



PATROL GUIDE

Section: General Regulations

Procedure No: 203-25

DEPARTMENT POLICY PROHIBITING RACIAL PROFILING AND BIAS-BASED POLICING

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PAGE:

1 of 2

1. Members of the service are reminded that the New York City Police Department is committed both to the impartial enforcement of law and to the protection of constitutional rights. To reinforce these commitments and to ensure that all members of the service engage only in constitutionally sound policing practices, the Department prohibits the use of racial and bias-based profiling in law enforcement actions. Conducting enforcement activities in an unbiased manner fosters and strengthens relationships between police officers and members of the community, and inspires confidence in, and support for, policing efforts.

2. Police-initiated enforcement actions, including, but not limited to, arrests, Level 3 Terry stops, frisks, searches, summonses, and motor vehicle stops, must be based on the standards required by the Fourth and Fourteenth Amendments of the U.S. Constitution, Sections 11 and 12 of Article I of the New York State Constitution, Section 14-151 of the New York City Administrative Code, and other applicable laws.

3. Race, color, ethnicity, or national origin may not be used as a motivating factor for initiating police enforcement action. When an officer’s decision to initiate enforcement action against a person is motivated even in part by a person’s actual or perceived race, color, ethnicity or national origin, that enforcement action violates Department policy unless the officer’s decision is based on a specific and reliable suspect description that includes not just race, age, and gender, but other identifying characteristics or information.

4. The law confers on police officers the authority to stop, question, and if warranted, frisk an individual whom an officer reasonably suspects has committed, is committing, or is about to commit a felony or Penal Law misdemeanor. Police officers must be able to articulate the factors which led them to take enforcement action, in particular those factors leading to reasonable suspicion for stopping, questioning, and, if appropriate, frisking a person, or probable cause for arresting or issuing a summons to a person. Individuals may not be targeted for any enforcement action, including stops, because they are members of a racial or ethnic group that appears more frequently in local crime suspect data. Race, color, ethnicity, or national origin may only be considered when the stop is based on a specific and reliable suspect description that includes not just race, gender, and age, but other identifying characteristics or information. When an officer carries out a stop based on reasonable suspicion that a person fits such a description, the officer may consider the race, color, ethnicity, or national origin of the suspect, just as the officer may consider the suspect’s height or hair color. In accordance with Department policy, when a stop is not based on a specific suspect description, however, race, ethnicity or national origin may not be used at all as a motivation or justification for the stop.

5. Section 14-151 of the New York City Administrative Code and Department policy prohibit bias-based profiling and include demographic categories in addition to race, color, and national origin. The Administrative Code and Department policy prohibit the Department and individual officers from intentionally engaging in bias-based profiling, which is defined as “an act of a member of the force of the police department or other law enforcement officer that relies on actual or perceived race, national origin, color, creed, age, alienage or citizenship status, gender, sexual

PATROL GUIDE

PROCEDURE NUMBER:	DATE EFFECTIVE:	REVISION NUMBER:	PAGE:
203-25	06/02/16		2 of 2

orientation, disability, or housing status as the determinative factor in initiating law enforcement action against an individual, rather than an individual’s behavior or other information or circumstances that links a person or persons to suspected unlawful activity.” With respect to race, color, ethnicity and national origin, the standards of conduct described in paragraphs “3” and “4” must always be met by the Department and its officers.

6. Commanding officers will continue to ensure that self-inspections are conducted within their commands regarding stop, question, and frisk activity. The Quality Assurance Division will continue to monitor compliance with self-inspection protocols in all of its command inspections and will continue to audit stop, question, and frisk activity Department-wide.

7. Commanding officers will ensure that members of their command comply with the Department’s policy regarding investigative encounters as per Patrol Guide 212-11, “Investigative Encounters: Requests for Information, Common Law Right of Inquiry and Level 3 Stops.”