safety function, not an optional activity.

Key Elements

- Community Police Academy and ongoing community education forums
- Joint trainings for police, Town staff, and community partners on:
 - Procedural justice
 - De-escalation

- Bias awareness
- Trauma-informed response
- Dedicated annual funding to ensure broad and equitable community participation

Intended Outcome

Stronger relationships, shared understanding, and reduced harm through proactive, trust-based engagement.

Pillar II: Community Accountability & Trust Policy Partnerships

Recommendation

Establish a community-based structure to strengthen trust, accountability, and effectiveness in public safety:

Great Barrington Community Care Team: One of the arms of the Trust Policy Partnerships with community-based organizations that provide trauma-informed expertise and services.

Trust Policy Partnerships (Community-Based Expertise)

Purpose

Formalize relationships with trusted community organizations that possess cultural, linguistic, and trauma-informed expertise beyond the scope of law enforcement.

Key Elements

- Police Department commitment to maintain an updated nonprofit and community partner contact list for vulnerable populations, based on mutual commitment and shared expectations
- Regular, standing consultation with partners (at minimum quarterly) involving Police leadership and Town administration
- Exploration of joint funding opportunities, including federal and state public safety and justice funding, to support trust-based safety and care infrastructure
- Clear referral pathways for needs beyond law enforcement capacity, including:
 - Trauma-informed support
 - Immigration-related assistance
 - Social work and care navigation
 - Cultural mediation
 - Language access and interpretation
- Recognition of partners as subject-matter experts, not extensions of enforcement

Intended Outcome

More appropriate responses, reduced burden on police, improved resident outcomes, and services delivered by those best equipped to provide them.

Why This Structure Matters

- Trust Policy Partner organizations center professional expertise, care delivery, and trauma-informed response.

Together, these structures ensure that:

- Police are supported and integrated as part of our community solutions for public health and safety rather than working in isolate or legacy structures not meeting current need
- Residents are heard without being asked to carry the burden of service provision or undue exposure in rural communities
- Subject matter experts work alongside the police in trauma-informed practices

Pillar III: ICE Notification, Identification & Community Alert Protocol

Recommendation

Operationalize transparency, preparedness, and harm reduction when federal immigration enforcement operates in or near the Town.

Policy Clarification and Advisory Guidance

Nothing in the 2017 Trust Policy or this addendum authorizes voluntary participation in civil immigration enforcement. Nothing in this policy prohibits lawful, unavoidable contact with federal immigration authorities when required by a judicial warrant or court order.

Trust Policy 2.0 distinguishes between formal policy requirements and ongoing advisory and protocol development.

Key Elements (Practice and Protocol)

When the Police Department is notified of or becomes aware of federal immigration enforcement activity in or near the Town, the Department may, consistent with law:

- Verify the presence of federal agents, including identification and vehicle information, when feasible and consistent with law
- Maintain a limited presence for safety and de-escalation purposes only
- Conduct post-incident closeout documentation to clarify:
 - Police Department engagement with federal intervention
 - What information is verified and factual
 - Where individuals were taken, when known
 - Whether individuals were detained, for purposes of appropriate community notification and support

Such documentation and closeout procedures are intended solely for transparency, accuracy, and harm reduction. They do not constitute cooperation with civil immigration enforcement and shall not include assistance, facilitation, or information-sharing beyond what is legally required.

Advisory Role of Police Leadership

The Police Chief is requested, in an advisory context, to clarify:

- How these practices can be carried out safely and lawfully
- What level of documentation and communication is appropriate to preserve trust
- Where legal limits exist, so that expectations remain accurate and credible

Court Context Transparency

Trust Policy 2.0 acknowledges that certain Massachusetts court processes automatically report criminal matters through state systems beyond municipal control. This addendum

affirms that transparency about these realities is essential to trust and that local advisory bodies may continue to explore what safety, communication, and harm-reduction practices are possible in local court contexts.

Intended Outcome

Reduced fear, clear communication, and accountability consistent with the 2017 Trust Policy, without overreach or misrepresentation of local authority.

Pillar IV: Strategic Plan & Budget Alignment

Recommendation

Align the Town's strategic planning and budget priorities with Trust Policy implementation.

Key Elements may include:

- Explicit integration of Trust Policy goals into the Town's strategic plan with provisions for proactive ongoing budget allocations.
- Ongoing budget allocations for justice, safety, access and efficiency.
- Continued investment in public safety capacity
- Police Department operational upgrades that support safety, efficiency, and trust perception, including

Intended Outcome

Trust Policy moves from principle to practice through sustained investment, workforce support, and aligned planning.

Pillar V: Data, Privacy, and State-Level Accountability

Recommendation

Acknowledge and address how state and federal data systems impact local trust, and align Town practices and advocacy accordingly.

Context

Certain Massachusetts criminal justice data systems share information through state-administered processes beyond municipal control. While these systems are not governed locally, their impacts are experienced by residents at the local level.

Key Elements

- Transparency about the limits of local authority
- Local data minimization practices where permitted
- Documentation and awareness of enforcement activity affecting residents
- Alignment with state advocacy through the Berkshire legislative delegation
- Periodic public updates to maintain accountability and understanding

Intended Outcome

Residents understand how trust operates across local, state, and federal systems; fear is reduced through transparency; and the Town actively aligns its values with the systems shaping residents' lived experience.

Closing Framing

Trust Policy 2.0 affirms that protecting trust today requires not only sound local practice, but also transparency about systemic realities and the courage to advocate for change where local authority ends.

Great Barrington did not adopt a sanctuary city model. The Town established a trust-based governance framework, and Trust Policy 2.0 provides an implementation and accountability structure designed to function responsibly, credibly, and effectively in a rural context.

Draft Presented By BRIDGE

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