

Purpose

This policy is intended to reaffirm the Bemidji Police Department's commitment to impartial and unbiased policing.

Policy

It is the policy of the Bemidji Police Department to reinforce procedures that serve to reaffirm our commitment to impartial policing and to reinforce procedures that serve to assure the public we are providing service and enforcing laws in a fair and equitable manner to all.

Definitions

Racial profiling - has the meaning given to it in Minn. Stat. 626.8471, Subd. 2. which states: "Racial profiling" means any action initiated by law enforcement that relies upon the race, ethnicity, or national origin of an individual rather than:

- (1) the behavior of that individual; or
- (2) information that leads law enforcement to a particular individual who has been identified as being engaged in or having been engaged in criminal activity.

Racial profiling includes use of racial or ethnic stereotypes as factors in selecting whom to stop and search. Racial profiling does not include law enforcement's use of race or ethnicity to determine whether a person matches a specific description of a particular subject.

I. Procedures

A. Policing impartially, not racial profiling, is standard procedure for this agency meaning:

1. investigative detentions, pedestrian and vehicle stops, arrests, searches and property seizures by peace officers will be based on a standard of reasonable suspicion or probable cause in accordance with the Fourth Amendment of the United States Constitution and peace officers must be able to articulate specific facts, circumstances and conclusions that support reasonable suspicion or probable cause for investigative detentions, pedestrian and vehicle stops, arrests, nonconsensual searches and property seizures;
2. except as provided in paragraph 3., peace officers shall not consider race, ethnicity, national origin, gender, sexual orientation and religion in establishing either reasonable suspicion or probable cause; and
3. peace officers may take into account the descriptors in paragraph 2. based on information that links specific, suspected, unlawful or suspicious activity to a particular individual or group of individuals and this information may be used in the same manner officers use specific information regarding age, height, weight, etc. about specific suspects.

B. In an effort to prevent the perception of biased law enforcement peace officers shall:

1. be respectful and professional;
2. introduce or identify themselves to the citizen and state the reason for the contact as soon as practical unless providing this information will compromise officer or public safety;
3. ensure the detention is no longer than necessary to take appropriate action for the known or suspected offense;
4. attempt to answer any relevant questions the citizen may have regarding the citizen/officer contact including relevant referrals to other agencies when appropriate;
5. provide their name and badge number when requested, preferably in writing or on a business card; and
6. explain and/or apologize if it is determined the reasonable suspicion was unfounded (e.g. after an investigatory stop).

C. Supervisors shall ensure all personnel in their command are familiar with the content of this policy and are in compliance.

II. Duty to Report

A. Every member of this department shall perform their duties in a fair and objective manner and are 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.

III. Violations

A. Alleged violations of this policy must be reported to POST in accordance with the reporting requirements in Minn. Stat. 626.8457.

Reference or Revision Date(s):

A. Minnesota POST Board Model Policy – PB REV 07/2022

B. Minnesota Statutes § 626.8471

REVISION DATE(S):

09/09/2022