

Bias-Based Policing

Effective Date:	1/18/2023
Revised Date:	
Issuing Authority: Chief Matthew Egan	

401.1 PURPOSE AND SCOPE

This policy provides guidance to department members that affirms the Media Borough Police Department's commitment to policing that is fair and objective.

Nothing in this policy prohibits the use of specified characteristics in law enforcement activities designed to strengthen the department's relationship with its diverse communities (e.g., cultural and ethnicity awareness training, youth programs, community group outreach and partnerships).

401.1.1 DEFINITIONS

Definitions related to this policy include:

Bias-based policing - An inappropriate reliance on actual or perceived characteristics such as race, ethnicity, national origin, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, economic status, age, cultural group, disability, or affiliation with any non-criminal group (protected characteristics) as the basis for providing differing law enforcement service or enforcement.

401.2 POLICY

The Media Borough Police Department is committed to providing law enforcement services to the community with due regard for the racial, cultural or other differences of those served. It is the policy of this department to provide law enforcement services and to enforce the law equally, fairly, objectively and without discrimination toward any individual or group.

401.3 BIAS-BASED POLICING PROHIBITED

Bias-based policing is strictly prohibited.

However, nothing in this policy is intended to prohibit an officer from considering protected characteristics in combination with credible, timely and distinct information connecting a person or people of a specific characteristic to a specific unlawful incident, or to specific unlawful incidents, specific criminal patterns or specific schemes.

401.4 MEMBER RESPONSIBILITIES

Every member of this department shall perform his/her duties in a fair and objective manner and is responsible for promptly reporting any suspected or known instances of bias-based policing to

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a supervisor. Members should, when reasonable to do so, intervene to prevent any bias-based actions by another member.

401.4.1 REASON FOR CONTACT

Officers contacting a person shall be prepared to articulate sufficient reason for the contact, independent of the protected characteristics of the individual.

To the extent that written documentation would otherwise be completed (e.g., arrest report, field contact entry), the involved officer should include those facts giving rise to the contact, as applicable.

Except for required data-collection forms or methods, nothing in this policy shall require any officer to document a contact that would not otherwise require reporting.

401.5 SUPERVISOR RESPONSIBILITIES

Supervisors shall monitor those individuals under their command for compliance with this policy and shall handle any alleged or observed violations in accordance with the Personnel Complaints Policy.

- (a) Supervisors should discuss any issues with the involved officer and involved officer's supervisor in a timely manner.
 - 1. Supervisors shall document these discussions, in the prescribed manner.
- (b) Supervisors shall periodically review any available resources used to document contact between officers and the public to ensure compliance with this policy.
 - 1. Supervisors should document these periodic reviews.
 - 2. Recordings or data that capture a potential instance of bias-based policing should be appropriately retained for administrative investigation purposes.
- (c) Supervisors shall initiate investigations of any actual or alleged violations of this policy.
- (d) Supervisors should take prompt and reasonable steps to address any retaliatory action taken against any member of this department who discloses information concerning bias-based policing.
- (e) If bias-based policing occurs, corrective measures may include counseling, remedial training, or punitive discipline (e.g., suspension, termination).

401.6 ADMINISTRATION

The Lieutenant shall review the efforts of the Department to provide fair and objective policing and submit an annual report of data derived from traffic stops, field contacts, vehicle searches, asset seizures/forfeitures, and enforcement actions, including public concerns and complaints, to the Chief of Police. The annual report should not contain any identifying information about any specific complaint, member of the public, or officer. It should be reviewed by the Chief of Police to identify any changes in training or operations that shall be made to improve service.

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Supervisors should review the annual report and discuss the results with those they are assigned to supervise.

401.7 TRAINING

Initial and in-house refresher training on fair and objective policing and review of this policy shall be conducted as directed by the Lieutenant. Training shall be provided no less than every three years.