

Bias-Based Policing

PURPOSE AND SCOPE

This policy provides guidance to Department members that affirms the Santa Monica Police Department's commitment to Constitutional policing that is fair, objective, and fosters mutual respect and cooperation between law enforcement and members of all racial, identity, and cultural groups.

Nothing in this policy prohibits the use of specified characteristics in law enforcement activities designed to strengthen the Department's relationship with its diverse communities, while at the same time emphasizing an understanding and respect for racial, identity, and cultural differences (e.g., cultural and ethnicity awareness training, youth programs, community group outreach, partnerships).

DEFINITIONS

Definitions related to this policy include:

Bias-based policing - An inappropriate reliance on characteristics such as race, ethnicity, national origin, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, economic status, age, cultural group, disability or affiliation with any non-criminal group (protected characteristics) as the basis for providing differing law enforcement service or enforcement (Penal Code § 13519.4).

POLICY

The Santa Monica Police Department is committed to providing law enforcement services to the community with due regard for the racial, cultural or other differences of those served. It is the policy of this Department to provide law enforcement services and to enforce the law equally, fairly, objectively and without discrimination toward any individual or group.

BIAS-BASED POLICING PROHIBITED

Bias-based policing is strictly prohibited.

However, nothing in this policy is intended to prohibit an officer from considering protected characteristics in combination with credible, timely and distinct information connecting a person or people of a specific characteristic to a specific unlawful incident, or to specific unlawful incidents, specific criminal patterns or specific schemes.

MEMBER RESPONSIBILITIES

Every member of this Department shall perform his/her duties in a fair and objective manner and is responsible for promptly reporting any suspected or known instances of bias-based policing to a supervisor. Members should, when reasonable to do so, intervene to prevent any biased-based actions by another member.

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REASON FOR CONTACT

Officers contacting a person shall be prepared to articulate sufficient reason for the contact, independent of the protected characteristics of the individual.

To the extent that written documentation would otherwise be completed (e.g., arrest report, field interview (FI) card), the involved officer should include those facts giving rise to the contact, as applicable.

Except for required data-collection forms or methods, nothing in this policy shall require any officer to document a contact that would not otherwise require reporting as articulated in California Assembly bill § 953.

SUPERVISOR RESPONSIBILITIES

Supervisors should monitor those individuals under their command for compliance with this policy and shall handle any alleged or observed violations in accordance with the Personnel Complaints Policy.

- (a) Supervisors should discuss any concerns with the involved officer and his/her supervisor in a timely manner.
 - 1. Supervisors should document these discussions, in the prescribed manner.
- (b) Supervisors shall periodically review MAV recordings, portable audio/video recordings, Mobile Data Computer (MDC) data and any other available resource used to document contact between officers and the public to ensure compliance with the policy.
 - (a) Supervisors shall document these periodic reviews.
 - (b) Recordings or data that capture a potential instance of bias-based policing shall be appropriately retained for administrative investigation purposes.
- (c) Supervisors shall initiate investigations of any actual or alleged violations of this policy.
- (d) Supervisors shall take prompt and reasonable steps to address any retaliatory action taken against any member of this Department who discloses information concerning bias-based policing.

ADMINISTRATION

Each year, the Deputy Chief of Police shall review the efforts of the Department to provide fair and objective policing and submit an annual report, including public concerns and complaints, to the Chief of Police.

The annual report should not contain any identifying information about any specific complaint, member of the public or officers. It should be reviewed by the Chief of Police to identify any changes in training or operations that should be made to improve service.

Supervisors should review the annual report and discuss the results with those they are assigned to supervise.

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TRAINING

Training on fair and objective policing and review of this policy should be conducted as directed by the Professional Standards Unit.

- (a) All sworn members of this Department will be scheduled to attend Peace Officer Standards and Training (POST)-approved training on the subject of bias-based policing.
- (b) Pending participation in such POST-approved training and at all times, all members of this Department are encouraged to familiarize themselves with and consider racial and cultural differences among members of this community.
- (c) Each sworn member of this Department who received initial bias-based policing training will thereafter be required to complete an approved refresher course every five years, or sooner if deemed necessary, in order to keep current with changing racial, identity and cultural trends (Penal Code § 13519.4(i)).

REPORTING TO CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE

The Professional Standards Manager shall ensure that all data required by the California Department of Justice (DOJ) regarding complaints of racial bias against officers is collected and provided to the Police Records Administrator for required reporting to the DOJ (Penal Code § 13012; Penal Code § 13020).
