

	SEAGOVILLE POLICE DEPARTMENT	
	Policy 2.2 Bias Based Policing	
	Effective Date: 08/23/2016	Replaces: 01/27/2012
	Approved:  Chief of Police	
Reference: TBP 2.01.1		

I. POLICY

We are committed to a respect for constitutional rights in the performance of our duties. Our success is based on the respect we give to our communities, and the respect members of the community observe toward law enforcement. To this end, we shall exercise our sworn duties, responsibilities, and obligations in a manner that does not discriminate on the basis of race, sex, gender, national origin, ethnicity, age, or religion. All people carry biases: in law enforcement, however, the failure to control our biases can lead to illegal arrests, searches, and detentions, thus thwarting the mission of our department. Most importantly, actions guided by bias destroy the trust and respect essential for our mission to succeed. We live and work in communities very diverse in population: respect for diversity and equitable enforcement of the law are essential to our mission.

All enforcement actions, particularly stops of individuals (for traffic and other purposes), investigative detentions, arrests, searches and seizures of persons or property, shall be based on the standards of reasonable suspicion or probable cause as required by the Fourth Amendment to the U. S. Constitution and statutory authority. In all enforcement decisions, officers shall be able to articulate specific facts, circumstances, and conclusions which support probable cause or reasonable suspicion for arrests, searches, seizures, and stops of individuals. Officers shall not stop, detain, arrest, search, or attempt to search anyone based solely upon the person's race, sex, sexual orientation, national origin, color, creed, disability, gender, economic status, ethnic background, age, religion, citizenship, cultural group or any other identifiable group . Officers shall base all such actions on a reasonable suspicion or probable cause that the person or an occupant of a vehicle committed an offense. (TBP: 2.01)

All departmental orders are informed and guided by this directive. Nothing in this order limits non-enforcement contacts between officers and the public.

II. PURPOSE

The purpose of this order is to provide general guidance on reducing the presence of bias in law enforcement actions, to identify key contexts in which bias may influence these actions, and emphasize the importance of the constitutional guidelines within which we operate.

III. DEFINITIONS

Most of the following terms appear in this order. In any case, these terms appear in the larger public discourse about alleged biased enforcement behavior and in other orders. These definitions are intended to facilitate on-going discussion and analysis of our enforcement practices.

- A. Bias: Prejudice or partiality which may be based on preconceived ideas, a person's upbringing, culture, experience, or education.
- B. Biased policing: Stopping, detaining, searching, or attempting to search, or using force against a person based upon his or her race, ethnic background, gender, sexual orientation, religion, economic status, age, cultural group, or any other identifiable group.
- C. Ethnicity: A cluster of characteristics which may include race but also cultural characteristics or traits which are shared by a group with a common experience or history.
- D. Gender: Unlike sex, a psychological classification based on cultural characteristics or traits.
- E. Probable cause: Facts or apparent facts and circumstances within an officer's knowledge and of which the officer had reasonable, trustworthy information to lead a reasonable person to believe that an offense has been or is being committed, and that the suspect has committed it.
- F. Race: A category of people of a particular decent, including Caucasian, African, Hispanic, Asian, or Native American descent. As distinct from ethnicity, race only refers to physical characteristics sufficiently distinctive to group people under a classification.
- G. Racial profiling: A law-enforcement initiated action based on an individual's race, ethnicity, or national origin rather than on the individual's behavior or on information identifying the individual as having engaged in criminal activity.
- H. Reasonable suspicion: Articulate, objective facts which lead an experienced officer to suspect that a person has committed, is committing, or may be about to commit a crime. A well-founded suspicion is based on the totality of the circumstances and does not exist unless it can be articulated. Reasonable suspicion supports a stop of a person. Courts require that stops based on reasonable suspicion be "objectively reasonable."
- I. Sex: A biological classification, male or female, based on physical and genetic characteristics.
- J. Stop: The detention of a subject for a brief period of time, based on reasonable suspicion. A stop is investigative detention.

IV. PROCEDURES

A. General responsibilities

1. Officers are prohibited from engaging in bias based profiling or stopping, detaining, searching, arresting, or taking any enforcement action including seizure or forfeiture activities against any person based solely on the person's race, national origin, citizenship, religion, ethnic background, age, gender, color, creed, sexual orientation, disability, economic status, cultural group, or any other identifiable group. These characteristics, however, may form part of reasonable suspicion or probable cause when officers are seeking a suspect with one or more of these attributes. (TBP: 2.01.1)
2. Investigative detentions, traffic stops, arrests, searches, and property seizures by officers will be based on a standard of reasonable suspicion or probable cause in accordance with the Fourth Amendment of the U.S. Constitution. Officers must be able to articulate specific facts and circumstances that support reasonable suspicion or probable cause for investigative detentions, traffic stops, subject stops, arrests, nonconsensual searches, and property seizures. Except as provided in number 3 below, officers shall not consider race/ethnicity in establishing either reasonable suspicion or probable cause. Similarly, except as provided below, officers shall not consider race/ethnicity in deciding to initiate even those nonconsensual encounters that do not amount to legal detentions or to request consent to search. (TBP 2.01.1)

Reasonable suspicion or probable cause shall form the basis for any enforcement actions or decisions. Individuals shall only be subjected to stops, seizures, or detention upon reasonable suspicion that they have committed, are committing, or are about to commit an offense. Officers shall document the elements of reasonable suspicion and probable cause in appropriate reports.

3. Officers may take into account the reported race or ethnicity of a specific suspect or suspects based on trustworthy, locally relevant information that links a person or persons of a specific race/ethnicity to a particular unlawful incident(s). Race/ethnicity can never be used as the sole basis for probable cause or reasonable suspicion. Except as provided above, reasonable suspicion or probable cause shall form the basis for any enforcement actions or decisions. Individuals shall be subjected to stops, seizures, or detentions only upon reasonable suspicion that they have committed, are committing, or are about to commit an offense. Officers shall document the elements of reasonable suspicion and probable cause in appropriate reports. (TBP 2.01.1)

Officers shall observe all constitutional safeguards and shall respect the constitutional rights of all persons.

- a. As traffic stops furnish a primary source of bias-related complaints, officers shall have a firm understanding of the warrantless searches allowed by law, particularly the use of consent. How the officer disengages from a traffic stop may be crucial to a person's perception of fairness or discrimination.
 - b. Officers shall not use the refusal or lack of cooperation to justify a search of the person or vehicle or a prolonged detention once reasonable suspicion has been dispelled.
4. All personnel shall treat everyone with the same courtesy and respect that they would have others observe to department personnel. To this end, personnel are reminded that the exercise of courtesy and respect engenders a future willingness to cooperate with law enforcement.
 - a. Personnel shall facilitate an individual's access to other governmental services whenever possible, and shall actively provide referrals to other appropriate agencies.
 - b. All personnel shall courteously accept, document, and forward to the Chief of Police any complaints made by an individual against the department. Further, officers shall provide information on the complaints process and shall give copies of "How to Make a Complaint" when appropriate.
5. When feasible, personnel shall offer explanations of the reasons for enforcement actions or other decisions that bear on individual's well-being unless the explanation would undermine an investigation or jeopardize an officer's safety. When concluding an encounter, personnel shall thank him or her for cooperating.
6. When feasible, all personnel shall identify themselves by name. When a person requests the information, personnel shall give their departmental identification number, name of the immediate supervisor, or any other reasonable information.
7. All personnel are accountable for their actions. Personnel shall justify their actions when required.

B. Supervisory responsibilities

1. Supervisors shall be held accountable for the observance of constitutional safeguards during the performance of their duties. Supervisors shall identify and correct instances of bias in the work of their subordinates.

2. Supervisors shall use the disciplinary mechanisms of the department to ensure compliance with this order and the constitutional requirements of law enforcement.
3. Supervisors shall be mindful that in accounting for the actions and performance of subordinates, supervisors are key to maintaining community trust in law enforcement. Supervisors shall continually reinforce the ethic of impartial enforcement of the laws, and shall ensure that personnel, by their actions, maintain the community's trust in law enforcement.
4. Supervisors are reminded that biased enforcement of the laws engenders not only mistrust of law enforcement, but increases safety risks to personnel. Lack of control over bias also exposes the department to liability consequences. Supervisors shall be held accountable for repeated instances of biased enforcement of their subordinates.
5. Supervisors shall ensure that all enforcement actions are duly documented per departmental policy. Supervisors shall ensure that all reports show adequate documentation of reasonable suspicion and probable cause, if applicable.
6. Supervisors shall facilitate the filing of any complaints about law enforcement service.
7. Supervisors shall be responsible for reviewing video footage from both in-car and body worn cameras from each of their subordinates on traffic stops as well as calls for service monthly. These reviews are to be documented in the VIDEO VIEW LOG to ensure compliance with all written directives and in accordance with all bias based profiling requirements. The viewing of each officer's entire shift is not required; however the supervisor should review in a manner to gain an understanding of each officer's performance and adherence to policy and laws. (TBP 2.01.1)

C. Disciplinary consequences

Actions prohibited by this order shall be cause for disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal.

D. Training (TBP: 2.01.1)

1. Officers shall complete all training required by state law regarding bias based profiling.

V. COMPLAINTS

- A. The Department shall publish "How to Make a Complaint" handout and make them available in the Police Department lobby, and the lobby of City Hall as well as on the City's web-site. The Department's complaint process and its bias based

profiling policy will be posted on the Department's website. Whenever possible, the media will be used to inform the public of the Department's policy and complaint process.

- B. Complaints alleging incidents of bias based profiling will be fully investigated as described under Policy 2.4.
- C. Complainants will be notified of the results of the investigations when such investigation is completed.

VI. RECORD KEEPING

- A. The Department will maintain all required records on traffic stops where a citation is issued or where an arrest is made subsequent to a traffic stop pursuant to state law.
- B. The information collected above will be reported to the City Council annually.
- C. The information will also be reported to TCOLE in the required format.