

GENERAL ORDER City of Sour Lake Police Department	Date of Issue 01-01-02	Effective Date 01-01-02	Number
Subject Racial Profiling Policy and Data Sheet	Index As Racial Profiling		
Amends			

I. PURPOSE

The purpose of the policy is to reaffirm the City of Sour Lake Police Department's commitment to unbiased policing in all its encounters between officer and any person; to reinforce procedures that serve to ensure public confidence and mutual trust through provision of services in a fair and equitable fashion; and to protect our officers from unwarranted accusations of misconduct when they act within the dictates of department policy and the law.

II. POLICY

It is the policy of this Office to provide law enforcement services in a proactive manner and, to aggressively investigate suspected violations of law. Officers shall actively enforce state and federal laws in a responsible and professional manner, without regard to race, ethnicity or national origin. Officers are strictly prohibited from engaging in racial profiling as defined in this policy. This policy shall be applicable to all persons, whether driver, passengers or pedestrians.

Officers shall conduct themselves in a dignified and respectful manner at all times when dealing with the public. Two of the fundamental rights guaranteed by both the United States and Texas constitutions are equal protection under the law and freedom from unreasonable searches and seizures by government agents. The right of all persons to be equal and to be free from unreasonable searches and seizures must be respected. Racial profiling is an unacceptable patrol tactic and will not be condoned.

This policy shall not preclude officers from offering assistance, such as upon observing a substance leaking from a vehicle, a flat tire, or someone who appears to be ill, lost or confused. Nor does this policy prohibit stopping someone suspected of a crime based upon observed actions and/or information received about the person.

III. DEFINITIONS

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 as having engaged in criminal activity.

Racial profiling pertains to persons who are viewed as suspects or potential suspects of criminal behavior. The term is not relevant as it pertains to witnesses, complainants or other citizen contacts.

The protection against racial profiling does not preclude the use of race, ethnicity or national origin as factors in a detention decision. Race, ethnicity or national origin may be legitimate factors in a detention decision when used as part of an actual description of a specific suspect for whom an officer is searching. Detaining an individual and conducting an inquiry into that person's activities simply because of that individual's race, ethnicity or national origin are racial profiling. Examples of racial profiling include but are not limited to the following:

1. Citing a driver who is speeding in a stream of traffic where most drivers are speeding because of the cited driver's race, ethnicity or national origin.
2. Detaining the driver of a vehicle based on the determination that a person of that race, ethnicity or national origin is unlikely to own or possess that specific make or model of vehicle.
3. Detaining an individual based upon the determination that a person of that race, ethnicity or national origin does not belong in a specific part of town or a specific place.

The Sour Lake Police Department can derive two principles from the adoption of this definition of racial profiling:

1. Police may not use racial or ethnic stereotypes as factors in selecting whom to stop and search, while police may use race in conjunction with other known factors of the suspect.
2. Law enforcement officers may not use racial or ethnic stereotypes as factors in selecting whom to stop and search. Racial profiling is not relevant as it pertains to witnesses, etc.

Race or Ethnicity – Of a particular decent, including Caucasian, African, Hispanic, Asian, or Native American

Pedestrian Stop – An interaction between a peace officer and an individual who is being detained for the purpose of a criminal investigation in which the individual is not under arrest.

Traffic Stop – A peace officer who stops a motor vehicle for an alleged violations of a law ordinance regulating traffic.

IV. TRAINING

Officers are responsible to adhere to all Texas Commission on Law Enforcement Officer Standards and Education (TCLEOSE) training and the Law Enforcement Management Institute of Texas (LEMIT) requirements as mandated by law.

All officers shall complete a TCLEOSE training and education program on racial profiling not later than the second anniversary of the date the officer is licensed under Chapter 1701 of the Texas Occupation Code or the date the officer applies for an intermediate proficiency certificate, whichever date is earlier. A person who on September 1, 2001, held a TCLEOSE intermediate proficiency certificate, or who had held a peace office license issued by TCLEOSE for at least two years, shall complete a TCLEOSE training and education program on racial profiling not later than September 1, 2003.

V. COMPLAINT INVESTIGATION

1. The department shall accept complaints from any person who believes he or she has been stopped or searched based on racial, ethnic or national origin profiling. No person shall be discouraged, intimidated or coerced from filing a complaint, nor discriminated against because he or she filed such a complaint.
2. Any employee who received an allegation of racial profiling, including the officer who initiated the stop, shall record the person's name, address and telephone number, and forward the complaint through the appropriate channel or direct the individual(s). Any employee contacted shall provide to that person a copy of a complaint form or the department process for filing complaint. All employees will report any allegation of racial profiling to their superior before the end of their shift.
3. Investigation of a complaint shall be conducted in a thorough and timely manner. All complaints will be acknowledged in writing to the initiator who will receive disposition regarding said complaint within a reasonable period of time. The investigation shall be reduced to writing and any reviewer's comments or conclusion shall be filed with the Chief of Police. When applicable, finding and/or suggestions for disciplinary action, retaining, or changes in policy shall be filed with the Chief of Police.
4. If a racial profiling complaint is sustained against an officer, it will result in appropriate corrective and/or disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

5. If there is a departmental video or audio recording of the events upon which a complaint of racial profiling is based, upon commencement of an investigation by this department into the complaint and written request of the officer made the subject of the complaint, this department shall promptly provide a copy of the recording to that officer.

VI. PUBLIC EDUCATION

This department will inform the public of its policy against racial profiling and the complaint process. Methods that may be utilized to inform the public are the news media, radio, service or civic presentations, the Internet, as well as governing board meetings. Additionally, information will be made available as appropriate in languages other than English.

VII. CITATION DATA COLLECTION & REPORTING

An officer is required to collect information relating to traffic stops in which a citation is issued. On the citation officers must include:

1. the violators race or ethnicity;
2. whether a search was conducted;
3. was the search consensual; and
4. arrest for this cited violation or any other violation.

By March of each year, the department shall submit a report to the Sour Lake City Council that includes the information gathered by the citations. The report will include:

1. a breakdown of citations by race or ethnicity;
2. number of citations that resulted in a search;
3. number of searches that were consensual; and
4. number of citations that resulted in custodial arrest for the cited violation or any other violation.

Not later than March 1 of each year, this department shall submit a report to the Sour Lake City Council, which contains the information from the preceding calendar year.

VIII. COLLECTIONS AND REPORTING INFORMATION GATHERED FROM TRAFFIC AND PEDERTRAIAN STOPS

An Officer who stops a motor vehicle for an alleged violation of a law or ordinance regulating traffic, or who stops a pedestrian for any suspected offense, shall record and report the following information:

1. A physical description of each person as a result of the stop, including:
 - (a). The person's gender;
 - (b). The person's race or ethnicity, as stated by the person or as determined by the officer to the best of his/her ability.
2. The street address or approximate location of the stop. The suspected offense or the traffic ordinance alleged to have been violated.
3. Whether the officer conducted a search as a result of the stop and, if so, whether the person detained consented to the search.
4. Whether probable cause to search existed and, if so, the fact(s) supporting the existence of that probable cause.
5. Whether any contraband was discovered in the course of the search and, if so, the type of contraband discovered.
6. Whether the officer made an arrest as a result of the stop and/or search and, if so a statement of the offense charged.
7. Whether the officer issued a warning or a citation as a result of the stop and, if of, a statement of the offense charged.

This department shall compile and analyze the information contained in these individual reports. Not later than March 1 of each year, this department shall submit a report to the Sour Lake City Council of the information-compiled format the proceeding calendar year in a manner they approve. This report shall include:

1. A comparative analysis of the information contained in the individual reports in order to:
 - (a) Determine the prevalence of racial profiling by officers in this department; and
 - (b) Examine the disposition of traffic and pedestrian stops made by this department's officers, including searches resulting from stops.
2. Information relating to each complaint filed with this department alleging racial profiling.