



BIAS-FREE POLICING POLICY

Section 1 General Considerations

The Boston Police Department is committed to building and strengthening trust with all members of the community. Actual or perceived bias by police undermines this trust and damages relationships with the community – relationships that are at the heart of an effective community policing approach. Bias practices are unfair, ineffective, promote mistrust, and perpetuate negative and harmful stereotypes. The Boston Police Department is committed to bias-free policing.

Section 2 Purpose

Biased policing undermines legitimate law enforcement efforts, alienates community members, and fosters community distrust. This policy is intended to clarify the circumstances in which officers can consider personal characteristics such as race, ethnicity, national origin, gender, sexual orientation / identity, socio-economic status, religion, and/or age when making enforcement decisions. In addition, this policy will identify ongoing efforts to ensure that biased policing does not take place.

Section 3 Use of Personal Characteristics in Law Enforcement Activities

In conducting law enforcement activities such as criminal investigations, personnel shall not consider personal characteristics such as race, ethnicity, national origin, gender, sexual orientation / identity, socio-economic status, religion, and /or age **except** when credible intelligence relevant to the location and time frame links a person or people of a specific race, ethnicity, national origin, gender, sexual orientation/ identity, socio-economic status, religion, and /or age to a specific unlawful incident, incidents, criminal patterns or schemes.

It **is** biased policing if an officer's enforcement decisions and / or actions are based on the fact that the individuals' demographics (e.g. race, ethnicity) are different from the demographics of the majority of residents in the area in which the individual is found.

When officers are participating in proactive community policing activities, focusing on specific racial or ethnic groups is integral to building relationships and strengthening trust in those diverse communities the Department serves. Such proactive positive engagement with diverse communities is a goal of community policing and is encouraged.

Section 4 Training

The Department is committed to ensuring that all police officers receive training in procedural justice, and the constitutionality and proper documentation of police interactions in order to reduce the effects of implicit bias and more effectively serve the diverse communities they represent.

Section 5 Release of Information

The Department is committed to continuing analysis and public release of data related to documented police interactions with community members.

Section 6 Community Engagement and Interaction

The Department is committed to an ongoing and open dialogue with community leaders to ensure that it is engaging in bias-free policing through the formation of the Social Justice Task Force and other like collaborations with the community. The Department is committed to community policing in all of the City's neighborhoods, and specifically proactively engaging with youth, families and community members to build relationships, solve problems, and prevent crime.

Section 7 Supervision and Discipline

Supervisors shall ensure that all personnel in their command are familiar with the content of this policy and will immediately respond to instances of biased policing by those officers in their command. Any violations of this policy may result in discipline, retraining, counseling or other remedial intervention as appropriate to the violation.