

	LOWER MERION TOWNSHIP POLICE DEPARTMENT Ardmore, Pennsylvania	
	Policy 3.2.1	
Subject:		Distribution:
Unbiased Policing		All Sworn Personnel
Date of Issue:	Expiration Date:	Rescinds:
10-2-2018	Until Amended or Rescinded	Policy 3.2.1 (06-01-2014)
References:		
CALEA: 1.2.9; PLEAC: 1.8.3		
By Authority of:		
		Superintendent of Police

PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to reaffirm the Police Department’s commitment to unbiased policing in all of its encounters between police officers and citizens, and to reinforce procedures that serve to maintain public confidence and trust by providing service in a fair and equitable manner.

POLICY

All forms of bias-based policing are prohibited. Public trust and confidence in the police are critical to effective policing and are achieved largely through the fair and equitable treatment of the public. **(CALEA 1.2.9 a) (PLEAC 1.8.3 a)**

DEFINITION

Biased-based Policing – Is the differential treatment of individuals in the context of rendering police service based solely on an individual classification, such as, but not limited to, race, ethnicity, national origin, religion, age, gender, gender identity/expression, sexual orientation, immigration status, disability, housing status, occupation, or language fluency. Biased-based policing may also be defined as a police action based on an assumption or belief that any of the aforementioned classifications have a tendency to participate or engage in criminal behavior. This is also referred to as “profiling.” Use of the classifications to identify a specific suspect for questioning or apprehension does not constitute biased-based policing.

PROCEDURES

A. Individual Responsibility

1. Biased-based policing by any Department personnel is prohibited. Officers must be able to articulate specific facts, circumstances and

conclusions that support probable cause or reasonable suspicion for any search and/or seizure. Officers shall conduct searches and seizures based on the standards required by the Fourth Amendment of the U. S. Constitution and statutory authority.

2. Department personnel will provide police service to all persons without regard to race, ethnicity, national origin, religion, age, gender, gender identity/expression, sexual orientation, immigration status, disability, housing status, occupation, or language fluency.
3. During citizen encounters, misunderstandings may occur from the officer's failure to explain why the contact was initiated. During most contacts, the officer should inform the detainee of the reason for the contact.
4. Officers may take into account the reported race, ethnicity or national origin of a specific suspect(s) in the same way they would use specific information regarding height, weight, hair color, and other personal characteristics about the specific suspect.
5. Nothing in this procedure shall limit an officer's ability to interview witnesses or discourage routine conversations with citizens that are not suspected of an offense.
6. Any member of the Department who observes or is aware of a violation of this procedure shall immediately report it to a supervisor.

B. Supervisory Responsibility

1. Supervisors shall ensure that personnel assigned under their command are familiar with this policy and comply with its provisions.
2. Supervisors shall monitor the activities under their command to ensure that biased-based policing is not practiced.
3. Supervisors shall accept all citizen complaints or allegations of biased-based policing on the part of officers under their command. All complaints will be investigated in compliance with the Department's standard operating procedures covering citizen complaints and internal investigations.

C. Complaint Process

1. The Department takes allegations of biased-based policing very seriously. Personnel shall not discourage citizens from filing complaints and should avoid any actions that could be interpreted to constitute intimidation, coercion or actual retaliation against the citizen to discourage or prevent them from filing a complaint.

2. Any sustained complaints of biased-based policing will result in disciplinary action. **(PLEAC 1.8.3 c)**

D. Training

1. All sworn personnel will receive initial training on biased-based policing, policy and related topics. These topics are incorporated into the field-training program for newly hired officers. **(CALEA 1.2.9 b) (PLEAC 1.8.3 b)**
2. All sworn personnel will receive annual training on biased-based policing, policy and related topics. The training will be included in the Department's in-service training programs. Records of all training will be maintained in PowerDMS. **(PLEAC 1.2.9 b) (PLEAC 1.8.3 b)**

RESPONSIBILITY

- A. All sworn personnel are responsible to ensure compliance with all aspects of this policy.
- B. The Staff and Inspections Unit will conduct an annual administrative review of any citizen complaints or concerns regarding biased-based policing. The review will ensure compliance with this policy and that complaints received were appropriately handled. Training and policy adjustments will be considered based on the review. **(CALEA 1.2.9 c) (PLEAC 1.8.3 d)**.