



Dear reader:

One homicide victim is one too many. Yet we also understand the challenging and quite complex nature of homicide investigations. Homicide, homicide investigations, clearance rates, and productive communication with the public are all critical concerns for law enforcement and communities nationwide. And despite recent across-the-board improvements in homicide clearance rates, we know that we can do better.

How are some agencies so successful in their homicide investigations? What are the ingredients to successful homicide investigations? What can law enforcement executives do to support homicide investigations, investigators, and the communities they serve?

To answer these questions, the U.S. Department of Justice, through the Office of Justice Programs' Bureau of Justice Assistance (BJA), partnered with the International Association of Chiefs of Police (IACP), the Institute for Intergovernmental Research (IIR), and several law enforcement agencies around the country to gather data, evidence, and best practices in an effort to share their successes with you.

As a result, I am pleased to announce two similar, yet complementary, publications that represent BJA's ongoing commitment to reducing crime and violence through evidence-based and results-driven efforts. One publication details effective investigative practices; the other focuses on the administrative environment necessary to support successful homicide investigative outcomes. Together, they will assist law enforcement executives and homicide units in effectively managing homicide investigations.

The first publication, IIR's [\*Homicide Process Mapping: Best Practices for Increasing Homicide Clearances\*](#), provides insight into "what works" in homicide investigations and identifies effective approaches and key elements of practice for managing these investigations. The resulting "process map" is offered as a guide for increasing clearances in U.S. law enforcement homicide investigations.

The second publication, IACP's [\*10 Things Law Enforcement Executives Can Do to Positively Impact Homicide Investigation Outcomes\*](#), looks beyond clearance rates to offer a starting point for executives to extend their support of homicide investigations, investigators, and their communities.

Each component highlighted in these publications—administration and investigation—is essential for effective policing. I encourage you to read both publications.

I want to thank the IACP and IIR for their work in producing such practical and relevant publications. BJA, IIR, and IACP have a longstanding relationship and a shared interest in promoting promising practices in law enforcement. It is our sincere hope that every law enforcement agency in the nation can improve homicide investigations by adopting practices identified in these publications.

Sincerely,

Denise E. O'Donnell  
Director