



ABLE
ACTIVE BYSTANDERSHIP FOR LAW ENFORCEMENT
GEORGETOWN LAW

ABLE Agency Application Letters of Support

ABLE Overview

Your local law enforcement agency is applying to participate in the national Active Bystandership for Law Enforcement (ABLE) Project. ABLE aims to create a police culture in which officers routinely intervene as necessary to prevent misconduct, avoid mistakes, and promote officer health and wellness.

Agencies that wish to join ABLE must commit to the [ABLE Standards](#), which require meaningful training and department-wide implementation of policies and practices designed to facilitate a culture of active bystandership.

Community involvement and accountability are essential parts of ABLE. As part of the application, we require an agency to secure letters of support from (1) their chief executive, (2) the chief executive of the jurisdiction in which the agency is located, and (3) at least two local community-based organizations. We ask for letters of support because ABLE is more than just training—joining ABLE is making a long-term commitment to build and maintain a culture of active bystandership at all levels of a law enforcement agency.

All letters must be submitted on official letterhead. **Letters should be drafted by the signatory or their designee and should not include templated or boilerplate language.** Every letter submitted in the application is reviewed by our team and may be returned if the letter uses templated language or does not otherwise follow our guidelines listed here. Please see below for guidance on letters of support from:

- [An agency's chief executive](#)
- [A jurisdiction's chief executive](#)
- [Community-based organizations](#)

Any questions about the letters may be directed to ABLE@georgetown.edu.

Guidance for an agency's chief executive:

The letter from the agency's chief executive should address the following topics:

- Your understanding of and commitment to the ABLÉ Standards;
- Why you want your agency to join ABLÉ;
- Actions you will take and resources you will allocate to ensure successful implementation at your agency;
- Your plan to communicate to your agency as well as to your community partners about your progress implementing ABLÉ; and
- The role you will play to establish and maintain a culture within your agency that expects and encourages interventions.

Thank you for your service to your community. We look forward to receiving your letter of support.

Guidance for the chief executive of a jurisdiction:

The letter from the jurisdiction's chief executive should address the following topics:

- Your understanding of and commitment to the ABLÉ Standards;
- Why you support this agency's application to join ABLÉ;
- Support you will provide to ensure successful implementation at the agency; and
- Your plan to stay informed about implementation progress within the agency.

Guidance for community-based organizations:

Please note that the community-based organizations from which an agency receives support must be independent of the agency and must be truly community-based. These may include community advocacy groups, civil rights organizations, and faith-based organizations.

Some examples of organizations that ABLÉ agencies have submitted include, but are not limited to:

- Youth community groups or after school programs
- Business associations that provide community programming
- Community churches, mosques, synagogues, temples, or other houses of worship
- Local chapters of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP)
- Local chapters of Black Lives Matter (BLM)
- Local chapters of the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU)
- Civilian/community police oversight commissions

- Local chapters of the Anti-Defamation League (ADL)
- Local chapters of the American Legion or Veterans groups
- Nonprofits that work to improve food security/access

Agencies are welcome to submit additional letters from “friends of the police” organizations or from police/community partnership groups; however, these letters must be submitted in addition to, *not in place of*, at least two letters from independent, community-based groups that are not formally affiliated with the agency.

Campus-based law enforcement agencies may submit letters of support from faculty or student affiliation groups. At least one letter of support must come from a student-led organization. Letters from individuals in the campus community, such as professors or Deans, are not considered letters that are representative of “community-based organizations”.

As a reminder, letters should not use templated or sample language. We would like to hear directly and authentically from the community-based organizations submitting letters. Each letter from a community organization should address the following topics:

- A brief description of the organization’s mission and work in the community;
- The nature of your organization’s relationship with the law enforcement agency and any prior work you have collaborated on;
- Why you support the agency’s application to ABLE; and
- How your organization plans to provide community feedback and input to the agency.

The letter should be signed by an individual who has the authority to speak on the organization’s behalf, e.g. the President, Chapter Director, or equivalent.