




POLICIES AND PROCEDURES MANUAL

	BIAS-FREE POLICING	
	POLICY NUMBER: 1-8	ISSUING AUTHORITY 
	EFFECTIVE DATE: January 1, 2025	Christine A. Elow Police Commissioner

I. GENERAL CONSIDERATIONS AND GUIDELINES

The Cambridge Police Department is committed to protecting the constitutional and civil rights of all community members. Allegations of bias-based profiling or discriminatory practices, real or perceived, are detrimental to the relationship between the police department and the community it protects and serves. It is the view of this department that the legal authority to enforce the law must be coupled with the legitimate authority that only comes with a strong and trusting relationship between the police and the people they serve.

The department does not endorse, train, teach, support, or condone any type of bias, stereotyping or racial and gender profiling by its employees. While recognizing that most employees perform their duties in a fair, ethical, and impartial manner, this department is committed to identifying and eliminating any instances of bias-based policing in all areas, including field contacts, traffic contacts, investigations, and asset seizure and forfeiture efforts.

II. POLICY

It is the policy of the department to:

- A. provide to all people within this community fair and impartial police services consistent with constitutional and statutory mandates;
- B. expect the highest standards of integrity and ethics among all department members;
- C. respect the diversity and cultural differences of all people;
- D. take positive steps to identify, prevent, and eliminate any instances of bias-based policing by any member of the department;
- E. continually reinforce the department's commitment to community policing and problem solving;
- F. perform investigative detentions, traffic stops, arrests, searches, and property seizures only on the basis of a standard of reasonable suspicion or probable cause in accordance with the Fourth Amendment of the U.S. Constitution and Article Fourteen of the Massachusetts Declaration of

Rights. Officers will be trained to articulate and document in writing specific facts and circumstances that support reasonable suspicion or probable cause that would justify any police action that interferes with or deprives persons of their rights under the Constitution, judicial rulings and/or the laws; and

- G. prohibit from consideration, except in *suspect specific incidents*, the race, gender, and national or ethnic origin of members of the public in deciding to detain a person or stop a motor vehicle and in deciding upon the scope or substance of any law enforcement action.

III. DEFINITIONS

- A. *Bias-based Policing*: Policing decisions made by and conduct of law enforcement officers that consider a person's race, ethnicity, sex, gender identity, sexual orientation, religion, mental or physical disability, immigration status or socioeconomic, or professional level absent a legitimate and lawful police purpose. Refer to M.G.L. c. 6E, § 1.
- B. *Racial or Other Profiling*: The differential treatment by a law enforcement officer based on actual or perceived race, color, ethnicity, national origin, immigration or citizenship status, religion, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation or other protected group in conducting a law enforcement action, whether intentional or evidenced by statistically-significant data showing disparate treatment; provided, however, that *racial or other profiling* shall not include the use of such characteristics, in combination with other factors, to apprehend a specific suspect based on a description that is individualized, timely, and reliable.
- C. *Suspect Specific Incident*: An incident in which a police department employee is lawfully attempting to detain, apprehend, or otherwise be on the lookout for one or more specific suspects who have been identified or described in part by national or ethnic origin, gender, or race.
- D. *POST*: Peace Officers Standards and Training.

IV. PROCEDURES

- A. 1.2.9 (M) Bias-Free Policing
 - 1. Bias-based policing, including racial or gender profiling, is strictly prohibited.
 - a. All complaints of alleged bias-based policing or discriminatory practices against a member of this department are to be fully investigated by the Professional Standards Unit no matter the source.
 - 2. Training
 - a. All newly hired department employees engaged in enforcement activities shall receive initial training in bias issues including legal aspects during their Academy experience. In addition, all new employees of the police department, regardless of their assignment,

are required to go through the City's Diversity Training Program, mandated by the City Manager, within a reasonable time after first beginning employment with the City.

- b. All department employees engaged in enforcement activities shall receive training annually in bias-based policing.
- c. Such training may include:
 - (1) the dissemination of this policy to all employees;
 - (2) instruction in legal aspects of bias-based policing; and
 - (3) training for supervisory personnel to monitor employee conduct such that the standards of this policy are being carried out by employees under their supervision.

3. Corrective Measures

- a. To enforce the provisions of this policy, the department shall take appropriate action to address documented incidents of bias-based profiling:
 - (1) Intentional Acts: Employees discovered to be intentionally engaged in profiling or other forms of bias-based policing shall be addressed through appropriate disciplinary actions.
 - (2) Unintentional Acts: Well-meaning employees who appear to be engaged in unintentional acts of bias-based policing shall receive additional training, guidance, supervision, or review of enforcement activities as deemed appropriate by the Police Commissioner or designee.
 - (3) Institutional Practices: In the event that department practices are discovered to promote or allow bias-based policing, such practices shall be addressed through policy review and training.

B. Identification of Profiling

- 1. To identify instances of bias the department will perform the following.
 - a. Utilize appropriate complaint procedures to document and investigate allegations of profiling or other forms of bias-based policing filed directly with the agency, the Police Review Advisory Board, or referred through the POST Commission.
 - b. Utilize procedures for the proactive review of performance, complaints, and other employment information to assist supervisors in identifying and modifying potentially problematic behavior and to promote professionalism in the department.
 - (1) The department will proactively monitor data related to police-citizen interactions for indications of possible racial profiling and racially-biased policing including use of force incidents.

- C. The department's Command Staff will conduct a department-wide annual review of employee/department practices and community concerns. The purpose of the review is to

reveal patterns or trends that might indicate a need for training, policy modification, and/or corrective measures. The report of findings will be submitted to the Commissioner, to include:

- a. enforcement contacts;
- b. field contacts;
- c. community member concerns, based upon alleged biased police actions;
- d. asset seizures; and
- e. asset forfeitures.